Developing and Retaining School Leaders

University of Nevada Las Vegas, Educational Policy and Leadership Program

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY ................................................................................................................................ 1  
GRANT FUNDED ACTIVITIES .................................................................................................... 6  
BUDGET SUMMARY ............................................................................................................... 22  
APPENDIX A: References ...................................................................................................... 25  
APPENDIX B: National Association of Elementary School Principals Mentor Competencies and Principal Standards ............................................................................................................. 26  
APPENDIX C: Mentor Group Evaluation of NEASP Training .............................................. 30  
APPENDIX D: Pre-service Administrators Cohort III ........................................................... 31  
APPENDIX E: Pre-service Administrators Cohort II ............................................................... 32  
APPENDIX F: CCSD Chief Academic Officer’s Evaluation ................................................... 33
SUMMARY

A. Overall Goals/Objectives of Program

This report of the Great Teaching and Leading Grant Developing and Retaining School Leaders (DRSL) will examine whether the grantee met the overall goal of the program, improving the effectiveness and retention of school administrators through a seamless mentoring and coaching program involving aspiring, novice, and practicing principals. Four project effectiveness outcomes were outlined in the grant to achieve this overall goal. Specifically, did implementing mentoring and coaching between practicing principals and pre-service school administrators and mentoring between practicing principals and novice administrators positively impact:

1. Participants’ perceptions of the effectiveness of mentoring and coaching in developing aspiring principal and novice administrators’ leadership skills?
2. Aspiring principal leadership development and impact on student achievement?
3. Novice administrator’s leadership development?
4. Mentor and novice principal retention in administrative positions?

The grantee’s theory of action to improve the effectiveness and retention of school administrators included:

1. Partnerships between pre-service preparation providers and school districts that result in impactful field-based experiences.
2. Field-based experiences for aspiring administrators, supported by effective practicing principals, that result in more effective early-career school administrators.
3. Mentoring and coaching by highly effective practicing principals, with specific training in mentoring, that improve pre-service administrators’ practices.
4. Mentoring and coaching by highly effective practicing principals, with specific
training in mentoring, that improve novice administrators’ practices and increase retention.

5. Engagement in mentoring and coaching that improve practicing principals’ practices and increase retention.

Using the theory of action, the grantee defined four goals and related objectives to achieve the desired effectiveness outcomes.

1. Select and develop a cadre of mentor principals to support and retain aspiring and novice administrators to become highly effective instructional leaders.
   a. **Objective 1:** Using a highly selective process, recruit and select principals to serve as mentors for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Educational Policy and Leadership (EPL) program students and novice administrators.
   b. **Objective 2:** Provide initial training for mentor principals in the area of mentoring and coaching, followed by continuous support through professional learning community (PLC) meetings.

2. Enhance site-based principals’ coaching knowledge and skills through training in coaching.
   a. **Objective 1:** Provide introductory coaching training for site-based principals.

3. Develop aspiring and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework – School Administrator Standards (NEPF-SAS).
   a. **Objective 1:** Provide EPL students mentoring from selected district mentor principals and coaching from site-based principals to integrate course work with field-based experiences and to provide
initial socialization into school administration.

b. **Objective 2**: Provide novice administrators mentoring from district mentor principals to enhance leadership skills.

4. Enhance the availability and retention of administrators through mentoring.
   a. **Objective 1**: Enhance the quantity and quality of entry-level administrators available for hire.
   b. **Objective 2**: Retain participating novice and mentor principals.

**B. Abstract and Results Overview**

The *Developing and Retaining School Leaders* project’s theory of action and project features are grounded in the research supporting effective school leadership preparation programs, leadership development, and school administrator retention. The project is part of a university/district partnership between the UNLV EPL program and the Clark County School District (CCSD) focused on developing a seamless school administrative pipeline that will support effective leadership from pre-service preparation through professional development of practicing principals. The primary program features of this pipeline were supported by the DRSL project, specifically a mentoring and coaching process involving aspiring, novice, and practicing principals. Findings indicate that implementation of the program features led to positive outcomes for each participating leadership group – aspiring, novice, and those practicing principals involved as mentors and coaches. Findings support that the grantee met goals and objectives outlined in the grant, with evidence that the project effectiveness outcomes were also met. This overview summarizes results by goal and then by the project effectiveness outcomes.

**Goal #1.** The grantee used a highly selective process to select mentor principals (objective 1) and then trained mentors to support and retain highly effective aspiring and novice principals (Goal 2).
**Goal #2.** The grantee enhanced site-based principal knowledge and skills in coaching through training.

**Goal #3.** The grantee developed aspiring administrators’ and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on the NEPF-SAS and the National Association of Elementary School Principal (NAESP) Standards through mentoring and coaching. Specifically, mentors and site-based coaches supported the integration of coursework with field experiences that improved aspiring principals’ knowledge and skills, and provided socialization into school administration (objective 1). Mentor principals also supported novice principals’ enhanced knowledge and skills (objective 2).

**Goal #4.** The DRSL project enhanced the availability and quality of aspiring principals (objective 1) and supported the retention of novice and mentor principals (objective 2).

