

Preparing Tomorrow's Principals Today: A Formative Review of the Missouri Leadership Development System (MLDS)

September 2019



Prepared for:



Prepared by:



About CTAC:

The Community Training and Assistance Center is a national not-for-profit organization with a demonstrated record of success in the fields of education and community development. CTAC builds district, state, and community capacity by providing technical assistance, conducting research and evaluation, and informing public policy. It focuses on developing leadership, planning and managerial expertise within school systems, community-based organizations, collaborative partnerships, state and municipal governments, and health and human service agencies. Since 1979, CTAC has provided assistance to hundreds of public institutions, community-based organizations, and coalitions in the United States and several other countries.

CTAC's staff is comprised of nationally recognized executives, educators, policy makers, researchers and organizers who have extensive experience working with city, county and state agencies, educational institutions, federal legislative bodies, not-for-profit organizations, philanthropic institutions and the private sector.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) conducted an independent, formative review of the Missouri Leadership Development System (MLDS). The purpose of the formative review is to learn from educators regarding the implementation of MLDS and to support the state in making evidence-based refinements to the program. This report is made possible by the support of the Central Comprehensive Center.

The primary goal of MLDS is to develop and support effective school leaders throughout the state. MLDS supports principals at four levels from Aspiring (pre-certificated), to Emerging (initial career entry), through Developing (practicing), and ultimately to the Transformational Principal. This formative review examines the perceptions of MLDS principals at the following levels:

- Emerging Level: Year I
- Emerging Level: Year II
- Developing Level

This review uses a mixed-methods approach with both qualitative and quantitative data collected from educators across the state. The multiple data sources of data include statewide survey responses provided by principals, superintendents, central office administrators, and specialists; interviews with principals, vice/assistant principals, superintendents, central office administrators, and specialists; participant satisfaction surveys carried out by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) over a three-year period; and multiple MLDS-related documents.

The following questions guided the formative review:

- Is MLDS being implemented with fidelity across the nine MLDS regions in the state?
- How do principals participating in the emerging and developing MLDS programs perceive the importance of the competencies, learning experiences, and treatments in strengthening their practice and improving student learning?
- What factors are enhancing or impeding the progress of implementation?
- How do program participants and major stakeholders perceive the value of the MLDS?

Findings

Overall Perceptions

- Principals and superintendents generally believe the purpose of MLDS is clear, and they know where to get information about MLDS.
- Principals and superintendents see a connection, through MLDS, between leadership development and student learning.

- Principals agree that they receive support from their district or Regional Professional Development Center when applying learnings from MLDS.
- Multiple educator groups cite communication as a challenge.

Fidelity of Implementation

- Principals and superintendents believe MLDS is being implemented with fidelity.
- Principals report they are regularly applying what they learn from MLDS at their school.
- When examining perceptions across regions, principals from all nine regions indicate that MLDS is being implemented with fidelity.

Professional Development

- Principals at all levels are positive about MLDS professional development.
- Principals agree the professional development focuses on research-based leadership practices.
- Principals indicate the professional development content and training materials are relevant to their needs as school leaders.
- Principal-to-principal networking is a key and effective feature of the program.
- Principals indicate MLDS trainings are strengthening their leadership practices and promoting a common leadership vocabulary across the state.

Importance of MLDS Components

- Principals and specialists believe the MLDS components are important for strengthening principals' leadership practices and improving student learning.

Benefits and Value

- Principals and superintendents agree that MLDS supports the growth of principals, promotes collaboration, and strengthens principals' instructional leadership practices.
- Principals and superintendents believe that MLDS provides customized support to address principals' specific needs.

Multiple Impacts

- Principals and superintendents believe MLDS contributes to improvements in instructional leadership and classroom instruction.
- Principals and superintendents agree MLDS contributes to improved student achievement.
- Principals and superintendents believe MLDS supports the growth of school leaders in Missouri.
- Principals and superintendents agree that MLDS makes principals more likely to stay as school leaders in Missouri.

