Interim Report on the Evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP)

Prepared for the Texas Education Agency

March 2008

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Contents

Executive Summary

This interim report on the evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP) summarizes the legislation creating the program; provides an overview of program content and organization; describes the overall evaluation design; and presents preliminary findings on participant characteristics, participation in TxPEP events, and program implementation and quality. Potential implications of what is known to date and next steps in the evaluation then are discussed. Challenges in linking professional development for principals to improvement in student achievement outcomes—especially directly and especially in the short term—also are noted. Although these findings are preliminary, they do offer insight into the experiences of principals participating in the TxPEP program.

Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation of TxPEP includes both a summative component (focusing on program impact) and a formative component (focusing on program implementation and quality). The summative evaluation addresses the following questions regarding program impact:

- What is the impact of the TxPEP program on participants' leadership ability?

- What is the impact of principals' participation in TxPEP on student performance and graduation rates?

- What is the impact of principals' participation in TxPEP on school-level indicators including, but not limited to, teacher retention?

- Do program outcomes vary with principal and/or school characteristics (e.g., years of experience as principal, school and district type, campus rating, percentage of minority students in the school)?

The formative evaluation addresses the following questions regarding program implementation and quality:

- Is the program being implemented with fidelity (i.e., as planned)?

- Is the program being implemented with high quality?

- Is the program content relevant to the day-to-day responsibilities of participating principals?

- Is the program useful (e.g., are participants incorporating what they learn in their day-to-day work in schools)?

The data necessary to address the summative questions regarding program impact are not yet available. These data will be collected in spring and fall 2008. However, baseline data on TxPEP participants' leadership ability and preliminary data on participation in TxPEP events are summarized in this report. Data from the initial round of principal focus groups and interviews with program staff are examined to begin to address the formative evaluation questions regarding program implementation and quality and the relevance and utility of program offerings for TxPEP participants.

Preliminary Findings

This report highlights and expands upon the following findings:

- A total of 318 principals from 304 schools attended the TxPEP summit and first two workshops. Attendance rates for the initial TxPEP summit and first workshop were high (over 95%), but attendance declined to 88% for the second workshop.

- TxPEP participants are primarily from academically unacceptable (AU) campuses. Most are also from elementary schools and suburban districts.

  - 81% ($n = 258$) of participants were from AU campuses; 19% ($n = 60$) were from non-AU campuses.

  - More than 40% of participants ($n = 121$) were from elementary schools; 9% were from elementary/secondary (Grades K–12) schools ($n = 25$); 31% were from middle schools ($n = 88$); and 19% were from high schools ($n = 54$).

  - Approximately 40% of participants ($n = 116$) were from suburban districts, 27% ($n = 78$) were from urban districts; 18% ($n = 51$) were from rural districts, and 14% ($n = 41$) were from charter schools.

- Overall, TxPEP participants rated themselves favorably on the three assessments used to measure leadership ability. However, there were noticeable differences in participant responses by campus rating. On two of the assessments, principals from AU campuses consistently rated themselves higher on leadership measures than those from non-AU campuses.

  - Principals whose students scored lower on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) rated themselves higher on change management, ethical leadership, and school/program evaluation.

  - Principals from schools with greater percentages of minority, economically disadvantaged, or special education students had higher ratings for one or more of the following leadership areas: building learning communities, ethical leadership, resource management, and/or school/program evaluation.

- Generally, interviews with TxPEP program staff suggest that the program is being implemented with fidelity to stated program objectives. Participants find the program content to be of high quality. However, participants' perceptions of program relevance and utility generally were less favorable.

  - The focus on abstract leadership theories and management models in the workshops does not appear to resonate with participants. Focus group participants articulated a need for hands-on, successful strategies that they could apply immediately when they returned to their schools.

  - Focus group participants valued the advice of their cohort consultants, who are successful school leaders. However, participants indicated that they would prefer to have more guidance than currently is offered from successful principals.

- Participants reported that the webinars are most relevant to their needs as school leaders.

- Principals noted that they would find TxPEP more relevant if they had more choice about what courses or webinars to attend.

- Networking with other principals was seen as the most useful aspect of the program.

- Focus group participants and program staff offered several suggestions for program improvements:

  - Provide participants with greater access to educational leaders who have demonstrated success in AU schools.

  - Hold the TxPEP summits and workshops during the summer to better align with school schedules.

  - Find ways to make management and leadership models more relevant to principals.

  - Provide principals with more choices with respect to program offerings.

Implications of Preliminary Findings

The preliminary findings have several implications for the future implementation of TxPEP:

- Program staff should continue to monitor attendance to ensure that TxPEP participants, particularly those from AU campuses, are fully participating in the program.

- Although TxPEP participants' ratings of their leadership ability were quite high on baseline leadership assessments, there is room for growth during the course of the program. For participants who overestimate their leadership abilities at the beginning of the program, one might expect to see a decrease in leadership ratings on later assessments as they gain a better understanding of sound leadership practices.

- Given that principals are having difficulty applying the management models and practices emphasized by TxPEP in their schools, program staff may need to find ways to demonstrate the relevance and usefulness of these models to principals.

- Program staff might consider tailoring program offerings to participants' experience and situations. Courses could be differentiated based on years of experience as well as participants' professional and organizational development plans.

Next Steps in the Evaluation

Evaluation activities that will be undertaken from February through October 2008 include the following:

- Analyzing comparison group principals' responses to the Principal Leadership Survey that was administered in late December 2007 and early January 2008.

- Collecting and analyzing data about principal, school, and teacher outcomes needed to address the summative evaluation questions regarding program impact.

- Collecting and analyzing additional data from TxPEP participants and program staff needed to address the formative evaluation questions regarding fidelity of program implementation and the quality, relevance, and utility of program offerings.

Introduction

This interim report on the evaluation of the TxPEP summarizes the legislation creating the program; provides an overview of program content and organization; describes the overall evaluation design; and presents preliminary findings on participant characteristics, participation in TxPEP events, and program implementation and quality. Potential implications of what is known to date and next steps in the evaluation then are discussed. Finally, the challenges in linking professional development for principals to improvement in student achievement outcomes—especially directly and especially in the short term—are noted.

Background

In 2006, the 79th Texas Legislature, Third Special Session, passed House Bill 1 (HB 1), which includes a mandate to develop several school interventions for the purpose of improving educator excellence. HB 1 allocated $3.5 million for the development and implementation of TxPEP, one of those interventions, in its first year (Texas Education Agency, 2007a). The purpose of TxPEP is to improve student academic achievement, graduation rates, and teacher retention by improving leadership skills. The program is designed specifically to help principals learn sound business and management practices. Principals from 250 campuses in their first year of AU status are required to participate in the program; however, any principal or principal-in-training, regardless of AU status, also may attend.

The legislation creating TxPEP reflects the current research base on the principles of good school leadership. This research suggests that principals have a greater impact on student learning than any other factor except the quality of classroom instruction (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Moreover, the effects of successful leadership have been shown to be even more pronounced in schools with the greatest needs, such as high-poverty and low-performing schools. For many of these schools, the principal is central to transforming the school. Most findings from reports on blue-ribbon schools list school leadership as a major factor in turning around a low-performing school. School leadership also has been shown to have a strong impact on school climate, teacher satisfaction, working conditions, and teacher retention, which in turn have been shown to be critical to turning around struggling schools (Anderman, Belzer, & Smith, 1991; Krug, 1992; Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2004; Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007).

A growing consensus on the attributes of successful school leaders suggests that principals influence student achievement through two important pathways: the support and development of effective teachers and the implementation of effective organizational processes (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005). Increasingly, this consensus is reflected in professional leadership standards for principals and preparation and licensing requirements. Although current standards emphasize the importance of instructional leadership, which is a traditional focus of principal preparation programs, the standards place equal emphasis on management practices and organizational processes that will help principals transform schools into effective organizations that foster teaching and learning. Such practices typically have not been emphasized in principal preparation programs.

In reporting on their review of research on school leadership, Davis et al. (2005) observed that:

> Standards for leadership programs as well as research on leadership behaviors that influence school improvement support the need to change and/or re-prioritize the content of many preparation and development programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Knapp, Copland & Talbert, 2003). Such changes include developing knowledge that will allow school leaders to better promote teaching and learning, the development of collaborative decision-making strategies, distributed leadership practices, a culture of collegiality and community, processes for organizational change and renewal, and the development of management competence in the analysis and use of data and instructional technologies to guide school improvement activities (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Knapp et al., 2003). (p. 9)

Davis et al. (2005) note that ethical leadership also is an area of increasing interest, particularly as it relates to issues of diversity, race and gender, and equity (see also: Murphy, 2006). In a review of university-based educational leadership programs, Levine (2005) similarly argues that principal leadership programs should include basic courses in both management and education. Recommended management courses include finance, human resources, organizational leadership and change, educational technology, and negotiation. Given the current emphasis on management and organizational leadership skills, a number of professional development programs for principals, including TxPEP, are being conducted in partnership with business schools (Levine, 2005).

TxPEP Overview

TxPEP focuses on six content areas that are emphasized in the Texas Education Agency's (Texas Education Agency, 2007b) request for qualifications (RFQ) for program development and that are aligned with current research on effective principal practices:

- Change management and strategic planning
- Building learning communities, including team building and collaboration
- Data-driven decision making
- Fiscal/resource management
- School/program evaluation
- Ethical leadership

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC) and its partners at the University of Houston-Victoria School of Business Administration to develop and implement TxPEP. Program participation includes an initial summit meeting, three workshops, and a series of webinars. The program will conclude with a final summit meeting held in Austin, Texas, in June 2008. Participants are required to attend the summit meetings, the workshops, and five webinars on leadership areas emphasized by the program. Participants who complete program requirements can earn up to 69 continuing professional education (CPE) credits.

The three workshops focus on competencies relevant to the leadership areas emphasized by TxPEP. Table 1 lists workshop sessions and the regional locations and dates of each workshop. The leadership areas emphasized in each workshop session are noted in parentheses.

Table 1. Texas Principal Excellence Program Workshops

Workshop I	Locations	Dates
• Understand Your Individual Strengths and Weaknesses (Ethical Leadership) • Understand Your Organization and Articulate a Clear Vision (Change Management) • Communicate Effectively and Manage Change (Change Management) • Build Effective Teams and Collaborative Organizations (Building Learning Communities)	El Paso Dallas San Antonio Houston	October 8–9, 2007 October 10–11, 2007 October 22–23, 2007 October 24–25, 2007
Workshop II	**Locations**	**Dates**
• Understand Decision-Making Processes and Pitfalls (Change Management) • Evaluate Performance to Recognize Opportunities and Problems (School/Program Evaluation) • Make Data-Driven Decisions Through Data Visualization (Data-Driven Decision Making) • Understand How to Maximize Your Resources (Fiscal/Resource Management)	El Paso San Antonio Dallas Houston	October 29–30, 2007 November 7–8, 2007 November 13–14, 2007 November 19–20, 2007
Workshop III	**Locations**	**Dates**
• Understand Reflections and Directions of Your Leadership Progress (Ethical Leadership) • Understand Reflections and Directions of Your Organizational Progress (School/Program Evaluation)	San Antonio Houston El Paso Dallas	January 23, 2008 January 24, 2008 February 4, 2008 February 5, 2008

Source: TxPEP website: http://www.txpep.org/curriculum.html.

Specific leadership topics also are addressed in a series of required and optional webinars. The topics and dates of the webinars are listed in Table 2. To provide greater scheduling flexibility for participants, required webinars are offered on three different days; optional webinars are offered on two different days.

Table 2. Texas Principal Excellence Program Webinars

Required Webinars	Dates
• Change management	December 10, 11, 12, 2007
• Fiscal management	February 11, 12, 14, 2008
• Data disaggregation	February 18, 19, 20, 2008
• Data-driven decision making	February 25, 26, 27, 2008
• Ethical leadership	April 7, 8, 9, 2008
Optional Webinars	**Dates**
• Monitoring continuous improvement	November 26, 27, 2007
• Diversity management	December 3, 5, 2007
• Strategic planning	January 14, 15, 2008
• Goal setting	January 28, 29, 2008
• Team building	March 4, 5, 2008
• Quality processes	Mach 25, 26, 2008
• Performance management	March 31, April 1, 2008
• Best practices	April 16, 17, 2008
• Problem solving	April 22, 23, 2008
• Conflict resolution	April 29, 30, 2008

Source: TxPEP website: http://www.txpep.org/webinars.html.

The initial summits were held in September 2007 at two locations (Dallas and Houston). Between October 2007 and early February 2008, workshops were conducted at four locations (Dallas, El Paso, Houston, and San Antonio). The series of webinars is offered between November 2007 and April 2008. In addition to these program activities, current or recently retired principals who serve as cohort consultants for the program provide leadership and support to cohorts of 5 to 10 program participants.

Other program features include the use of Open Space Technology, a face-to-face method for organizing participant discussions. In this instance, *technology* does not refer to the use of a specific technology such as video-conferencing; rather, it is a forum where participants can meet to talk about leadership topics. Discussions typically are organized into breakout groups where participants are free to move among facilitated groups. Each group's conversation is recorded to be shared with other groups. TxPEP participants also use the IBM Reinventing Educational Change Toolkit, a free online tool that suggests approaches for implementing systemic change in schools. The first TxPEP workshop included two interactive sessions about the use of the toolkit; principals also are able to access and use the toolkit on their own. (The IBM Reinventing Educational Change Toolkit is available at: http://www.reinventingeducation.org/RE3Web/.)

In addition to developing and implementing the TxPEP program, APQC is conducting a formative evaluation focusing on program processes for purposes of program improvement and accountability. Principals were required to complete two leadership assessments: the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (Posner & Kouzes, 1988; Posner & Kouzes, 1993) and the National

Association for Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) 21st Century Principal Assessment (2007) at the beginning of the program. These assessments provide baseline measures of participants' leadership abilities and also are used by APQC to provide feedback to participants about their individual strengths and weaknesses to assist them in creating a personal leadership development plan. Both the LPI and the 21st Century assessment obtain feedback about the principal from multiple sources (e.g., self, supervisors, staff, and peers), a method known as 360-degree assessment. These assessments will be administered again at the conclusion of the program to measure change in participants' leadership abilities. In addition, APQC also monitors program quality through a series of feedback surveys administered at the summit meetings and workshops and makes changes to the program based on participant feedback. (See the TxPEP website: http://www.txpep.org/ for additional information about the program.)

Evaluation Design

The evaluation of TxPEP includes both a summative component (focusing on program outcomes) and formative component (focusing on program processes) and employs a mixed-methods approach.[1] As a summative evaluation, its purpose is to judge TxPEP's worth or value based on the extent and respects to which it accomplishes its goals: to improve participating principals' abilities and by doing so improve student performance and outcomes, teacher retention, and other school-level indicators. As a formative evaluation, its purpose is to provide TEA with feedback about aspects of the program that appear to be working well and aspects that appear to be less relevant or useful to participants. Such information can be used to inform improvements to program design and implementation.

For the summative evaluation, a quasi-experimental design[2] is being used to evaluate the impact of TxPEP on principals, their schools, and students. TxPEP participants have been matched to

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[1] Mixed methods approaches employ both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Quantitative methods such as surveys and assessments provide data that can be quantified and analyzed using statistical techniques. Qualitative methods such as interviews provide narrative data that typically are analyzed by identifying common themes as well as areas of agreement or disagreement among those interviewed.

[2] A quasi-experimental design is similar to an experimental design but does not use random assignment (assignment by chance) to treatment and control groups. For the TxPEP program, principals from AU campuses are required to attend; therefore, random assignment to treatment and control groups could not be used. In a "true" experiment, the treatment group receives some type of treatment, such as an innovative program of instruction, while the control group does not receive the treatment. To ensure that participants in both groups are essentially equivalent in all respects except for receiving or not receiving the treatment, individuals typically are randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups. Any differences in the pretreatment characteristics of the two groups occur only by chance. Once the program is administered to individuals in the treatment group, specific outcomes thought to be the result of program participation (e.g., student achievement) are measured and compared with similar outcomes for the control group. If the treatment group has better outcomes (e.g., higher student achievement) than the control group, this difference can be attributed to the treatment, because the groups are similar in all other respects. Quasi-experimental designs seek to achieve similarity in the pretreatment characteristics of the treatment and control group (usually referred to as the comparison group in quasi-experiments) by means other than random assignment. One technique for achieving similarity between groups is matching. For example, individuals in the two groups might be matched according to similarities in family characteristics (e.g., parent education, income, race, ethnicity) and individual characteristics (e.g., age, gender, prior achievement). Matching is most effective when the characteristics on which the groups are matched are related to the outcome of interest. For example, prior student achievement generally is highly predictive of later achievement; it is therefore important that the treatment and

nonparticipating Texas principals with similar characteristics (e.g., years of experience as principal, education, earnings) from similar schools (e.g., school type, district type, percentage of minority students, average student performance) using administrative data obtained from TEA.

A survey on leadership knowledge and skills was developed and completed by TxPEP participants at the beginning of the program; the same survey was completed two months later by comparison group principals. Both groups of principals will be asked to complete the survey again at the end of the program in order to measure change in leadership ability. TEA data about student performance and school-level outcomes prior to and after the implementation of the TxPEP program will allow us to determine whether these outcomes change over the course of the program for both TxPEP and comparison group principals.

To analyze the program's impact after TxPEP concludes, participant and comparison school principals who have completed surveys will be matched a second time. The matching technique that we use (propensity score matching[3]) provides a one-to-one match between the TxPEP participants and comparison group principals. Because all of the principals selected for the original comparison group sample are unlikely to complete the surveys, this second matching is necessary to ensure that the survey respondents in each group are similar with respect to school and individual characteristics, including initial leadership ability. Matching on a range of individual variables (e.g., education, years of experience as principal, earnings) and campus-level variables (e.g., school size, percentage of minority students, percentage of students performing at grade level on state assessments) ensures that the groups are similar with respect to pretreatment characteristics. Differences in outcomes between the two groups (i.e., postprogram measures of leadership ability, student performance, and school-level outcomes such as teacher retention), if found, then can be attributed to program participation.

For the formative evaluation, data about program implementation and quality are being obtained through frequent cycles of feedback from participating principals and program staff. This information will be provided to TEA for purposes of improving or enhancing specific program components or procedures.

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comparison groups be similar with respect to prior achievement and other characteristics known to be associated with achievement outcomes.