**Project effectiveness outcomes.** Findings indicate that the grant activities positively impacted: aspiring principal and novice administrators’ leadership skills through mentoring and coaching, aspiring principals’ impact on student achievement, novice administrators’ leadership development, and mentor and novice principal retention.

**Next Steps**

The findings of the *Developing and Retaining School Leaders* project suggest several next steps. These next steps are:

1. The UNLV/CCSD partnership should continue to develop mentoring and coaching skills of practicing principals to support aspiring principals as they connect coursework to effective school leadership practices.
2. The partnership should develop a stronger evaluation process to determine specifically how mentors and coaches contribute to improving aspiring principal knowledge, skills, and dispositions.
3. The partnership should develop a stronger evaluation process to determine specifically how mentors contribute to improving novice administrators’ knowledge, skills, dispositions, and retention.

4. The partnership is in a position to expand the mentoring process for first year entry-level administrators and first and second year principals in CCSD. This will require the development of formal structures that connect mentors with those new to school administration and new to the principalship. This process will require an increased pool of mentors while still maintaining continued high quality screening and mentor training for new and existing mentors.

5. The evaluation of the support for mentors should continue, examining how the processes may improve specific leadership practices for novice school administrators, as well as how mentoring may improve mentor principals’ leadership practices.

6. Although aspiring principals had positive perceptions of the site-based coaches’ effect on their learning, there should be improved structured training and evaluation of the site-based coaches.

7. The UNLV/CCSD partnership should consider developing an in-house training and on-going support process for mentors and coaches rather than relying solely on contract services. The evaluation of the support for mentors and coaches should continue, examining how the processes may improve specific leadership practices.

8. Mentor and aspiring principal recruitment should include processes to improve the diversity of mentors and aspiring principals to reflect the student population of CCSD.
GRANT FUNDED ACTIVITIES

Four specific activities were directly and indirectly funded by the GTLF to accomplish the goals of the Developing and Retaining School Leaders project. These activities were: 1) Selection and development of a cadre of mentor principals to support aspiring and novice administrators to become highly effective instructional leaders and increase retention (Goal 1); 2) enhance site-based principals’ knowledge and skills through training in coaching (Goal 2); 3) develop aspiring and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on the NEPF-SAS (Goal 3), and 4) enhance the availability and retention of administrators through mentoring (Goal 4).

Grant Funded Activity #1: Select and develop a cadre of mentor principals to aspiring and novice administrators to become highly effective instructional leaders and increase retention.

Funding was provided for support in building a cadre of mentors. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) provided training and national certification for practicing CCSD principals to become effective mentors; and in so doing, improve instructional leadership skills of aspiring and novice principals whom they mentored. Researchers have confirmed that improved instructional leadership skills positively impact student achievement (Robinson, Lloyed, & Rowe, 2008) (see Appendix A for references). Additionally, support through effective mentoring, which includes training and ongoing professional development, has been connected to improved retention of novice administrators (Wallace Foundation, 2017). The NAESP training and certification builds effective mentoring skills based on six mentor competencies and six leadership standards described in Appendix B. NAESP training involves two days of direct instruction and small group activities.
Certification is a 9-month process consisting of monthly activities between the mentor and mentee (protégé), mentor and coaching reflections, and a final project that indicates how mentoring and/or coaching affected the mentor and protégé.

**Participants:**

Funding for this activity supported the professional development of 20 mentors who completed the NAESP two-day training. The majority of mentors were white (75% or 15 participants). Four mentors were Hispanic (20%) and one mentor was African American (5%). The majority of mentors were also male (65%). Fifteen (75%) of the mentor principals led elementary schools, four (20%) led high schools, and one (5%) lead a middle school. Of the twenty, 12 mentors went through the 9-month NAESP National Principal Mentor Certification Program. Seven of the 12 (58%) were male, 10 (83%) were White and two (17%) were Hispanic.

**Areas of Effectiveness Measure:**

The area of effectiveness measures were: increase assistance to administrators and improve retention of aspiring and novice administrators.

**Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures:**

Effectiveness measures for mentor selection were originally to be based on mentors’ Nevada Department of Education school ratings and CCSD principal supervisors’ recommendations. However, because no school ratings were published for the 2015-16 school year by the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), mentor selection was based solely on CCSD principal supervisors’ screening. Mentors applied to participate in the mentoring program and CCSD principal supervisors screened those applicants based on their leadership performance. The final mentor participants were those recommended by their principal supervisor.

