



Because School Leadership Matters

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STUDY UPDATE FINDS THAT SCHOOLS LED BY NYC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY GRADUATES CONTINUE TO CLOSE GAP IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE

NYU Study Updates and Expands 2009 Report

Schools led by graduates of the NYC Leadership Academy tend to improve student performance in English language arts (ELA) and math at a higher rate than schools led by similarly-tenured principals in similar schools, according to a study by the Institute for Education and Social Policy (IESP) at New York University. In this update, IESP applied the same methodology it used in its 2009 paper, *The New York City Aspiring Principals Program: A School-Level Analysis*. The new analysis adds a third cohort of Aspiring Principal Program (APP) graduates and an additional year of testing data. IESP found that APP graduates were more likely to be placed in elementary and middle schools with higher concentrations of African American and Latino students, and students eligible for free and reduced lunch. Their schools also had significantly lower initial student achievement and attendance rates, as well as lower proportions of experienced teachers than those led by comparison principals. After standardizing for citywide performance trends and controlling for differences in initial school and student characteristics, IESP found that APP-led schools cut the initial ELA performance gap between their schools and comparison schools in half. In math, the performance gap initially widened, but was virtually eliminated in years three and beyond.

These results improve upon those in the earlier report, which found that elementary and middle schools led by APP graduates made greater gains in ELA than schools led by comparison principals, with gains in math made at roughly the same rate as the comparison schools. The IESP study sample included 109 schools led by APP principals and 331 led by other new principals hired in the same years.

"The Leadership Academy's Aspiring Principals Program prepares educators to accelerate school improvement efforts in the city's lowest performing schools," said Dr. Sandra J. Stein, the Leadership Academy's Chief Executive Officer. "We are pleased that this expanded independent evaluation demonstrates our graduates' capacity to lead these efforts and dramatically narrow pre-existing performance gaps."



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“For us, the ultimate measure of APP’s effectiveness is the impact program graduates have on student achievement,” said Dr. Louise Mirrer, Chair of the Leadership Academy, and President and CEO of the New-York Historical Society. “We are pleased to see such strong evidence that APP graduates and teachers at these schools are turning around lower-performing schools within a relatively short time frame.”

“These promising results both reinforce and expand upon our prior findings,” said Dr. Sean Corcoran of the Steinhardt School of Education at NYU and the primary researcher of the follow-up study. “We appreciate the opportunity to continue following the Aspiring Principals Program’s impact on student achievement.”

The NYC Leadership Academy, an independent nonprofit established in 2003, designs and delivers preparation, coaching, and support programs for New York City public school leaders. The Leadership Academy also provides strategic consulting to the New York City Department of Education, New York State Education Department, and other school districts and state education departments. Now in its eighth year, the Leadership Academy’s Aspiring Principals Program (APP) has trained 17 percent of current New York City public school principals, who serve more than 110,000 students in some of the city’s most challenging schools.

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