

TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
127th Maine Legislature (Resolve 2015, Chapter 46)

Meeting Summary

October 6, 2015

Hancock County Technical Center, Ellsworth, Maine

Members present: Sen. Brian Langley, Senate Chair (Ellsworth), Rep. Victoria Kornfield, House Chair (Bangor), Rep. Paul Stearns (Guilford), Maggie Allen (Principal, Windsor Elementary School), Kenneth Coville (Superintendent, RSU 74, North Anson), Gordon Donaldson (Professor Emeritus, University of Maine), Richard Durost (Executive Director, Maine Principals' Association), Sandy Flacke (Director of Special Services, RSU 3, Unity), Marc Gousse (Superintendent, Westbrook School Department), Mark Hatch (Principal, Messalonskee Middle School), Julie Keblinsky (Dean of Curriculum, Mt. Desert Island High School), Cathy Lewis (Principal, Pemetic Elementary School, Southwest Harbor), Chris Record (Principal, Gorham High School), Bob Stevens (Retired Principal, York High School), Rachelle Tome (Acting Deputy Commissioner, Department of Education), Ryan Watts (Transition Specialist, Gorham High School), and Betsy Webb (Superintendent, Bangor School Department)

Staff: Phil McCarthy, Senior Analyst (Office of Policy and Legal Analysis, Maine Legislature)

1. Call to Order and Introduction of Task Force Members. The meeting convened at approximately 9:00 a.m. The Task Force Chairs, Senator Langley and Representative Kornfield, called the meeting to order and asked the members to introduce themselves.

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks. Sen. Brian Langley and Rep. Tori Kornfield, the Task Force Chairs, thanked the members of the task force for their willingness to participate in the review of school leadership issues related to Maine public education. After a review of the proposed agenda and the background of the legislation that created the task force, Sen. Langley introduced Amy Boles, the Director of the Hancock County Technical Center. Director Boles gave a brief overview of the career and technical education center's programs. She also welcomed the task force members to Ellsworth, Maine and thanked the members for serving on the study group.

3. Review of Task Force Duties and "Housekeeping." Phil McCarthy, the staffing assistant for the task force, described the certification process and travel expense reimbursement procedures for the legislators and public members appointed to the task force. He also called attention to the documents that were mailed to the task force members prior to this meeting of the task force; and reminded members that the task force materials are posted on the Office of Policy & Legal Analysis webpage on the Legislature's website and can be accessed by members and the public at the following link to the task force webpage: <http://legislature.maine.gov/legis/opla/schoolleadership.htm>.

The task force staff walked the members through the following documents that were included in the meeting materials packet:

- ❖ Resolve 2015, Chapter 46, "Resolve To Create the Task Force on School Leadership," the legislation that created the task force;
- ❖ The work plan for the Task Force on School Leadership, including the objectives, project tasks and key elements to be reviewed by the task force in accordance with the legislation that authorized the study;
- ❖ The list of members appointed to serve on the Task Force on School Leadership by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House;

- ❖ “The Maine Schools Study: Phase II Report on Improving Maine Schools (Preliminary Analysis of Maine High Schools)” prepared for the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs Maine State Legislature (June 2012) by the Maine Education Policy Research Institute (University of Southern Maine)
- ❖ A side-by-side table of “Certification & Evaluation Requirements for Maine School Administrators” including statutes and rules related to certification, recertification and performance evaluation
- ❖ A Maine DOE Newsroom website posting on “Maine DOE overviews updated educator effectiveness expectations” (March 19, 2015)
- ❖ A Maine Principals’ Association (MPA) Supervision and Evaluation Committee summary of the initiative to review the “Principal Evaluation System” (September 2013)
- ❖ “NCSL School Leadership Resource Guide 2015” submitted by Kelly Latterman, School Leadership State Policy Specialist, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), that includes the description of the initiative to bring principals and legislators together titled: “A Day in the Life: Legislators Learning with Principals”;
- ❖ An NCSL Education Policy Brief titled “Effective School Principals: A Lever for School Improvement” (March 2014);
- ❖ An article prepared by the Center on Great Teachers & Leaders at the American Institute for Research (AIR) titled “Leadership and Lattices: New Pathways Across the Teaching Profession” by Daniela Doyle (February 2015);
- ❖ A memo sent by Gordon Donaldson, Professor Emeritus, University of Maine (and task force member), on September 29, 2015 to the task force providing data and observations on the past few decades of school leadership in Maine;
- ❖ “The Maine Principal Study: Change and Stability in School Leadership 1997-2011” prepared by Gordon Donaldson and George Marnik, Professors in the Graduate Program in Education Leadership at the University of Maine (October 2012); and
- ❖ A series of questions to help guide the development of state education policy titled “State Education Policy Checklist” prepared by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), The Aspen Institute’s Education & Society Program, and the State Legislative Leaders Foundation (SLLF).