Effectiveness measures for mentors’ perceptions of training were the January 2017 quantitative and qualitative surveys completed after each day of the two-day NAESP
training, recorded and transcribed focus group interviews of mentors’ perceptions of the effectiveness of training and ongoing PLC meetings, mentors’ own skill development, and the effects of mentoring for aspiring and novice administrators, and the NAESP National Principal Mentor Certification Program Final Project Self-Reflections. The January 2017 surveys discussed the mentors’ perceptions of their training, which included both quantitative and qualitative data. The mentors rated 12 statements about the training using a Likert scale from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) (See Appendix C). Also, the mentors answered open-ended questions and added any additional comments about the training. Overall, the mentors’ perceptions of their training was high with an average score for all of the 12 statements at 4.91 out of 5.00. The individual mentor’s averages for each of the 12 statements are presented in Appendix C. In reviewing the open-ended questions, the mentors found the most relevant parts of the training were: (a) discussion and feedback with other mentors, (b) case study practice/role-playing, (c) self-reflection exercises, and (d) application of knowledge. In order to improve the training sessions, the mentors suggested more role-playing, more reflective questions and more time for training. Additional comments were positive about the training. For example, “I found Thursday’s training very helpful in helping me refine my mentoring skills as well as my professional growth.” In addition to NAESP training, two one-hour training sessions were facilitated by UNLV faculty to support co-training among experienced and new mentors. Seven experienced and five new mentors participated in these sessions. These sessions were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for common themes. Three themes emerged from the data analysis. First, mentoring improved the mentors’ learning and practice as principals. Second, mentors were able to build relationships with each other through NAESP Training and Certification creating a principal support system. Third, the mentors learned to reflect on
their practices during the mentoring process.

The NAESP National Principal Mentor Certification Program Final Project Self-Reflection asked mentors to summarize what they had learned through the training and the certification process. According to their self-reflections, mentors learned to become better leaders; which encompassed being better listeners, being better communicators, gaining a deeper understanding about themselves through self-reflection, learning to build supportive and strong positive relationships with their mentees and school staff, and striving to demonstrate the NAESP School Leadership Mentor Competencies while applying the six Principal Standards in Leading Learning Communities. For example, one mentor stated “[m]y goal was to support, develop, and prepare my protégé for the role of an administrator while modeling best practice for leaders. I strived to do my best to demonstrate the NAESP School Leadership Mentor Competencies while encompassing the six Principal Standards in Leading Learning Communities.” Another mentor stated “I wasn’t expecting that I would learn so much more about myself as a leader, and how that, in turn, would positively impact my daily practices.”

**Implications for Future Implementation**

Research suggests that rigorous selection of mentors is important in the effective preparation of future and novice school administrators (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). The current analysis of effectiveness measures of the Development/Implementation of the Mentors activities indicates that Goal 1 of the grant was met, although other selection criteria beyond supervisor recommendations should be included in future mentor selection processes. The grantee should also conduct further evaluation of the effectiveness of these selection processes. Future effectiveness measures should include comparing school outcomes between selected mentors and applicants that were not selected, i.e.,
how did student achievement in the schools led by mentors compare to those led by principals not selected?

Additionally, the grantee should consider how to recruit and select mentors that are more representative of the ethnicity of students and teachers in CCSD. Specifically, the current student population of CCSD is only 25.25 percent White compared to 75 percent White mentors in the NAESP training and 83 percent White in the NAESP National Certification. Although the teacher minority population in CCSD is 24 percent (Takahashi, 2012), similar to the mentor training group, there is room to reduce the gap between school administrators perceived as leaders in the district and the CCSD student population.

Data analysis indicates mentors learned a variety of concepts, which improved their skills as mentors and their leadership skills. Considering the value to mentors, aspiring principals, and novice administrators resulting from participation in mentor training and certification, the partnership should consider how to support those principals now trained as part of the GTLF. In addition, more mentors will need to be trained considering the volume of new administrators hired in CCSD annually. This suggests the partnership should consider a long-range plan for training new mentors and supporting those mentor principals who have been trained and who participated in the NAESP national certification process.

Related to future evaluation, the grantee should conduct additional evaluations of the effectiveness of the mentor training. Future effectiveness measures should include more in-depth surveys of mentor principals as they begin and complete mentor training and after they have engaged with protégés. Additionally, evidence suggests the mentor trainings should be improved by providing more role-playing, more reflective questions, and a notebook with training materials. Finally, mentor participation in training should be correlated to protégé outcomes, such as the outcomes of pre-service principals hired as entry-level administrators mentored by trained
mentors compared to those pre-service administrators hired that were not mentored or mentored by principals that were not trained.

Grant Funded Activity #2: Enhance site-based principal’s knowledge and skills through training in coaching.

Funding for this goal supported training and ongoing support for site-based principals who coached and monitored aspiring principals in the EPL program as they participated in field-based activities. Research indicates that aspiring principals are best prepared for school administration if they engage in field-based experiences supported by an experienced school-based administrator who receives training in coaching and mentoring (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). By training and engaging site-based principals, aspiring principals received a second form of support beyond their trained mentor. Improving site-based school administrators’ knowledge and skills in the coaching and supervision of aspiring principals’ fieldwork translates into better prepared pre-service administrators and holds the potential to better retain these candidates as entry-level administrators (Wallace Foundation, 2017).

UNLV faculty with expertise in leadership coaching provided one group training for all site-based principals, outlining field-based activities and expectations, as well as effective strategies to provide coaching support to aspiring principals. UNLV faculty then met one-on-one with each site-based principal and their protégé three additional times throughout the grant period. These meetings allowed UNLV faculty to provide feedback to the site-based principal on their work with the protégé.

