Great Teaching and Learning Fund Final Annual Report – FY 18

Advancing Administrator Development (ADD)
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Educational Policy and Leadership Program

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SUMMARY

Overall Goals/Objectives of Program

This report for the first year of the Great Teaching and Leading Grant *Advancing Administrators Development (ADD)* will examine whether the grantee met the overall goal of the funded program, which is the ongoing development of a school leadership pipeline to support the recruitment, selection, retention, and development of highly effective educational leaders from pre-service principal preparation through in-service school and district administrators in the Clark County School District (CCSD). This overall goal is the foundation of the partnership between CCSD and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, a partnership focused on strengthening the school leadership pipeline. Three project effectiveness outcomes were outlined in the grant to support the overall goal of the grant and CCSD/UNLV partnership. 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 practices?

2. Aspiring principal leadership development and impact on student achievement?

3. Novice and practicing principals’ retention and leadership development as a result of participation in mentoring and professional learning communities?

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

1. Partnerships between pre-service preparation providers and school districts result in impactful field-based experiences.

2. Field-based experiences for aspiring administrators, supported by effective practicing principals, result in more effective early-career school administrators.
3. Mentoring and coaching by highly effective practicing principals, with specific training in mentoring, improve pre-service administrators’ practices.

4. Mentoring and coaching by highly effective practicing principals, with specific training in mentoring, improve novice administrators’ practices and increase retention.

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

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

1. Continue to recruit, select, and develop a cadre of mentor principals to support and retain EPL students and novice administrators to become highly effective instructional leaders.
   
   Objective 1: Using a selective process, recruit, select, and train principals to serve as mentors for EPL students and novice administrators.

   Objective 2: Monitor mentoring effectiveness in supporting EPL students and novice principals.

2. Enhance mentor principals’ school leadership effectiveness through participation in the mentoring process.
   
   Objective 1: Monitor the value of mentoring as a professional development process for trained mentors engaged in supporting EPL students, prospective, and novice administrators.

3. Enhance site-based coaching effectiveness in supporting EPL students’ field-based experiences.
   
   Objective 1: Provide introductory coaching training for site-based principals.

4. Develop EPL student’s and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on NEPF observation cycles, effective models of improvement, and NEPF-SAA standards.
Objective 1: Provide EPL students mentoring from selected trained mentor principals to integrate course work with field-based experiences focused on NEPF observation cycles and student learning goals.

Objective 2: Provide EPL students coaching from site-based principals in integrating course work with field-based experiences focused on school improvement.

Objective 3: Provide EPL students coaching from site-based principals in integrating course work with field-based experiences to improve confidence and skills related to the NEPF-SAA standards.

5. Enhance practicing principal effectiveness through ongoing professional development focused on school improvement.

Objective 1: Monitor the value of participation in a PLC focused on a problem of practice related to school improvement.

Abstract and Results Overview

The Advancing Administrators Development (ADD) project’s theory of action and project features are grounded in the research supporting effective school leadership preparation programs and development. 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 ADD project, specifically a mentoring and coaching process involving aspiring, novice, and practicing principals. Findings indicate that implementation of the program features in the first year of the ADD 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 first year of 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 continued to recruit, select, and develop a cadre of mentor principals to support and retain highly effective EPL and novice principals (Objective 1) and monitored the mentoring process to ensure effectiveness (Objective 2).

**Goal #2.** The grantee enhanced mentor principal school leadership effectiveness through the use of mentoring as a professional development process.

**Goal #3.** The grantee enhanced site-based principal coaching effectiveness in supporting EPL students’ field based experiences through training.

**Goal #4.** The grantee developed aspiring administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on the NEPF observations cycle and evaluation of student learning goals (Objective 1), school improvement (Objective 2), and NEPF-SAA standards (Objective 3), through field-based experiences supported by site-based principal coaches.

**Goal #5.** The grantee enhanced practicing principals’ effectiveness, both novice and experienced administrators, in planning school improvement through participation in a professional learning community (Objective 1).

**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, and novice and experiences administrators’ leadership development.

**Next Steps**

The findings of the *Advancing Administrators Development (ADD)* 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 course work to effective school leadership practices.

2. Although UNLV Educational Policy and Leadership (EPL) 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.

3. The UNLV/CCSD partnership should develop a stronger evaluation process to determine specifically how mentors and coaches contribute to improving EPL aspiring principal and novice principal knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

4. The UNLV/CCSD partnership began expanding the mentoring process for first and second year principals in CCSD through a Problem of Practice Professional Learning Community Problem (PP-PLC) pilot supported by this grant. This pilot for supporting the learning of new and experienced principals should continue and include efforts to recruit minority participants, match types of schools within the PLC group, and ongoing evaluations to determine overall impact.