Enhancing Factors

- Consistency in implementation helps to make MLDS effective.
- The focus on instruction contributes to the program's effectiveness.
- The emphasis on researched-based strategies also helps to make the program effective.
- Networking and collaboration among principals is a major strength of the program.
- Many principals find the hands-on learning experiences beneficial and valuable.
- Principals across the levels report the mentors and specialists effectively support them.
- The support from mentors and specialists increases the effectiveness of MLDS.

Emerging Issues

- As the program goes to greater scale, a challenge is to continue to provide customized support to a growing number of MLDS principals.
- Recognizing that there are nuanced differences among principals and schools, many respondents hope the groupings of principals in MLDS trainings can become more differentiated over time.
- Several principals and superintendents describe the time away from the building as a concern.
- There are concerns that a few mentors have minimal contact with principals.

Recommendations

In the aggregate, **the dominant recommendation emerging from the interviews and survey responses is to stay the course.** The early implementation of MLDS is well-received in the field. The following issues and recommendations should be considered as the basis for making targeted refinements to the program.

Issue One: Principal Support

- Continue to focus on effective, research-based practices and strategies.
- Further strengthen the relevance and applicability of the learning activities.
- Experiment with training formats.
- Consider providing certification or micro-credentials for MLDS participants.

Issue Two: Mentors and Specialists

- Provide more guidance and training to mentors.
- Keep building the specialist team.

Issue Three: Superintendents and Evolving District Needs

- Convene superintendents to understand what districts need from the program.

Summary

Leaders and practitioners across the state believe that MLDS is implemented with fidelity, effective in supporting and developing principals, and moving in the right direction. They have confidence that the program is having a positive impact on principal leadership practices, classroom instruction, and student achievement. Building on the accomplishments of MLDS to date, Missouri is well-positioned to build the capacity of all principals in the state to become impactful leaders.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) conducted an independent, formative review of the Missouri Leadership Development System (MLDS). The purpose of the formative review is to learn from educators regarding the implementation of MLDS and to support the state in making evidence-based refinements to the program. This report is made possible by the support of the Central Comprehensive Center.

Background of the Formative Review

Principal Leadership Development

The primary goal of MLDS is to develop and support effective school leaders throughout the state. In fall 2014, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) convened a group of key leaders—all engaged in principal development—to examine research and best practices, and identify the essential competencies of a highly effective principal at each level of experience in a principal’s career.

MLDS supports principals at four levels, from Aspiring (pre-certificated), to Emerging (initial career entry), through Developing (practicing), and ultimately to the Transformational Principal. MLDS is aligned with the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) as developed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA).

The Need

According to DESE, Missouri has approximately 2,200 principals and 1,300 assistant principals, and each year approximately 1,100 educators earn an administrator certificate and 300 new principals are hired.¹ Recognizing the essential role effective leaders play in ensuring equitable access to excellent education for all Missouri students, DESE is focusing on developing and supporting effective school leaders in every school.

Currently, MLDS serves 51% of the principals in the state, representing 53% of the public school districts and charter schools. At full scale, MLDS will serve all principals and assistant principals employed in Missouri public schools and charter schools, as well as prospective school principals in 19 preparation programs across the state.

Organizational Structure

The key components in the MLDS organizational structure are governance, design, and implementation (see Appendix A for the MLDS organizational chart).

Commission. The MLDS Commission is the governing body. The Commission establishes and executes the “processes of interaction and decision-making” among the key stakeholders involved in training and supporting effective principals. The Commission is comprised of 12-15 key stakeholders from DESE, education administration programs, professional organizations, practitioners, and regional service providers. DESE chairs the Commission.

Design. The design team for each level consists of 10-15 individuals with such duties as developing training and support materials, and preparing those who facilitate, coach, and mentor principals. They also participate in exercises and activities with other MLDS designers, and provide feedback and evaluative information to the appropriate MLDS director.

The design team identifies various engagement platforms, through which learning experiences and treatments are delivered. The engagement platforms include regional meetings, conferences, learning labs, one-to-one mentoring or coaching, and retreats.

- *Emerging Level* principals. Their learning experiences are delivered across a two-year timeline to align with the state’s requirement that beginning school leaders be mentored for their first two years (see Appendix B for an illustration of the timeline from 2016 to 2018 for *Emerging Level* principals).
- *Developing Level* principals. Their learning experiences are designed to engage administrators across a span of several years.
- *Aspiring Level* and *Transformational Level* principals. Their training opportunities begin in fall 2019.