The task force staff also passed out materials related to factors regarding age, experience, recruitment and retention of school leaders in the state, including the following documents:

- ❖ An email sent to the Maine Department of Education (DOE) and to the University of Maine and University of Southern Maine related to data requests for the task force (September 30, 2015);
- ❖ A table downloaded from the DOE website on the “State Aggregate Staff: Administrators, Coordinators, Dept. Chairs FTE Counts by Assignment” from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2014-2015 school year;
- ❖ Selected research data from testimony submitted by Chris Record, Gorham High School Principal (and task force member), at the public hearing for LD 1042, “Resolve To Create the Task Force on School Leadership,” the bill that created this task force (May 4, 2015). Of significant concern is that about one third of all Maine principals change jobs every two years and according to MPA

data, for the 2014-2015 school year, 40% of Maine high school principals are in their first or second year in their current school position, and 25% of middle school principals and 29% of elementary principals are in their first or second year. High principal turnover often leads to greater teacher turnover and has direct negative effects on student- and school-level achievement;

- ❖ An email including the “Companion Guide to the Principal/Leader Evaluation and Professional Growth” (LEPG) rubric developed through the Maine Schools for Excellence (funded by the Federal Teacher Incentive Fund project to 10 high-needs Maine school districts); submitted by Susan Williams, Professional Development Coordinator, Maine Schools for Excellence, Maine DOE; and
- ❖ An email containing information regarding the Education Leaders Experience (ELE) program run during the past 4 years by the Maine Principals’ Association (MPA) in collaboration with Educate Maine and Unum; the current program’s class has 23 participants, including superintendents, principals, teacher leaders and curriculum leaders; and they can receive continuing education units for state certification or graduate course credits from St. Joseph’s College.

4. Presentation: State Policies and Practices that Foster Excellence in School Leadership. Kelly Latterman, School Leadership State Policy Specialist, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), presented PowerPoint slides that address challenges other states face related to school leadership and a review of other states’ legislation, policy levers and best practices to promote excellence in school leadership. Here are selected slides and brief notes related to the information and data presented on state policies and practices.

- ❖ Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school;
- ❖ Principals are key to retaining good teachers; school leaders both recruit and retain high quality staff ... the number one reason for teachers’ decisions about whether to stay in a school is the quality of administrative support ... and it is the leader who must develop this organization;
- ❖ Preparing a pipeline of principals who can improve teaching and learning is essential to achieving state policy goals for student performance and economic progress;
- ❖ Effective principals have core competencies, including: shaping a transformational vision of academic success for all students; creating a hospitable climate; managing people, data and processes; improving instruction; leading the professional learning community; and cultivating leadership in others;
- ❖ But good leaders can be developed and graduates of effective programs are better-prepared; perform better in high-needs schools; twice as likely to actually become principals (60% vs. 20% - 30%);
- ❖ State policymakers will want to understand challenges specific to their state in order to identify the best policies to cultivate and support a pipeline of effective principals;
- ❖ State requirements for principal preparation programs are too challenging; and, without mentors, it is difficult to recruit or prepare non-educators to become principals;
- ❖ Rural schools are in a more challenging place with “green” (untrained and inexperienced) principals; and
- ❖ A huge increase in the amount of support and mentoring is necessary to bring in a larger pool of school leaders.