Participants:

Funding for this activity supported 25 site-based principals who supervised 26 aspiring principals in the UNLV EPL program (cohort III). The majority of mentors were white (76% or 19
site-based principals). Three site-based principals were Hispanic (12%), two were Asian (8%) and
one mentor was African American (4%). The majority of site-based principals were female (56%).
Fifteen (60%) of the site-based principals led elementary schools, 8 (32%) led high schools, and
two (8%) lead middle schools. The demographics of the 26 EPL students engaged with these site-
based principals are presented in Appendix (D).

Areas of Effectiveness Measures:

The areas of effectiveness measures were: increase assistance to administrators and improve
the retention of aspiring administrators.

Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures:

A questionnaire of EPL graduates perceptions of the effectiveness of coaching provided
them in their field-based experiences served as the effectiveness measure of the training and
support of site-based principals. EPL aspiring principals indicated their fieldwork component of
the program was valuable and met their expectations (4.48/5.00). They explicitly indicated that
interactions with their site-based principals was valuable to them as future administrators
(3.98/5.00). Qualitatively EPL aspiring principals outlined the value and specific concepts, skills,
and dispositions learned from their site-based principal. Examples of what they learned from their
site-based principal coach included:

• “How to access data. How to facilitate teams.”
• “Day to day school operations and how schools should be organized”
• “How to handle difficult situations with parents and staff.”
• “How critical clear communication is to the culture and climate of the school”
• “Managing time and completing tasks.”

Implications for Future Implementation:
The current analysis of the training of site-based principals indicates the training was effective in supporting aspiring principals’ integration of knowledge gained from classwork to actual practice. However, there is room to improve site-based principals’ support of aspiring principals as indicated by quantitative survey data related to the question, “How valuable was the site-based coach to your learning.” (mean score of 3.98 out of 5.00). Beyond the current training process, site-based principals should be encouraged and incentivized to gain additional training in coaching and mentoring through participation in the NAESP mentor training and national certification. Additionally, UNLV faculty should consider revamping the initial and individual training to more explicitly indicate specific coaching actions the site-based principal can engage in with their protégé.

The evaluation measures for training of site-based principal coaches should be strengthened to include feedback from these principals. Additionally, aspiring principals’ evaluations of site-based principals should include more specific items to determine the value of support from site-based principals related to specific projects and leadership content.

Grant Funded Activity #3: Develop aspiring and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on the NEPF-SAS.

Funding provided through the GTLF provided UNLV EPL students mentoring from selected district mentor principals and coaching from site-based principals to support integration of course work with field-based experiences and initial socialization into school administration. Although pre-service administrators did not receive funds directly, a primary purpose for funding this GTLF project was to support the growth and development of pre-service administrators. The grant supported coaching and mentoring to improve pre-service administrators’ skills and knowledge in school leadership focused on the NEPF-SAS through the integration of course work with field-based experiences.

Funding also provided mentoring for aspiring principals beyond those specific to the UNLV EPL program. Master mentors, those principals trained by NAESP through funding
provided by previous GTLF awards, led multiple group mentoring and training sessions for UNLV EPL and non-EPL aspiring principals interested in being hired in CCSD. These sessions extended knowledge and skills gained through initial principal preparation and socialized aspiring principals into CCSD culture. According to researchers, principal socialization into the culture of the profession and local context is an important part of improving novice administrators’ effectiveness and retention (Bengston, 2014, Aiken, 2002).

Additionally, funding extended the partnership’s previous work with aspiring principals to include support for novice administrators. NAESP trained principal mentors who participated in the NAESP National Certification process spent nine months supporting a novice school administrator. Research indicates this certification process improves novice administrators’ leadership knowledge and skills (Sciarappa & Mason, 2014).

**Participants:**

Funding from the GTLF supported three participant groups. Group One included two cohorts of aspiring principals in the UNLV EPL leadership program, 27 in cohort II and 26 in cohort III (see Appendix E and D for demographics). Group Two consisted of 100 aspiring principals who engaged with master mentors in CCSD district mentoring and training sessions. Group Two was composed of 79% females, with 67% of the participants being White, 14% Hispanic/Latino, 12% African American, 3% multi-race, 2% Asian, and 2% identifying as other. The third participant group were 12 novice administrators mentored by those mentor principals who participated in the NAESP National Mentoring Certification process. Of the 12 novice principal participants, 11 were female (92%), 11 were White (92%), and 1 protégé (17%) was Hispanic/Latino.