[3] Propensity score analysis is a technique developed by Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983) to represent the probability that an individual with certain characteristics would be assigned to the treatment or control group when assignment to groups is not random. The advantage of this method is that it assigns a single score to individuals based on an aggregate of characteristics. Most matching techniques are limited to only a few variables because of the difficulty of matching on a large number of variables. Propensity score matching overcomes this limitation. To approximate random assignment to treatment and control groups, only individuals with similar propensity scores (i.e., similar probabilities of being in the treatment and control groups) are compared. A recent study by Steiner, Cook, Shadish, and Clark (2008) compared the results of a randomized experiment to a carefully designed quasi-experiment using propensity scores to match students in nonequivalent groups receiving different treatments. The study showed that the two methods achieved similar results.

Research Questions

The summative evaluation addresses the following questions regarding program impact:

1. What is the impact of the TxPEP program on participants' leadership ability?

2. What is the impact of principals' participation in TxPEP on student performance and graduation rates?

3. What is the impact of principals' participation in TxPEP on school-level indicators including, but not limited to, teacher retention?

4. Do program outcomes vary with principal and/or school characteristics (e.g., years of experience as principal, school and district type, campus rating, percentage of minority students in the school)?

The formative evaluation addresses the following questions regarding program implementation and quality:

1. Is the program being implemented with fidelity (i.e., as planned)?

2. Is the program being implemented with high quality?

3. Is the program content relevant to the day-to-day responsibilities of participating principals?

4. Is the program useful (e.g., are participants incorporating what they learn in their day-to-day work in schools)?

The following theory of action underlies these research questions:

- Implementation of TxPEP with high fidelity and high quality, including high relevance and utility to participants, will lead to improvement in participating principals' leadership ability in areas emphasized by the TxPEP curriculum.

- Improvement in participating principals' leadership ability in areas emphasized by the TxPEP curriculum will lead to improvement in student achievement and other student performance indicators, including graduation rates.

- Improvement in participating principals' leadership ability in areas emphasized by the TxPEP curriculum will lead to improvement on school-level indicators, including teacher retention.

- Improvement in participating principals' leadership ability in areas emphasized by the TxPEP curriculum will lead indirectly to improvement in student outcomes through improvement in school-level variables such as teacher retention.

Data needed to address the summative questions regarding program impact are not yet available. These data will be collected in spring and fall 2008. However, baseline data about TxPEP participants' leadership ability and preliminary data about participation in TxPEP events are available. In addition, administrative data on characteristics of TxPEP participants, such as campus rating (i.e., academically acceptable or unacceptable), school type (elementary, middle,

or high school), and district type (rural, urban, suburban, or charter) allow us to look for variation in baseline leadership ability and TxPEP participation rates.

Variation in participants' leadership ability may have implications for program impact. For example, principals who differ in leadership ability at the beginning of the program might vary in the extent to which they improve their leadership skills as a result of program participation; principals with less experience and lower levels of leadership ability might be less able than more experienced principals to apply what they learn to school improvement efforts. Similarly, difference in participation rates also could influence program impact. Participants with higher participation rates may show higher levels of growth in leadership ability.

Data from the initial round of principal focus groups and interviews with program staff allow us to begin to address the formative evaluation questions regarding program implementation and quality and the relevance and utility of program offerings for TxPEP participants. These data collection methods will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Organization of the Report

The next section of the report describes the methods used to obtain data on TxPEP participant characteristics, their participation in TxPEP events held in fall 2007, and indicators of their leadership ability at the beginning the program, as well as data on program implementation and quality. Preliminary findings on participant characteristics, their baseline leadership ability, and their attendance at the initial TxPEP summit and first two workshops are then presented.

Although data on the leadership skills of comparison group principals were collected in late December 2007 and early January 2008, these data still are being analyzed and are not included in this report. Findings from principal focus groups and interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants, which were conducted in December 2007, are presented. The report concludes with a discussion of the implications of these findings for assessing program impact and quality, and a description of evaluation activities planned for February through October 2008. The challenges of linking principal professional development to student achievement also are noted.

Data and Methods

Several sources of data have been used thus far to document TxPEP program participation and participant characteristics and leadership ability. In addition, data from principal focus groups provide information on participants' perceptions of program quality, relevance, and utility. Interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants provide data about program implementation and challenges. These data sources are described below.

TxPEP Program Participation

Data about program registration and attendance, obtained from APQC, provide documentation regarding who is participating in the program and the extent of their participation. APQC records attendance at all TxPEP events, including the summit meetings, workshops, and webinars. Attendance data for the initial TxPEP summit meetings and the first two workshops, conducted in fall 2007, are summarized in this report. (Evaluation instruments are included in Appendix A; detailed information on the methods used for data collection and analysis can be found in Appendixes B through G.)

Characteristics of TxPEP Participants

Administrative data were obtained from TEA about the characteristics of TxPEP participants, their schools, and students for each of the five years prior to program implementation. Principal characteristics include education, years of experience as principal, tenure at the school, and pay (base and total). School-level variables include the following:

- Campus rating
- School type (elementary, elementary/secondary,[4] middle, or high)
- District type (rural, urban, suburban, charter)[5]
- Total students
- Percent minority students
- Percent economically disadvantaged students
- Percent limited English proficiency students
- Percent special education students
- Percent of students meeting standards on the TAKS

These data are used to determine whether there is variation among TxPEP participants in program attendance and baseline leadership ability.

Participants' Leadership Ability

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[4] Elementary/secondary schools include students in kindergarten through 12th grade.

[5] The nine TEA district type categories were collapsed into four categories: rural, urban, suburban, and charter. Rural includes "independent town" and "rural;" urban includes "major urban" and "other central city;" suburban includes "major suburban," "other central city suburban," "nonmetropolitan fast growing," and "nonmetropolitan stable;" charter includes only "charter."

Baseline data on TxPEP participants' leadership ability come from three sources: the Principal Leadership Survey developed by Learning Point Associates, the LPI, and the 21st Century Principal Assessment. The LPI and 21st Century assessment are commercially available assessments that were administered to TxPEP participants by APQC in September 2007 when the program began; the Principal Leadership Survey was administered to TxPEP participants by Learning Point Associates in late September through early November 2007.

Principal Leadership Survey

Learning Point Associates developed the Principal Leadership Survey to measure TxPEP participants' perceived effectiveness or knowledge in the six leadership areas emphasized by TEA in its description of the TxPEP program (Texas Education Agency, 2007b):

- Change management
- Building learning communities
- Data-driven decision making
- Fiscal/resource management
- School/program evaluation
- Ethical leadership

Principals were asked to rate their effectiveness with respect to change management, building learning communities, and data-driven decision making. These are areas in which principals are likely to be actively engaged in planning and decision-making. Participants were asked to rate their knowledge of ethical leadership, fiscal/resource management, and school/program evaluation. These are areas in which principals may be less knowledgeable about best practices and less able to assess their leadership effectiveness. Learning Point Associates developed items to measure each of these leadership constructs based on a review of the literature on principal leadership and on information provided by TEA program staff on the proposed content of the TxPEP program. Response categories for items measuring leadership effectiveness range from 1 (not effective) to 4 (very effective). Response categories for items measuring leadership knowledge range from 1 (little or no knowledge) to 4 (extensive knowledge). (See Appendix A for a copy of the baseline survey; see Appendix B for additional information on the administration of the survey and the scaling of survey items.)

Principals were invited to complete the survey by linking to a website. The first Principal Leadership Survey was launched in fall 2007, prior to the first TxPEP workshop, to obtain baseline measures of TxPEP participants' perceived leadership effectiveness and knowledge. Of the 314 TxPEP participants, 255 completed the survey for a response rate of 81%.[6]

LPI and 21st Century Principal Assessment

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[6] According to APQC attendance records, 314 individuals were participating in TxPEP as of December 3, 2007. In calculating the survey response rate, individuals who had withdrawn from TxPEP prior to December 2007 were excluded. Of the 255 survey respondents, 253 completed all sections of the survey; two respondents completed only part of the survey.

Web-based versions of the LPI and 21st Century Principal Assessment were administered to TxPEP participants by APQC in September 2007 and provide additional baseline measures of participants' leadership ability. Both assessments include self ratings and observer ratings (i.e., ratings by supervisors or colleagues). Observer ratings were averaged across all observers. For both assessments, only overall scores averaged across all items measuring the leadership practices were provided by assessment developers. Consequently, item-level analyses could not be conducted. Data received from APQC for the LPI assessment include responses from 318 TxPEP participants; data received for the 21st Century Principal Assessment include responses from 314 TxPEP participants.

LPI. The LPI is based on research conducted by Posner and Kouzes (1988; 1993) on effective leadership practices. Through extensive interviews and surveys with leaders from a variety of public and private organizations, Posner and Kouzes identified five practices that characterize exemplary leaders. The LPI was developed to measure the extent to which leaders implement these practices. Unlike the Principal Leadership Survey, which was designed specifically to measure the six leadership areas emphasized by TxPEP, the LPI was developed to measure general leadership ability. However, it is possible to link the leadership behaviors measured by the LPI to some of the leadership areas emphasized by TxPEP. The five practices measured by the LPI, together with examples of behaviors that are associated with these practices, are summarized below. The TxPEP leadership area most closely associated with each of these practices is indicated in parentheses.

- Modeling the way (Ethical Leadership)
  - Finding your voice by clarifying your personal values
  - Setting an example by aligning actions with shared values
- Inspiring a shared vision (Change Management)
  - Envisioning the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities
  - Enlisting others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations
- Challenging the process (Change Management)
  - Searching for opportunities by seeking innovative ways to change, grow, and improve
  - Experimenting and taking risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes
- Enabling others to act (Building Learning Communities)
  - Fostering collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust
  - Strengthening others by sharing power and discretion
- Encouraging the heart (Building Learning Communities)
  - Recognizing contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence
  - Celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community

Each of the five practices is measured by six items. Respondents are asked to indicate the frequency with which they engage in specific behaviors related to each practice. Response categories range from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always).

The LPI has been shown to be a reliable and valid measure of leadership ability. The six items measuring each practice cohere as scales; results across survey administrations also have been shown to be consistent (indicators of reliability). Results also are significantly correlated with a range of performance measures, indicating that the inventory is a valid measure of leadership ability (Posner & Kouzes, 1988; Posner & Kouzes, 1993). (See the LPI website for additional details about this assessment: https://www.lpionline.com/lpi/helpInfo/aboutLPI.jsp.)

21st Century Principal Assessment. The 21st Century Principal Assessment was developed by NASSP. The assessment is aligned with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium leadership standards and identifies skills that principals need to acquire to become effective leaders. The assessment typically is used as a diagnostic tool to help school leaders and prospective principals identify strengths and weaknesses.

The 21st Century assessment measures ten leadership practices or traits relevant to four broad skill sets. Although the 21st Century assessment was not designed specifically to measure the leadership areas emphasized by TxPEP, the leadership practices and traits that are measured by the assessment can be linked to these leadership areas. The ten leadership practices or traits measured by the 21st Century assessment are summarized below by skill set. The TxPEP leadership areas most closely associated with each of these ten practices or traits are indicated in parentheses.

- Instructional Leadership
  - Setting instructional direction (Building Learning Communities)
  - Teamwork (Building Learning Communities)
  - Sensitivity (Building Learning Communities)
- Solving Complex Problems
  - Judgment (Data-driven Decision Making; Change Management)
  - Results orientation (School/Program Evaluation)
  - Organizational ability (Change Management; Resource Management)
- Communication
  - Oral communication (Change Management; Building Learning Communities)
  - Written communication (Change Management; Building Learning Communities)
- Developing Self and Others
  - Development of others (Building Learning Communities)
  - Understanding your own strengths and weakness (Ethical Leadership)

Each of these practices or traits is measured by multiple items. Respondents are asked to indicate the frequency with which they engage in specific behaviors related to each practice or trait. Response categories range from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always). (See the NASSP website for additional details about the 21st Century Principal Assessment: http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/sec_inside.asp?CID= 39&DID=39.)

Program Implementation and Quality

Interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants, and focus groups conducted with TxPEP participants provide preliminary data about program development, implementation, and quality. Initial interviews and focus groups were conducted in December 2007.

Interviews With Program Staff

Interviews were conducted with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants to obtain information about program development, implementation, and the perceived quality of program offerings. Two members of TEA's program staff who were directly involved with vendor selection and program review were selected to be interviewed; two APQC staff members who were directly involved with program development and implementation also were selected. In addition, two of the 48 cohort consultants for the program were randomly selected to participate in interviews.

Similar interview protocols were developed for each of these groups. Those who were interviewed were asked to comment on the following aspects of the TxPEP program:

- Their role in developing or implementing the program

- Whether they thought the program was being implemented as planned (i.e., as described in the approved curriculum and program materials)

- The relevance and quality of the program offerings (based on their own perceptions, or for APQC staff, based on formal or informal feedback received from participants)

- Whether they knew if participants were applying what they were learning and, if so, what formal or informal data were available regarding participants' application of TxPEP content (asked only of APQC staff and cohort consultants)

- Whether they thought participants were acquiring the knowledge and skills anticipated from their participation in the program (asked only of APQC staff)

- Perceived barriers to participants in changing their leadership practices

- What the program implementers were doing to address these perceived barriers (e.g., in terms of curriculum and delivery mechanisms)

TEA program staff members also were asked to describe TEA's process for developing a program relevant to principals' needs, the process used to select a vendor for the program, and the process used to approve the TxPEP curriculum. (See Appendix A for copies of the interview protocols; see Appendix B for details regarding sample selection and interview administration).

Principal Focus Groups

To obtain formative feedback on program quality, relevance, and utility and suggestions for program improvements, focus groups were conducted in December 2007 with a total of 11 principals who are participating in TxPEP. Separate focus groups were organized for elementary, middle, and high school principals. The same protocols were developed for each of the three focus groups. To allow for comparison of responses between focus group participants and program staff, similar questions were included on both the interview and focus group protocols. (See Appendix A for a copy of the focus group protocol; see Appendix B for details regarding sample selection and focus group administration.)

Focus group participants were asked to comment on the following aspects of the TxPEP program:

- The relevance of TxPEP topics to participants' responsibilities as principals
- The quality of the program thus far
- Important skills, strategies, or ideas learned from their participation in TxPEP
- Applicability of TxPEP in principal's work
- Help received from program staff in applying what they had learned
- Aspects of the program that were going well
- Suggestions for program improvements
- Difficulties or challenges

Preliminary Findings

This section summarizes the findings of preliminary analyses of TxPEP attendance data, characteristics of participants' schools (i.e., campus rating, school type, and district type) and baseline measures of leadership ability obtained from the Principal Leadership Survey, the LPI, and the 21st Century Principal Assessment. Preliminary findings from principal focus groups and interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants conducted in December 2007 also are presented.

Program Participation, Participant Characteristics, and Leadership Ability

Who Is Participating in TxPEP?

TxPEP registration data indicate that 419 individuals initially registered for the TxPEP program. Several withdrew at the beginning of the program, however. Of the 105 individuals who notified APQC that they were withdrawing, 64 were from non-AU campuses and were not required to attend. Of the remaining individuals, 21 were replaced by another person from the same school (18 of these individuals were from AU campuses; 3 were from non-AU campuses); 15 principals successfully petitioned to participate in another principal leadership program. One individual from an AU campus withdrew from the program after registering with no replacement; four individuals from AU campuses (three of them from charter schools) withdrew from the program after the second workshop with no replacement. These five cases may warrant further investigation to determine whether participants from these schools are required to attend. TEA 2006–07 campus ratings data confirm that the schools represented by these five individuals have AU ratings.

Data were obtained from APQC on attendance at the initial summit meeting and the first and second workshops. A total of 318 individuals from 304 different schools attended at least one of these three events (the four participants who withdrew from the program after the second workshop are included in this total). Of the 318 participants, 81% ($n = 258$) were from AU campuses and 19% ($n = 60$) were from non-AU campuses.

TEA data about school type were available for 288 of the 318 participants; data about district type (rural, urban, suburban, or charter) were available for 286 of the 318 participants:

- Of the 288 individuals for whom data about school type were available, 121 were from elementary schools; 25 were from elementary/secondary schools; 88 were from middle schools; and 54 were from high schools.

- Of the 286 individuals for whom data about district type were available, 51 were from rural schools, 78 were from urban schools, 116 were from suburban schools, and 41 were from charter schools.

Are TxPEP Events Well-Attended?

Overall, attendance rates for the initial TxPEP summit and first and second workshops have been high, although attendance declined from the first to the second workshop:

- Of the 318 TxPEP participants, 96% attended the initial summit meeting

- 95% attended the first workshop

- 88% attended the second workshop

- 84% attended all three events.

The decline in attendance rates from the first to the second workshop may be cause for concern, particularly if those who failed to attend are from AU campuses and are required to attend. An examination of attendance rates by campus rating (AU versus non-AU status), presented below, indicates whether attendance rates differ for these two groups.

Do Attendance Rates Vary by Participant Characteristics?

Analyses of attendance rates by characteristics of participants' schools (campus rating, school type, and district type) revealed some differences between participants from AU and non-AU campuses.

- Overall, participants from AU campuses had higher attendance rates than those from non-AU campuses (88% vs. 68% attendance for all three events).

- Attendance rates for participants from AU campuses were more than 95% for the initial summit meeting and the first workshop; attendance rates for participants from non-AU campuses were more than 90% for the summit and first workshop.

- From the first to the second workshop, attendance rates for principals from AU campuses declined from 96% to 92%; among principals from non-AU campuses attendance rates declined from 92% at the first workshop to 70% at the second workshop.

These analyses indicate that attendance for all events generally remains high for participants from AU campuses; the decline in attendance rates from the first to the second workshop is due primarily to lower attendance by participants from non-AU campuses. Nonetheless, nonattendance by participants from AU campuses should be monitored because these participants are required to attend.

Analyses of attendance rates by school type and district type also revealed a few differences across subgroups.

- Elementary/secondary school participants had lower overall attendance than participants from elementary, middle, or high schools.

- Charter school participants had lower attendance than rural, urban, or suburban participants.

However, only a small percentage of TxPEP participants were from elementary/secondary or charter schools. Attendance rates for these groups therefore would be influenced by sample size

to a greater extent than the attendance rates of larger groups. For example, nonattendance by five participants from elementary/secondary schools would result in a 25% drop in the attendance rate for this group, whereas nonattendance by five participants from suburban schools would represent only a 4% drop in the suburban attendance rate. (See Appendix C for a detailed analysis of program attendance data.)

How Do Participants Rate Themselves With Respect to Leadership Ability?