Ms. Latterman shared a recently released report from Paul Manna, Government & Public Policy Professor at the College of William & Mary, titled *“Developing Excellent School Principals to Advance Teaching and Learning: Considerations for State Policy”* (Wallace Foundation, September 2015). The report presents a catalog of considerations and identifies issues and key questions that state policymakers could usefully engage to help develop excellent school principals.

❖ Principals and the State Policy Agenda:

- Overall priority: Principals are a relatively lower priority on state education policy agendas compared to other topics.
- Comparison to teachers: Policymakers and advocates in states give more attention to teacher-related issues than principal-related issues.
- Muddling roles: A focus on “school leadership” conflates the principal’s role with the roles of other school leaders.
- Key conclusion: Principals merit a more prominent place on state policy agendas because their work is crucial for developing healthy school cultures, supporting better teaching and learning, and helping state education initiatives succeed.

❖ State Policy Levers:

- State Action: Create a state commission or task force, develop and support statewide longitudinal data systems, improve working conditions, align all components, direct resources
 - ▶ Setting principal standards
 - ▶ Recruiting aspiring principals
 - ▶ Overseeing principal preparation programs
 - ▶ Licensing principals
 - ▶ Supporting professional development of principals
 - ▶ Evaluating principals
- Key conclusion: States have formal and informal powers they can wield as they attempt to develop more effective principals. Local schools and school districts play a role in all these areas, as well, but that does not mean state leaders should remain on the sidelines.

❖ Mentoring and Coaching: Percent of public school principals reporting that they received mentoring or coaching during the school year

Location	1999	2003	2011
All locales	40.6	41.1	51.6
City	50.4	52.2	61.9
Suburb	40.6	40.1	52.2
Town-Rural	35.1	34.9	47.4

❖ Principal’s Numerous Responsibilities: Percent of principals reporting “a great deal” or “major” influence over the following activities in their schools

Traditional tasks	1987	1990	1993	1999	2003	2007	2011
Budget/school spending	--	--	32.7	47.4	67.0	71.3	61.8
Setting discipline policy	45.5	54.1	57.4	67.8	87.3	88.5	78.7
Hiring teachers	49.4	57.8	62.0	74.6	88.6	91.3	86.6
In-service teacher training	--	--	34.4	41.3	68.6	75.2	70.2
Reform-oriented tasks	1987	1990	1993	1999	2003	2007	2011
Setting student performance standards	--	--	--	35.1	52.8	61.4	72.7
Evaluating teachers	--	--	80.7	78.8	93.0	94.6	95.1
Establishing curriculum	23.6	21.8	21.6	31.8	52.6	57.3	44.3

- ❖ How to Proceed? Remember, there are *no standard recipes* to guarantee success. Still, the following *guiding questions* can help organize future work in states.

- What does the state education *policy agenda* look like?
- What are *principals' tasks* in the state, in theory (as policy envisions them) and in daily practice?
- What explains the *consistencies and inconsistencies* between principal actions and state policies?

Policymakers should understand how different state agencies wield authority and interact; the diversity of their state's urban, suburban and rural communities; state and local capabilities to carry out change; and state mandates already shaping the principal's job.

Ms. Latterman directed the task force members to connect with the person next to them to share their thoughts on the 3 biggest challenges currently facing Maine regarding the principal pipeline. Here are notes on the comments made by task force members after their discussions:

- ❖ Development richness for leadership is difficult;
- ❖ Examination of university preparation programs ... what is missing in leadership training programs;
- ❖ Are internships in-depth and do they provide directives on how to cope with challenges facing school leaders;
- ❖ Public leadership lacks awareness of how difficult school principal's jobs are;
- ❖ Change from management to instructional leadership is a huge shift; teacher leadership should not necessarily be a pipeline to instructional leadership;
- ❖ Distributive leadership; a number of things are growing, but there are ways to share and provide investments; teacher leaders can be part of instructional leaders;
- ❖ Veteran teachers could be greater principals, but salary is not compelling and they don't want to give up tenure;
- ❖ Rural areas have stability in order to create techniques;
- ❖ Governance;
- ❖ State level has not addressed these issues during the "Maine LEAD" era from the early 1990s to 2005; proposals did not lead to legislative breakthroughs; need rapid advocacy for leadership in all of our schools;
- ❖ Aging workforce (many baby boomers are reaching retirement age); failure to look at generational differences;
- ❖ Preparing leadership at university of levels;
- ❖ MPA needs to meet 30-40 year old principals to provide a different level of effective services;
- ❖ "Do-ability" of job which has changed so much over the last 15 years; communication and society's expectations; instantaneous communication impacts education leaders; sales and public relations weren't part of education leader training; personal and interpersonal training was focus of training;
- ❖ Educators can work long hours; and are isolated and subject to attack and risks;
- ❖ Principals are "three birds with one stone";
- ❖ We are here because we love children; poverty rate in Maine has rapidly increased over last several years; many leaders are in middle class;
- ❖ Difference between generations of how they look at their jobs; time in building and at events; managing family and having balance between work and personal time;
- ❖ Community perspective is also unaware of principal jobs;
- ❖ More women now in principalship than over last 50 years (when most elementary school principals were women); connection between ability to balance the world of compliance;
- ❖ There are only 28 female superintendents in Maine;
- ❖ Last several years, there has been an increase in female principals; is there data available; it is very difficult to be a parent, a principal and a husband or a wife;

- ❖ Sharing resources and distribution; reallocating class sizes; one of two Assistant Principals at Mt. Desert Island H.S. ... adding another salary position to the job; commitment of community investment by having two assistant principals;

Ms. Latterman completed the discussion with the comment: “You are not alone. Maine is not alone.” Sen. Langley noted these are challenges facing our country and our rural communities (e.g., North Dakota and Montana) ... stated “As Maine goes, so goes the nation.” Ms. Latterman then gave examples of program highlights from other state legislatures. Here are brief notes on what other states are doing:

- ❖ Standards: **Oregon** directed the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, to develop and adopt statewide core teaching standards to improve student academic growth and learning. Standards must help school districts determine effectiveness of teachers and administrators and make human resource decisions and improve professional development and classroom and administrative practices;
- ❖ Recruitment and selection: **Washington State** expanded alternative routes to certification and expanded administrator preparation programs to include community and technical colleges or non-higher education providers; and Arkansas creates the Master Principal Program, a voluntary, three-phase (approximately three years) program that provides bonuses to practicing principals who achieve master principal designation. Master principals receive \$9,000 annually for 5 years, while those serving full-time in “high need” schools receive \$25,000 annually for 5 years;
- ❖ Strengthening principal preparation: **Kentucky** convened a task force to present recommendation on the redesign of the state’s system for preparing and supporting principals; and **Illinois** conducted a case study on strengthening principal preparation program design and accreditation;
- ❖ Mentoring: **Iowa** clarifies eligibility guidelines so beginning principals and superintendents were the primary recipients of mentoring. Iowa appropriated funds: \$195,157 for FY 2010-11 to the State Department of Education for administration of the Beginning Administrator Mentoring and Induction Program; **Utah** requires mentors to have or receive training in order to mentor provisional educators and provides that mentors may receive compensation for their services; and **New Mexico** requires the statewide School Leadership Institute to provide mentoring to new principals and superintendents in public schools;
- ❖ Ongoing professional development: **Oregon** establishes the Career Preparation and Development Task Force to develop a proposal for a seamless system of professional development for teachers and administrators that begins with career preparation and continues through employment; and **Wisconsin** provides supplemental mentoring for principals in the state’s lowest-performing schools who have an emergency license or permit and requires 60 hours annually of professional development for principals in the state’s lowest-performing schools;
- ❖ **“Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA) Cohorts”**, North Carolina State University (NCSU) won UCEA national award for preparing cohorts to prepare principals to become school and community leaders; NCSU structured 2-year program including specialized training and a full-time internship with master principal and executive coach; program prepares principals to become community leaders and school leaders ready to turn around low performing schools;
- ❖ **“Redesigning Principal Preparation and Development for the Next Generation: Lessons from Illinois”** (Center for the Study of Education Policy, Illinois State University): Illinois created a state commission in 2010 to enhance principal professional development; legislation was enacted to create a new Pre-K-12 principal endorsement that emphasizes the unique preparation necessary to become the instructional leader of a school and allows for expanded alternative certification programs for administrators. Candidates must be prepared to meet approved standards for principal skills, knowledge and responsibilities; these skills and responsibilities include a focus

on instruction and student learning that must be used for principal professional development, mentoring and evaluation.