**Areas of Effectiveness Measures:**

The area of effectiveness measures was: increase assistance to administrators.
Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures:

Four effectiveness measures were used to measure the development and perceptions of Group one, which consisted of pre-service (EPL students):

1. A qualitative survey of pre-service administrators
2. A qualitative survey of site-based principals
3. Scoring of visual displays of pre-service administrators’ projects
4. Focus group interviews with mentors

A qualitative survey of pre-service administrators at the conclusion of their program provided perceptions of the kinds of activities Cohort II engaged in relative to the NEPF-SAS. These perceptions provided evidence of the kinds of skills and knowledge gained by pre-service administrators as a result of field-based experiences. Qualitative surveys of site-based principal coaches outlined the activities in which the aspiring principal engaged relative to the NEPF-SAS, indicating learning related to each standard. Aspiring principals demonstrated their understanding of instructional leadership, school improvement, and the NEPF-SAS by presenting field-based experiences in which they engaged, including implementation of a school improvement plan through a visual display and presentation to district administrators and community leaders. A rubric was used to evaluate aspiring principals’ knowledge and skills presented through the display. The mentor focus groups allowed mentors to outline the growth and development of protégés over the course of the year in which they worked with pre-service administrators. The focus group questions were conducted in February.

All aspiring EPL students completed the qualitative survey outlining their perceptions of experiences relative to the NEPF-SAS. Pre-service administrators perceived that they had adequately participated in NEPF-SAS activities as a result of mentoring/coaching and field-based experiences, with an overall mean score of 3.33 on a four-point scale. Creating and
Sustaining Structures to Support an Effective School as part of the Instructional Leadership Domain was the only standard that pre-service principals felt they had only Some Experience relative to the NEPF (2.95 out of 4).

Because site-based principal coaches supervised pre-service principals’ field experiences, they were in the best position to determine what skills aspiring EPL principals may have gained related to the NEPF-SAS. Twenty-four of the 27 principals returned the questionnaire for an 88.89% response rate. Site-based principal coaches perceived that aspiring principals were sufficiently able to engage in all NEPF-SAS standards upon completion of the program, with a mean score of 3.38 out of 4.00. Additionally, site-based principals perceived that pre-service administrators were adequately prepared to engage in each NEPF-SAS standard.

Four UNLV faculty members evaluated pre-service principals’ visual displays in each of their respective classes that demonstrated pre-service administrators’ competence in planning and implementation of the school improvement process, as well as competence in engaging in NEPF-SAS standard activities. The mean score for planning and implementing the school improvement process was 2.85 out of 3.00 indicating competence. The mean score for competence in the NEPF-SAS standards was 2.96 out of 3.00 indicating competence in school leadership, including instructional leadership.

Mentor focus group meetings were recorded and transcribed. Grant evaluators recorded themes related to the mentors’ perceptions of mentees’ areas of growth. Mentors noted that the mentor-protégé relationship resulted in pre-service principal learning, specifically related to effective leadership dispositions and knowledge. One mentor noted that mentees learned, “No matter what it seems like, it’s going back to trying to do something about dispositions.” Mentors noted the most common dispositional change was understanding the importance of developing a mission and vision to guide the school. Mentors suggested the most important knowledge gained
was how to build culture and climate in a school.

One effectiveness measure was used to measure the development of Group Two, which consisted of aspiring principals participating with master mentors in group leadership mentoring and training sessions. This measure was the cumulative score protégés earned from their work with mentors over 14 weeks relative to the NEPF-SAS standards and CCSD procedures and process. Master mentors, after examining NEPF-SAS standards and content necessary for effective leadership in CCSD, determined protégés had the knowledge and skills necessary for entry-level school leadership positions if they attained a score of 85 or above out of a possible 100. The mean score for aspiring principals participating in the mentoring and training process was 91.66 with 100 percent scoring above 85.

Novice administrators’ development was measured through one effectiveness measure, the mentor principals’ final project as part of the NAESP National Certification. These projects included the mentors’ qualitative written documentation of what their protégés had learned by participating in the mentoring process. Both the evaluations by the mentors and the protégés’ own reflections indicated that protégés had improved their leadership most through effectively engaging in self-reflection (NEPF-SAS Professional Standard 2), learning how to observe and work to improve teacher instruction (NEPF-SAS Instructional Standard 2), and improving communication and collaboration with teachers and staff (NEPF-SAS Instructional Standard 3). Examples of novice administrators’ comments include:

- “I have learned the importance of both reflection and looking forward.”
- “We have focused our conversations a lot on instructional leadership, so I feel a lot of our work will transfer to mentoring and coaching the teachers.”
- “This program has informed the way I communicate with staff and parents, really focusing on listening.”
Implications for Future Implementation:

The current analysis of effectiveness measures for grant activity number three indicates that grant Goal 3 was met. The results of the analysis provided evidence that field-based activities supported by site-based coaches and continuous interaction with mentors effectively contributed to aspiring and novice administrators’ improved skills and knowledge. Continued development and ongoing support for mentors and coaches is important to ensure aspiring principals receive effective assistance that leads to the improved practice as noted in this analysis. This includes providing more trainings and follow-up support for mentors and coaches who engage with aspiring principals. The current master mentors, those with NAESP National Certification, should be utilized to increase both the volume of trained coaches and mentors, as well as provide continued collaborative support for those who have been trained. This collaborative support could be developed by the Partnership through professional learning communities (PLCs) on coaching and mentoring.