5. Other than the PP-PLC pilot the partnership and limited mentoring of assistant principals, the UNLV/CCSD partnership has yet to develop formal structures to connect trained mentors with entry level and novice principals. This will require the development of such structures to connect mentors with entry level administrators and those new to the principalship. This process will require ongoing development of current mentors while still maintaining high quality screening and mentor training for new and existing administrators.

6. The UNLV/CCSD partnership should expand in-house training and on-going support processes for mentors and coaches through the use of the three CCSD administrators trained to provide the National Association of Elementary School Principals mentor training. The process should be monitored and evaluated to determine the effectiveness of this in-
house training in developing mentor principals.

7. 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.

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

**GRANT FUNDED ACTIVITIES**

Five specific activities were directly and indirectly funded by the GTLF to accomplish the goals of the project. These activities were: 1) Recruit, select, and develop a cadre of mentor principals to support and retain aspiring principals and novice administrators (Goal 1); 2) enhance mentor principals' school leadership effectiveness (Goal 2); 3) enhance site-based principals’ knowledge and skills (Goal 3); 4) develop aspiring and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on the NEPF-SAS (Goal 4); and 5) enhance practicing principals effectiveness relative to school improvement (Goal 5).

**Grant Funded Activity #1: Continue to recruit, select, and develop a cadre of mentor principals to support and retain EPL students and novice administrators to become highly effective instructional leaders.**

Support through effective mentoring, which includes training and ongoing professional development, has been connected to retention of novice administrators (Wallace Foundation, 2017), support for instructional leadership (Johnston, Kaufman, & Thompson, 2016), and improved outcomes for aspiring principals (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007) (see Appendix A for references). Funding was
provided to continue to recruit, select, and develop a cadre of mentors for EPL students and
novice administrator through the National Association of Elementary School Principals
(NAESP) National Principal Mentor Training and Certification Program. The NAESP training
and certification builds effective mentoring skills (Sciarappa & Mason, 2014) and is based on
six mentor competencies and six leadership standards described in Appendix B.

Previous GTLF grants provided funding for 72 CCSD principals to be trained through
the NAESP Mentoring program with 29 of those obtaining national certification. Following
through on previous GTLF grant recommendations for next steps, the UNLV/CCSD partnership
used the current GTLF to expand CCSD capacity to internally train effective mentors. ADD
funds provided for the certification of three CCSD administrators to become National Trainers.
The three CCSD administrators were selected from the 29 CCSD principals that participated in
the 9-month NAESP National Certification funded by previous GTLF grants and were
recommended by their supervisor. These three CCSD administrators can now provide the
NAESP mentor training at significantly reduced costs to prospective CCSD mentors at more
convenient times for the district. Grant funds also paid for the three CCSD National Trainers to
conduct one two-day NAESP Mentor Training for 12 additional CCSD principals.

Participants

Funding supported both the certification of three National Trainers and the professional
development of the 12 mentors who completed the NAESP two-day training. Two of the National
Trainers were women and all three trainers were White. One National Trainer is a CCSD School
Associate Superintendent (SAS) and two were middle school principals.

The majority of the 12 mentors trained were white (67% or 8 participants). Two mentors
were Hispanic (17%), one mentor was African American (8%), and one mentor was Asian (8%).
The majority of mentors were also female (67% or 8 participants). Nine (75%) of the mentor
principals led elementary schools, one (8%) led a middle school, one (8%) was a School Associate Superintendent, and one (8%) was a UNLV faculty member who is a liaison with CCSD.

**Areas of Effectiveness Measure**

The area of effectiveness measures were mentors’ perceptions of training and mentors’ perceptions of effectiveness in supporting EPL students and novice principals.

**Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures**

The effectiveness of the training for the three CCSD mentor principals who became National Trainers was evaluated based on the perceptions of those CCSD principals they trained in June 2018 to become mentors. The perceptions of those trained also indicated the overall effectiveness of mentor training. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected after completion of each day of the two-day NAESP training. The mentors rated 12 statements related to the training using a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Mentors answered open-ended questions and added any additional comments regarding the training. Overall, the mentors’ perceptions of their training was high with an average score for all of the 12 statements of 4.81 of 5.00 possible. The mentors’ 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) a focus on highlighting mentees strengths, (b) self-reflection exercises, and (d) application of knowledge to mentees and staff. In order to improve the training sessions, the mentors suggested more exercises around communication. Additional comments were positive about the training. For example, “Very good opportunities for self-reflection. This session allowed me to grow and will continue to foster growth both within myself as well as my team and those I come in contact with.”
Mentor effectiveness in supporting EPL students was measured by a qualitative survey of 25 students upon graduation. Students were asked on a five point scale, “My regular meetings with my EPL Mentor were valuable to meeting my needs as a future administrator” and “My shadowing experience with my mentor was valuable in meeting my needs as a future administrator.” In addition, an open ended questions was asked of EPL students, “Describe two valuable and specific concepts, skills, or dispositions learned from your regular meetings with your mentor.” Students indicated their mentor was valuable in meeting their needs (4.32/5.00) and shadowing their administrator was also valuable (4.36/5.0). Students indicated a range of concepts, skills, and disposition from their mentor including the importance of being in classrooms, building collaborative relationships, time management, and looking deep into data.