Results of the Principal Leadership Survey, the LPI, and the 21st Century Principal Assessment all provide initial measures of participants' leadership ability. Analyses of these results are summarized below. Detailed analyses of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey are presented in Appendix D; analyses of responses to the LPI are presented in Appendix E; and analyses of responses to the 21st Century Principal Assessment are presented in Appendix F.

The Principal Leadership Survey asked respondents to rate their effectiveness or knowledge in the six leadership areas emphasized by the TxPEP program: change management, building learning communities, data-driven decision making, resource management, school/program evaluation, and ethical leadership. The LPI and 21st Century assessment, administered by APQC, asked respondents to rate the frequency with which they engage in behaviors associated with specific leadership practices (e.g., inspiring a vision, encouraging collaboration, developing self and others). The LPI and 21st Century assessment include observer ratings as well as self ratings.

Overall, TxPEP participants rated themselves positively on all three assessment instruments.

- On the Principal Leadership Survey, most respondents reported moderate levels of effectiveness or knowledge for all six constructs (average ratings of 3 on a four-point scale).

- For the LPI, the average participant rating for each of the five leadership practices that were measured was approximately 8 on a ten-point scale. Ratings ranged from almost never to almost always; a rating of 8 indicates that participants reported usually engaging in the behaviors described.

- For the 21st Century assessment, the average rating for each of the ten leadership traits or practices that were measured was approximately 4 on a five-point scale. Ratings ranged from never to almost always; a rating of 4 indicates that participants reported frequently engaging in the behaviors described

- Observer ratings on both the LPI and 21st Century assessment were consistent with participants' self-ratings.

Do Participants Ratings of Leadership Ability Vary by School Characteristics?

An examination of average leadership ratings by characteristics of participants' schools revealed few differences across subgroups for any of the assessment instruments. However, there were noticeable differences in participant responses by campus rating. On both the Principal Leadership Survey and the LPI, principals from AU campuses consistently rated themselves higher on leadership measures than those from non-AU campuses.

Figure 1 presents the results of the Principal Leadership Survey. Each of the leadership areas included in the survey was measured by six items, and each item was rated on a four-point scale. These six individual item ratings have been converted into a single scale, meaning that the items all measure aspects of a single leadership area or construct (e.g., change management, resource management, ethical leadership). For each leadership construct, the average score for all items that comprise the scale is 50; scale scores above 50 indicate positive ratings (i.e., moderate to high knowledge or effectiveness). (See Appendix D for a detailed explanation of how scales for each of the six leadership areas were constructed.)

As Figure 1 shows, participants from AU campuses rated themselves consistently higher than non-AU participants on all leadership constructs included in the Principal Leadership Survey. For resource management, the ratings of AU participants were significantly higher than those of non-AU participants. AU participants also rated themselves higher on measures of change management and ethical leadership (these differences only approached statistical significance).[7]

Figure 1. Average Scales Scores on the Principal Leadership Survey by Campus Rating (*N* = 255)
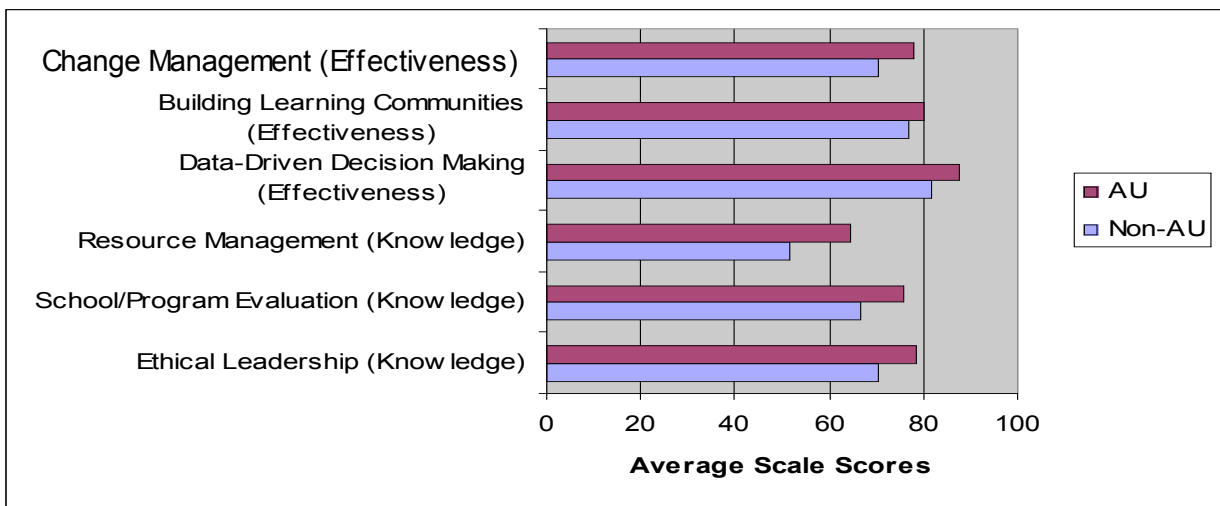
Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP participants' fall 2007 responses to the Principal Leadership Survey.
Notes: AU indicates a campus rating of academically unacceptable. Non-AU indicates a campus rating other than academically unacceptable. Scale scores are not equated across constructs; therefore comparisons among constructs (e.g., change management to ethical leadership) cannot be made.

Figure 2 presents the average responses of TxPEP participants to items measuring the five leadership practices included in the LPI. Item-level responses were not available for the LPI; it therefore was not possible to create a single scale from the six items measuring each of these five leadership practices. Instead, an average rating was computed by summing the ratings for the six items measuring each leadership practice and then dividing by the number of items. As Figure 2 shows, average self ratings were consistently higher for participants from AU campuses than for those from non-AU campuses. Observer ratings (not shown) also were consistently higher for AU participants than for non-AU participants.

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[7] Statistical significance indicates that differences between groups are unlikely to occur by chance.

**Figure 2. Average Self-Ratings on the Leadership Practices Inventory
by Campus Rating (*N* = 318)**
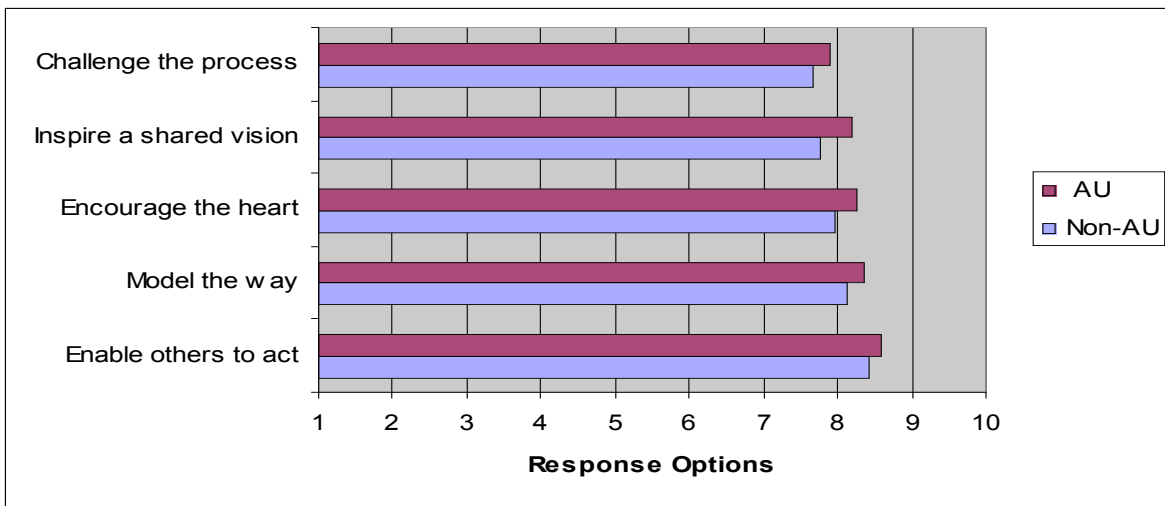
Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP participants' fall 2007 responses to the Leadership Practices Inventory.
Notes: AU indicates a campus rating of academically unacceptable. Non-AU indicates a campus rating other than academically unacceptable. Leadership practices are measured by different items; therefore comparisons among practices (e.g., challenge the process to inspire a shared visions) cannot be made.

A possible explanation for these differences in the leadership ratings of AU and non-AU participants may be that participants from AU campuses are more experienced school leaders than those from non-AU campuses. Although principals from AU campuses are required to attend TxPEP, principals from non-AU campuses choose to attend. Principals from non-AU campuses may attend because they are less experienced and want to improve their leadership skills.[8]

Does Student Achievement Vary With Principal Leadership Ability?

Correlational analyses were conducted to determine whether participant ratings of their leadership ability on the Principal Leadership Survey were associated with student achievement (measured prior to program participation) and school demographic characteristics (e.g., percentage of minority students, percentage of students considered economically disadvantaged).[9] Because previous research has shown that successful school leadership is positively associated with student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004), it was assumed that higher ratings on measures of TxPEP participants' principal leadership ability also might be positively associated with student achievement. We also assumed that principal leadership ratings might correlate with school demographic characteristics; for example, principals with

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[8] We were unable to conduct analyses of participants' years of experience as principal because data were missing for this variable for approximately 40% of TxPEP participants. TEA administrative data files are scheduled to be updated in March 2008. The updated files may include fewer missing values, making it possible to conduct analyses of participants' years of principal experience.

[9] Correlations indicate the degree to which variables are associated with one another. Two variables are positively correlated if high values of one variable are associated with high values of the other variable. The variables are negatively correlated if high values of one variable are associated with low values of the other variable.

proven leadership ability may be assigned to particular types of schools (e.g., low-performing schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students). These analyses are presented in Appendix D.

Results of these analyses revealed some statistically significant correlations between leadership ability and student achievement and between leadership ability and school demographic characteristics. The measure of student achievement used in these analyses was overall student performance on the 2006–07 TAKS assessment (i.e., all grades and all tests); this assessment was administered prior to the start of the TxPEP program.

- Student TAKS scores were negatively and significantly correlated with participant ratings for change management, ethical leadership, and school/program evaluation, indicating that principals whose students scored lower on the TAKS assessments rated themselves higher on these leadership measures.

- Principals' leadership ratings were positively and significantly correlated with several school demographic variables. Principals from schools with greater percentages of minority, economically disadvantaged, or special education students had higher ratings for one or more of the following leadership areas: building learning communities, ethical leadership, resource management, and/or school/program evaluation. These positive correlations between principal leadership ratings and student characteristics suggest that principals in schools with higher percentages of special needs students may have greater opportunities to learn about resource management or program evaluation because programs for these students often are federally funded and must be formally evaluated to meet program and funding requirements.

The negative correlations between student TAKS scores and principal leadership ratings need to be interpreted in the context of the participant sample. Most TxPEP participants are from schools where students are not meeting standards (AU campuses). Only a small percentage of participants are from non-AU campuses; these non-AU principals or principals-in-training have chosen to participate in the program, presumably to develop their leadership skills. As noted above, principals from non-AU campuses may be less experienced school leaders than principals from AU campuses and thus rate themselves lower on measures of leadership ability. Because students from non-AU campuses have higher TAKS scores, by definition, than students from AU campuses, higher student TAKS scores are associated with the lower leadership ratings for the small sample of non-AU principals who are participating in TxPEP.

Program Implementation and Perceived Quality, Relevance, and Utility

Fidelity of Program Implementation

Preliminary findings from principal focus groups and interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants are summarized below; these findings are presented in detail in Appendix G. Generally, interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants suggest that the TxPEP program is being implemented with fidelity to stated program objectives. The approved curriculum and delivery mechanisms for the program are, for the most part, being implemented as planned.

There have been a few changes in the TxPEP program design that originally was submitted by APQC. Some changes have been made at request of TEA (e.g., a greater program emphasis on business tools and processes in line with the legislative intent for the program). Other changes have been due to circumstances beyond APQC's control, such as having to schedule an additional summit meeting in late September to accommodate principals who were attending another professional development program scheduled at the same time as the initial TxPEP summit meeting. One aspect of the program that has not been implemented entirely as intended is the inclusion of a menu option for participants that would allow them to tailor their professional development to their individual needs. Participants have been given fewer choices with respect to courses and online activities than TEA had originally envisioned.

Program Quality, Relevance, and Utility

Feedback from 11 focus group participants and results of postevent feedback surveys administered by APQC suggest that participants find the program content to be of high quality and mostly relevant to their needs.

- Overall, the workshops and professional development activities provided by APQC are regarded as of high quality. Focus group participants reported being satisfied with the facilities, the presenters, and the materials that have been provided.

- The focus on leadership theories and management models in the workshops does not appear to have resonated with participants. Focus group participants articulated a need for hands-on, successful strategies that they could apply immediately when they returned to their schools. One focus group participant spoke about the gap between the program providers and TxPEP participants in the following way:

  > The person presenting leadership strategies has never been a principal. That's very difficult. I know leadership strategies are leadership strategies in the business world and the education world, but if you've never been a principal it's kind of hard to get buy-in if you've never been there in our shoes.

- Focus group participants valued the advice of their cohort consultants, who were selected as consultants because of their success as school leaders. However, they indicated that they would prefer to have more guidance than is currently offered from successful principals.

- Participants reported that the webinars are most relevant to their needs as school leaders. The webinars appear to address issues that many participants are currently struggling with in their schools. Several focus group participants mentioned that the webinar on change management was particularly useful. As one principal noted:

  > I did actually participate in my first webinar on change and management yesterday afternoon and I actually thought it was very worthwhile and enjoyed it. It did encourage me to reflect on where I am right now in the change process.

- Overall, principals noted that they would find TxPEP more relevant if they had more choice about what courses or webinars to attend. In interviews, program staff noted that

principals want to learn, but what they want to learn differs depending on their experience and the circumstances in their schools. Professional development cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach.

- Networking with other principals was seen as the most useful aspect of the program.

- Other aspects of the program that participants found particularly useful included the following:
  - Small-group discussions during workshops, which provide opportunities to discuss and troubleshoot issues of concern
  - The use of Open Space Technology (an approach to organizing discussions) to facilitate discussion and problem-solving
  - The opportunity to reflect on their own leadership practices provided by the LPI and 21st Century assessment
  - The use of student assessment data from their schools to identify targets for school improvement.

Perceived Barriers to Leadership Change

Several barriers to leadership change and principal buy-in emerged from the interviews and focus groups.

- TxPEP workshops do not appear to be addressing issues of compelling interest to participants such as strategies for improving student performance. Several focus group participants indicated that they found the workshop presentations to be too abstract and theoretical. Participants wanted to hands-on strategies that they could immediately apply.

- TxPEP is one of several school improvement initiatives that compete for principals' time. The day-to-day demands on principals, particularly those in low-performing schools, make it difficult for them to reflect and plan for change.

- Other perceived barriers to change included poorly qualified teachers that principals felt powerless to remove; a narrow focus on raising student test scores to the exclusion of more systemic approaches to change; and the belief on the part of some principals that they do not need to enhance their leadership skills.

Suggestions for Program Improvements

Focus group participants and program staff offered several suggestions for program improvements:

- Provide participants with access to educational leaders who have demonstrated success in AU schools.

- Hold the TxPEP summits and workshops during the summer to better align with school schedules.

- Find ways to make management and leadership models more relevant to principals.

- Provide participants with more choices with respect to course offerings.

Focus group participants were willing and, in many cases, eager to provide feedback about the program and to suggest changes that would allow them to learn and apply effective leadership practices. In turn, program staff were willing to discuss challenges they were experiencing. Given the apparent resistance of participants to the program's emphasis on leadership theories and management models, TEA and APQC program staff may need to find ways to demonstrate their relevance and usefulness to principals.

Implications of Preliminary Findings

Overall, preliminary findings with respect to program attendance; fidelity of implementation; and perceived quality, relevance, and utility of program offerings are quite positive, suggesting that the program is working well in many respects for participants. However, a few findings suggest the need for some adjustments in program planning and implementation.

TxPEP Attendance

A large number of principals from non-AU campuses who were initially registered for TxPEP withdrew at the start of the program, presumably because they were not required to attend. However, five participants from AU campuses also withdrew from the program without a replacement from their school. Such cases should be monitored closely to ensure that principals who are required to attend the program are doing so.

The attendance data for the initial summit and first two TxPEP workshops indicates that attendance rates are high, particularly among principals from AU campuses who are required to attend these events. However, overall attendance rates dropped from 95% at the initial summit and first workshop to 88% at the second workshop. Although attendance rates were higher among principals from AU campuses compared with those from non-AU campuses (88% vs. 68% attendance for all three events), the decline in attendance at the second workshop may warrant careful monitoring of attendance. Principals from AU campuses may need to be reminded that their attendance at TxPEP workshops is required. In a few instances, registration and attendance data indicate that individuals who originally were registered for the program were replaced by another individual from the same school. Although this may be a legitimate change, these cases raise the possibility that some participants may send another representative from the school to attend in their place rather than attending themselves.

Participants' Ratings of Their Leadership Ability

Participants' generally high ratings of their principal leadership ability, particularly on the LPI and 21st Century Principal Assessment, raise questions about whether principals are accurately assessing their leadership ability. For the LPI, the average rating across the five leadership practices that were measured was approximately 8 on a ten-point scale; for the 21st Century assessment, the average ratings for the ten practices or traits that were measured was approximately 4 on a five-point scale. In addition, there was little variability in individual responses, as shown by the small size of the standard deviations, a measure of the average distance of individual responses from the mean. (The standard deviations for the LPI measures are presented in Table E1 in Appendix E; the standard deviations for the 21st Century assessment are presented in Table F1 in Appendix F). The small size of standard deviations indicates that responses of individual participants are similar to each other for any given measure of leadership ability.

There could be a number of explanations for this finding. One possibility is that most respondents are, in fact, capable school leaders who already are implementing sound leadership practices and rated their leadership abilities accordingly. If participants' assessments of their

abilities are accurate, then other factors that might contribute to their schools' academically unacceptable rating should be investigated; for example, principals may lack the authority to fire unqualified teachers or be unable to recruit qualified teachers to their schools. A second possibility is that TxPEP participants gave socially desirable responses; that is, they rated themselves relatively high on all LPI and 21st Century leadership measures to provide a positive impression of their leadership abilities. A third possibility is that some respondents overestimated their abilities based on their understanding of best practices at the start the program. If this assumption is valid, then one might expect to see a decrease in ratings of leadership ability on a later assessment as participants gain a better understanding of sound leadership practices.