Additionally, the Partnership should consider developing a structure and process where more novice administrators can receive mentoring and coaching from trained and effective mentors. This would include entry-level administrators as well as novice principals in their first and second year as school leaders. Currently, CCSD has no structured process to support either entry or novice administrators. Again, this will necessitate greater numbers of trained mentors and those who can provide the training and support for principal mentors and coaches. The Partnership should consider how to increase the volume of NAESP Nationally Certified Mentors and support those certified to become trainer of trainers for future mentors in CCSD and engage in developing a districtwide process to support entry-level and novice administrators.

The UNLV/CCSD partnership should also consider how to improve the diversity of each
of the three participant groups. None of the participant groups reflected the demographics of
the student population in CCSD.

Grant Funded Activity #4: Enhance the availability and retention of administrators
through mentoring.

Funding provided support for enhancing the quantity and quality of entry-level administrators
available for employment through the sponsorship of two cohorts of UNLV EPL students and
aspiring administrators who participated in the CCSD district mentoring and training sessions.
Funding also supported the retention of CCSD practicing principal (mentors) through participation
in the mentoring process.

Participants

Participants included two cohorts of pre-service administrators in the UNLV EPL
program who received mentoring and coaching through the GTLF. Cohort II included 27 pre-
service administrators who graduated June 2017. Cohort III included 26 pre-service
administrators who will graduate June 2018. The demographics of Cohort II are included in
Appendix E and Cohort III in Appendix D. Funding supported retention of novice
administrators hired from the EPL program, 20 mentor principals trained in coaching and
mentoring, and 12 mentor principals who received national certification. (see Goal #1 for
demographics of mentor principals).

Areas of Effectiveness Measures:

There were four effectiveness measures for grant funded activity number four. These
were: 1) the percentage of EPL graduates hired for administrative positions for the 2016-17
and 2017-18 school years; 2) the percentage of participating novice and mentor
administrators retained as school administrators for the 2017-18 school year compared to
CCSD historic trends; 3) focus group interviews of mentors’ perceptions of the mentor
program related to administrative retention; and 4) an evaluation of the effectiveness of the partnership activities from the Chief Academic Officer of CCSD.

Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures:

The percentage of EPL graduates hired as assistant principals and deans for the 2016-17 school year was forty-one percent (41%), eleven (11) of twenty-seven (27). All have been retained for the 2017-18 school year. The percentage of EPL graduates hired as assistant principals and deans for the 2017-18 school year was four (4) of twenty-seven (27) or fifteen percent (15%), however there is currently a hiring freeze in CCSD which may affect the number of 2017-18 EPL graduates that will be hired at the time of this report.

The percentage of participating novice and mentor administrators retained as school administrators for the 2017-18 school year is one-hundred percent (100%). CCSD’s historic trends from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 for administrators retained is eight hundred and fifty-three (853) of nine hundred and twenty-five (925) or ninety-two percent (92%).

Mentors, through two focus group interviews in January and May, indicated that their involvement in the mentoring process provided support for novice administrators that not only improved their practice, but also helped them deal with the stresses of school leadership. One mentor phrased it this way and other mentors agreed, “There were times through the journey you could see the weight in her eyes (protégé) and I knew that meant we needed to push the content aside and talk about what was happening.” This personal support, mentors agreed, would allow growth but also help their protégés stay in the profession.

The Chief Academic Officer of CCSD, Mike Barton, evaluated the DSRL in relationship to developing a seamless school administrative pipeline that would support effective leadership from pre-service to professional development of practicing principals through mentoring and coaching. The summary of that evaluation is included in Appendix F.
Implications for future Implementation:

The current analysis of effectiveness measures of grant activity number four indicates that grant Goal 4 was met. The results of the analysis provided evidence that, in combination, the activities implemented as part of this GTLF funded grant supported an increase in the pool of effective pre-service school administrators and contributed to the retention of novice school administrators and those experienced principals engaged in the mentoring process. As a result, the Partnership between UNLV and CCSD should continue focusing on developing an effective principal pipeline for CCSD schools. This would include continuing and strengthening field-based activities for aspiring principals supported by trained mentors and site-based principals and increasing structured support for novice administrators from trained mentor principals. Additionally, the Partnership should develop and provide ongoing support for mentor principals’ involvement in the partnership as their participation appears to support their retention. This support and development might include engaging mentor principals in ongoing professional learning communities that focus on effective mentoring and other activities that support aspiring and novice principals.

The Partnership should consider better evaluation of how the activities sponsored in this GTLF contribute to the volume and retention of school administrators. There should be a long-range evaluation of the effects of specific field-based interactions among aspiring principals and their mentors and site-based principals indicating how these activities support effective leadership. Further evaluation processes should be employed to determine more specifically the relationship between engagement in the partnership activities and retention. The current evaluation only suggests a possible relationship. More quantitative and longitudinal evaluation data should be collected to determine if and how engagement in the Partnership activities contribute to administrator retention.
BUDGET SUMMARY

Overview

The Developing and Retaining School Leaders project was awarded $250,881.50. These funds were expended to support a partnership between UNLV and CCSD focused on supporting the development of aspiring principals and the development and retention of novice administrators through mentorship and coaching from trained mentors and site-based principals. Specifically, funds were used to provide financial support and professional development for veteran principals who served as mentors and site-based coaches for aspiring leaders enrolled in UNLV’s principal preparation program and for novice CCSD principals. Funds were also expended to support UNLV faculty serving as the Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigators for activities related to the direction, oversight, and evaluation of the project.