Novice principals perceptions of their mentors’ effectiveness was measured through focus groups interviews that included both mentors and their mentees as part of the engagement in the Problem of Practice Professional Learning Community (PP-PLC). The PP-PLC was composed of two novice principals and three NAESP trained mentor principals. Focus group interviews indicated that the mentors provided support to novices in the following areas: (a) providing feedback on practices and actions, (b) offering new ideas for school improvement and, (c) improving skills in communication.

Mentors perceptions of their effectiveness in mentoring EPL students and novice principals and how their mentees benefited from mentoring was measured thorough three audio taped focus group interviews with mentors and a questionnaire sent those mentoring novice principals through the PLC-PP. Mentors indicated they supported EPL students most effectively through effective communication skills, specifically listening and questioning as learned through their NAESP Mentor Training. Mentors indicated EPL students would ask probing questions and think more critically about effective leadership when mentors used
these skills. The most common topics of discussion centered on teacher evaluations, how to deal with difficult decisions, legal issues, and scheduling students. Mentors, however, indicated a somewhat different role with novice principals. Mentors perceived they were most effective as colleagues to mentees, discussing common issues faced by mentors and mentees rather than in the role of advice giver. The most common issues discussed among mentors and their novice principal mentee encompassed the use of data and improving student outcomes.

Implications for Future Implementation

Research suggests that rigorous selection of mentors is important in the effective preparation and retention of future and novice school administrators (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). The current analysis of effectiveness measures of the mentors training and engagement activities indicates that Goal 1 of the grant was met. The grantee provided effective recruitment, selection, and training of three National Mentor Trainers, the selection and training of an additional 12 mentors beyond the mentors previously trained through GTLF grants, and interaction of mentors with novice principal in collaborative PLCs focused on problems of practice.

Although Goal 1 was met, the grantee should continue to improve the recruitment, selection, and development of mentor principals. This includes evaluating and adjusting the mentor recruitment and selection process and improving the continued development, use, and evaluation of mentor principal’s effectiveness. Specifically, 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 67 percent of the 12 mentors selected and engaged in the NAESP training. Additionally, all of the Mentor trainers were White. Although the teacher
minority population in CCSD is 24 percent (Takahashi, 2012) and 33 percent of mentors trained were non-White, there is room to reduce the gap between school administrators perceived as leaders in the district and the CCSD student population.

The grantee should also examine how to support the UNLV/CCSD partnership to more effectively use and evaluate those mentor principals trained. The pool of CCSD mentor principals trained through the past and current GTLF grants are currently engaged in regularly mentoring EPL students, supporting the training of aspiring principals who are participating in the CCSD Leadership Academy, supporting a limited number of novice principals by modeling for assistant principals in the CCSD Leadership Academy, and through the PLC-PP process. The UNLV/CCSD partnership should continue to examine how to further use trained mentors to support novice administrators.

The grantee should further develop evaluation processes to understand the effectiveness of mentor training and mentor engagement with aspiring and novice administrators. 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 mentees. Additionally, longer term evaluation should be conducted that examines the outcomes of mentoring, such as a following those mentees who engaged with trained mentors as they work as administrators in schools. This evaluation process could examine retention of mentees as they become administrators and a comparison of principal evaluations of those that were mentored to those not mentored.

Grant Funded Activity #2: Enhance mentor principals’ school leadership effectiveness through participation in the mentoring process.

Structured mentoring experiences serves as effective professional development for practicing administrators (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004). Mentors report improving their own
leadership practices as a result of mentoring aspiring and novice administrator (Gimbel & Kefor, 2018; Hansford & Ehrich, 2006). Mentoring among practicing principals, in collaborative structures such as professional leaning communities also appears to improve student outcomes (Bickmore, 2012; David, 2009; Houchens, Stewart, & Jennings, 2017). This GTLF supported the learning of trained mentor principals as they mentored aspiring principals and novice principals.

**Participants**

Through three GTLF grants 84 CCSD principals have been trained to mentor aspiring and novice principals. Of that number, 20 have been actively engaged in mentoring aspiring and novice principals. These principals have mentored EPL aspiring principals, novice administrators in their own building, assistant principals as part of the CCSD Leadership Academy, and novice principals as part of the PP-PLC. Demographically, these principals are similar to the larger pool of CCSD principals trained through the NAESP Mentor Principal program.