Although participants' average ratings of their leadership ability on the Principal Leadership Survey also were relatively high (an average rating of 3 on a four-point scale), there was much more variability in participants' responses to the survey compared with their responses to the LPI and 21st Century assessment. (Standard deviations for the Principal Leadership Survey are presented in Table D1 in Appendix D.) In contrast, the standard deviations for the LPI and 21st Century assessment are much smaller.

One possible explanation for these differences is that the Principal Leadership Survey asks respondents to rate their knowledge or effectiveness with respect to the leadership areas being measured, whereas both the LPI and 21st Century assessment asks respondents to rate the frequency with which they engage in particular leadership practices. Although respondents may indicate that they engage in these leadership practices, they may not perceive themselves as effective in implementing these practices or view themselves as particularly knowledgeable about specific practices.

Even though respondents' average ratings were relatively high for all measures of leadership ability, it should be possible to measure growth over time, if growth occurs. There is considerable variability in respondents' average ratings for the Principal Leadership Survey. If respondent ratings of their knowledge and effectiveness increase as a result of participation in TxPEP, we should see an increase in average ratings over time as well as a decrease in the variability of individual responses. Even though there is much less variability in participants' responses to the LPI and 21st Century assessment, and leadership ratings generally are high, the small size of the standard deviations for these assessments will make it possible to detect even small increases in participants' average leadership ratings on postprogram assessments.

Perceptions of Program Quality, Relevance, and Utility

Although focus group participants reported favorably on the quality of the presenters, materials, and programs offerings, their perceptions of program relevance and utility were generally less favorable. Most focus group participants agreed that the workshop sessions were too abstract and theoretical, and they found the leadership theories and business models difficult to apply. They also agreed that they would prefer a greater emphasis on practical strategies and would like greater access to educational leaders that have demonstrated success in AU schools.

Although the feedback from focus group participants might be interpreted as resistance or even rejection of business or management approaches, their overall comments about program content suggest that a greater integration between theory and practice is needed. Principals might be more receptive to business models if they could see the relevance of these models to their day-to-day practice and the challenges they are facing in their schools. Focus group participants generally were favorable in their assessment of webinars, which appear to be more solution-focused. Finding ways to bridge the gap between theory and practice through the additional use of case studies, connections between leadership theories and webinar topics, and the inclusion of successful principals as workshop presenters or discussion group facilitators might help participants to better see the connections between management models and practices and principals' day-to-day work in schools.

Focus group participants also agreed that they would prefer more options for selecting courses and webinars. Designing a program that has a coherent core of required courses while also accommodating the needs and interests of participants is admittedly difficult. However, some changes might be possible that would offer greater flexibility without sacrificing program coherence. One change that might be relatively easy to introduce would be to offer different course options for new and experienced principals. A feature of effective principal leadership programs noted by Davis et al. (2005) and reiterated in Levine's (2005) recommendations for improving educational leadership programs is to tailor program requirements to the needs of principals at various stages of their careers.

Another way in which program content might be better matched to the needs of individual participants would be to have them develop a personal and organizational development plan around leadership areas emphasized by the program and then select courses and webinars that would help them implement this development plan. Cohort consultants or program staff could guide the selection of courses that are well matched with personal and organizational goals. Allowing participant greater freedom to choose courses that are most relevant to their own schools and situations may in turn help to increase participant engagement with the program.

Next Steps in the Evaluation

Evaluation activities that will be undertaken from February through October 2008 include the following: (1) analyses of comparison group principals' responses to the Principal Leadership Survey that was administered in late December 2007 and early January 2008; (2) collecting and analyzing data on principal, school, and teacher outcomes needed to address the summative evaluation questions regarding program impact; and (3) collecting and analyzing additional data from TxPEP participants and program staff needed to address the formative evaluation questions regarding fidelity of program implementation and the quality, relevance, and utility of program offerings.

Analysis of Baseline Survey Data for Comparison Group Principals

In late December 2007 and early January 2008, Texas principals who were selected to be members of the comparison group for the evaluation of the TxPEP program were asked to complete the Principal Leadership Survey. This is the same survey that was completed by TxPEP participants in fall 2007. Administration of this survey, which originally was scheduled to coincide with the administration of the TxPEP participant survey, was postponed due to delays in receiving the data needed to select the comparison group as well as the complexities of merging data from multiple data files.

In early December 2007, TxPEP participants were matched to nonparticipating Texas principals with similar characteristics (e.g., years of experience as principal, education, earnings) from similar schools (e.g., school and district type, percentage of minority students, average student performance) using administrative data obtained from TEA. Because we anticipated a lower response rate among comparison group principals, we selected a large comparison group (670 principals were selected) and asked them to complete the web-based Principal Leadership Survey. A total of 266 comparison group principals responded to the survey for a response rate of 40%. The survey responses of comparison group principals provide baseline data on the leadership ability of this group of principals.

Collecting and Analyzing Principal, School, and Student-Level Outcome Data

Follow-Up Principal Surveys

Both TxPEP participants and comparison group principals will be asked to complete follow-up surveys in spring and fall 2008. These surveys will include the same measures of principal knowledge and effectiveness that were included in the initial Principal Leadership Survey. In addition to measuring principals' leadership knowledge and effectiveness, the spring and fall 2008 surveys will ask principals to assess changes in school- and student-level performance indicators between the start and end of the program (e.g., perceived changes in school-level indicators such as teacher satisfaction and retention and student-level indicators such as student engagement). These outcomes will serve as measures of perceived program impact. The assumption is that principals who have participated in TxPEP may be more likely to perceive and report changes in school- and student-level outcomes as a result of program participation and

implementation of effective leadership practices in their schools. The postprogram principal surveys are in development.

Teacher Surveys

Teachers also will be asked to complete a survey in spring 2008. The teacher surveys are being designed to obtain data about teachers' perceptions of school learning environment, teacher retention rates, school leadership, opportunities for teacher collaboration and decision-making, and student-level indicators such student engagement, graduation rates, and performance on standardized assessments. Teachers whose principals are participating in TxPEP or are in the principal comparison group will be included in the survey sample. TxPEP participants and comparison group principals will either be asked to provide e-mail addresses for teachers or will be sent the survey link and asked to forward it to teachers with a request to complete the survey. Teacher surveys will provide additional school- and student-level outcome data.

TxPEP Postprogram Assessment Data and Program Participation Data

APQC will administer the LPI and 21st Century Principal Leadership Assessment to TxPEP participants at the end of the program. Arrangements have been made with APQC to obtain these data. The data provide additional outcome measures of principal leadership ability.

Arrangements also have been made with APQC to obtain attendance data for the last TxPEP workshop, the TxPEP webinars, and the final TxPEP summit meeting. Attendance data will be used to determine whether program participation rates are related to program impact.

TEA Administrative Data

Student outcome data will be obtained from TEA. Outcomes will include student attendance rates, dropout rates, graduation rates, and the percent of students meeting standards on the TAKS assessment during the 2007–08 academic year (contingent on the availability of data). These data will be used as outcome measures to determine whether the students of TxPEP participants perform better on these indicators than students of comparison group principals.

Analysis of Outcome Measures

The analysis of TxPEP outcome data will occur in two stages. The first stage will answer questions about program impact—specifically comparing outcome measures for those participating in the program to those not participating. Using data obtained from the principal and teacher surveys in combination with TEA administrative data, this first set of analyses will address research questions regarding program impact on principal leadership, student performance, and school-level outcomes, including teacher retention. The second stage of analysis will use data from the principal and teacher surveys, TEA administrative data, and APQC data to explore variation in participant outcomes by principal and school characteristics (e.g., whether outcomes vary by number of TxPEP workshops and webinars attended; whether principal, school, and/or student outcomes vary by campus performance rating, years of experience as principal, or other school or principal characteristics).

Collecting and Analyzing Data on Program Implementation and Quality

Principal Focus Groups and Interviews with Program Staff

Additional data will be collected from principal focus groups and interviews with program staff on program implementation and the perceived quality, relevance, and utility of TxPEP program offerings. Principal focus groups and interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants will be conducted in February, April, June, and September 2008.[10]

Principal Logs/Checklists

In late January/early February 2008, TxPEP participants and comparison group principals were asked to complete a daily principal log or checklist for five consecutive days. The checklists were designed to obtain data about: (1) the extent to which principals spend time working on activities related to the six leadership areas emphasized in the TxPEP program; (2) principals' ratings of their effectiveness in working on activities in these leadership areas; and (3) the extent to which TxPEP participants incorporate information from the program in working on these activities. (Principal checklist templates for both TxPEP participants and comparison group principals are included in Appendix A). The checklists provide data about the relevance of program content to principals' day-to-day work in schools as well as the utility of TxPEP program offerings for TxPEP participants.

Administration of the checklists was staggered to obtain data over a longer time period. One third of the principals in each group were asked to complete the checklists during one of the following weeks: (1) January 21 to January 28, 2008; (2) January 28 to February 1, 2008; and (3) February 4 to February 8, 2008. A total of 164 TxPEP participants completed the logs for a response rate of 52%; 169 comparison group principals also completed the logs for a response rate of 25%. The checklists are being analyzed. Additional checklists are scheduled for March, May, and September 2008.

Analysis of Data on Program Implementation and Quality

Content analyses of focus group and interview transcripts are being conducted to identify common themes across respondents. In analyzing principal checklist results, TxPEP and comparison group respondents will be matched on an array of individual and school characteristics. Results for the two groups then will be compared to determine whether the groups differ with respect to the amount of time they allocate to work in these leadership areas, and their effectiveness ratings for each area.

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[10] Interviews with APQC program staff and cohort consultants will be conducted in February, April, and June 2008. Interviews with TEA program staff will be conducted in April, June, and September 2008.

Challenges of Assessing Program Impact

A major challenge for the evaluation will be assessing program impact on students. TxPEP is being implemented over a relatively short period of time (September 2007 to June 2008). Although the program provides much more sustained and coordinated professional development than many professional development workshops, it still may be difficult to demonstrate impact on students over a period of nine months. Detecting growth in participants' leadership abilities as a result of program participation as well as changes in school-level variables such teacher satisfaction has a greater chance of yielding evidence regarding program impact.

Much of the program's potential impact on principal leadership will depend on the extent to which participants are applying what they are learning from TxPEP. Given the demands on principals' time, expecting them to immediately apply what have learned and, in turn, plan for and implement systemic change may be unrealistic within the timeframe of the program.

Nonetheless, through data collected from principal checklists and participant focus groups, the evaluation can help to document the extent to which participants report working on activities related to the leadership areas emphasized by the program, their perceived effectiveness in working on those activities, and the extent to which they perceive the program as useful in helping them work on those activities. This information can in turn be used to assess whether additional supports, such as assistance from cohort consultants, may be needed to help principals implement effective leadership practices.

The growth in average leadership abilities of program participants relative to comparison group principals will provide evidence of program impact. If growth in principal leadership ability is positively correlated with school-level indicators such as teacher satisfaction and positive ratings of school climate and school learning environment, additional evidence of program impact would be provided. Such changes could be expected to lead to improvements in student performance at some later point if school-level changes are sustained. Evidence of principals' indirect impact on student performance through their effect on school-level indicators may be the best evidence we could realistically be able to provide within the timeframe of the evaluation.

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Appendix A
Evaluation Instruments

Several instruments developed by Learning Point Associates are being used to evaluate the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP). The following instruments are included in Appendix A:

- The baseline Principal Leadership Survey for TxPEP and comparison principals
- Focus group protocols for principals participating in TxPEP
- Interview protocols for TEA staff, APQC staff, and cohort consultants
- Principal Daily Checklists for TxPEP and comparison principals

Texas Principal Excellence Program
Principal Leadership Survey

Learning Point Associates is an independent nonprofit education organization that is conducting an evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP), as mandated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). One of the goals of the evaluation is to provide TEA with feedback on the impact of TxPEP on the leadership practices of participating principals. In addition, the evaluation, with input from principals like you, will help inform recommendations made to TEA on how to refine TxPEP to better address leadership practices that are critical for a principal's success in improving student achievement, graduation rates, and school-level outcomes.

The evaluation findings will be based on a variety of sources, including this survey. This survey is designed to obtain baseline information on TxPEP participants' knowledge and application of concepts and practices in the key leadership areas emphasized by TxPEP. The survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

While your participation is voluntary, it is a critical contribution to evaluating the impact of TxPEP on principals and informing ongoing improvements to the program. Your responses to survey questions will remain confidential, and responses will be reported in the aggregate only. In completing this survey, please remember that this is an evaluation of the TxPEP program, *not* an evaluation of you as principal. If you have questions or concerns about the survey, contact Karen Drill at 800-356-2735 or at karen.drill@learningpt.org.

We appreciate your time and contribution. Thank you for your participation!

Section 1. Participant Status in TxPEP

1. Are you participating in the Texas Principal Excellence Program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Initial Principal Leadership Survey for TxPEP Participants

The next three sections of the survey ask you to indicate your *effectiveness* in implementing specific practices related to key areas of principal leadership.

Section 2. Change Management

2. Indicate how effective you are at doing each of the following:	Not doing	Not effective	Minimally effective	Moderately effective	Very effective
a. Assessing the needs and interests of all members of the school community (students, teachers, parents, staff) before initiating change.					
b. Articulating a vision of change that reflects the beliefs, values, and commitments of the school community.					
c. Building consensus among all members of the school community (teachers, students, parents, staff) around a shared vision for change.					
d. Using theories of change to guide the development of school improvement efforts.					
e. Establishing specific goals for implementing change.					
f. Evaluating the effects of change on school culture.					
g. Managing conflicts associated with change.					

Section 3. Building Learning Communities

3. Indicate how effective you are at doing each of the following:	Not doing		Minimally effective	Moderately effective	Very effective
a. Creating opportunities for teachers and staff to share ideas and beliefs about schooling, teaching, and learning.					
b. Establishing and maintaining shared and distributed leadership.					
c. Preserving regularly scheduled time for professional collaboration.					
d. Maintaining high academic expectations and standards for all teachers and students.					
e. Providing opportunities for teachers to learn about and implement evidence-based "best" practices.					
f. Creating a school culture focused on learning.					
g. Celebrating the achievement of school goals.					

Section 4. Data-Driven Decision Making

4. Indicate how effective you are at doing each of the following:	Not doing	Not effective	Minimally effective	Moderately effective	Very effective
a. Compiling data in formats useful for analysis and decision-making needs.					
b. Analyzing and interpreting data to uncover patterns and relationships.					
c. Using data to identify gaps in the curriculum for all students.					
d. Using data to set learning goals for individual students.					
e. Using data to assign or reassign students to classes or groups.					
f. Using data to determine topics for professional development.					
g. Using data to set school improvement goals.					

Initial Principal Leadership Survey for TxPEP Participants

The next three sections of the survey ask you rate your *knowledge* or *understanding* of specific concepts or practices related to key areas of principal leadership.

Section 5. Ethical Leadership

5. Rate your knowledge or understanding of each of the following:	Little or no knowledge	Some knowledge	Moderate knowledge	Extensive knowledge
a. Establishing clear ethical standards that all members of the school (teachers, students, and staff) are expected to follow.				
b. Serving as a model of ethical behavior for others in the school.				
c. Strategies to reinforce ethical conduct for everyone in the school (e.g., establishing consequences for violating ethical standards).				
d. Decision making based on established ethical standards.				
e. Ethical principles for resolving conflicts among competing interests in the school.				
f. Strategies for fostering appreciation for diverse views and opinions.				
g. Methods for assessing your effectiveness as an ethical leader.				

Section 6. Resource Management

6. Rate your knowledge or understanding of each of the following:	Little or no knowledge	Some knowledge	Moderate knowledge	Extensive knowledge
a. Strategies for mobilizing funding (e.g., state or federal grants) to advance the goals of the school.				
b. Using performance data to make decisions about resource allocations.				
c. Promoting organizational efficiency through effective budget management.				
d. Securing additional funds through grant writing.				
e. Managing human resources to support school improvement goals (e.g., making appropriate teacher assignments, selecting qualified personnel).				
f. Establishing a staff development program in the school.				
g. Developing partnerships (e.g., with businesses, community organizations, government, higher education institutions).				

Section 7. School and Program Evaluation

7. **Rate your current understanding or knowledge of the following:**	**Little or no knowledge**	**Some knowledge**	**Moderate knowledge**	**Extensive knowledge**
a. Key elements of good program evaluation.				
b. Evaluation and assessment strategies.				
c. Procedures for monitoring progress in meeting school/program goals including quality assurance checks.				
d. Development of evaluation instruments (e.g., surveys, structured interviews, focus groups).				
e. Approaches to building teams to collect and process data related to school or program goals.				
f. Strategies for building staff capacity to analyze and interpret evaluation findings.				
g. Using evaluation findings to inform decision making.				

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Texas Principal Excellence Program
Principal Leadership Survey

Learning Point Associates is an independent nonprofit education organization that is conducting an evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP), as mandated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). One of the goals of the evaluation is to provide TEA with input from principals like you on the leadership practices that are critical for a principal's success in improving student achievement, graduation rates, and school-level outcomes. To accomplish this goal, information is being collected from both program participants and nonparticipants. Your assistance with this evaluation will help inform ongoing improvements to professional development activities designed for and delivered to principals, particularly those sponsored by TEA.

The evaluation findings will be based on a variety of sources, including this survey. This survey is designed to obtain information on principals' knowledge and application of concepts and practices in key leadership areas. The survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete.

While your participation is voluntary, it is a critical contribution to informing ongoing improvements to professional development for principals. Your responses to survey questions will remain confidential and responses will be reported in the aggregate only. If you have questions or concerns about the survey, contact Karen Drill at 1-800-356-2735 or at karen.drill@learningpt.org.

We appreciate your time and contribution. Thank you for your participation!

Section 1. Participant Status in TxPEP

1. Are you participating in the Texas Principal Excellence Program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Initial Principal Leadership Survey for Comparison Group Principals

The next three sections of the survey ask you to indicate your *effectiveness* in implementing specific practices related to key areas of principal leadership.

Section 2. Change Management

2. Indicate how effective you are at doing each of the following:	Not doing	Not effective	Minimally effective	Moderately effective	Very effective
a. Assessing the needs and interests of all members of the school community (students, teachers, parents, staff) before initiating change.					
b. Articulating a vision of change that reflects the beliefs, values, and commitments of the school community.					
c. Building consensus among all members of the school community (teachers, students, parents, staff) around a shared vision for change.					
d. Using theories of change to guide the development of school improvement efforts.					
e. Establishing specific goals for implementing change.					
f. Evaluating the effects of change on school culture.					
g. Managing conflicts associated with change.					