Implementation. The implementation teams provide direct training and support to principals, participate in exercises and activities with other implementers, and provide feedback and evaluative information to the appropriate MLDS design team and director. Mentors and specialists from the Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDCs),ⁱⁱ in particular, help MLDS principals to master the leadership competencies.

MLDS provides three layers of training and support: (a) one-to-one mentoring and coaching is provided at the *Emerging* and *Developing Levels*, with additional coaching available at the *Transformational Level*; (b) regional networking with other principals is facilitated in small groups; and (c) state networking is achieved through a series of meetings where principals gather and participate in professional development together.

Scope of the Formative Review

This formative review examines the perceptions of participants at the following levels (hereinafter referred to as “levels”):

- Emerging Level: Year I
- Emerging Level: Year II
- Developing Level

At the time of data collection and analysis for this formative review, the state began to roll out the *Aspiring* and *Transformational Levels* of MLDS. As such, data are not available for these two levels.

Research on Principal Leadership Development

As indicated above, the design and implementation of MLDS is firmly rooted in research.

Research shows that effective principal leadership is associated with better educational outcomes for students and teachers (e.g., Branch, Hanushek, & Rivkin, 2013; Leithwood et al., 2004).ⁱⁱⁱ Indeed, the quality of leaders is found second only to teacher quality among school-related factors that affect student achievement (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010).^{iv}

Additional studies (e.g., Clark, Martorell, & Rockoff, 2009)^v show a positive impact of principal experience on school performance, particularly related to math and student absences. This finding suggests that principal turnover can be costly, especially at rural schools, schools of high-poverty, and schools with a high concentration of students of color (U.S. Department of Education, 2019).^{vi}

Other than retirement or dismissal, Levin and Bradley (2019)^{vii} find inadequate preparation and professional development is the main reason principals leave their job. This report also shows that several elements of professional learning opportunities are positively associated with principal retention, including “high-quality preparation programs that carefully select and deeply prepare principals for challenging schools; access to in-service training, mentoring, and coaching that continue to support and develop principals; and collaboration between professional learning programs and school districts.” (p. 3)

An additional study (Gates, Baird, Master, & Chavez-Herrerias, 2019)^{viii} examines the impact of a *Principal Pipeline Initiative* implemented in six large urban school districts from 2011 to 2016. Their analyses show a positive impact of the initiative on improving both student achievement and principal retention. After three or more years, schools with newly placed principals in the treatment districts outperform comparison schools by 6.22 percentile points in reading and 2.87 percentile points in math. Also, newly placed principals in the treatment districts are 5.8 percentage points more likely to remain in their school for at least two years and 7.8 percentage points more likely to remain in their school for at least three years than newly placed principals in comparison schools. The effects of the initiative on student achievement are positive and statistically significant for schools in the lowest quartile of the achievement distribution and larger than for schools in the second-lowest quartile.

These researchers also indicate that the entire package of initiative components appears to work as a cohesive whole. The four aligned components of the initiative include: (a) rigorous leader standards, or principal job descriptions, of practice and performance that guide principal preparation, hiring, evaluation, and support; (b) high-quality preservice preparation for high-

potential candidates, typically through a combination of in-district programs and partnerships with university preparation programs; (c) data-informed hiring and placement, based on candidates' demonstrated skills, to selectively hire and match principal candidates to schools; and (d) well-aligned on-the-job support and evaluation, serving to help principals, especially novices, hone their skills, particularly in bolstering instructional leadership.^{ix}

Overview of the Report

The remainder of the report is organized as follows. Chapter Two discusses the methodology of the formative review. Chapters Three through Ten present the findings of the study, including overall perceptions (Chapter Three), fidelity of implementation (Chapter Four), professional development (Chapter Five), importance of MLDS components (Chapter Six), benefits and value (Chapter Seven), multiple impacts (Chapter Eight), enhancing factors (Chapter Nine), and emerging issues (Chapter Ten). The last chapter (Chapter Eleven) discusses key issues and presents recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

CTAC used a mixed-methods approach with both qualitative and quantitative data for this formative review. The multiple data sources include: (a) statewide surveys of principals, superintendents, and specialists; (b) interviews with principals, superintendents, and specialists; (c) participant satisfaction surveys carried out by DESE over a three-year period; and (d) a review of multiple MLDS-related documents.