Description of Expenditures

Purchase of Professional Services: The project purchased professional development training from the National Association of Elementary School Principals for a total expenditure of $30,000. This included two-day training sessions for 20 CCSD highly effective principals held locally and conducted by nationally certified staff from NAESP (including travel and materials) plus 9-months on-line follow up support for 12 participants seeking national certification. The professional development provided training and skill development for veteran principals serving as mentors and site-based coaches to aspiring leaders in UNLV’s educational leadership preparation program and to novice CCSD principals.

Two non-CCSD site-based principals were contracted to support two UNLV students who were not employed by CCSD. Each of the two principals were paid $1,500 to support the field experiences for the two UNLV students.
**Professional Salaries:** The Principal Investigator and the Co-Principal Investigators were paid a total of $24,000. A letter of appointment graduate student was paid $23,000. A total of $1,204.45 was paid for fringe benefits for all professional salaries. The scope of work under this grant for all professional services included: collaboration with CCSD to select mentor principals; conducting meetings with site-based principal coaches; providing professional development to mentor principals and site-based principal coaches in the area of instructional leadership; making all arrangements for mentor principal training provided by NAESP (including developing contracts, making travel arrangements, and arranging scheduling and facilities); facilitating meetings with mentor coaches and district leadership administrators as continued professional development and planning; recruiting aspiring administrators for the M.Ed. in Educational Policy and Leadership; collaborating with CCSD Leadership administration to assign cohort members to mentor principals; directing and oversee aspiring administrators’ field experience; administering pre- and post-evaluation instruments, analyzing data, and evaluating the project.

**Other Operating Expenses:** Supplies were purchased in order to implement the mentoring process for the grant as well as software licenses to evaluate the outcomes of the grant. A total of $4,873.58 was spent on required supplies and software.

**CCSD Sub Award for Mentor Principals and Site-Based Coaches Stipends:** The Clark County School District expended $117,939.10 for stipends to mentors and site-based principals. The project paid stipends to 11 mentor principals working with 53 UNLV aspiring administrators and to 23 CCSD site-based coaches engaged with 24 UNLV aspiring principals. Mentor principals met monthly with UNLV aspiring leaders to provide guidance and to engage mentees in reflective practice to connect course-based learning with practice. The project also paid the 11 master mentors and 11 other mentors to provide eight training and mentoring sessions to 100 UNLV and non-UNLV aspiring principals to prepare them to implement NEPF-SAS Standards and to orient
them to the CCSD culture and procedures. Site-based coaches provided support and assistance for UNLV aspiring leaders’ year-long field experiences conducted at their buildings.

**Total Expenditures: $204,017.13**

**Awarded Funds vs. Unexpended Funds**

The difference of $46,864.37 between the amount awarded ($250,881.50) and the amount expended ($204,017.13) was a result of reduced expenditures in three areas. First, the fringe benefits for purchased professional services was over estimated, resulting in $3,097.55 not spent. Second, $738.92 was not expended within other operating expenses as a result of savings in estimated costs for software licenses. Third, the subaward to CCSD was reduced by $43,027.90 as a result of fewer UNLV students supported by CCSD mentors and site-based principals, fewer training sessions provided by mentors for UNLV students and non-UNLV students, and fewer novice principals supported by mentors than anticipated in the grant proposal, as well as changes in indirect costs requirements. The unexpended funds were returned to NDE on September 1, 2016.
APPENDIX A: References


APPENDIX B: National Association of Elementary School Principals Mentor Competencies and Principal Standards

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP MENTOR COMPETENCIES

**Competency One:** An effective mentor sets high expectations for self-development in high quality professional growth opportunities.

**Strategies:**
- Demonstrates adult learning practices through professional growth activities
- Practices professional learning that increases mentor effectiveness

**Competency Two:** An effective mentor has knowledge of and utilizes mentoring and coaching best practices.

**Strategies:**
- Utilizes effective oral and written communication skills
- Applies effective listening skills and provides constructive feedback
- Communicates a clear vision
- Understands and practices adult learning theory

**Competency Three:** An effective mentor is active in instructional leadership.

**Strategies:**
- Is grounded in national, state, and local student common core curriculum and professional standards for principals
- Focuses on new principals growth in applying skills as an instructional leader resulting in school improvement and student achievement
- Takes a leadership role in the development and study of professional practice

**Competency Four:** An effective mentor respects confidentiality and a code of ethics in
the mentor-protégé relationship.

**Strategies:**

Demonstrates a confidential and trusting environment

Encourages open and reflective conversations in collaboration with protégé

**Competency Five:** An effective mentor contributes to the body of knowledge as it pertains to principal and administrative mentoring.

