

Forging the link between school leaders and student achievement.



"The overall assessment is that the school principal has the greatest single impact on student performance."

—ERS 2000

- Thirty years of research established that schools do make a powerful difference in the academic achievement of students.
- Five variables—known as "correlates"—are consistently linked to student achievement.
- Strong leadership is consistently identified as one of these five correlates.
- In the past five years momentum has been gathering around strong leadership as the correlate having the greatest impact on student achievement.

"Excellent schools and excellent teachers result in the highest student achievement. Leadership from the principal is what makes an excellent school."

—Eric Marzano, 2000

- Excellent Principal Leadership + Excellent Teachers = *Excellent Student Achievement*
 - Excellent Principal Leadership + Average Teachers = *High Student Achievement*
 - Average Principal Leadership + Excellent Teachers = *Average Student Achievement*
- Implications Based on Marzano's School Effects Research reported in A New Paradigm for Schools: Going Where the Research Takes Us (2000).*

"Researchers, policy makers, educational practitioners agree: good principals are the keystone of good schools. Without the principal's leadership, efforts to raise student achievement cannot succeed."

The Educational Research Service: The Principal Keystone of a High-Achieving School: Attracting and Keeping the Leaders We Need (2000)

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

"Leadership at the district and schools level is the 'stealth issue' of education reform."

—Rod Paige, US Secretary of Education

"After nearly two decades of sustained national school reform efforts, a consensus is emerging that the missing element in the drive to bring educational opportunity to all children has been leadership."

—Report on 2nd Annual Leaders Count Conference on Educational Leadership, 2001

"More and more school and district leaders are responsible for bringing about change and improvement."

—ESEA Policy Brief, 2001

"Good schools require good principals, and it is only through focused attention and action on both the problems and possible solutions by educators, professional associations, colleges and universities, government and citizens—all working collaboratively—that we can guarantee that every school will have a well-prepared and committed leader."

—ERS 2000

Visit www.opi.state.mt.us for more information.

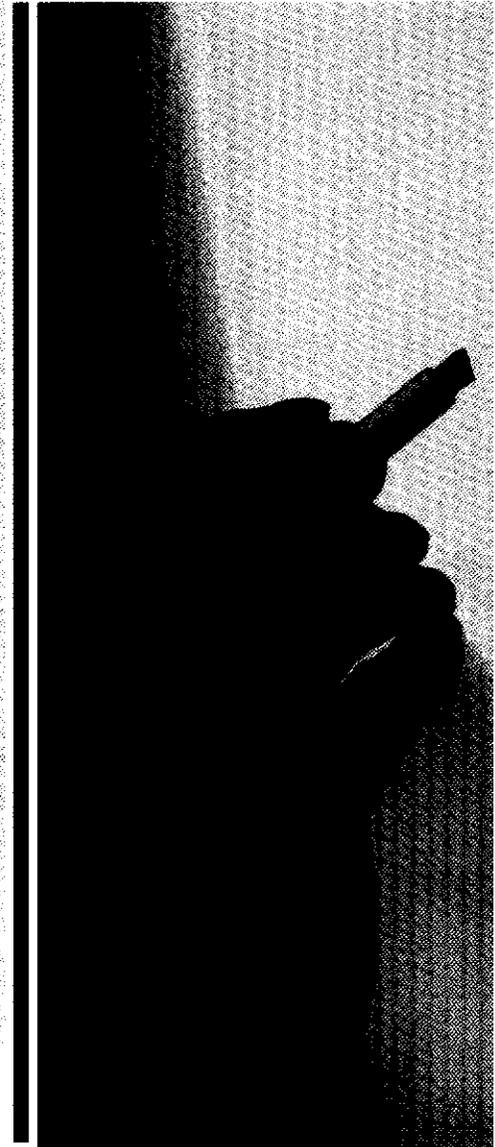
(Link to State Action for Educational Leadership Project.)

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An administrative shortage.

- Nearly 80 percent of Montana's current superintendents and principals responded to the SAELP survey that was conducted in May of 2002. Their responses indicated that 220 school administrators plan to retire within the next five years—that is an average of 44 per year. That only counts retirements. It does not include the number that may leave Montana school administration during that time period for out-of-state positions or to work in other areas.
- In addition, the potential pool of administratively qualified personnel currently working in the schools has shrunk over the past three years. The number of teachers who are qualified to be superintendents or principals but who are not employed in those roles has declined by 25 percent in the past three years. And they will be retiring at about the same rate as school administrators.
- It appears the superintendency will be the hardest hit. Of the current administrators, about 30 of them have returned to school administration after already retiring, either in Montana or from out of state. Only 33 in that pool of administratively qualified teachers are endorsed as superintendents. Half of them say they don't intend to apply for any future openings, and over half already have 30 years in the retirement system.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do we have answers for our community's questions about what it will take to guarantee high-quality leadership for student learning?
- What data do we have on our current principals and superintendents, and the generation that we expect will replace them when they retire?
- What will it take in order to assemble the public awareness, the political commitment to transform our ideas into actual policy?