- ❖ **“Principal Pipeline: Denver’s Story”** (Lead in Denver: Develop, Advance, Achieve); principal turnover rate has dropped by half in 4 years; teacher and principal pipelines clear pathways for educators in their system. Principal Pathways Program (University of Denver, University of Colorado, other entities): serves 151 school leaders; provide one year integrated coursework; 1,000 hours of internship with 4 hours of instructional leadership; coordinated support: mentor, advocate and director). Teacher Leader Pathways (Denver Public Schools): Teacher leaders lead teams of 6-8 teachers; teachers leaders get 1/3 to 1/2 of day as release time; responsible for leading collaborative planning/data time with their teams and for coaching and guiding teachers on their teams; very positive feedback;
- ❖ **“Danforth Educational Leadership Program, University of Washington”** This institution serves a mix of rural and urban candidates. The program is high quality with several outstanding features, such as rigorous selection and the performance guarantee. The recruitment and selection process includes multiple measures to identify equity-driven, learning focused, collaborative leaders who have the potential of serving schools and districts as principals and program directors. Districts are largely responsible for both the nomination of candidates, while the program takes a larger role in rigorous selection. UW offers a performance guarantee, which may be the first such guarantee offered by a leadership preparation program; and
- ❖ **“Building Leadership Capacity in Rural West Virginia”** Three school districts formed a school leadership training model for individuals serving high-needs school districts; training and assessment based on Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards (new ISLLC standards are coming out in a few months). The program fills the need for a coordinated and sustained school-leader training program that not only prepares candidates to be effective school leaders, but also provides on-going support and development for them as they progress through their career. The goals are to improve the quality of school leaders in the high-need districts involved in the project, improve student academic growth, decrease the principal turnover rate, build a sustained infrastructure for principal development training in the targeted districts, and add to the body of knowledge pertaining to school leadership development theory and practice.

Task Force members made the following comments following the presentation:

- ❖ Mr. Durost noted the MPA offers great beginnings program for first year administrators; and also has a 2-year mentoring program for new leaders (MPA and SAUs share cost of programs);
- ❖ Rep. Kornfield would like Maine DOE to provide resources to low-performing schools; (i.e., for teaching that would be called differentiated instruction); and
- ❖ Mr. Gousse noted that the United Way provides an executive loan program for school districts.

5. Briefing: “A Day in the Life: Maine Legislators Learning with Principals.” Kelly Latterman, NCSL School Leadership State Policy Specialist and Dick Durost, Executive Director, Maine Principals’ Association (MPA), introduced a proposal to bring Maine legislators together with outstanding Maine principals for a one-day observation of principals in action. The purpose of the event is to provide a realistic shadowing experience for legislators and to provide principals with the opportunity to openly share the realities of their job with elected state representatives.

These encounters would take place in October, which is National Principal’s Month, and 8 to 12 Maine legislators would be paired with outstanding principals identified by the MPA. The NCSL will prepare legislators in advance of their visits and will set up an online conference and survey with legislators to find out

what they learned from their observations of principals in action. A summary of responses will be presented to the task force.

The task force members unanimously approved this initiative and suggested that the principals and the legislators must abide by the confidentiality laws. The NCSL and the MPA presented the task force with a list of proposed talking points to be part of the preparation of both legislators and principals prior to the legislators' visits with principals. Task force members were invited to send feedback on the proposed talking points.

Lunch. Hancock County Technical Center's Culinary Arts students prepared and served a wonderful lunch.