**Strategies:**

Conducts action research in collaboration with protégé through a growth model

Utilizes assessment information to adjust the mentoring process as needed

Maintains a reflection portfolio for self and encourages the protégé to do the same

**Competency Six:** An effective mentor fosters a culture that promotes formal and informal mentoring relationships.

**Strategies:**

Engages in professional outreach activities which include the use of technology and networking to endorse the sustainability of mentor programming for school leaders

Acknowledges and supports the need for mentoring and coaching throughout the career continuum
NAESP PRINCIPAL STANDARDS

**Standard One:** Lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center.

*Stay informed of the continually changing context for teaching and learning. Embody learner-centered leadership.*

*Capitalize on the leadership skills of others.*

*Align operations to support student, adult and school learning needs.*

* Advocate for efforts to ensure that policies are aligned to effective teaching and learning.*

**Standard Two:** Set high expectations and standards for the academic, social, emotional and physical development of all students.

*Build a consensus on a vision that reflects the core of the school community.*

*Value and use diversity to enhance the learning of the entire school community.*

*Broaden the framework for child development beyond academics.*

*Develop a learning culture that is adaptive, collaborative, innovative and supportive.*

**Standard Three:** Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed-upon standards.

*Ensure alignment of curriculum with district and school goals, standards, assessments and resources.*

*Invest in a technology-rich culture that connects learning to the global society.*

*Hire, retain and support high-quality teachers.*

*Ensure rigorous, relevant and appropriate instruction for all students*
**Standard Four**: Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals.

*Invest in comprehensive professional development for all adults to support student learning.*

*Align the schoolwide professional development plan with school and learning goals.*

*Encourage adults to broaden networks to bring new knowledge and resources to learning environments.*

*Provide time, structures and opportunities for adults to plan, work, reflect and celebrate together to improve practice.*

**Standard Five**: Manage data and knowledge to inform decisions and measure progress of student, adult and school performance.

*Make performance data a primary driver for school improvement.*

*Measure student, adult and school performance using a variety of data.*

*Build the capacity of adults and students to use knowledge effectively to make decisions.*

*Benchmark high-achieving schools with comparable demographics.*

*Make results transparent to the entire school community.*

**Standard Six**: Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student performance and development.

*Engage parents, families and the community to build relationships that support improved performance.*

*Serve as civic leaders who regularly engage with numerous stakeholders to support students, families and schools in more effective ways.*

*Shape partnerships to ensure multiple learning opportunities for students, in and out of school.*

*Market the school’s distinctive learning environment and results to inform parents’ choices of options that best fit their children’s needs.*

*Advocate for high-quality education for every student.*
### APPENDIX C: Mentor Group Evaluation of NEASP Training

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<th>Rating</th>
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<td>Presenters were knowledgeable about the topics.</td>
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<td>Presenters were well-organized.</td>
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<td>Session presentation materials were relevant and top-quality.</td>
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<td>Description of session matched the presentation.</td>
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<td>I will be able to apply what I learned today.</td>
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<td>Training was of high quality.</td>
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<td>Facilitators presented in a way to help me learn the content.</td>
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<td>Organization and timing of the presentation was good.</td>
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<td>I learned new content today to become a more effective mentor.</td>
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<td>I am able to view the mentor pedagogy in new ways.</td>
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<td>I participated in the learning collaboratively with colleagues to value others viewpoints.</td>
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<td>The Training today was relevant to the school leadership mentor competencies.</td>
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**Overall Mean:** 4.98
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APPENDIX F: CCSD Chief Academic Officer’s Evaluation of Developing and Retaining School Leaders Project

September 1, 2017

Great Teaching and Leading Fund Evaluation Team,

On behalf of the Clark County School District, please accept this letter outlining the positive outcomes experienced by the district as a result of implementing the Great Teaching and Leadership Fund grant titled Developing and Retaining School Leaders. District personnel within the Leadership Development Department have worked collaboratively with personnel in the Educational Policy and Leadership Program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to use funds from this grant to build instructional-leadership capacity within the District. The funds supported the development of pre-service administrators and job-embedded professional development for practicing principals.

Specifically, funds from the Developing and Retaining School Leaders project were used to prepare prospective school leaders, of which 16 have been hired as entry-level administrators in the District. We anticipate additional hires from the UNLV Cohort that participated in the GTLF within the next year. These hires were well prepared to effectively implement the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF), conduct observation cycles, support student-learning goals, and implement school improvement.

Additionally, funds were used to implement job-embedded professional development for practicing principals through mentoring processes that resulted in benefits for the principal mentor and their protégés. Mentors reported improving practices at their schools as a result of lessons learned through mentoring pre-service and novice principals, including how to better communicate with staff and involve stakeholders in the mission and vision of the school.

Principal Mentors also reported that being involved in the Developing and Retaining School Leaders mentoring process rejuvenated them as school leaders. To date, all mentors and novice principals involved with the grant have remained as an administrator in the District. We believe that involvement in this project supported principal retention and will do so in the future as well.

As a District, we believe in preparing and supporting all educational leaders to provide leadership for learning. Evidence indicates that the Developing and Retaining School Leaders project, supported by the Great Teaching and Leadership Fund, has improved our instructional leadership capacity. In so doing, this project supports our ultimate goal of improved student achievement.

Sincerely,

Mike Barton
Chief Academic Officer