

## REL Southwest Ask A REL Response

Principals

June 2018

### Question:

*What does the research say about the effects of principal and superintendent certification or accreditation policies on school leadership behaviors by those principals/superintendents and associated student achievement in their schools/districts, respectively?*

### Response:

Thank you for the question you submitted to our REL Reference Desk. We have prepared the following memo with research references to help answer your question. For each reference, we provide an abstract, excerpt, or summary written by the study's author or publisher. Following an established Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest research protocol, we conducted a search for research reports as well as descriptive study articles on educational leadership behaviors associated with student achievement.

We have not evaluated the quality of references and the resources provided in this response. We offer them only for your reference. Also, we searched the references in the response from the most commonly used resources of research, but they are not comprehensive, and other relevant references and resources may exist. References provided are listed in alphabetical order, not necessarily in order of relevance. We do not include sources that are not freely available to the requestor.

### Research References

Boyland, L. G., Lehman, L. E., & Sriver, S. K. (2015). How effective are Indiana's new principals? Implications for preparation and practice. *Journal of Leadership Education, 14*(1), 72–91. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1133717>

*From the abstract:* “This study investigates the performance of Indiana’s new principals per the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) and the Indiana Content Standards for building-level leader preparation. Using quantitative survey methodology, information was collected from Indiana superintendents regarding the effectiveness of principals who had recently completed university administrative preparation programs. Analysis of responses revealed that superintendents viewed their new principals as

‘proficient’ in almost every area, with the highest mean observed in the category of ‘Integrity’. In contrast, the mean response for ‘financial management’ was found to be in the ‘basic’ range, creating implications for an area of potential development in school leadership education in the state.”

Derrington, M. L., & Sharratt, G. (2008). Evaluation of school principals using Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. *AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice*, 5(3), 20–29. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ831165>

*From the ERIC abstract:* “Educational expectations and demands on the principal have changed markedly over the past few decades, so an updated set of standards or competencies is needed to effectively evaluate school principals today. Increasingly, many states require that administrators qualify for the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) certification. In 2006, forty-three states reported using ISLLC standards in some way related to administrator licensure. In Washington State, ISLLC standards set the direction and are the primary objective for developing course requirements and internship activities in principal preparation programs. Moreover, requirements for continuing certification for principals are job embedded, and based on ISLLC standards. This study aims to discover the extent to which the ISLLC standards are used in the evaluation of principals in Washington State, and to identify strengths or problems in current implementations of those standards.”

Moore, A. D., Dexter, R. R., Berube, W. G., & Beck, C. H. (2005). Student assessment: What do superintendents need to know? *Planning and Changing*, 36(1–2), 68–89. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ737643>

*From the ERIC abstract:* “Moore reviewed the literature on accountability and assessment in order to design a questionnaire to survey superintendents across Wyoming on their existing and needed knowledge about student assessment. Results on the presence or absence of gaps in knowledge that is deemed important by respondents and/or the literature can be used by colleges and universities in Wyoming, and perhaps elsewhere, to improve superintendent certification programs.”

Pannell, S., Peltier-Glaze, B. M., Haynes, I., Davis, D., & Skelton, C. (2015). Evaluating the effectiveness of traditional and alternative principal preparation programs. *Journal of Organizational and Educational Leadership*, 1(2), Article 3. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1131525>

*From the ERIC abstract:* “This study sought to determine the effectiveness on increasing student achievement of principals trained in a traditional principal preparation program and those trained in an alternate route principal preparation program within the same Mississippi university. Sixty-six Mississippi principals and assistant principals participated in the study. Of the 66 participants, 41 completed a traditional principal preparation program, and 25 completed an alternate route principal preparation program at the same university. The data included the type of principal preparation the participant received, the number of consecutive years served as a principal or assistant principal, and student achievement data for their assigned schools. The results of this study suggested

the type of principal preparation program had no significant impact on student achievement in Mississippi public schools.”

## Additional Organization to Consult

Center on Great Teachers and Leaders - <https://www.gtlcenter.org/>

*From the website:* “The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) is dedicated to supporting state education leaders in their efforts to grow, respect, and retain great teachers and leaders for all students. The GTL Center continues the work of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) and expands its focus to provide technical assistance and online resources designed to build systems that:

- Support the implementation of college and career standards.
- Ensure the equitable access of effective teachers and leaders.
- Recruit, retain, reward, and support effective educators.
- Develop coherent human capital management systems.
- Create safe academic environments that increase student learning through positive behavior management and appropriate discipline.
- Use data to guide professional development and improve instruction.”

## Methods

### Keywords and Search Strings

The following keywords and search strings were used to search the reference databases and other sources:

- Principal effectiveness
- Superintendent effectiveness
- Superintendent certification
- Principal certification
- Instructional leadership
- Leadership effectiveness
- Effective principal leadership
- Principals and student achievement
- Accreditation policies

### Databases and Resources

We searched ERIC for relevant, peer-reviewed research references. ERIC is a free online library of more than 1.6 million citations of education research sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Additionally, we searched Google Scholar and PsychInfo.

## Reference Search and Selection Criteria

When we were searching and reviewing resources, we considered the following criteria:

- *Date of the publication:* References and resources published from 2003 to present, were included in the search and review.
- *Search priorities of reference sources:* Search priority is given to study reports, briefs, and other documents that are published and/or reviewed by IES and other federal or federally funded organizations, academic databases, including ERIC, EBSCO databases, JSTOR database, PsychInfo, PsychArticle, and Google Scholar.
- *Methodology:* The following methodological priorities/considerations were given in the review and selection of the references: (a) study types—randomized control trials, quasi-experiments, surveys, descriptive data analyses, literature reviews, policy briefs, and so forth, generally in this order; (b) target population, samples (representativeness of the target population, sample size, volunteered or randomly selected, and so forth), study duration, and so forth; and (c) limitations, generalizability of the findings and conclusions, and so forth.

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This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by stakeholders in the Southwest Region (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Southwest at AIR. This memorandum was prepared by REL Southwest under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-IES-91990018C0002, administered by AIR. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.