**Areas of Effectiveness Measure**

The area of effectiveness measures was the mentors’ perceptions of how and what they had learned by participating as a mentor and how that learning has impacted retention and effectiveness as a school administrator. Three focus group interviews were conducted with a subset of 11 mentor principals engaged in mentoring aspiring, assistant principals, and novice principals.

**Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures**

Mentors indicated participation in the mentoring process resulted in improved leadership effectiveness. Mentors indicated that mentoring required them to reflect on specific leadership practices and make changes to their leadership as a result. Specifically, mentors reflected on their communication practices and how they interacted with staff. As a result, mentors changed their communication practices to listen to and engage more staff in decisions. Mentors also indicated
they were more effective in interactions with teachers around improving their instructional practices because of these improved communication skills. Additionally, mentor principals provided examples of how they made changes to school structures and programs as a result of mentoring and reflections. Examples of changes included implementation of mindfulness activities in the in-school suspension program and implementation of a program that supported more teacher and staff engagement with the community. Mentor principals engaged with novice administrators also indicated that they were more engaged with using data to implement their school improvement plans.

**Implications for Future Implementation**

Analysis of effectiveness measures of mentor principal learning and improved leadership effectiveness indicates that Goal 2 was met. Participation in mentoring improved the effectiveness of those principals engaged in the mentoring process.

A future goal of the UNLV/CCSD should be to expand the number of mentors participating in supporting aspiring and novice principals to include more of the CCSD principals that have been trained through the NAESP Mentor Program. This will require specific processes to match and support mentors as they work with novice administrators. These processes should include ongoing professional development for mentors and specific evaluations processes to determine what mentors are learning from the engagement with mentees. Additionally, more CCSD administrators should be trained through the CCSD Mentor Trainers to become mentors. Expanding the opportunity of experienced principals to engage with mentees may be a cost effective method of improving these experienced principals effectiveness.
Grant Funded Activity #3: Enhance site-based coaching effectiveness in supporting partnership students’ field-based experiences.

Funding for Grant Funded Goal 3 supported training and ongoing support for site-based principals who coached, guided, and monitored EPL aspiring principals in the UNLV-CCSD Partnership as they participated in field-work activities and their culminating Target School Improvement Project (TSIP). Research has indicated coaching and mentoring in an educational setting plays an important role in the leadership development of both aspiring school leaders and practicing administrators (Clayton, Sanzo & Myran, 2013; Crow & Matthews, 1998). Aspiring principals are better prepared for school administration if they are engaged in field-based activities supported by an experienced school-based administrator who are trained in coaching (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Daresh, 2004). Furthermore, site-based principal coaches who improve their coaching skills also help better retain aspiring principals as entry-level administrators (Wallace Foundation, 2017). Studies have suggested principals who engage in coaching have enhanced their job satisfaction, reflected more on their leadership practices, and increased opportunities for personal career advancement (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006).

UNLV faculty provided meetings with each site-based principal coach outlining field-based activities and guidelines and expectations regarding their involvement coaching aspiring principals in the EPL program. Site-based principal coaches were also provided with suggestions and effective strategies to enhance coaching support for the aspiring principal from their school site. These meetings took place three times throughout the grant period. These meetings allowed UNLV faculty to provide feedback to both the
site-based principal coach and the aspiring principal on their coaching and leadership development.

**Participants**

Funding for this activity supported 38 site-based principals who supervised 46 aspiring principals in the UNLV EPL program (Cohorts III and IV). The majority of the site-based principals were White (89%). Two site-based principals were African-American (5%) and three were Hispanic (7%). The majority of site-based principals were female (67%). Twenty-one (55%) of the site-based principals led elementary schools, 9 (24%) led high schools and 8 led middle schools (21%). The demographics of the 46 EPL students engaged with these site-based principals are presented in Appendix D (Cohort III) and Appendix E (Cohort IV).

**Areas of Effective Measures**

The area of effective measures was the aspiring principals’ perceptions regarding the effectiveness of coaching from their site-based principals. The students’ perceptions were collected through a questionnaire which included both qualitative and quantitative items.

**Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures**

Upon completing the school administrator preparation program, EPL students completed a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of coaching provided to them throughout the program by their site-based principals. Aspiring principals indicated their fieldwork experience in the program was valuable and met their expectations (4.44/5.00). They also indicated their interactions with their site-based
principal coach as part of the program was valuable to them as a future administrator (4.32/5.00).

Qualitatively, EPL aspiring principals emphasized the value and skills learned from their site-based principal coach, particularly regarding instructional leadership and learning how to make data-driven decisions. Examples of what they learned from their site-based principal coaches included:

- “I learned how to access data.”
- “My principal assisted me in aggregating relevant data.”
- “How to analyze data and system structures.”
- “Monitoring effective instructional strategies.”
- “How to leverage teacher talent for maximum impact.”