The following questions guided the formative review:

1. Is MLDS being implemented with fidelity across the nine MLDS regions in the state?
2. How do principals participating in the emerging and developing MLDS programs perceive the importance of the competencies, learning experiences, and treatments in strengthening their practice and improving student learning?
3. What factors are enhancing or impeding the progress of implementation?
4. How do program participants and major stakeholders perceive the value of the MLDS?

Data Collection

MLDS Principal, Superintendent, and Specialist Surveys

In partnership with DESE, CTAC developed and administered three web-based, anonymous MLDS surveys for principals, superintendents, and specialists, respectively. The surveys were launched on May 14, 2019, using an independent platform. CTAC sent the survey links to DESE, and the MLDS specialists then forwarded the links to the principals and superintendents that they serve. The principal and superintendent associations helped to disseminate information about the surveys. CTAC provided DESE with daily updates on survey participation. Multiple reminders were sent to maximize the number of responses. The surveys were closed on June 7, 2019.

The principal survey branched the respondents to two sets of questions, based on their MLDS program status. Principals who are currently in the program or have previously participated in MLDS were asked a series of Likert-scale questions focusing on: overall perceptions; fidelity of implementation; professional development; importance of components; benefits and value; and impact.

In addition, principals were provided with four open-ended questions so they could comment on: the parts of MLDS that they consider to be unique; the parts of MLDS that are making it effective; the parts of MLDS that are impeding its effectiveness; and recommendations for improving MLDS.

Principals who have not participated in MLDS were asked questions centered on: their knowledge of MLDS; and the value and impact of high quality leadership development and support. They were also invited to share their recommendations on how to improve support for school leaders.

The superintendent survey also used a branching function based on whether or not their respective districts have principal(s) involved in MLDS. The questions for the MLDS superintendents focused on: overall perceptions; benefits and value; and impact, with three open-ended questions on enhancing factors, impeding factors, and recommendations for improving MLDS.

For the Non-MLDS superintendents, the questions centered on: general beliefs; and the value and impact of high quality leadership development and support, with an open-ended question for their recommendations.

The specialist survey included a similar set of Likert-scale and open-ended questions as the MLDS principal survey, with some wording adjustments as appropriate. All specialists surveyed are those who provide training and support for the MLDS program.

The response rates on the three surveys are indicated below.

Table 1: Response Rates for the Principal, Superintendent, and Specialist Surveys

Surveys and Respondents	Population	Number of Responses	MLDS Response Rate	Non-MLDS Response Rate
Principal Survey				
MLDS Principals	702	521	74.2%	
<i>Emerging Level: Year I (Current)</i> <i>Emerging Level: Year II (Current)</i> <i>Developing Level (Current and Previous)</i>				
Non-MLDS Principals	1,498	112		7.5%
Superintendent Survey				
MLDS Superintendents	238	131	55.0%	
Non-MLDS Superintendents	280	78		27.9%
Specialist Survey				
Specialists	11	11	100.0%	

Note.

- The number of responses by MLDS Principal category was Emerging Level: Year I – 181; Emerging Level: Year II – 195; and Developing Level – 145.
- A total of 48 Central Office Administrators also responded to the superintendent survey. Due to the small numbers of respondents, their responses are not part of this formative review.

In the discussions of the survey responses that follow, unless otherwise noted, “principals” refer to current MLDS principals, and “superintendents” refer to MLDS superintendents.^x

The survey analyses include cross tabulations and figures to display the findings. CTAC conducted Mann-Whitney U tests to examine the statistical significance of the differences across groups.^{xi} For the written comments, CTAC conducted thematic analyses to identify common themes and key issues across survey respondents.