6. Presentation: Evolution of School Administration in Maine Schools. Gordon Donaldson, Professor Emeritus of Education, University of Maine, and George Marnik, Professor in the Graduate Program in Education Leadership at the University of Maine provided observations of their research and analysis of Maine principalship from "The Maine Principal Study: Change and Stability in School Leadership 1997-2011."

- ❖ A memo sent by Gordon Donaldson, Professor Emeritus, University of Maine (and task force member), on September 29, 2015 to the task force provided data and observations on the past few decades of school leadership in Maine.

Here are a few observations I've made about the past few decades of school leadership in Maine. I hope you find them helpful in giving our work some context.

1. Prior to 1960, administration was "bare bones" by today's standard.
 - Maine schools were administered mostly by teaching principals, most of whom were women at the elementary level;
 - Maine districts (the vast majority were School Unions) employed a single superintendent and a clerical staff;
 - 2.3% of total operating expenditures was for "administration" (Table B-4); and
 - Principals and superintendents were expected to "keep schools open and running smoothly" – largely a *management* function.
2. Between 1960 and 2000, the number of administrators and clerical staff grew very fast as the expectations of schools (and of administrators) changed considerably.
 - The number of "instructional personnel" nearly tripled, particularly in the areas of special education, gifted and talented, remedial programming, and school-to-work;
 - Most principals became full-time principals, sometimes with multiple schools to supervise;
 - The vast majority of central offices added administrators and clerical positions for Business, Special Education and Curriculum Coordination; many employed Assistant Superintendents and Supervisors of Food Service, Facilities, and Transportation. (See Table A-8); and
 - 9.3% of total operating expenditures was for "administration" in 2000. This figure does NOT include the management costs of Special Education or Supervisors of Food Service, Facilities, Transportation. (Table B-4).
3. Expectations of our schools leaders have changed to now include:
 - Provide "instructional leadership", not merely "management"; principals and superintendents need to be expert at "school improvement";
 - Understanding special populations and how staff should serve them well;
 - A steady diet over 30 years of mandates and initiatives aimed at ensuring that "all children will learn to high standards" and heightened public exposure to each school's "outcome measures";

- Larger state & district bureaucracies and thicker “policy books” to follow
 - Funding programs on tighter and more politically contested budgets; and
 - More resources to support and guide administrators toward leadership.
- ❖ The memo also included the following attached tables from a section titled “Maine Teachers, Management Personnel, and Costs of Administration: 1900-2000” from a 2014 report prepared by Professor Donaldson:
- Table A-7. Instructional Personnel and Average K-12 Student-Teacher Ratios: 1900-2000
 - Table A-8. School Districts and Committees and Non-Teaching Personnel in Maine: 1900-2000
 - Table B-4. Percentage of Total Maine School Expenditures by Function: 1900-2000;
- ❖ “The Maine Principal Study: Change and Stability in School Leadership 1997-2011” prepared by Gordon Donaldson and George Marnik, Professors in the Graduate Program in Education Leadership at the University of Maine (October 2012). Here’s the report’s Executive Summary:

Executive Summary: Observations About Maine Principals: 1997 – 2011

Based on the responses of 479 Maine principals (67% return rate) to the 2011 Maine Principal Study survey:

- In comparison to 1997, 2001, and 2005, the typical Maine principal:
 - is slightly younger and has two years’ less experience in administration;
 - is a woman (53% of those who responded);
 - is supervising a larger school (enrolling 69 more students for an average size of 407) and a significantly larger staff (53) than before;
 - is supervising a school where more students are eligible for Free or Reduced price Lunch (54% reported over 50% of their students qualify)
- Maine principals devote on average 70 hours per week to their work, up from 58 hours in 2005 and the highest work-hours recorded in this study. Principals average 32 hours per week on the job during the summer. 39% “often wonder if the long hours are worth it.”
- Principals’ activity patterns continue to be characterized by many diverse tasks. They are most engaged in “student management” and “personnel management” activities; they devote least time to “instructional leadership” and “resource management” activities.
- The vast majority – 80% to 95% -- of Maine principals continue to find their work rewarding, energizing, and enjoyable.
- Similar majorities believe they are “making a positive difference for students at my school” and that “I am making progress at my school.”
- 83% report that their work is “stressful”; 72% say their work involves conflict and disagreement; and 56% indicate that their workload makes it difficult to give their “best attention to tasks”.
- 65% continue to report that they struggle to balance job and family/personal life; 56% say the job “intrudes too much on my personal life”; 69% report that “because of the long hours, I have little time left for myself.”
- But the percentages reported in the last two bullets are lower than in the past; principals seem to now expect the long hours and high demands of the job.