**Implications for Future Implementation**

The current analysis of the training of site-based principal coaches indicates Goal 3 was met and site-based principal training resulted in improved outcomes from previous years. In the previous GTLF grant evaluation, aspiring principals reported a mean score of 3.98 out of 5.00 related to their interactions with their site-based principal coach compared to the current 4.32 out of 5.00. Although mean scores have positively increased, there is still room to improve site-based principals’ coaching and support for aspiring principals in the program. UNLV faculty should consider increasing the amount of training provided to site-based principals and customize the training to meet the needs of aspiring principals. Analyzing the qualitative data, providing specific coaching training on instructional
leadership and data-driven decisions to site-based principals would be beneficial to help better engage them with aspiring principals.

Current evaluation measures for site-based principal coaches’ training and feedback from aspiring principals should be strengthened. Both site-based principal coaches’ and EPL students’ evaluations should include more specific items to determine strengths and weaknesses between their interactions. It would also be of value to track the progress of site-based principal coaches who have had more than one aspiring principal participate in the program.

Grant Funded Activity #4: EPL students’ and novice administrators’ knowledge and skills in school leadership focused on NEPF observation cycles, effective models of school improvement, and NEPF-SAA standards.

Funding for Goal 4 provided EPL students mentoring and coaching from selected trained mentor principals and site-based principal coaches to integrate coursework with field-based experiences focused on NEPF classroom observation cycles and student learning goals. EPL students were given opportunities to observe classroom instruction which later resulted in discussions with their mentors about evaluating and monitoring teacher instruction. Such interactions assisted in learning new skills and perspectives when observing instruction. EPL students were also coached by their site-based principals on how to best integrate their TSIP for school improvement. Site-based principal coaches not only coached EPL students during TSIP implementation, they also evaluated their dispositions and skills on the NEPF-SAA. Upon completion of the observation cycles, EPL students were asked to collect data, analyze it, summarize findings, provide
recommendations, and self-reflect on their experience as an evaluator of teacher instruction.

Participants

Funding from the GTLF supported two participant groups. Group one included one cohort (Cohort III) of aspiring principals in the program (See Appendix D for demographics). The second group consisted of 26 site-based principals who coached EPL students from Cohorts III.

Areas of Effective Measures

The areas of effectiveness measures included the EPL students’ observation cycle, TSIP documents, and EPL student and site-based principal coaches’ perceptions of EPL students’ knowledge and skills based on a questionnaires.

Effective Measures/Rationale for Measures

Three effective measures were used to assess the development of EPL students’ knowledge and skills focused on NEPF teacher observation cycles and school improvement: (1) EPL students’ responses and reflection of their participation in the NEPF observation cycle; (2) students’ responses on implementation of their TSIP; and (3) questionnaire results measuring EPL and their coaches perceptions of their leadership knowledge and skills related to the NEPF-SAA.

Upon completing their teacher observation cycle, EPL students recorded and submitted their perceptions on what they learned and the skills gained during the process. Grant evaluators recorded themes related to the perceptions of EPL students. Theme one outlined EPL students’ perceived need to develop data collection skills during classroom observations. One EPL student observed that she was “weak in scripting in order to
collect data”. Another EPL student outlined her struggle collecting data during instruction, “I don’t feel that I excel at this skill. I need to continue to practice different types of data collection tools to really hone and develop this technique.” Although students indicted struggles with data collection the practice involved with observations improved student skills. As a student explained, the observation cycle experience allowed her to better hone her skills and “practice real-time data collection and analysis.” Although EPL students struggled in learning how to effectively collect data, a second theme indicated they also observed how administrator-teacher relationships can be effectively used to improve instruction. One student confirmed, “Relationships are at the core of necessary conversations and building these relationships are foundational to this process.”

Administrator-teacher relationships were not only evident in EPL student observation cycles, but also in their TSIP. One student pointed out her need to develop “people skills to create a meaningful team” of teachers. Another student learned during TSIP implementation the need to “build strong, honest relationships that involve trust.” A student also recorded, “Getting to know who your faculty is, understanding how they work with one another, and knowing which talents and experiences they bring is absolutely necessary to being an effective leader.” Another student observed that he was able to “interact with colleagues I have not interacted with much beforehand” which for him was “a small glimpse of what the instructional leaders do at our schools.”

EPL students from Cohort III also completed a self-evaluation questionnaire measuring their perceptions of leadership knowledge and skills related to the NEPF-SAA. EPL students responded to two components of the questionnaire, one indicating their Participation with the NEPF-SAA domains during the program and the other indicating
their Confidence in their abilities to perform the standards within each domain. EPL students ranked their experiences from 1 indicating little extent to 4 indicating exemplary extent. Appendix F represent the mean scores of students’ perceptions of their effectiveness in Participation and Confidence related to the domains of the NEPF-SAA.

