

ASSISTANT AND ASPIRING PRINCIPAL PROGRAMS

Leadership Bridge Program

20 assistant principals

70% of participating principals identify as Black or Latinx

Since 2019, the Leadership Bridge program has supported the development and career growth of assistant principals (APs), with the goal of ensuring that Chicago has a strong, diverse pipeline of school leaders.

In 2021-22, 20 assistant principals received on-the-job professional development and individualized coaching sessions from school leadership experts at [New Leaders](#), the [University of Illinois at Chicago](#), and [Accelerate Institute](#) and worked closely with their current principals to prepare for future school leadership roles. By July 2022, seven current and former Leadership Bridge participants secured principal roles for the 2022-23 school year.

Each of the three Leadership Bridge partners is welcoming a new cohort of APs in 2022-23 while continuing to support graduates as they actively seek principal roles. We are serving at least 26 aspiring leaders through this program in 2022-23.

Aspiring Principal Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

50 aspiring principals and¹ 7 principal leaders

49% of program participants identify as Black or Latinx

Since 2019, the Aspiring Principals Professional Learning Communities (AP PLCs) have aimed to equip aspiring principals with a deep understanding of the skills needed to take on a principal position in the near future. Participants work to practice and deepen these skills in the context of their assistant principal (AP) roles. The learning communities are led by current principals with strong track records of developing AP talent.

In 2021-22, we served our largest cohort of aspiring principals. Over ten months, participants engaged in nine learning sessions on topics such as change management, culturally responsive school leadership, and budgeting best practices.

In 2022-23, we are expanding the program to meet increased demand, offering three Aspiring Principal PLCs serving up to 45 aspiring principals.

Chicago Principal Endorsement Program

28 aspiring principals and 1 principal leader²

¹ Two additional principals participated alongside their assistant principals

² Demographic data is only available for principal and assistant principals in district operated schools. We have limited demographic information for aspiring principals in the district.

Since 2019, the Principal Endorsement Program has served aspiring principals who currently work as teachers, network staff, and other school support staff and who are enrolled in degree programs that award the General Administrative Endorsement, Illinois' statewide license for school leadership. This specialized professional learning community (PLC) provides supplemental school leadership experiences and networking opportunities with key central office staff, in partnership with CPS and community partners. In addition, it aims to elevate the profile of aspiring leaders within the district.

In 2021-22, a highly-regarded Chicago Public School (CPS) principal led two cohorts for the program. Over four months, each cohort met six times to participate in sessions focused on key elements of the principalship, such as leading a school team and working with community members.

In 2022-23, this PLC is serving a cohort of up to 25 aspiring leaders.

PRINCIPAL PROGRAMS

Summer Design Program (SDP)

Since 2013, The Fund's Summer Design Program (SDP) has provided educators with time, space, and resources to create innovative, student-centered solutions to school-based or classroom-based challenges.

For the 2021-22 school year, SDP consisted of two elements: Design Studios and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). School teams could participate in one or both programs, depending on their needs.

Read below for details on each.

Design Studios

95 principal or aspiring principal-led teams

47% of the teams were led by an educator who identifies as Black or Latinx

In 2021-22, The Fund partnered with [Leadership + Design](#) to host eight design-thinking workshops for 95 K-12 school teams in Chicago. School teams engaged in empathy-building interviews and observations with students or teachers. They learned design thinking as a problem-solving practice and collaborated to design unique learning acceleration strategies for a priority group of students.

Notably, 100% of school teams reported high satisfaction and agreed that participation in the studio better prepared them for the coming school year. Projects ranged from literacy programs to instructional coaching models to teacher learning communities. All were designed to better support the students who felt furthest from the opportunities in their school community.

In spring 2022, The Fund hosted a culminating design challenge for SDP schools. This inaugural competition aimed to deepen learning and application of design thinking and to identify and share promising practices. In total, 14 schools competed, and the winning teams received up to \$10,000 to implement their ideas in their schools. Our grand prize winner was [Sayre Language Academy](#), whose school team mapped out a comprehensive plan to create a more culturally responsive environment for Black male students in third through fifth grade.

After a two-year break due to the pandemic, The Fund held our Innovation Showcase at William Blair offices to celebrate the talented educators involved in SDP. Exemplifying creativity, consideration, and

collaboration, their proposals demonstrate the potential of educator-led innovation and how school leaders improve teaching and learning within existing systems and in partnership with their communities each day. Learn more about these projects [here](#).

