**Who's Ready to Be a Principal?**

Most of the nation’s 90,000 public school principals start their education careers as teachers. Along the way, most who aspire to the principalship will land in a university-based preparation program. There, they take a series of courses and obtain some in-the-field experience that leads them to the required credentials to become a school leader. But very often, those programs don’t bestow the knowledge and skills that make would-be principals truly ready for the complex job that awaits.

Why?

For starters, the job has changed dramatically, especially the expectations around what effective principals must be able to do. They must know how to coach teachers to become better at instruction. They must create and maintain a school climate where all students and educators can flourish. And, increasingly, they need to know how to attend to the full array of children’s needs, not just their academic ones. So what are states, school districts, higher education, and alternative programs doing to prepare our future principals for all of this?

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*Subject-matter experts featured in this report include:*

* [**Corey Mitchell**](http://www.edweek.org/info/about/experts.html#mitchell)
* [**Arianna Prothero**](http://www.edweek.org/info/about/experts.html#prothero)
* [**Denisa R. Superville**](http://www.edweek.org/info/about/experts.html#superville)

[**Editor's Note: Who's Ready to Be a Principal?**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/01/25/editors-note-whos-ready-to-be-a.html)

The principal’s job has changed dramatically, but many of the programs that prepare future school leaders don’t bestow the knowledge and skills they need to be effective.

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[**New Principal Standards Catch On**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/01/25/new-principal-standards-catch-on.html)

A national set of revised professional goals for school principals are pushing some states and universities to rethink and redesign preparation.

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[**From Teacher to Principal: A Look at the Typical Pathway**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/from-teacher-to-principal.html)

The career path to the principalship has been a fairly rigid one until recently.

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[**Niche Training for Principals Aims to Fill Skill Gaps**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/01/25/niche-training-aims-to-fill-gaps.html)

For many principals and other school leaders, learning how to handle some of the toughest issues in schools happens only after they are on the job.

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[**Pressure Mounts on Higher Ed. to Improve Principal Preparation**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/01/25/pressure-mounts-on-higher-ed-to-improve.html)

Calls to modernize how prospective principals are selected and trained are being heeded in some states and universities.

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[**Principal-Preparation Programs Get Major Makeover in Illinois**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/01/25/principal-preparation-programs-get-major-makeover-in-illinois.html)

The state's move to overhaul training for school leaders has shifted university-based programs' focus to developing principals who are strong instructional leaders.

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[**Teachers, What Makes an Ideal Principal?**](http://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/teachers-what-makes-an-ideal-principal.html)

*Education Week* asked teachers to share their visions for what makes an ideal principal. Read some of their responses, then share your own take on the #idealprincipal to describe the qualities, traits, and experiences that add up to a strong, effective principal.

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