Site-based principals also completed a survey evaluating EPL student’s related to the NEPF-SAA. Principals were asked to determine EPL student’s engagement in the leadership practice within the NEPF-SAA. Appendix G represents the mean scores of site-based principals’ evaluation of EPL students’ ability to engage in the domains of the NEPF-SAA.

Implications for Future Implementation
Analysis of data indicates that Goal 4 was met. The grant funded goal enabled EPL students to participate in observation cycles, reflect on their leadership growth, and receive guidance from their mentor and site-based principals as they participated in observations cycles and implemented targeted school improvement projects. Throughout this process, EPL students recognized the need to develop their teacher observation skills. They also acknowledged the importance of establishing relationships in instructional and school improvement. Overall, EPL students and their site-based principal coach acknowledged that these aspiring principals were prepared to engage in leadership activities associated with the NEPF-SAA.

However, data analysis also indicated areas of improvement in preparing EPL aspiring principals. Faculty should consider providing EPL students more opportunities to participate in observation cycles. Since many of the students struggled in learning how to collect data, UNLV faculty should consider integrating technology tools, workshops, or
training that will enable EPL students to acquire the skills necessary to complete this
objective more successfully. Furthermore, UNLV faculty may want to consider recording
key discussion points and guidance that is provided by mentor principals to aspiring
principals regarding teacher observations and school improvement strategies.

Although data from the NEPF-SAA student self-evaluations and site-based
principal coaches evaluations indicated students are confident and can engage effectively
in leadership activities, there are Domains of the NEPF-SAA that indicate areas of needed
improvement. Analysis indicated the highest mean score for both EPL students and site-
based principal coaches was in the Professional Responsibilities Domain-Standard
3:Professional Obligations, while the lowest mean score both from students and coaches
was in the Professional Responsibilities Domain-Standard 4: Family and Community
Engagement. UNLV faculty should consider improving programmatic activities to allow
these aspiring principals increased experiences in community engagement. Although the
program has an entire course dedicated to community engagement, the UNLV faculty
should consider pairing aspiring principals with principal mentors who have an expertise in
family and engagement. In addition, coursework can be redeveloped to also focus on
building and sustaining community engagement.

**Grant-Funded Activity #5: Enhance practicing principals’ effectiveness through ongoing
professional development focused on school improvement.**

As noted previously, support through effective mentoring, which includes training
and ongoing professional development, has been connected to retention of novice
administrators (Wallace Foundation, 2017). Grant funds supported activities enhancing
the effectiveness and retention of CCSD practicing principals (mentors) and novice principals by providing the opportunity for ongoing professional development focused on school improvement using a Problem of Practice approach through a Professional Learning Community.

Participants

Participants included one group of five practicing principals, three experienced and NAESP certified coaches, and two novice principals, engaged in identification of a Problem of Practice and the development of a plan for improvement based on the Problem of Practice. All five participants were White, three female and two male. Two males and one female were the experienced principals. The two novice principals were females, one in her first year and the other in her second year as a principal. Two experienced principal led an elementary school, while the other led a middle school. The two experienced elementary school principal and the novice principals led schools predominantly minority and at-risk. The other two principals lead schools with much fewer at-risk students based on low socio-economic, minority, and second language learner status. Participants were chosen by the district administrator responsible for principal professional development from applicants desiring to engage in the PP-PLC.

Areas of Effective Measures

There were two effectiveness measures for grant funded goal 5. The measures were designed to monitor the value of participation in a PLC using the Problem of Practice process to identify an area of focus and to develop a plan to address that area. The measures included: 1) three audio-recording of PP-PLC meeting in which mentor and novice principals’ discussed perceptions of how and what they have learned as a results
of participating in the PP-PLC and 2) a questionnaire addressing the participants’ self-evaluation of the effectiveness of a school improvement plan developed while participating in the PP-PLC.

**Effectiveness Measures/Rationale for Measures**

Grantee’s recorded and analyzed PP-PLC meetings, extracting participant perceptions about how and what they were learning from participation in the PP-PLC. Mentor and novice principals also responded to a questionnaire approximately halfway through the PP-PLC process. Their responses indicated that participation in the PP-PLC group provided an avenue to improve their leadership skills, such as communication, improvement of school culture, and a focus on student achievement. They expressed that support for both novice and experienced principals occurred through collaboration, professional support, emotional support, and feedback as they identified a Problem of Practice, then developed and began implementing a plan for school improvement in that area. One experienced administrator stated,

“What I have learned thus far is the need for support for all administrators (new/old) in this profession and the impact of other’s ideas. For example, it is not often that you get feedback from your colleagues or suggestions for what is working at their school sites that you may want to try at your school site.”