In 2022-23, we are offering design studios to 100 school teams and will continue highlighting promising practices through case studies and showcase events.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

122 school leaders and 16 principal leaders

59% of PLC participants and 63% of leaders identify as Black or Latinx

Since 2016, The Fund's Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have provided year-long peer study groups for Chicago's school leaders. PLCs are highly valued as an opportunity for school leader collaboration and enable highly relevant principal practices to transfer from experienced principals to other leaders. Each PLC is led by a distinguished principal with extensive subject-matter knowledge and a track record of success in the topic area, which they draw on to facilitate the learning experience for the participants in their cohort.

In 2021-22, The Fund supported 20 PLCs focused on helping principals and aspiring leaders hone the technical adaptive competencies necessary for leading in the unique moment spurred by the pandemic. Topics included equitable grading practices, leading school-wide anti-racist initiatives, leveraging community partnerships, and ensuring student social-emotional well-being. The Fund also convened PLC leaders for quarterly Community of Practice sessions. As a result, they engaged in their own learning community and adjusted their approach based on data and shared problems of practice.

By the end of the school year, 100% of PLC Leaders facilitated at least eight sessions over ten months. PLC participants reported 95% program satisfaction, reinforcing the need for a professional community of peers in which leaders can engage in honest, open reflection of their practice.

In 2022-23, we are offering up to 22 PLCs across various topics to serve up to 275 school leaders.

Executive Principal Program

22 principals

59% of participants identify as Black or Latinx

Since 2018, the Executive Principal Program has provided top and emerging leaders with the power of strategic thought-partnership, peer accountability, flexible financial resources, and intentional engagement with feedback from CPS leadership. This program is a multi-year mentorship opportunity for Chicago's top leaders (Executive Principals) and rising stars (Partner Principals) in the second or third year of their principalship. The program's first three years were a pilot generously funded by the Schwartz-Ward Family Foundation, with each Executive Principal matched with a Partner Principal. The Schwartz-Ward Family Foundation also graciously funded the fourth year of the program, with each Executive Principal matched with an average of three Partner Principals.

In 2021-22, we scaled the Executive Principal program to meet increased demand and to impact more Partner Principals. As a result, the cohort grew from 14 principals in 2020-21 to 22 principals in 2021-22. The Executive Principal Program provided approximately 300 hours of coaching and mentoring throughout the school year through monthly school visits, one-on-one meetings, and group sessions.

For 2022-23, we are scaling down our investment as we think through new ways to support early career and seasoned principals. As a result, we will have two Executive Principals and up to six Partner Principals participating in alignment around grading and assessments and curriculum and instruction.

PRINCIPAL FELLOWSHIPS

The Chicago Principals Fellowship

15 principals

53% of participants identify as Black or Latinx

Since 2014, The Chicago Principals Fellowship has provided executive leadership support to Chicago's most talented principals. The Fellowship is a hands-on policy and leadership experience led by Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and CPS' Department of Principal Quality. Fellows participate in academic sessions with Northwestern faculty and policy sessions with the district. At the end of the Fellowship, groups of participants presented district policy recommendations to district leaders on a topic of their choice.

In 2020-21, the program evolved from a one-year model to a two-year model, with academic and policy sessions focused on school sustainability and system-level leadership. The Fellowship is often leveraged as a pipeline for district leadership to develop principals' leadership pathways and options while recognizing that their journeys can be nonlinear. The current cohort of fellows began meeting in January 2021 and continued until May 2022. The presentations resulted in CPS' Chief Education Officer, Bogdana Chkoumbova, writing a memo that addressed the Fellows' initial recommendations and provided a shared commitment on a path forward to improving the district's work.

For 2022-23, we are supporting up to 75 Fellowship alums to engage in a culminating Chicago Principals Fellowship Alumni Series; The Fund and CPS will continue to explore opportunities to identify a future path for the Fellowship.

The Cahn Fellows Program for Distinguished Principals

8 principals and 8 "allies"

62% of participants identify as Black or Latinx

Since 2016, the Cahn Fellows Program has provided a 15-month national leadership development opportunity for principal fellows in Chicago, with a curated curriculum delivered by faculty at Teachers College, Columbia University. Fellows designed and implemented leadership projects in their schools with guidance from professors and practitioners. In addition, each Fellow chooses an "ally"—another educator in their school whom they have cultivated for leadership—to participate alongside them. Fellows and allies also participate in sessions around personal leadership and stakeholder engagement. At the end of the Fellowship, Fellows present their school-based projects at the Cahn Fellows Annual Leadership Conference.

The cohort of fellows will continue meeting until October 2022. For 2022-23, we are also welcoming a new cohort of Cahn Fellows, serving up to 8 principals.