- 14 % say, if they had the choice to make again, they would “definitely not” or “probably not” become a principal; 15% were “unsure”. This is a consistent finding over 14 years.
- Principals continue to view the people closest to them – spouse/significant other, secretaries, other principals, and teachers – as most helpful to them in their work. Least helpful – and sometimes “obstacles” – were the Maine Department of Education, the school board, and parents.
- In general, they feel that parents and community have positive views of their schools.
- As in the past, it appears that principals’ sense of reward from and energy for the job:
 - is inversely related to their feelings of stress and overload;
 - is directly related to their perception that the community, district, and staff are in consensus about the positive direction of their school.
- As in the past, it appears that their sense of effectiveness as principals:
 - is directly related to their perception of community, district, and staff consensus about school goals; and,
 - is inversely related to the “unpredictability” of the environment around them and the amount of conflict and challenge they experience.
- ❖ Selected data from the “College of Education and Human Development: Degrees Conferred by Academic Unit and Major” spreadsheet containing degree completion data for graduate students enrolled in the Educational Leadership program at the University of Maine from 2009-2010 to 2013-2014; submitted by George Marnik, Professor at the University of Maine (October 5, 2015);
 - 21 certificates of advanced study (CAS), 18 masters (M.S.Ed.) and 2 doctorate (Ed.D.) degrees were conferred in 2009-2010;
 - 9 CAS, 5 M.S.Ed. and 2 Ed.D. degrees were conferred in 2010-2011;
 - 10 CAS, 33 M.S.Ed. and 3 Ed.D. degrees were conferred in 2011-2012;
 - 4 CAS, 4 M.S.Ed. and 0 Ed.D. degrees were conferred in 2012-2013; and
 - 10 CAS, 24 M.S.Ed. and 0 Ed.D. degrees were conferred in 2013-2014.

Task force members agreed that stress -- from legislation, school boards, parents, home life, etc. -- has increased and affects the turnover rates of principals. Members questioned whether recent changes in society, social contracts, and family/personal life have an effect on principal’s decisions for remaining in school leadership positions; and asked if any research identified the reasons why principals remain in the field for a long time.

7. Small Group Discussions: State policy solutions and best practices to address the problems challenging the pipeline for promoting excellence in Maine school leadership. Kelly Latterman, NCSL School Leadership State Policy Specialist, described the breakout group activity for the task force to discuss state policy solutions and best practices to promote school leadership. The task force members were broken up into the following 3 groups:

- ❖ Recruitment: Identifying prospective candidates for school principalship;
- ❖ Preparation: Enhancing the preparation, licensure and certification of school principals; and
- ❖ Retention: Providing mentoring, professional development and training to promote the performance and professional growth of school principals.

Each group addressed the following questions related to their policy topics and used chart paper to jot down their brainstorm and responses: (1) what are the challenges around our topic area? (2) what are we already doing in Maine to address this topic (e.g., programs, policies)? and (3) what ideas and next steps can and should we do? After the initial brainstorm of the groups was completed, task force members were instructed to place stickers to indicate the items proposed by each group that they felt were priorities for further review. Here is a summary of the small group discussions.

Summary of Group Discussions: State Policy Solutions and Best Practices to Address Problems Challenging the Pipeline for Promoting Excellence in Maine School Leadership

Task Force on School Leadership: October 6, 2015 Meeting

Below is a summary of an “idea capture” produced during the final breakout session at the October 6th task force meeting. Task force members were split up into three groups: (1) recruitment; (2) preparation; and (3) retention. The groups were then asked to respond to three questions (see these questions in tables below). The column on the left reflects group member’s responses. After answering the three questions for their topic area, all task force members reflected on the ideas that came from the other groups. As a collective, task force members were then instructed to indicate what ideas they would like to prioritize. By prioritizing an item, the individual is indicating that they agree, see a high need, or support the comment. The right hand column indicates the number of individuals who prioritized any given item.