The newest, first year principal in the group added,

“The collaboration with the other principals in the [PP-PLC] process has been a very supportive experience. As we have met with a purposeful focus, I am gaining ideas and feedback for actions I am currently focusing on with my staff…The [PP-PLC process] has provided me with a support team and ideas for a targeted need.”
The conclusion can be drawn that this sense of support and the identification of common goals will aid in the retention and development of the new and experienced principals.

Because the plans for the implementation of the school plan to address the Problem of Practice are year-long, the second measure of evaluation of the effectiveness in school improvement could not be determined at this time. Data for this measure will be collected after the schools’ academic year ends and will be reported in the following year’s grant evaluation.

**Implications for Future Implementation**

The current analysis of effectiveness measures of grant activity number five indicates that grant Goal 5 was met. The results of the analysis provided evidence that, in aggregate, the activities implemented as part of this GTLF funded grant supported an increase in the effectiveness and retention of current and novice school principals. Based on these results, the UNLV-CCSD Partnership should continue implementation of the PP-PLC process to support development of an effective principal pipeline for CCSD schools. This would include creating more groups of experienced and novice principals for continued professional and personal support and feedback as they undergo school improvement planning and implementation.

However, logistics for group meetings may need to be adjusted to after-school hours to lessen the participants’ stress of being off-campus during school hours, as noted in participants’ responses. Perhaps allowing participants to create their own meeting schedule based on their identified needs may also help with the continuity of support and feedback, especially for the novice principals. Another important consideration is the grouping of principals with schools of similar demographics. If experienced principals are
being successful with similar students, they may be able to provide more relevant assistance and support to novice principals with similar schools in attaining school improvement. This may be achieved through closer collaboration and communication with the CCSD in selecting the participants for the PP-PLC groups and grouping them by schools with similar demographics for optimal collaboration and school improvement. Perhaps an increased focus in selection of minority principals may also be included in these groups, as there is a lack of representation of minority principals in the training and development provided, and the schools that are predominantly minority and of low socioeconomic status are the schools with greatest need for improvement. Including minority principals in support mechanisms such as the PP-PLC may retain and encourage minority teachers to seek principal certification and join the ranks of the current school administrators.

**Conclusion**

Analysis of the data collected indicates the grantee met the overall goal of the funded program, which was the ongoing development of a school leadership pipeline to support the recruitment, selection, retention, and development of highly effective educational leaders from pre-service principal preparation through in-service school and district administrators in CCSD. The grant-funded activities increased: (a) the number of aspiring principals prepared to effectively engage in school improvement, (b) the number of NAESP trained mentors to provide support for aspiring and novice principals, (c) the perceived effectiveness of novice and experienced principals in school improvement through professional development, and (d) the support and retention of novice and experienced principals through mentoring and co-mentoring. Additionally, CCSD now has
three certified NAESP national trainers to further increase the number of effective coaches and mentors in the district. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructional for CCSD, Jesse Welsh, evaluated the components of Partnership funded by the GTLF in relationship to developing a seamless school administrative pipeline that would support effective leadership from pre-service through professional development of practicing principals. His evaluation supports the outcomes described in this report. The summary of Dr. Welsh’s evaluation is included as Appendix H.

Although evidence points to positive outcomes, the Partnership should consider better and longer-term evaluation of how the activities sponsored in this GTLF grant contribute to: 1) the effectiveness of the aspiring and current school leaders in school improvement and 2) the volume and retention of school administrators in the district. Due to the short life of the UNLV EPL program, very few graduates have been elevated to principal or district administrator positions, although many have been placed in assistant principal or dean positions. In addition, due to the recent introduction as a pilot project of the co-mentoring component of the Partnership, using mentors to support the retention and effectiveness of current principals cannot be completely evaluated by the end of this evaluation cycle. The effectiveness of the Partnership pipeline components cannot be fully measured until a greater number of program graduates become school principals and the Problem of Practice Professional Learning Community (PP-PLC) process has been implemented for a longer period of time. The current evaluation indicates a possible relationships between UNLV/CCSD Partnership pipeline components and the effective recruitment, selection, retention, and development of highly effective educational leaders. However, a longer period of implementation and more quantitative and longitudinal
evaluation data may produce even stronger evidence of how Partnership activities funded by the GTLF improve school leadership development and practices.

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

The *Advancing Administrative Development (AAD)* project was awarded $140,000. In addition, the ADD project was also awarded Unexpected FY17 Carryover Allocations of $26,260. The total of $166,260 was expended to support a partnership between UNLV and CCSD focused on the selection, retention, and development of highly effective educational leaders from pre-service principal preparation through in-service school and district administrators in partnership with the Clark County School District (CCSD). 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:** Using FY 2018-Round 2 GTLF Unexpended Carry over Allocations from the FY 2017 grant, the grantee purchased professional development training from the National Association of Elementary School Principals for a total expenditure of $25,705. This included a two-day training session and travel for three CCSD principals who had received NAESP
National Mentor Certification through previous GTLF grants to become National Trainers of the NAESP Mentoring Program. These three National Trainers then provided a two-day NAESP Mentor Training for 12 CCSD highly effective principals such that they could become mentors and site-based coaches to aspiring leaders in UNLV’s educational leadership preparation program and to novice CCSD principals.