Interviews

CTAC developed three protocols for interviews with principals, superintendents, and specialists across the state. The protocols were tailored as appropriate to the role of the participants and included questions on their perceptions of the fidelity of MLDS implementation, professional development, and the impact of MLDS on principals’ leadership practices, classroom instruction, and student learning. The interviewees were also asked for factors that they believe enhance or impede the implementation of MLDS, and their recommendations for further improving the program.

CTAC used a stratified random sampling process for the selection of principal and superintendent interviewees. The principals were stratified into three levels (i.e., *Emerging Level: Year I; Emerging Level: Year II; and Developing Level*) and nine RPDC regions. A total of 16 principals were then randomly selected proportionally in each strata. Multiple rounds of reminder emails were sent. For those who declined the invite or did not respond, another principal was randomly selected for the specific level and RPDC region. The superintendents were also stratified into nine RPDC regions and randomly selected. The specialists helped to contact the superintendents chosen and secure at least two superintendent interviewees per RPDC. For the specialists, three out of 11 were randomly selected.

As Table 2 shows, CTAC conducted 35 interviews with 6 principals, 8 vice/assistant principals, 13 superintendents, 5 central office administrators designated by the superintendents, and 3 specialists.

Table 2. Number of Interviewees by Position and Level (N = 35)

	Emerging Level: Year I	Emerging Level: Year II	Developing Level	Total Interviewees
Principals	1	3	2	6
Vice/Assistant Principals	3	3	2	8
Superintendents				13
Central Office Administrators (e.g., Assistant Superintendent, Director)				5
Specialists				3

In the discussions that follow, principals and vice/assistant principals are grouped in the “principal” category. Superintendents and central office administrators are two separate groups.

Participant Satisfaction Surveys

CTAC analyzed responses from ten satisfaction surveys which DESE carried out over the three-year period from 2017 to 2019 after coaching labs, regional meetings, and kick-off conferences. Nine were principal surveys and one was a superintendent survey.

Documents Review

CTAC reviewed a variety of documents relating to MLDS. Representative examples include:

- MLDS Emerging Level Participant Guide (August, 2016)
- MLDS Emerging Level Facilitator Guide (August, 2016)
- MLDS Developing Level Participant Guide (September, 2017)
- MLDS Developing Level Facilitator Guide (September, 2017)
- MLDS Executive Summary (May, 2019)

Limitations of the Formative Review

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the formative review. To support DESE in gaining timely insights and actionable information, CTAC collected and analyzed perceptual data from multiple sources. In this context, quantifying the impact of MLDS on principal leadership practices or student achievement was beyond the scope of this formative review.