Section 3. Building Learning Communities

3. Indicate how effective you are at doing each of the following:	Not doing	Not effective	Minimally effective	Moderately effective	Very effective
a. Creating opportunities for teachers and staff to share ideas and beliefs about schooling, teaching, and learning.					
b. Establishing and maintaining shared and distributed leadership.					
c. Preserving regularly scheduled time for professional collaboration.					
d. Maintaining high academic expectations and standards for all teachers and students.					
e. Providing opportunities for teachers to learn about and implement evidence-based "best" practices.					
f. Creating a school culture focused on learning.					
g. Celebrating the achievement of school goals.					

Section 4. Data-Driven Decision Making

4. **Indicate how effective you are at doing each of the following:**	**Not doing**	**Not effective**	**Minimally effective**	**Moderately effective**	**Very effective**
a. Compiling data in formats useful for analysis and decision-making needs.					
b. Analyzing and interpreting data to uncover patterns and relationships.					
c. Using data to identify gaps in the curriculum for all students.					
d. Using data to set learning goals for individual students.					
e. Using data to assign or reassign students to classes or groups.					
f. Using data to determine topics for professional development.					
g. Using data to set school improvement goals.					

The next three sections of the survey ask you rate your *knowledge* or *understanding* of specific concepts or practices related to key areas of principal leadership.

Section 5. Ethical Leadership

5. Rate your knowledge or understanding of each of the following:	Little or no knowledge	Some knowledge	Moderate knowledge	Extensive knowledge
a. Establishing clear ethical standards that all members of the school (teachers, students, and staff) are expected to follow.				
b. Serving as a model of ethical behavior for others in the school.				
c. Strategies to reinforce ethical conduct for everyone in the school (e.g., establishing consequences for violating ethical standards).				
d. Decision making based on established ethical standards.				
e. Ethical principles for resolving conflicts among competing interests in the school.				
f. Strategies for fostering appreciation for diverse views and opinions.				
g. Methods for assessing your effectiveness as an ethical leader.				

Section 6. Resource Management

6. Rate your knowledge or understanding of each of the following:	Little or no knowledge	Some knowledge	Moderate knowledge	Extensive knowledge
a. Strategies for mobilizing funding (e.g., state or federal grants) to advance the goals of the school.				
b. Using performance data to make decisions about resource allocations.				
c. Promoting organizational efficiency through effective budget management.				
d. Securing additional funds through grant writing.				
e. Managing human resources to support school improvement goals (e.g., making appropriate teacher assignments, selecting qualified personnel).				
f. Establishing a staff development program in the school.				
g. Developing partnerships (e.g., with businesses, community organizations, government, higher education institutions).				

Section 7. School and Program Evaluation

7. Rate your current understanding or knowledge of the following:	Little or no knowledge	Some knowledge	Moderate knowledge	Extensive knowledge
a. Key elements of good program evaluation.				
b. Evaluation and assessment strategies.				
c. Procedures for monitoring progress in meeting school/program goals including quality assurance checks.				
d. Development of evaluation instruments (e.g., surveys, structured interviews, focus groups)				
e. Approaches to building teams to collect and process data related to school or program goals.				
f. Strategies for building staff capacity to analyze and interpret evaluation findings.				
g. Using evaluation findings to inform decision making.				

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Texas Principal Excellence Program
Focus Group Protocol

Annotated Agenda for Facilitator(s)

(Goal: 45–60 minutes; Current design: 45–60 minutes)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (10–15 MINUTES)

Hello, I'm_____with Learning Point Associates. I am a member of the team that is conducting the evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP).

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us. Our discussion should take about 45 to 60 minutes. Before we start, I just want to reassure you that your responses to my questions will be completely confidential, and in our reporting of findings, respondents will not be identified in any way. To help preserve confidentiality, we also ask participants not to talk about what specific individuals have said in the focus group. Do you have any questions about our confidentiality policy?

The information you share with us will be used to help inform the TxPEP professional development initiative. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with Learning Point Associates, a nonprofit educational organization, to conduct the external evaluation of TxPEP. Learning Point Associates is interested in gathering insights from principals participating in TxPEP on the quality of program, the knowledge and skills gained through the program, and their relevance, and use. Data collected from the focus group discussions will inform TEA's efforts to support professional development programs that develop and enhance critical leadership practices that impact Texas students and educators.

We would like to tape record our discussion in order to accurately capture everything you tell us. Do I have your permission to record this discussion? [Note: If the respondents wish not to be tape recorded, take notes, but do not proceed with recording.]

Let's take a few minutes for introductions. Please share the following information with the rest of the group:

- First Name
- Length of time as a principal overall and in their current school
- Location of school and a sentence about the school.

Principal Focus Group Protocol

GROUP DISCUSSION (45 MINUTES)

1. How relevant have the topics covered in TxPEP been to your responsibilities as principal?

   Intentionally open-ended. We want to see what responsibilities they focus on.

   If they need prompt ask: What responsibilities come to mind?

   Probe: Can you provide some examples of topics that were particularly relevant? Less relevant?

2. What do you think of the quality of the TxPEP program so far?

   Provide examples of quality if needed:
   The program content
   The expertise of the presenters
   The clarity of the presentations
   The materials (handouts, notebooks)

3. Looking across all of the TxPEP activities you've participated in, what are some of the most important ideas, skills, and strategies you've learned so far? Think of three.

   Give them a minute. Have someone there to take notes and summarize/categorize the responses.

4. Have you been able to apply what you're learning in the TxPEP program? *If so*, can you give me some examples?

5. Are you receiving help from the program in applying what you're learning? What kind of help?

6. Overall, what is going well with the TxPEP program?

7. What could be improved?

   Ask only if time:
8. Think back to the question about applying what you're learning from TxPEP. How is that going? What are some of the difficulties or challenges you're encountering?

WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)
Thank you for a rich discussion today. We really appreciated the feedback you have given us, and look forward to our next conversation. Do you have any questions?

Texas Principal Excellence Program
TEA Staff Interview Protocol

Introduction

Hello, I'm _____ with Learning Point Associates. I am a member of the team that is conducting the evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP).

Thank you for taking the time for this interview. It should take about 30 minutes. The purpose of the interview is to obtain information on the implementation of the TxPEP program for purposes of providing formative feedback on the program.

Before we start, I just want to note that in our reporting of findings, you will not be identified by name. However, there is a possibility that those who read the report will infer or assume that you were one of those interviewed.

I would like to tape record our interview in order to accurately capture everything you tell me. Do I have your permission to record this interview with you? [Note: If the respondent agrees to be taped, then turn on the tape recorder and note that you need to ask again, for the record, if you have their permission to tape the interview. If the respondent wishes not to be tape recorded, take notes, but do not proceed with recording.]

Respondent

Respondent Code:		Date:	
Interviewer:		Start Time:	End Time:
Is this interview taped?			

TEA Staff Interview Protocol

1. Can you tell me about the role you have played so far in the TxPEP program? *(to be asked only the first time the person is interviewed)*

   Probe: Do you have any responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the program?

2. Could you describe TEA's process for developing a program that is relevant to participants' responsibilities as principals? *(to be asked only the first time the person is interviewed)*

   Left deliberately open-ended. If respondent asks which responsibilities, ask "what responsibilities come to mind?"

3a. Please describe how you selected a vendor to prepare the curriculum and implement the program. *(to be asked only the first time the person is interviewed)*

3b. Could you describe the process for approving the curriculum?
    (to be asked only the first time the person is interviewed)

4a. In your view, is the program being implemented as originally planned?

    Probe: If departures from the proposed program are mentioned, ask the reason for the changes.

4b. Could you comment on the quality of the program offerings?

    Provide examples of quality if needed: expertise of presenters and other program staff, quality of program content, clarity of presentations and materials.

5a. What do you think are the biggest stumbling blocks for participants in changing their leadership practices?

    Examples might include lack of time to implement what is being learned, resistance to change, lack of support, insufficient skills or knowledge.

5b. What is TxPEP doing to address this issue (e.g., in terms of its curriculum and delivery mechanisms)?

6. Is there anything you think it is important to add about the implementation of the TxPEP program thus far?

Texas Principal Excellence Program
APQC Staff Interview Protocol

Introduction

Hello, I'm _____ *with Learning Point Associates. I am a member of the team that is conducting the evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP).*

Thank you for taking the time for this interview. It should take about 30 minutes. The purpose of the interview is to obtain information on the implementation of the TxPEP program for purposes of providing formative feedback on the program.

Before we start, I just want to note that in our reporting of findings, you will not be identified by name. However, there is a possibility that those who read the report will infer or assume that you were one of those interviewed.

I would like to tape record our interview in order to accurately capture everything you tell me. Do I have your permission to record this interview with you? [Note: If the respondent agrees to be taped, then turn on the tape recorder and note that you need to ask again, for the record, if you have their permission to tape the interview. If the respondent wishes not to be tape recorded, take notes, but do not proceed with recording.]

Respondent

Respondent Code:		**Date:**	
Interviewer:		**Start Time:**	**End Time:**
Is this interview taped?			

APQC Staff Interview Protocol

1. Can you tell me about the role you have played so far in the TxPEP program? *(to be asked only the first time the person is interviewed)*

   Probe: Do you have any responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the program?

2. In your view, is the program being implemented as planned?

   Probe: If departures from the proposed program are mentioned, ask the reason for the changes.

3. Have participants provided you with any feedback on the relevance of the program offerings to their responsibilities as leaders of school improvement efforts?

   Left deliberately open-ended. If respondent asks which responsibilities, ask "What responsibilities come to mind?"

4. Do you think participants are generally satisfied with the quality of the program offerings based on the formal and/or informal feedback you've received so far?

   Provide examples of quality if needed: expertise of presenters and other program staff, quality of program content, clarity of presentations and materials.

5a. Do you know if participants are applying what they are learning in their schools?

5b. *If so,* How do you know?
    If not, are principals expected to work on assignments or tasks related to program topics between workshop sessions? Is someone checking to see if they are working on these?

6. Do you think principals are acquiring the knowledge and skills you anticipated from their participation in the program?

   Probe: Based on what you've observed or heard from participants and program staff, are principals having any difficulty in understanding or applying the information or strategies being presented?

7a. What do you think is the biggest stumbling block for participants in changing their leadership practices? *Examples might include lack of time to implement what is being learned, resistance to change, lack of support, insufficient skills or knowledge.*

7b. What is TxPEP doing to address this issue (e.g., in terms of its curriculum and delivery mechanisms)?

8. Is there anything you think it is important to add about the implementation of the TxPEP program thus far?

Texas Principal Excellence Program
Cohort Consultant Interview Protocol

Introduction

Hello, I'm _____ *with Learning Point Associates. I am a member of the team that is conducting the evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP).*

Thank you for taking the time for this interview. It should take about 30 minutes. The purpose of the interview is to obtain information on the implementation of the TxPEP program for purposes of providing formative feedback on the program.

Before we start, I just want to note that in our reporting of findings, you will not be identified by name.

I would like to tape record our interview in order to accurately capture everything you tell me. Do I have your permission to record this interview with you? [Note: If the respondent agrees to be taped, then turn on the tape recorder and note that you need to ask again, for the record, if you have their permission to tape the interview. If the respondent wishes not to be tape recorded, take notes, but do not proceed with recording.]

Respondent

Respondent Code:		**Date:**	
Interviewer:		**Start Time:**	**End Time:**
Is this interview taped?			

Cohort Consultant Interview Protocol

1. Could you describe your role as a cohort consultant for TxPEP program? *(to be asked only the first time the person is interviewed)*

    Probe: How often do you meet or talk with principals? In what ways do you provide support to them?

    Note: As outlined on the TxPEP website, cohort consultants' responsibilities include providing ongoing support and guidance; arranging online meetings with participants to offer support and monitor progress in developing leadership capacity; serving as trouble shooters for participants who are seeking assistance; communicating with principals on a regular basis and facilitating shared learning and practice; communicating with TxPEP leadership on progress of the cohort and cohort members.

2. In your view is the cohort consultant component of TxPEP being implementing as planned (i.e., as described to you when you joined the program)?

    Probe: Are there tasks you haven't been able to complete or to complete as planned in your role as a cohort consultant?

3. Based on your work with participants, could you comment on the relevance of the program offerings to participants' responsibilities as principals?

    Left deliberately open-ended. If respondent asks which responsibilities, ask "what responsibilities come to mind?"

4. Could you comment on the quality of the program offerings?

    Provide examples of quality if needed: quality of program content, clarity of materials and presentations, expertise of presenters.

    What have you heard from participants about the quality of the program?

5a. Do you know if participants are applying what they are learning in their schools?

5b. *If so,* How do you know?

    Probe: Do you provide support or assistance in implementing particular practices or strategies?

6. Based on what you've observed or been told, are principals having any difficulty in understanding or applying the concepts and practices they are learning about in TxPEP?

7a. What do you think is the biggest stumbling block for participants in changing their leadership practices? *Examples might include lack of time to implement what is being learned, resistance to change, lack of support, insufficient skills or knowledge.*

Cohort Consultant Interview Protocol

7b. What is TxPEP doing to address this issue (e.g., in terms of its curriculum and delivery mechanisms)?

8. Is there anything you think it is important to add about the implementation of the TxPEP program thus far?

Texas Principal Excellence Program
Principal Daily Checklist

Findings from this checklist will be used for the evaluation of the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP). The checklists will help the Texas Education Agency (TEA) gain a better understanding of the role of principal leadership in school improvement efforts. We would like you to complete the following checklist at the end of the day for **one week.** If you miss a day, you can go back and fill out the checklist for the previous day.

Completing the Checklist

We have organized principal activities into six leadership areas. Please provide a general estimate of how much time you may have spent on activities associated with each area—none, less than 1 hour, 1–3 hours, 3 or more hours.

We know that the work of principals is complex and varied and that, on any given day or in any given week, you may not work on some of the areas included in the checklist. If you did not spend time working on an area that is listed, just indicate "None" and move to the next item. Additional activities can be added in the space provided. The checklist should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The Importance of Your Participation

While your participation is voluntary, it is critical to evaluating the effectiveness of TxPEP for principals and making ongoing improvements to the program. Your responses will remain completely confidential; no one but the project staff at Learning Point Associates, the external evaluator for TxPEP, will have access to these checklists. Responses will be reported in the aggregate only, and no individuals will be identified in reports or summaries of the data. In completing this checklist, please remember that this is an evaluation of the TxPEP program, *not* an evaluation of you as principal. If you need any assistance, please contact Karen Drill at 773-288-7640 or karen.drill@learningpt.org.

Accessing the Daily Checklists

To access the checklist for a specific day, please click on the link below for that day. Your answers will be automatically saved.

- Monday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Tuesday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Wednesday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Thursday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Friday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*

Principal Daily Checklist for TxPEP Participants

Did you work today?

☐ Yes (CONTINUE)
☐ No (sick day, vacation day, personal day, etc.) (EXIT)

Principal Daily Checklist for TxPEP Participants

Please take a minute to review the examples provided for each leadership area. Click here to view the examples. *(Descriptions appear on next page.)*

We have included an "other" category. If you engaged in activities that you feel were important but do not fit into one of the six areas, please tell us about the activity by specifying it under "other" and then respond to the same questions.

Review your activities for today, and answer the following questions for each of the leadership areas:

- **How much time did you spend working on activities (planning, thinking, implementing, delegating, and supervising) in the leadership area? Please select "None" for areas you spent virtually no time on.**

- **In the areas in which you worked, how effective did you think you were in providing strong leadership?**

- **To what extent did you incorporate information learned through TxPEP in your work in that area?**

Leadership Areas	How much time did you spend today working on this leadership area?				If you worked on this area today, how effective do you think you were in providing strong leadership?						
	None	Less than 1 hour	1–3 hours	More than 3 hours	Not effective	Minimally effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Not at all	To a minimal extent	To a moderate extent
Change Management											
Building Learning Communities											
Data-Driven Decision Making											
School or Program Evaluation											
Ethical Leadership											
Resource Management											
Other (specify)											

Principal Daily Checklist for TxPEP Participants

Descriptions to appear in a pop-up window by clicking on an embedded hyperlink:

Examples of Each Leadership Area

Change Management

- Strategic planning and goal setting

- Developing and communicating a vision of change for the school

- Building consensus around that vision

- Analyzing organizational problems and proposing solutions related to change efforts

- Managing conflicts associated with change

- Identifying and addressing the needs and interests of students, parents, teachers, and staff regarding change efforts

- Building alliances outside the school to support change efforts

- Addressing district initiatives

Building Professional Learning Communities

- Providing instructional leadership (e.g., ensuring that teachers receive feedback on their instruction)

- Supporting teacher and staff professional development

- Encouraging and providing opportunities for collaboration among teachers

- Engaging teachers and staff in decision making

- Communicating standards and goals for teaching and learning to teachers or students

- Recognizing and celebrating the accomplishments of teachers or students with respect to teaching and learning

- Engaging parents' support for the achievement of academic standards and goals

- Promoting a positive school climate

Principal Daily Checklist for TxPEP Participants

Data-Driven Decision Making

Compiling and using a variety of data sources for purposes such as the following:

- Identifying gaps in the curriculum
- Setting learning goals for individual students
- Reassigning students to classes or groups
- Determining topics for teacher professional development
- Setting school improvement goals

School or Program Evaluation

- Monitoring progress in meeting school or program goals (e.g., monitoring classroom instruction)
- Developing or overseeing the use of evaluation instruments (e.g., surveys, observation protocols)
- Overseeing the collection, analysis, and/or interpretation of school or program evaluation data

Ethical Leadership

- Discussing ethical issues with teachers, students, and/or parents (e.g., cheating on a test, plagiarism, violating a school policy)
- Reflecting on actions or decisions (your own or others') to ensure that they are fair, honest, nondiscriminatory and ethical (i.e., in accordance with the Revised Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators)
- Resolving conflicts among competing interests within the school based on ethical criteria
- Providing opportunities to share and discuss diverse views and opinions

Resource Management

- Preparing budgets or budget reports
- Seeking grants
- Mobilizing community resources
- Managing personnel (recruiting, hiring, supervising, evaluating, problem solving)
- Overseeing building operations (schedules, space allocation, maintenance, vendors)

Texas Principal Excellence Program
Principal Daily Checklist

As a comparison group principal for the Texas Principal Excellence Program (TxPEP) evaluation, your responses will help the Texas Education Agency (TEA) understand how TxPEP impacts the leadership practices of principals participating in the program. We would like you to complete the following checklist at the end of the day for **one week.** If you miss a day, you can go back and fill out the checklist for the previous day.