One non-CCSD site-based principals was contracted to support a UNLV student who was not employed by CCSD. This principal was paid $1,500 to support the field experiences for the UNLV student.

**Professional Salaries:** The Principal Investigator and the Co-Principal Investigators were paid a total of $20,000. A total of $3600 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 and school improvement; 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 oversight of aspiring administrators’ field experience; facilitating Problem of Practice Professional Learning (PP-PLC) meetings among novice and experience mentors; and
administering pre- and post-evaluation instruments, analyzing data, and evaluating the project.

**CCSD Sub Award for Mentor Principals and Site-Based Coaches Stipends:** The Clark County School District expended $95,155.89 for stipends to mentors and site-based principals. The project paid stipends to 9 mentor principals working with 46 UNLV EPL aspiring administrators and to 17 CCSD site-based coaches engaged with 20 UNLV EPL 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 17 master 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 EPL aspiring leaders’ year-long field experiences conducted at their buildings.

**Total Expenditures:** $145,960.89 (FY 18 and carryover FY 17 Funds)
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Standard</th>
<th>Mean Score (Scale of 1-5)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Presenters were knowledgeable about the topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session presentation materials were relevant and top-quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description of session matched presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>I will be able to apply what I learned today</td>
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<tr>
<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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<tr>
<td>Organization and timing of the presentation was good</td>
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<tr>
<td>I learned new content today to become a more effective mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am able to view the mentor pedagogy in new ways</td>
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<tr>
<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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<td><strong>Overall Mean</strong></td>
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## APPENDIX D: Pre-service Administrators Cohort III

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### APPENDIX E: Pre-service Administrators Cohort IV

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### APPENDIX F: Pre-service Administrators Evaluation of Effectiveness Related to the NEPF-SAA

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<th>NEPF-SAA Instructional Domain</th>
<th>Participation Mean Score</th>
<th>Confidence Mean Score</th>
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<td><strong>Standard 1: Creating and Sustaining a Focus on Learning</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Standard 2: Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Continuous Improvement</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Standard 3: Creating and Sustaining Productive Relationships</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Standard 4: Creating and Sustaining Structures to Support an Effective School</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Mean</strong></td>
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<th>NEPF-SAA Professional Responsibility Domains</th>
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<td><strong>Standard 1: Manages Human Capital (Effectively Manages the teachers employed)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Standard 3: Professional Obligations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Standard 4: Family and Community Engagement</strong></td>
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### APPENDIX G: Site-based Principal Coach Evaluation of EPL Student Ability to Engage in the NEPF-SAA

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<th>NEPF-SAA Instructional Domain</th>
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<th>NEPF-SAA Professional Responsibility Domains</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Standard 1: Manages Human Capital (Effectively Manages the teachers employed)</td>
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<td>Standard 2: Self-Reflection and Professional Growth</td>
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<td>Standard 3: Professional Obligations</td>
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<td>Standard 4: Family and Community Engagement</td>
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<td><strong>Total Mean</strong></td>
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APPENDIX H: CCSD Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Professional Development Division Evaluation of Advancing Administrator Development

October 5, 2018

Attn: Great Teaching and Leading Fund Team

On behalf of the Clark County School District, I would like to express our support for the collaborative work with the University of Nevada Las Vegas Educational Policy and Leadership Program to build capacity for instructional leadership through the Great Teaching and Leadership Fund Grant. Advancing Administrator Development has directly supported the recruitment, selection, retention, and development of highly effective educational leaders from pre-service principal preparation through in-service school and district administration.

Specifically, funds from the Advancing Administrator Development project were used to prepare prospective school leaders, of which, to date, 28 have been hired as entry-level administrators in the District. This project advanced the mentoring and coaching process and developed ongoing professional development for practicing principals focused on models of school improvement. The project developed aspiring, novice, and practicing principals’ practices associated with the NEPF observation cycles, student learning goals, and implementation of school improvement models.

Funding for this grant specifically provided mentor Trainer of Trainer certification for three CCSD principals; mentor training and ongoing professional development for 20 CCSD principals; and support for 54 site-based principal coaches that supported students’ field-based projects among many other components. Mentors and mentees reported improvements in practices at their schools as a result of the mentorship activities they were engaged in.

As a District, we believe strongly in the importance of leadership development and its impact on improved student outcomes. The Advancing Administrator Development project, supported by the Great Teaching and Leadership Fund has improved leadership capacity in CCSD.

Sincerely,

Jesse Welsh

Dr. Jesse Welsh
Assistant Superintendent