Group 1. Recruitment: Identifying prospective candidates for school principalship	
What are the challenges around this topic area?	Priority number
• Branding positions of principalship	6
• Roles that encourage leadership	6
• Authentic leadership opportunities	2
• Pre-identified pathways	0
• Time for courses and accessibility to professional development	0
• Anxiety about being alone on the job	0
What are we already doing in Maine to address this topic?	Priority number
• University of Maine cohort model provides a networking group that engages leadership candidates	3
• Accessing university programs	1
• Growing and nurturing our own leaders is a “hit or miss”	1
What ideas and next steps can and should we do?	Priority number
• Homegrown approach (with education associations) for potential means of improving leadership candidates	10
• Alternative pathways approach to developing leadership; entries followed by training programs	10
• Statewide internship programs to validate leadership skill sets	3
• Local licensure authority	3
• Identify support mechanisms that are already working	1
• Incentives for certain assignments	1
• Revise salary structures in rural and low income schools	0
• Virtual preparation models of reality	0

Group 2. Preparation: Enhancing the preparation, licensure and certification of school principals

What are the challenges around this topic area?	Priority number
• “True internship” experience	12
• Clustering and making principalship more attractive	10
• Connection between core content and real life needs	1
• Recruiting veteran leaders	1
• “Baptism by fire” (principals are immersed in their employment and learn their jobs the hard way)	0
• Time	0
What are we already doing in Maine to address this topic?	Priority number
• Authentic teacher leader experience	6
• Preparation programs; internships	1
• “Great Beginnings: Orientation for New School Administrators” (Maine Principals’ Association (MPA))	1
What ideas and next steps can and should we do?	Priority number
• Revisit and evaluate education leadership programs, including Teacher Leadership Program at University of Maine Farmington	4
• Pool resources for outside innovation programs	3
• Connect shadowing with internships	3
• Model of support (“Great Beginnings: Orientation for New School Administrators” (MPA))	2
• Provide paid job internships	1
• Contract retention	1
• Targeted performance bonding	0

Group 3. Retention: Providing mentoring, professional development and training to promote the performance and professional growth of school principals

What are the challenges around this topic area?	Priority number
• Workload	15
• Certification is disconnected from performance and professional growth	2
• Value of professional development and training programs; local efforts are not streamlined or coordinated	1
• Mentoring quality and time; “one size fits all” programs are far less stable	1
• Professional development is not timely, ongoing and differentiated	0
• “Quadrant 1 vs. 2”; placing mentoring program on back burner when it needs to be on the front burner	0
• Tenure; employment “at will”	0
• Contracts	0

What are we already doing in Maine to address this topic?	Priority number
• Maine Principals' Association (MPA) 2-year mentoring programs	4
• Professional development programs, including MPA, school districts, and individual programs	3
• Regional mentors	2
• Local stipends	2
• Local professional development and MPA efforts for individuals	2
• Retention	1
• Courses	0
• Awareness is growing	0
What ideas and next steps can and should we do?	Priority number
• Retirement law	8
• Combined efforts for professional development involving DOE, MPA, MSSA, MADSEC and MCCL (education associations)	4
• Deploy retired administrators as mentors	3
• Define principalship position; not the "Uber Principal"	2
• Retention	1
• Raise awareness	1
• Creating more proactive approaches to preparing school leaders, including alternative pathways and rural approaches	0
• Recognizing regional approaches for professional development and training	0

8. Next Steps and Announcements. Sen. Langley and Rep. Kornfield announced that task force members would be contacted to schedule the second (and final) task force meeting. The task force chairs also requested that task force staff send the task force members a summary of policy topic items prioritized in the small group breakout session so that the members would be prepared to discuss state policy solutions and best practices to promote school leadership at the next meeting. The members were also notified that they should consider proposals for strategies and recommendations for the task force report at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:10 p.m.