Completing the Checklist

We have organized principal activities into six leadership areas. Please provide a general estimate of how much time you may have spent on activities associated with each area—none, less than 1 hour, 1–3 hours, 3 or more hours.

We know that the work of principals is complex and varied and that, on any given day or in any given week, you may not work on some of the areas included in the checklist. If you did not spend time working on an area that is listed, just indicate "None" and move to the next item. Additional activities can be added in the space provided. The checklist should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The Importance of Your Participation

While your participation is voluntary, it is critical to evaluating the effectiveness of TxPEP for principals and making ongoing improvements to the program. Your responses will remain completely confidential; no one but the project staff at Learning Point Associates, the external evaluator for TxPEP, will have access to this data. Responses will be reported in the aggregate only, and no individuals will be identified in reports or summaries of the data. In completing this checklist, please remember that this is an evaluation of the TxPEP program, *not* an evaluation of you as principal. If you need any assistance, please contact Karen Drill at 312-288-7640 or karen.drill@learningpt.org.

Accessing the Daily Checklists

To access the checklist for a specific day, please click on the link below for that day. Your answers will be automatically saved.

- Monday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Tuesday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Wednesday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Thursday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*
- Friday, *(Date to be filled in automatically)*

Did you work today?

☐ Yes (CONTINUE)
☐ No (sick day, vacation day, personal day, etc.) (EXIT)

Please take a minute to review the examples provided for each leadership area. Click here to view the examples. *(Descriptions appear on next page.)*

We have included an "other" category. If you engaged in activities that you feel were important but do not fit into one of the six areas, please tell us about the activity by specifying it under "other" and then respond to the same questions.

Review your activities for today, and answer the following questions for each of the leadership areas:

- **How much time did you spend working on activities (planning, thinking, implementing, delegating, and supervising) in the leadership area? Please select "None" for areas you spent virtually no time on.**

- **In the areas in which you worked, how effective did you think you were in providing strong leadership?**

Leadership Areas	How much time did you spend today working on this leadership area?				If you worked on this area today, how effective did you think you were in providing strong leadership?			
	None	**Less than 1 hour**	**1–3 hours**	**More than 3 hours**	**Not effective**	**Minimally effective**	**Moderately effective**	**Very effective**
Change Management								
Building Learning Communities								
Data-Driven Decision Making								
School or Program Evaluation								
Ethical Leadership								
Resource Management								
Other (specify)								

Descriptions to appear in a pop-up window by clicking on an embedded hyperlink:

Examples of Each Leadership Area

Change Management

- Strategic planning and goal setting

- Developing and communicating a vision of change for the school

- Building consensus around that vision

- Analyzing organizational problems and proposing solutions related to change efforts

- Managing conflicts associated with change

- Identifying and addressing the needs and interests of students, parents, teachers, and staff regarding change efforts

- Building alliances outside the school to support change efforts

- Addressing district initiatives

Building Professional Learning Communities

- Providing instructional leadership (e.g., ensuring that teachers receive feedback on their instruction)

- Supporting teacher and staff professional development

- Encouraging and providing opportunities for collaboration among teachers

- Engaging teachers and staff in decision making

- Communicating standards and goals for teaching and learning to teachers or students

- Recognizing and celebrating the accomplishments of teachers or students with respect to teaching and learning

- Engaging parents' support for the achievement of academic standards and goals

- Promoting a positive school climate

Data-Driven Decision Making

Compiling and using a variety of data sources for purposes such as the following:

- Identifying gaps in the curriculum
- Setting learning goals for individual students
- Reassigning students to classes or groups
- Determining topics for teacher professional development
- Setting school improvement goals

School or Program Evaluation

- Monitoring progress in meeting school or program goals (e.g., monitoring classroom instruction)
- Developing or overseeing the use of evaluation instruments (e.g., surveys, observation protocols)
- Overseeing the collection, analysis, and/or interpretation of school or program evaluation data

Ethical Leadership

- Discussing ethical issues with teachers, students, and/or parents (e.g., cheating on a test, plagiarism, violating a school policy)
- Reflecting on actions or decisions (your own or others') to ensure that they are fair, honest, nondiscriminatory and ethical (i.e., in accordance with the Revised Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators)
- Resolving conflicts among competing interests within the school based on ethical criteria
- Providing opportunities to share and discuss diverse views and opinions

Resource Management

- Preparing budgets or budget reports
- Seeking grants
- Mobilizing community resources
- Managing personnel (recruiting, hiring, supervising, evaluating, problem solving)
- Overseeing building operations (schedules, space allocation, maintenance, vendors)

Appendix B
Administration and Scaling of the Principal Leadership Survey and Administration of Principal Focus Groups and Program Staff Interviews

Appendix B includes a description of the procedures used in administering the Principal Leadership Survey to TxPEP participants in late September through early November 2007 as well as the procedures used for scaling survey responses. Also described are the sample selection procedures for interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants and principal focus groups and the procedures used in scheduling and administering the interviews and focus groups conducted in December 2007.

Principal Leadership Survey

Administration

The first Web-based Principal Leadership Survey was launched in fall 2007, prior to the first TxPEP workshop, to obtain baseline measures of TxPEP participants' leadership effectiveness and knowledge. In late September 2007, Learning Point Associates e-mailed each TxPEP participant, requesting that they complete the Principal Leadership Survey. Instructions as well as unique user names and passwords were included in the e-mail. The participants also were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Respondents initially were asked to complete the survey by Friday October 5, 2007. To increase response rates, the deadline was extended to November 11, 2007. Reminders were sent on a weekly basis to participants who had not yet completed the survey.

Scaling of Survey Responses

For each of the six leadership constructs included in the initial Principal Leadership Survey (change management, building learning communities, data-driven decision making, resource management, school/program evaluation, and ethical leadership), analyses were conducted to determine whether responses to items measuring each construct could be summarized using a single scale. Results of these analyses indicated that each of the item sets cohered as a scale and were reliable and valid measures of the construct. Reliability refers the extent to which responses to items measuring a given construct are consistent. Validity refers to the extent to which the survey measures what it claims to measure. Reliability measures ranged from 0.78 for building learning communities to 0.89 for school and program evaluation.

There are several advantages to creating scales from groups of survey items. Multiple items that measure a single construct often tap different aspects or dimensions of the construct. Consequently, a good scale has better reliability and validity than a single item. A single scale also is easier to interpret than a group of items.

The primary method used for item analysis was the Rasch model for ordered categories (Andrich, 1978; Rasch, 1980; Wright & Masters, 1982; Wright & Stone, 1979) implemented

with WINSTEPS (Linacre, 2004), a statistical software program. When implemented properly, Rasch models can be used to solve a number of measurement problems posed by traditional testing approaches such as (1) the sample dependency of item and person estimates; (2) the lack of procedures for determining how measurement error varies across the levels of the latent trait; (3) the inability to directly compare scores obtained from the same set of items unless complete data are available; (4) the ordinal nature of the scores (Rasch scores possess interval qualities and are continuous); and (5) the lack of techniques for validating response patterns (Smith & Smith, 2004; Wright, 1977).

The Rasch model orders items in terms of the difficulty of endorsing the items. For example, on the Principal Leadership Survey, most respondents indicated that they were effective in "providing opportunities for teachers to learn about and implement evidence-based 'best' practices," one of the items measuring the building learning communities construct. The Rasch model thus identified this item as relatively easy to endorse. Fewer respondents indicated that they were effective at "maintaining high academic expectations and standards for all teachers and students." This item thus was identified as relatively difficult to endorse. In computing scale scores for each leadership construct, the Rasch model adjusts for the difficulty of endorsing each of the items that make up the scale.

When the data fit the model requirements, the person measures and item calibrations appear on a common logit scale (Perline, Wright, & Wainer, 1979; Rasch, 1980). Creation of a common scale allows the calculation of a probabilistic outcome of an interaction between any person and any item (e.g., the probability of selecting a rating scale category). As a result, a clear picture can be obtained of which response category a person can be expected to endorse given, for example, the person's level of knowledge or effectiveness and the item calibrations. Once the parameters of the Rasch model are estimated, they are used to calculate a set of scale scores for each of the constructs being analyzed.

Rasch modeling allows for comparisons across surveys containing the same constructs and items. By using a concurrent Rasch calibration method, scale scores from multiple survey administrations can calibrated on the same scale (i.e., scores can be compared directly to one another).

Interviews With Program Staff

Sample Selection

To identify program staff who could be interviewed regarding the development and quality of the TxPEP program, the evaluation team requested the names of TEA program staff who were involved in the selection of the TxPEP vendor (APQC) and the review of program design and content. A similar request was made to APQC for the names of program staff involved in the development and implementation of the TxPEP program and the names of principals serving as cohort consultants. Two members of TEA's program staff who were directly involved with vendor selection and program review were selected to participate in interviews. Two APQC staff members who were involved with program development and implementation also were selected. Two of the 48 cohort consultants for the program were selected randomly to be interviewed.

E-mails were sent to each of these individuals requesting their participation in the interviews. All agreed to be interviewed.

Administration

Interviews were scheduled individually and conducted by a member of the evaluation team in early December 2007. Respondents were asked for permission to record the interviews. All respondents agreed. The digital recordings were uploaded to a secure website and retrieved by a transcription company under contract with Learning Point Associates. Transcripts were analyzed to identify common themes and possible differences in perceptions among those interviewed.

Principal Focus Groups

Sample Selection

Participants for three participant focus groups were selected based on four criteria: (1) the principal's campus rating (AU or non-AU); (2) completion of the initial Principal Leadership Survey; (3) school grade level: elementary or elementary/secondary, middle, and high school; and (4) district type: major urban, other central city, major suburban, other central city suburban, independent town, nonmetropolitan stable, rural, and charter (there were no districts categorized as non-metropolitan fast growing in the participant sample). Because TxPEP participation is required of principals of AU schools and these principals constituted the majority of TxPEP participants, the sample of potential focus group participants was restricted to principals from AU campuses. Within this group, the sample was further restricted to those who had completed the initial Principal Leadership Survey because it was assumed that these principals were more likely to respond to the request to participate in a focus group. The other criteria ensured that principals who were selected would represent participants as whole with respect to school level and district type. Principals who had completed the survey were divided into three groups by school level (elementary, middle, and high school). Within each of these groups, one to two principals were randomly selected from each district type.

The final focus group sample consisted of 12 elementary, 12 middle school, and 12 high school principals who were from the full range of district types represented in the participant sample. Nine principals within each group were sent an e-mail requesting their participation in one of the three focus groups. If a principal indicated that he or she did not wish to participate, a replacement principal was selected. Follow-up calls were made to each principal to confirm participation in a focus group via conference call. The goal was to convene three focus groups of six participants each. Additional principals were invited in case some were unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.

Those invited to participate were offered several potential meeting times. Times that worked best for the majority of participants in each focus group were chosen for convening the groups. Of the nine principals who were selected for each of the focus groups, four middle school principals, four elementary schools principals, and three high school principals were able to participate at the scheduled times. Scheduling was difficult for the first round of focus groups because of end-of-semester demands on principals as well as the approaching holidays.

For each of the three focus groups, the distribution by district type was as follows:

- Elementary: other central city (1); other central city suburban (1); rural (2).

- Middle: major suburban (1); other central city suburban (1); nonmetropolitan stable (2).

- High: other central city suburban (1); nonmetropolitan stable (1); rural (1).

Administration

The focus groups were led by two members of the TxPEP evaluation team at Learning Point Associates. Focus groups were held on the following dates: December 12, 2007 (elementary); December 13, 2007 (middle school); and December 19, 2007 (high school). Each focus group meeting lasted approximately 50 minutes. Participants in each focus group were asked for their permission to record the conversation. All participants agreed. The digital recordings were uploaded to a secure website and retrieved by a transcription company under contract to Learning Point Associates. Transcripts then were analyzed to identify common themes and patterns of response across participants and focus groups.

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Appendix C
Analyses of TxPEP Attendance Data

Appendix C presents analyses of attendance data for the initial TxPEP summit and the first and second workshops. Overall attendance is analyzed, as well as attendance by campus rating (AU and non-AU), school type (elementary, elementary/secondary, middle, and high school), and district type (rural, urban, suburban, and charter).

Overall Attendance

Data were obtained from APQC on attendance at the initial summit meeting and the first and second TxPEP workshops. As shown in Table C1, of the 318 TxPEP participants, 96% attended the initial summit, 95% attended the first workshop, and 88% attended the second workshop. Overall, 84% of participants attended the summit and both workshops.

Table C1. Overall TxPEP Attendance

Attendance Status	Summit I	Workshop I	Workshop II	Workshops I and II	Summit I and Both Workshops
Attended	96% ($n = 305$)	95% ($n = 302$)	88% ($n = 280$)	86% ($n = 272$)	84% ($n = 267$)
Confirmed	2% ($n = 7$)	1% ($n = 3$)	0% ($n = 0$)	0% ($n = 0$)	0% ($n = 0$)
Did Not Attend	2% ($n = 6$)	4% ($n = 13$)	12% ($n = 38$)	14% ($n = 46$)	16% ($n = 52$)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Attendance by Campus Rating (AU Versus Non-AU Campuses).

Table C2 presents a breakdown of attendance at the initial summit meeting and first two workshops by participants from AU campuses. Table C3 presents the same breakdown for participants from non-AU campuses. More than 90% of participants from both groups attended both the initial summit and first workshop. The most notable difference in attendance between AU and non-AU participants was at the second workshop. Approximately 92% of participants from AU campuses attended the second workshop, compared with 70% of participants from non-AU campuses. Overall attendance also differed for the two groups: 88% of AU participants attended the summit and both workshops, whereas 68% of non-AU participants attended all of three events.

Table C2. TxPEP Attendance for Participants
From Academically Unacceptable Campuses

Attendance Status	Summit I	Workshop I	Workshop II	Workshops I and II	Summit I and Both Workshops
Attended	97% (*n* = 250)	96% (*n* = 247)	92% (*n* = 238)	89% (*n* = 230)	88% (*n* = 226)
Confirmed	2% (*n* = 6)	1% (*n* = 3)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)
Did Not Attend	1% (*n* = 2)	3% (*n* = 8)	8% (*n* = 20)	11% (*n* = 28)	12% (*n* = 32)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C3. TxPEP Attendance for Participants
From Academically Acceptable Campuses

Attendance Status	Summit I	Workshop I	Workshop II	Workshops I and II	Summit I and Both Workshops
Attended	92% (*n* = 55)	92% (*n* = 55)	70% (*n* = 42)	70% (*n* = 42)	68% (*n* = 41)
Confirmed	2% (*n* = 1)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)
Did Not Attend	7% (*n* = 4)	8% (*n* = 5)	30% (*n* = 18)	30% (*n* = 18)	32% (*n* = 19)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100. A small number of schools that did not have a campus rating are included in the table.

Attendance by School Type

A breakdown of TxPEP attendance at the initial summit and first two workshops by school type is presented in Tables C4 through C8. Of the 288 participants for whom data about school type were available, most attended the first summit; attendance rates by school type ranged from 96% to 99% for this event. Attendance at both the first and second workshops ranged from 72% to 89%, with elementary/secondary school participants having the lowest attendance rate. Attendance at the first summit and both workshops also ranged from 71% to 89%, with elementary/secondary school participants having the lowest attendance and middle school participants having the highest attendance. Across the three events, elementary/secondary school participants had consistently lower attendance rates than participants from the other three groups. However, the elementary/secondary school group is the smallest of the four groups, with only 25 participants.

Table C4. Attendance at Summit I by School Type

	School Type			
	Elementary	**Elementary/ Secondary**	**Middle**	**High**
Attended	98% (*n* = 118)	96% (*n* = 24)	99% (*n* = 87)	96% (*n* = 52)
Confirmed	1% (*n* = 1)	4% (*n* = 1)	1% (*n* = 1)	0% (*n* = 0)
Did Not Attend	2% (*n* = 2)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	4% (*n* = 2)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C5. TxPEP Attendance at Workshop I by School Type

	School Type			
	Elementary	**Elementary/ Secondary**	**Middle**	**High**
Attended	100% (*n* = 121)	84% (*n* = 21)	97% (*n*= 85)	89% (*n* = 48)
Confirmed	0% (*n* = 0)	4% (*n* = 1)	1% (*n* = 1)	0% (*n* = 0)
Did Not Attend	0% (*n* = 0)	12% (*n* = 3)	2% (*n* = 2)	11% (*n* = 6)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C6. TxPEP Attendance at Workshop II by School Type

	School Type			
	Elementary	**Elementary/ Secondary**	**Middle**	**High**
Attended	88% (*n* = 106)	84% (*n* = 21)	91% (*n* = 80)	93% (*n* = 50)
Did Not Attend	12% (*n* = 15)	16% (*n* = 4)	9% (*n* = 8)	7% (*n* = 4)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C7. TxPEP Attendance at Both Workshop I and II by School Type

	School Type			
	Elementary	**Elementary/ Secondary**	**Middle**	**High**
Attended Both Workshops	88% (*n* = 106)	72% (*n* = 18)	89% (*n* = 78)	89% (*n* = 48)
Did Not Attend	12% (*n* = 15)	28% (*n* = 7)	11% (*n* = 10)	11% (*n* = 6)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C8. TxPEP Attendance at Summit I and Both Workshop I and II by School Type

	School Type			
	Elementary	**Elementary/ Secondary**	**Middle**	**High**
Attended Both Workshops and Summit	86% (*n* = 104)	72% (*n* = 18)	89% (*n* = 78)	87% (*n* = 47)
Did Not Attend	14% (*n* = 17)	28% (*n* = 7)	11% (*n* = 10)	13% (*n* = 7)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Attendance by District Type

A breakdown of TxPEP attendance at the initial summit meeting and first two workshops by district type is presented in Tables C9 through C13. For these analyses, the nine TEA categories for district types were collapsed into four categories: rural, urban, suburban, and charter. Rural includes "independent town" and "rural;" urban includes "major urban" and "other central city;" suburban includes "major suburban," "other central city suburban," "non-metropolitan fast growing," and "non-metropolitan stable;" and charter includes only "charter."

Among the 286 participants for whom data about district type were available, attendance at the first summit ranged from 95% to 100%, with suburban participants having the lowest attendance. Attendance at the first workshop ranged from 90% to 98%, with charter school participants having the lowest attendance. Attendance at the second workshop ranged from 78% to 93%. Attendance at the first summit and both workshops ranged from 71% to 89%, with participants from charter schools having the lowest attendance and those from suburban schools having the highest attendance. Although the attendance rates of participants from charter schools tended to be lower than those of participants from other groups, only 41 participants were from charter schools.

Table C9. TxPEP Attendance at Summit I by District Type

	District Type			
	Charter	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Suburban**
Attended	98% (*n* = 40)	100% (*n* = 51)	100% (*n* = 78)	95% (*n* = 110)
Confirmed	2% (*n* = 1)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	2% (*n* = 2)
Did Not Attend	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	3% (*n* = 4)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C10. TxPEP Attendance at Workshop I by District Type

	District Type			
	Charter	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Suburban**
Attended	90% (*n* = 37)	98% (*n* = 50)	95% (*n* = 74)	97% (*n* = 112)
Confirmed	2% (*n* = 1)	0% (*n* = 0)	0% (*n* = 0)	1% (*n* = 1)
Did Not Attend	7% (*n* = 3)	2% (*n* = 1)	5% (*n* = 4)	3% (*n* = 3)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C11. TxPEP Attendance at Workshop II by District Type

	District Type			
	Charter	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Suburban**
Attended	78% (*n* = 32)	86% (*n* = 44)	91% (*n* = 71)	93% (*n* = 108)
Did Not Attend	22% (*n* = 9)	14% (*n* = 7)	9% (*n* = 7)	7% (*n* = 8)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C12. TxPEP Attendance at Both Workshop I and II by District Type

	District Type			
	Charter	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Suburban**
Attended Both Workshops	71% (*n* = 29)	86% (*n* = 44)	88% (*n* = 69)	91% (*n* = 106)
Did Not Attend	29% (*n* = 12)	14% (*n* = 7)	12% (*n* = 9)	9% (*n* = 10)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Table C13. TxPEP Attendance at Summit I and Both Workshop I and II by District Type

	District Type			
	Charter	**Rural**	**Urban**	**Suburban**
Attended Both Workshops and Summit	71% (*n* = 29)	86% (*n* = 44)	88% (*n* = 69)	89% (*n* = 103)
Did Not Attend	29% (*n* = 12)	14% (*n* = 7)	12% (*n* = 9)	11% (*n* = 13)

Source: Evaluator analysis of TxPEP attendance data.
Note: Due to rounding, percents may not total to 100.

Appendix D
Analyses of Data From the Principal Leadership Survey

Analyses of data from the Principal Leadership Survey, which was completed by TxPEP participants in fall 2007, are described below. A summary of overall responses as well as analyses of responses by campus rating, school type, and district type are presented. In addition, an analysis of the relationship between principal leadership ability, as measured on the Principal Leadership Survey, and prior student achievement is presented as well as an analysis of the relationship of principal leadership ability to school demographic variables.

Overall Results

Six leadership constructs were included in the Principal Leadership Survey: change management, building learning communities, data-driven decision making, resource management, school/program evaluation, and ethical leadership. Items measuring the first three constructs asked respondents to rate their effectiveness in working on activities relevant to each construct (e.g., articulating a vision of change for change management). Items measuring the last three constructs asked respondents to rate their knowledge of best practices relevant to each construct (e.g., promoting organizational efficiency through effective budget management for resource management).

A single scale score was calculated for each respondent and each leadership construct based on an analysis of responses to items measuring each construct. For each construct, the average item difficulty of the scale as a whole was set at 50. Scale scores above 50 indicate that participants tended to respond positively (i.e., reported that they were effective or knowledgeable with respect to the construct being measured). Scale scores below 50 indicate that participants tended to respond negatively (i.e., reported minimal levels of effectiveness or knowledge for a given construct). Scale scores are not equated across constructs; therefore comparisons among constructs (e.g., change management to ethical leadership) cannot be made.

Of the 314 individuals who were still participating in TxPEP as of December 2007, 255 responded to the initial Principal Leadership Survey (the four participants who withdrew from the program after the second workshop were excluded from analyses). Table D1 shows the means, standard deviations, and the minimum and maximum values for each scale score. Overall, these scale scores indicate that, on average, survey respondents rated themselves positively on each of the leadership constructs.

Table D1. Principal Leadership Survey Scale Scores (*N* = 255)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Change Management	77.38	25.69	-0.14	131.95
Building Learning Communities	79.80	20.64	24.16	122.11
Data-Driven Decision Making	86.93	31.96	-11.60	134.69
Resource Management	62.26	24.51	-17.37	124.31
School and Program Evaluation	75.00	37.49	-46.55	147.01
Ethical Leadership	77.51	28.85	-5.26	121.09

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.

To illustrate the typical distribution of responses by response category, responses to an item of average difficulty were modeled for each construct. Table D2 presents the results of this analysis for change management, building learning communities, and data-driven decision making. For each of these constructs, respondents were asked to rate their level of effectiveness in working on activities associated with the construct. For all three constructs, an analysis of response patterns indicates that the majority of respondents would be expected to report that they were moderately effective in responding to an item of average difficulty. Approximately one third of respondents would be expected to report that they were very effective with respect to data-driven decision making and building learning communities, while only 20% would be expected to give this response for change management.

Table D2. Estimated Distribution of Responses for Change Management, Building Learning Communities, and Data-Driven Decision Making for an Item of Average Difficulty

	Change Management (*N* = 255)	Building Learning Communities (*N* = 254)	Data-Driven Decision Making (*N* = 253)
Very Effective	20.2%	32.9%	34.7%
Moderately Effective	70.4%	58.3%	51.8%
Minimally Effective	8.7%	8.7%	12.7%
Not Effective	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.

Table D3 presents the results of the same analysis for resource management, school/program evaluation, and ethical leadership. For items measuring each of these constructs, respondents were asked to rate their level of knowledge. The majority of respondents would be expected to report that they were moderately knowledgeable in responding to an item of average difficulty for all three constructs. However, almost half of the respondents would be expected to report that they had extensive knowledge of ethical leadership. In contrast, less than 16% would be expected

to report that they had extensive knowledge of either resource management or school/program evaluation. More than 20% of respondents would be expected to report that they had only some knowledge of these two leadership areas.

Table D3. Estimated Distribution of Responses for Resource Management, School/Program Evaluation, and Ethical Leadership for an Item of Average Difficulty

	Resource Management (*N* = 253)	School/Program Evaluation (*N* = 253)	Ethical Leadership (*N* = 253)
Extensive Knowledge	13.1%	15.9%	46.2%
Moderate Knowledge	61.4%	61.0%	52.2%
Some Knowledge	22.3%	21.9%	1.6%
Little or No Knowledge	3.2%	1.2%	0.0%

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.

Analysis of Survey Responses by Respondent Subgroup

Scale scores for each leadership construct were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine whether scores differed significantly across subgroups for each of the following variables: (1) campus rating, (2) school type, and (3) district type. For campus rating, TEA data were available for 239 of the 255 survey respondents; for school type, data were available for 236 participants; and for district type data were available for 235 participants.

Survey Results by Campus Rating

Each leadership construct was evaluated to determine whether scale scores differed according to participants' campus rating (AU or non-AU). Of the 239 survey respondents for whom campus ratings data were available, 193 participants were from AU campuses and 46 were from non-AU campuses (though these numbers vary slightly by construct.)

Of the six constructs, only resource management showed a significant difference between participants from AU and non-AU campuses. As shown in Table D4, participants from AU campuses had significantly higher scale scores than participants from non-AU campuses ($p < 0.01$), indicating that they viewed themselves as more knowledgeable about resource management.

Table D4. Means and Standard Deviations for Resource Management by Campus Rating

Campus Rating	Mean	Standard Deviation
AU (*N* = 192)	64.51	23.75
Non-AU (*N* = 45)	51.88	27.52

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: AU refers to participants from campuses rated as academically unacceptable; non-AU refers to participants from campuses that were not rated as academically unacceptable.

Two other constructs approached statistical significance: change management ($p = 0.09$) and ethical leadership ($p = 0.08$). In both cases, the scale scores of participants from AU campuses were higher than those of participants from non-AU campuses.

Survey Results by School Type

Scales scores for each construct were compared across four different school types: elementary, elementary/secondary, middle school, and high school. The sample sizes for each subgroup are as follows (again these varied slightly across constructs): 101 elementary school respondents, 21 elementary/secondary school respondents, 67 middle school respondents, and 47 high school respondents.

None of the constructs showed any significant difference across the four school types, although two approached significance: data-driven decision making and resource management. In each case, participants from elementary/secondary schools had lower scale scores than participants from other types of schools. Only a few respondents were from elementary/secondary schools, therefore these results should be interpreted with caution.

Survey Results by District Type

Each construct also was examined for differences across four district types: rural, urban, suburban, and charter. The sample sizes for each of these subgroups are as follows (again these varied slightly across constructs): 44 rural school respondents, 61 urban school respondents, 101 suburban school respondents, and 29 charter school respondents.

Of the six constructs, only resource management showed statistically significant differences across district types ($p = 0.01$). Posthoc analyses revealed that the only significant difference was between charter and urban school respondents ($p = 0.01$). As shown in Table D5, charter school participants had the lowest scale scores for knowledge of resource management while urban participants had the highest scale scores.

Table D5. Means and Standard Deviations for Resource Management by District Type

District Type	Mean	Standard Deviation
Rural (*N* = 44)	61.73	24.86
Urban (*N* = 60)	69.42	23.30
Suburban (*N* = 100)	60.42	24.84
Charter (*N* = 29)	51.53	25.44

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: Means for charter and urban participants differ significantly (p = .01)

The overall results for data-driven decision making were marginally significant. Posthoc analyses indicate that only one comparison approached statistical significance: charter school participants had lower scale scores for this construct than urban participants.

Correlational Analyses

Because previous research has shown that successful school leadership has a positive impact on student achievement, particularly in low-performing schools (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004), correlational analyses were conducted to determine whether participant ratings of their leadership ability on the Principal Leadership Survey were correlated with student achievement (measured prior to program participation) and school demographic characteristics (e.g., percentage of minority students in the school, percentage of students from economically disadvantaged students in the school). The measure of student achievement used in these analyses was overall student performance on the 2006–07 TAKS assessment (i.e., all grades and all tests).

TEA data about student TAKS achievement were available for 226 of the 255 survey respondents; data about the school variables included in analyses were available for 236 of these respondents. As shown in Table D6, several significant relationships were identified, indicating that baseline leadership abilities are related to both prior student achievement and various school demographic characteristics.

**Table D6. Correlation of Principal Leadership Scale Scores
With 2006–07 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
and School Demographic Values**

	All TAKS (*N* = 226)	Percent Minority (*N* = 236)	Percent Disadvantaged (*N* = 236)	Percent Special Education (*N* = 236)	Percent Limited English Proficient (*N* = 236)	Total Students (*N* = 236)
Change Management	-0.18*	0.12	0.09	-0.01	0.04	0.04
Building Learning Communities	-0.06	0.22**	0.19**	-0.07	0.10	0.01
Data Driven Decision Making	0.05	0.09	0.09	-0.04	0.00	0.05
Resource Management	-0.13	0.16*	0.18*	0.03	0.02	0.03
School/Program Evaluation	-0.20**	0.23**	0.18*	0.07	0.01	-0.01
Ethical Leadership	-0.15*	0.14*	0.05	0.16*	-0.05	0.06

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Principal Leadership Survey completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.

*$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$

Effectiveness Ratings for Change Management. There was a significant, negative correlation between change management and school TAKS proficiency (r = -0.18, p = 0.001), indicating that in schools with high TAKS proficiency ratings, principals' change management effectiveness ratings tended to be low and, conversely, when proficiency is low, principals' ratings tended to be high.

Effectiveness Ratings for Building Learning Communities. There was a significant correlation between building learning communities and two demographic variables: percent minority and percent economically disadvantaged students.

- The correlation between building learning communities and percent minority students was significant and positive (r = 0.22, p = 0.001), indicating that in schools with a high percentage of minority students, principals' effectiveness ratings for building learning communities also tended to be high.

- There was also a significant, positive correlation between building learning communities and percent economically disadvantaged students (r = 0.19, p = 0.003) indicating that in schools with high percentages of economically disadvantaged students, principals' effectiveness ratings for building learning communities also tended to be high.

Effectiveness Ratings for Data-Driven Decision Making. There were no significant correlations between data-driven decision making and the TAKS or demographic variables.

Knowledge Ratings for Resource Management. There was a significant relationship between resource management and two other variables:

- The relationship between resource management and percent minority ($r = 0.16$, $p = 0.01$) was positive and significant, indicating that in schools with a high percentage of minority students, principals' resource management ratings tended to be high.

- The relationship between resource management and percent economically disadvantaged students also was significant and positive ($r = 0.18$, $p = 0.01$) indicating that in schools with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, principals' resource management ratings tended to be high.

Knowledge Ratings for School/Program Evaluation. Three variables were significantly correlated with school/program evaluation:

- There was a significant, negative relationship between school/program evaluation and school TAKS proficiency ($r = -0.20$, $p = 0.003$), indicating that in schools with high TAKS proficiency, principals' school/program evaluation ratings tended to be low.

- The relationship between school/program evaluation and percent minority was significant and positive ($r = 0.23$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that in schools with a high percentage of minority students, principals' school/program evaluation ratings also tended to be high.

- There was also a significant, positive correlation between the percent economically disadvantaged students and principals' knowledge ratings for school/program evaluation ($r = 0.18$, $p = 0.01$), indicating that in schools with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, principals' ratings for program evaluation tended to be high.

Knowledge Ratings for Ethical Leadership. There was a significant relationship between ethical leadership and three of the variables examined:

- The relationship between ethical leadership and TAKS proficiency was significant and negative ($r = -0.15$, $p = 0.03$), indicating that in schools with high TAKS performance, principals' ratings of their knowledge about ethical leadership tended to be low.

- The relationship between ethical leadership and percent minority and was significant and positive ($r = 0.14$, $p = 0.04$), indicating that in schools with a high percentage of minority students principals' ethical leadership ratings tended to be high.

- The correlation between ethical leadership and percent special education students was also significant and positive ($r = 0.16$, $p = 0.02$), indicating that in schools with a high percentage of special education students principals' ratings of ethical leadership also tended to be high.

Reference

Leithwood, K., Seashore Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning.* (Review of Research). New York: Wallace Foundation. Retrieved March 25, 2008, from http://education.umn.edu/CAREI/Leadership/ReviewofResearch.pdf

Appendix E
Analyses of LPI Assessment Data

Analyses of data from the LPI, administered to TxPEP participants at the beginning of the TxPEP, are presented below. These data were obtained from APQC. A summary of overall responses as well as analyses of responses by campus rating, school type, and district type are presented.

Overall Results

Examination of the overall means for the five LPI constructs shows that there were only slight differences across ratings for both self and observers (differences were less than one half of one point). Among the self-reported measures, the averages across constructs also are small. Table E1 presents the means, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum values for both self and others' ratings on the five measures. Differences across constructs were not analyzed using analysis of variance procedures because responses to individual items were not available for these datasets; therefore item-level analyses could not be conducted.

Table E1. Leadership Practices Inventory Survey Results—Overall

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Self Rating (*N* = 318)				
Model the way	8.31	1.01	4.80	10.00
Inspire a shared vision	8.10	1.23	3.50	10.00
Challenge the process	7.85	1.21	2.20	10.00
Enable others to act	8.54	0.86	5.00	10.00
Encourage the heart	8.19	1.25	3.50	10.00
Others' Rating (*N* = 303)				
Model the way	8.58	0.91	4.50	10.00
Inspire a shared vision	8.55	0.96	4.20	9.90
Challenge the process	8.33	0.94	3.90	9.90
Enable others to act	8.76	0.82	4.30	9.90
Encourage the heart	8.57	0.95	5.00	9.90

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: Response options for the LPI range from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice.

Means also were examined by campus rating, school type, and district type. To explore systematic differences in the data, difference scores were created across subgroups for each construct. For example, a score was created to measure the difference between rural respondents and urban respondents for the construct "model the way."

LPI Results by Campus Rating

Comparisons between participants from AU and non-AU campuses show only slight differences in mean responses across the five constructs (all differences are less than one half of one point). However, as shown in Table E2, the average ratings of AU participants are consistently higher than those of participants from the non-AU campuses for both self and others.

Table E2. Leadership Practices Inventory Survey Results by Campus Rating

	AU	Non-AU
Self Rating	**(N = 245)**	**(N = 73)**
Model the way	8.37	8.12
Inspire a shared vision	8.20	7.78
Challenge the process	7.90	7.67
Enable others to act	8.58	8.42
Encourage the heart	8.26	7.96
Others' Rating	**(N = 239)**	**(N = 64)**
Model the way	8.61	8.48
Inspire a shared vision	8.58	8.44
Challenge the process	8.36	8.23
Enable others to act	8.76	8.75
Encourage the heart	8.59	8.48

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Notes: Response options for the LPI range from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice. AU refers to participants from campuses rated as academically acceptable; non-AU refers to participants from campuses that were not rated as academically unacceptable.

LPI Results by School Type

TEA data allowed for the classification of most of the participant responses by school type. The final sample consisted of self ratings for 119 elementary school participants, 22 elementary/ secondary participants, 84 middle school participants, and 52 high school participants. There were 41 participants who could not be classified according to school type. In looking at the means across subgroups, no pattern of responses emerges (see Table E3). There is little variation across subgroups in the average scores for each construct. Comparisons across categories (excluding the "missing" category) show that differences are approximately 0.2 points, with only one difference reaching more than one half of one point (0.65 between elementary and elementary/secondary participants on the "inspire a shared vision" measure).

Table E3. Leadership Practices Inventory Survey Results by School Type

	Missing	Elementary	Elementary/ Secondary	Middle	High
Self Rating	*(N = 41)*	*(N = 119)*	*(N = 22)*	*(N = 84)*	*(N = 52)*
Model the way	8.71	8.25	8.12	8.30	8.23
Inspire a shared vision	8.47	8.15	7.50	8.09	7.97
Challenge the process	8.09	7.83	7.77	7.86	7.71
Enable others to act	8.69	8.51	8.44	8.56	8.53
Encourage the heart	8.52	8.12	7.91	8.25	8.13
Others' Rating	*(N = 34)*	*(N = 119)*	*(N = 21)*	*(N = 79)*	*(N = 50)*
Model the way	8.75	8.49	8.45	8.66	8.60
Inspire a shared vision	8.63	8.55	8.42	8.54	8.55
Challenge the process	8.26	8.32	8.39	8.31	8.40
Enable others to act	8.81	8.65	9.00	8.82	8.79
Encourage the heart	8.61	8.56	8.50	8.56	8.60

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: Response options for the LPI range from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice.

LPI Results by District Type

TEA data allowed for the classification of most of the participants and observers by district type. There were missing data for 43 self ratings and 36 observer ratings.

As shown in Table E4, there are only small differences in average ratings across district types (excluding those with missing data). Differences do not exceed one half of one point except in two instances: (1) there is a 0.58 difference between rural and charter school participants on the "inspire a shared vision" measure and (2) there is a 0.64 difference between rural and urban participants on the same measure. Differences across district types for observer responses were all less than one third of one point.

Table E4. Leadership Practices Inventory Survey Results by District Type

	Missing	Rural	Urban	Suburban	Charter
Self Rating	*(N = 43)*	*(N = 50)*	*(N = 74)*	*(N = 113)*	*(N = 38)*
Model the way	8.61	8.02	8.26	8.39	8.21
Inspire a shared vision	8.35	7.62	8.26	8.08	8.20
Challenge the process	7.94	7.66	7.80	7.87	8.03
Enable others to act	8.66	8.51	8.48	8.58	8.49
Encourage the heart	8.44	7.95	8.05	8.35	8.05
Others' Rating	*(N = 36)*	*(N = 50)*	*(N = 71)*	*(N = 111)*	*(N = 35)*
Model the way	8.70	8.54	8.53	8.63	8.45
Inspire a shared vision	8.52	8.39	8.64	8.57	8.54
Challenge the process	8.23	8.29	8.38	8.36	8.31
Enable others to act	8.74	8.73	8.70	8.80	8.79
Encourage the heart	8.57	8.45	8.59	8.63	8.51

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: Response options for the LPI range from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice.

Appendix F
Analyses of 21st Century Principal Assessment Data

Analyses of data from the 21st Century Principal Assessment, administered to TxPEP participants in fall 2007 at the beginning of the TxPEP program, are presented below. These data were obtained from APQC. A summary of overall responses as well as analyses of responses by campus rating, school type, and district type are presented.

Overall Results

Examination of means for the ten constructs included in the 21st Century Principal Assessment show that within respondent type (self or others') average ratings are very similar across constructs. However, within constructs, self-ratings are consistently lower than others' ratings, although these differences never exceed one quarter of one point. Table F1 presents the means, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum values for both self and others' ratings on the ten constructs

Table F1. 21st Century Principal Assessment Results—Overall

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Self-Rating (*N* = 314)				
Setting Instructional Direction	4.05	0.56	0.00	5.00
Teamwork	4.28	0.58	0.00	5.00
Sensitivity	4.14	0.60	0.00	5.00
Judgment	4.06	0.53	2.40	5.00
Results Orientation	4.14	0.57	2.40	5.00
Organizational Ability	3.91	0.60	2.25	5.00
Oral Communication	4.30	0.60	1.29	5.00
Written Communication	4.09	0.74	0.00	5.00
Development of Others	3.93	0.63	2.17	5.00
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	3.96	0.66	1.67	5.00

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Others' Rating (*N* = 314)				
Setting Instructional Direction	4.37	0.38	3.11	5.00
Teamwork	4.37	0.38	3.24	5.00
Sensitivity	4.29	0.44	2.69	4.98
Judgment	4.34	0.38	2.70	5.00
Results Orientation	4.34	0.42	2.40	5.00
Organizational Ability	4.29	0.40	2.62	5.00
Oral Communication	4.46	0.40	2.67	5.00
Written Communication	4.56	0.37	3.35	5.00
Development of Others	4.27	0.42	2.67	4.97
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	4.41	0.39	2.78	5.00

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the 21st Century Principal Assessment completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: Response options for the 21st Century assessment range from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice.

Means also were examined by campus rating, school type, and district types. To explore systematic differences in the data, difference scores were created across subgroups for each construct. For example, a score was created to measure the difference between rural respondents and urban respondents for the teamwork construct.

21st Century Results by Campus Rating

Of the 314 TxPEP participants who completed the 21st Century assessment, 226 are from AU campuses and 88 are from non-AU campuses. Comparison of the mean ratings of AU and non-AU participants shows the differences to be small (see Table F2). Within each measure, all differences are less than one quarter of one point.

Table F2. 21st Century Principal Assessment Results by Campus Rating

	AU (*N* = 226)	Non-AU (*N* = 88)
Self-Rating		
Setting Instructional Direction	4.08	3.99
Teamwork	4.28	4.29
Sensitivity	4.17	4.05
Judgment	4.11	3.95
Results Orientation	4.18	4.02
Organizational Ability	3.97	3.78

	AU (N = 226)	Non-AU (N = 88)
Oral Communication	4.34	4.20
Written Communication	4.13	4.00
Development of Others	3.99	3.78
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	4.02	3.82
Others' Rating		
Setting Instructional Direction	4.37	4.35
Teamwork	4.38	4.35
Sensitivity	4.31	4.25
Judgment	4.34	4.32
Results Orientation	4.35	4.32
Organizational Ability	4.30	4.26
Oral Communication	4.46	4.46
Written Communication	4.56	4.56
Development of Others	4.28	4.26
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	4.42	4.38

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the 21st Century Principal Assessment completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.

Notes: Response options for the 21st Century assessment range from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice. AU refers to participants from campuses rated as academically unacceptable; non-AU refers to participants from campuses that were not rated academically unacceptable.

21st Century Results by School Type

Data on school type were available for all but 56 respondents. Among those who could be classified by school type, 115 were from elementary schools, 22 were from elementary/ secondary schools, 71 were from middle schools, and 50 were from high schools. An examination of differences across subgroups for each construct shows that none exceed one half of one point, and most were close to 0.10 (see Table F3).

Table F3. 21st Century Principal Assessment Results by School Type

	Missing (N = 56)	Elementary (N = 115)	Elementary/ Secondary (N = 22)	Middle (N = 71)	High (N = 50)
Self-Rating					
Setting Instructional Direction	4.08	4.00	4.08	4.07	4.10
Teamwork	4.40	4.23	4.13	4.29	4.33
Sensitivity	4.19	4.12	4.04	4.12	4.18
Judgment	4.09	4.04	3.96	4.06	4.15

	Missing (N = 56)	Elementary (N = 115)	Elementary/ Secondary (N = 22)	Middle (N = 71)	High (N = 50)
Results Orientation	4.17	4.10	4.01	4.17	4.19
Organizational Ability	3.96	3.85	3.82	3.97	3.97
Oral Communication	4.29	4.32	3.99	4.32	4.37
Written Communication	4.10	4.11	3.87	4.13	4.11
Development of Others	3.95	3.95	3.96	3.93	3.87
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	3.95	3.95	4.03	4.00	3.92
Others' Rating					
Setting Instructional Direction	4.39	4.33	4.32	4.39	4.41
Teamwork	4.38	4.32	4.40	4.42	4.41
Sensitivity	4.33	4.23	4.30	4.34	4.32
Judgment	4.37	4.30	4.34	4.35	4.38
Results Orientation	4.39	4.29	4.33	4.36	4.40
Organizational Ability	4.34	4.24	4.21	4.33	4.33
Oral Communication	4.50	4.44	4.37	4.45	4.51
Written Communication	4.54	4.59	4.51	4.54	4.54
Development of Others	4.33	4.24	4.26	4.27	4.27
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	4.41	4.39	4.39	4.41	4.44

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the 21st Century Principal Assessment completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.
Note: Response options for the 21st Century assessment range from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice.

21st Century Results by District Type

Data about district type were available for all but 58 respondents. Among respondents who could be classified by district type, 45 are from rural schools, 66 are from urban schools, 109 are from suburban schools, and 36 are from charter schools. In looking across subgroups within each construct, there is very little difference in ratings between any of the groups; the largest difference is one third of one point (see Table F4).

Table F4. 21st Century Principal Assessment Results by District Type

	Missing (N = 58)	Rural (N = 45)	Urban (N = 66)	Suburban (N = 109)	Charter (N = 36)
Self-Rating					
Setting Instructional Direction	4.08	3.94	4.06	4.08	4.07
Teamwork	4.41	4.08	4.21	4.33	4.32
Sensitivity	4.20	4.01	4.18	4.18	3.99
Judgment	4.10	3.96	4.06	4.08	4.08
Results Orientation	4.18	4.04	4.14	4.17	4.08
Organizational Ability	3.96	3.75	3.94	3.96	3.85
Oral Communication	4.28	4.15	4.47	4.33	4.13
Written Communication	4.13	3.92	4.12	4.15	4.02
Development of Others	3.99	3.76	3.95	3.92	4.08
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	3.97	3.80	3.98	3.99	4.03
Others' Rating					
Setting Instructional Direction	4.37	4.37	4.37	4.41	4.30
Teamwork	4.36	4.36	4.36	4.42	4.35
Sensitivity	4.31	4.31	4.27	4.34	4.22
Judgment	4.35	4.28	4.30	4.38	4.33
Results Orientation	4.38	4.30	4.30	4.39	4.30
Organizational Ability	4.33	4.24	4.29	4.33	4.23
Oral Communication	4.48	4.40	4.26	4.52	4.44
Written Communication	4.53	4.53	4.38	4.59	4.47
Development of Others	4.31	4.15	4.60	4.32	4.25
Understand Strengths/Weaknesses	4.39	4.33	4.41	4.45	4.38

Source: Evaluator analysis of responses to the 21st Century Principal Assessment completed by TxPEP participants' in fall 2007.

Note: Response options for the 21st Century assessment range from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always); responses are averaged across all items measuring a given leadership practice.

Appendix G
Analyses of Principal Focus Group and Interview Data

Appendix G presents findings about program implementation; program quality, relevance, and utility; barriers to leadership change; and suggestions for improving the TxPEP program. Qualitative data were gathered through interviews with TEA staff, APQC staff, and cohort consultants, as well as through focus groups with principals participating in the TxPEP program.

Program Implementation

Data gathered from interviews with TEA and APQC program staff and cohort consultants indicate that, for the most part, TxPEP is being implemented with fidelity. However, there have been several changes to the original development plan submitted by APQC:

- The program initially was slated to begin in spring 2007. However, APQC did not receive the list of participating principals until August 1, 2007. This delay pushed the program start date back to September 2007. As a result of this delay, the number of program modules decreased from four to three to accommodate principals' fall schedules. In addition, because of the late start, some principals were unable to complete the baseline LPI and 21st Century assessment prior to the beginning of the program.

- Based on feedback from TEA, APQC increased the program's emphasis on business management tools and processes and decreased the emphasis on educational leadership. As a result, the content of the first two workshops had to be modified.

- APQC provided principals with fewer choices with regard to courses and online activities than originally intended. As one TEA staff member noted:

    We originally thought there would be a menu option where a principal could actually fine tune their professional development in the TxPEP program and be able to attend or choose certain courses or online activities or online work to help them improve their skills. I don't think we offered that large menu option for them.

- Two summits were offered to accommodate roughly two thirds of TxPEP participants who were attending another mandatory program that occurred simultaneously with the first TxPEP summit.

- APQC had intended to use more of their own staff to conduct the professional development sessions, but because of limited funding could use only three internal staff members. As a result, APQC had to rely on contractors for work that initially was designated for their own staff.

Program Quality, Relevance, and Utility

Results of postevent surveys, administered by APQC, indicate that participants have found program content to be of high quality and mostly relevant to their leadership roles. In interviews, APQC program staff reported that workshops and webinars received relatively high ratings for relevance (a rating of 5 on a seven-point scale) on postevent surveys. They reported that more than 90% of survey respondents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied

with the quality of the program. They also noted that they have made some modifications to the program in response to participant feedback.

The summit and workshops were well-organized and well-run. The majority of principals who participated in the focus groups indicated that the facilities, materials, and presenters were of high quality. Principals also reported that sessions were well-planned, regional workshops were able to accommodate many schools, the quality of the information was good, and the rooms were well arranged.

The cohort consultants have been a valuable resource for principals. Principals reported that cohort groups (groups of 5 to10 participants who are assigned to work with the same cohort consultant) provide a way for principals to learn from each other as well as from a successful school leader. The advice of cohort consultants, who were chosen to be consultants because they have been successful leaders, appears to be highly valued. One principal noted that it has been "very, very helpful to get somebody that's already been there as a leader. They truly understand what you're going through."

Principals have found the webinars to be most relevant to their leadership role. Focus group participants indicated that the webinars were beneficial because the topics match their needs. Several principals mentioned that the webinar on change management was particularly useful. As one principal noted:

> I did actually participate in my first webinar on change and management yesterday afternoon and I actually thought it was very worthwhile and enjoyed it. It did encourage me to reflect on where I am right now in the change process.

Principals appreciated the opportunity that was offered by the 360-degree LPI and 21st Century assessment to reflect on their leadership practices. Several principals who participated in the focus groups found feedback on their own leadership style relevant and useful to their practice. Some principals specifically mentioned that this information helped them understand how their staff perceived them as leaders. One principal summed up the impact of leadership feedback by stating:

> I've heard them talk about being an example on your campus for everything, your vision, your mission of what you're doing, your belief in what you're doing; and all of that is wrapped up in the evaluation of how others see you and then [how you] see yourself. I think that was a really valuable thing to do—to have an honest look at yourself so you can think about "Am I being effective?" and, if not, "What do I need to do to change that and make it better?" That had a good impact on me, I think.

Overall, principals would find TxPEP more relevant if topics were more tailored to their needs or if they had more choice about what sessions to attend. In interviews, program staff noted that principals want to learn, but what they want to learn differs depending on their experience and the circumstances in their schools. Professional development cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach. As noted by the program implementers, tailoring professional development to a group of principals with diverse experiences can be challenging. However, focus group data suggest that participants would prefer to choose topics that are relevant to their specific needs.

The program's focus on business models and processes has not resonated with participants.
APQC staff, principals, and cohort consultants all indicated that principals would prefer a greater emphasis on educational leadership practices rather than the business models and processes that are emphasized by the program. Some principals are finding it difficult to translate business practices into viable solutions for their schools, while others would prefer to hear from principals who have been in their shoes and ultimately were successful. One focus group participant spoke about the gap between the program providers and TxPEP participants:

> The person presenting leadership strategies has never been a principal. That's very difficult. I know leadership strategies are leadership strategies in the business world and the education world, but if you've never been a principal it's kind of hard to get buy-in if you've never been there in our shoes.

In addition, interviews with cohort consultants suggest that principals in small rural communities who do not have much support and who wear multiple hats in their schools may not have the time to reflect on how to make the connections and adapt appropriate management solutions to fit their needs. APQC program staff indicated that they were unsure whether principals actually are applying knowledge gained from the workshops. Their concern echoes that of the principals: that it has been difficult to apply business models to educational practice.

Networking with other principals was seen as the most useful aspect of the program. Ten of the 11 focus group participants indicated that they appreciated the opportunity to network with other principals who had similar experiences. Through networking, principals were able to gather practical information from one another about interventions or strategies that had worked in their schools. In interviews, program staff noted that small-group discussions during workshops provide opportunities for participants to share and troubleshoot about specific issues of relevance to them; they reported that principals viewed these as one of the most useful aspects of the workshops. Focus group participants also noted that the use of Open Space Technology (an open forum that allows participants to discuss topics pertinent to their needs) allowed them to discuss challenges in their schools and ways to address them.

Participants found the data visualization exercise to be particularly useful in helping them understand how to use data to set school improvement goals. Having participants analyze data from their own schools allowed them to identify subject areas in which students were failing to meet standards, and populations of students who were at risk for school failure. As a result, participants were able to see how they could use data to develop targeted intervention strategies for improving instruction in specific subject areas and for addressing the learning needs of specific populations of students.

Barriers to Leadership Change

Several barriers to principal buy-in emerged from the interviews and focus groups. As noted, some participants are finding it difficult to translate business models and leadership theories into practical strategies that they can apply in their schools. In addition, for principals from AU campuses, TxPEP may be one of several school improvement initiatives that compete for their time. APQC staff also observed that it is difficult to determine whether principals actually apply the information and ideas gained from TxPEP when they return to their schools.

The topics of the workshops do not address participants' immediate priorities. Interview and focus group findings suggest that topics of compelling interest to participants such as improving student achievement are not being addressed in the TxPEP workshops. The majority of principals indicated that they wanted practical, hands-on information that they could apply when they returned to their campuses, rather than theoretical discussions of leadership attributes or approaches presented in the workshops. For example, some principals reported that they wanted specific strategies they could use to increase their students achievement scores in all subject areas.

Other barriers to changing leadership practice include the pressure to improve test scores, different levels of principal buy-in, initiative fatigue, and difficult teachers. Interview findings suggest a number of potential barriers to leadership change. Program staff noted that some principals from AU campuses appeared to be more focused on improving test scores and improving their campus rating than on developing broader leadership skills. Other principals, particularly those who have experienced success, do not believe they need to enhance their skills. Still others reported that they have poorly qualified teachers and feel powerless to change the situation despite their leadership skills.

Measuring whether principals actually are using what they have learned in the TxPEP program is difficult. According to APQC staff, most participants indicate that they intend to apply what they learned at the workshops in responding to postevent surveys, although responses vary with respect to what information or strategies participants plan to apply. One staff member noted that it is difficult to gauge the extent to which participants are applying what they have learned: Some participants may be more motivated to try out new ideas or strategies or better able to identify situations where a particular strategy might be useful.

Suggestions for Improvement

Several ideas regarding ways to improve the experience of TxPEP participants emerged from the interviews and focus groups:

- **Provide access to educational leaders that have demonstrated success in AU schools.** Feedback from focus group participants suggests that principals want to talk with principals who have succeeded in making improvements under challenging circumstances. As one principal stated:

  I think if they brought in more presenters that have been there, done that, and then divide us up into reading, math, and science … but just the topics, best practices, strategies, and from people that could help us a little bit more. I would appreciate that.

- **Change the dates of the summit and workshops to better align with school schedules.** Several principals indicated that they would have preferred for the summit and the workshops to be held in the summer or at times when they would not be pulled away from their campuses, especially during the first few weeks of the academic year.

- **Find ways to make business models and practices more relevant to principals.** Participants and program staff agree that principals may not be open to receiving professional development from business leaders. Because principals appear to be resistant

to business models, finding ways to bridge the gap between management theory and educational practice may be important to the success of the program.

- **Provide principals with more choices with respect to courses, webinars, and other activities.** Focus group participants emphasized that they would like to have options to learn from one another through Open Space Technology or to choose workshops and webinars that were more relevant to the particular challenges they are facing in their schools.