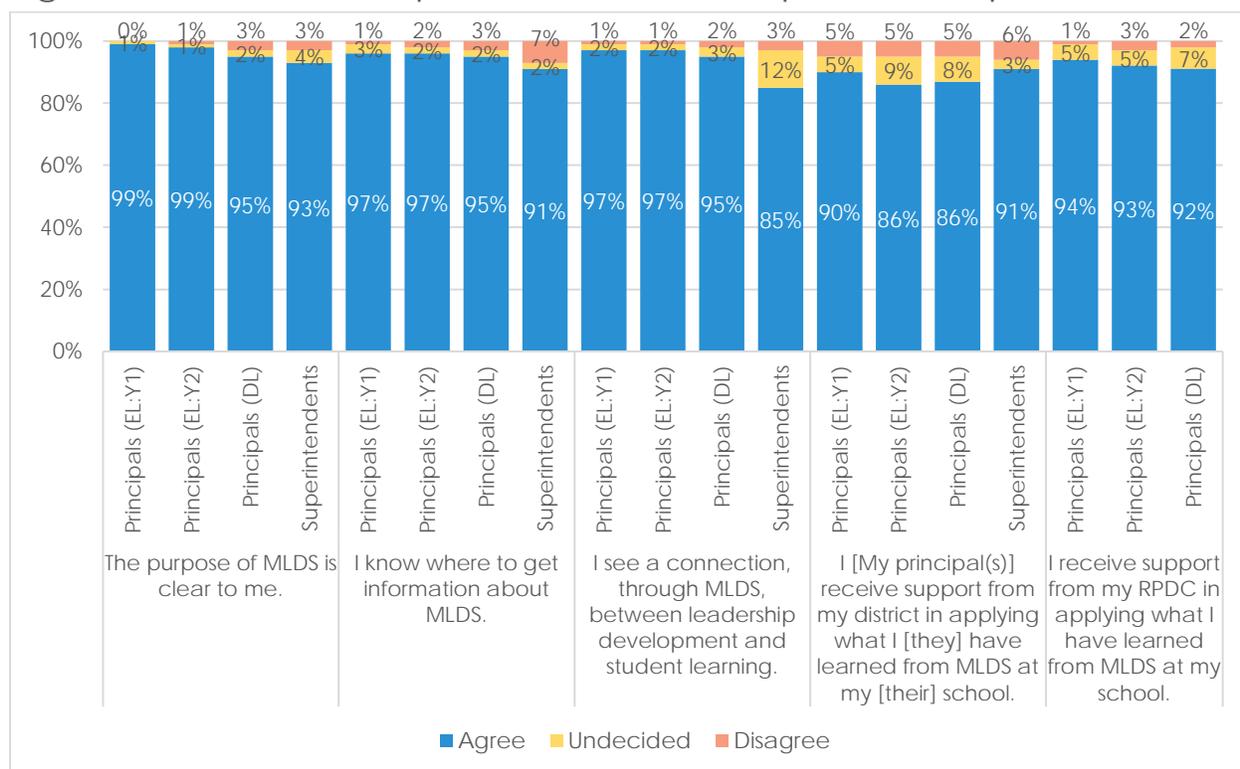
Despite these limitations, consistent findings and trends emerge from the surveys and interviews. They help to draw a clear picture of the early implementation of MLDS. These findings are informative and will support DESE in making evidence-based refinements during the continuing implementation of MLDS across the state.

CHAPTER THREE: OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

This chapter examines respondents' overall perceptions of MLDS.

Principals and superintendents generally believe the purpose of MLDS is clear, and they know where to get information about MLDS. As Figure 1 shows, 95% or more of principals across the levels agree that the purpose of MLDS is clear and they know where to get information about MLDS. More than nine out of ten superintendents also agree.

Figure 1. Overall Perceptions of MLDS Principals and Superintendents



Note. Throughout this report, unless otherwise noted, *agree* is a composite of strongly agree/agree, and *disagree* is a composite of strongly disagree/disagree. In terms of abbreviations, EL: Y1 = Emerging Level: Year I; EL: Y2 = Emerging Level: Year II; DL = Developing Level. Due to rounding, percentages may not always add up to precisely 100%.

Interviewees also report the expectations are clear.

There definitely is a clear understanding of the goals of the MLDS.

-Principal

*The MLDS is designed well with standards as the heart of the leadership program...
MLDS is clear about the vision.*

-Superintendent

Figure 1 also shows that principals and superintendents see a connection, through MLDS, between leadership development and student learning. Interviewees elaborate on this connection.

The culture of the school is changing. The changes will come in student achievement in the next 2-3 years.

-Superintendent

“The connection is good between participation in the MLDS and leadership development. I wish this had been available when I was a new administrator.”

I enjoy the focus on effective feedback the most. This will directly impact my ability to help my teachers grow which will impact student learning.

-Principal

The connection is good between participation in the MLDS and leadership development. I wish this had been available when I was a new administrator. I would have loved it. There is a culture of support.

-Superintendent

Principals agree that they receive support from their district or Regional Professional Development Center when applying learnings from MLDS. Just 6-14% of principals are either undecided or disagree that they receive such support.

The mentors and specialists had the experience and the knowledge and the right level of expertise to tell you what they thought in the right way. They were willing to give you advice when you needed it or wanted it. They were super supportive 24/7.

-Principal

The coaching labs have been a huge benefit. The opportunity to network with other principals as well as the availability of the RPDC Specialists to answer questions and give support has been extremely beneficial.

-Principal

Not every district participates or supports its administrators going. Continue to advertise and grow the program and help districts understand these programs directly relate to the retention rate of administrators.

-Principal

Multiple educator groups cite communication as a challenge. As Figure 2 shows, nearly all MLDS principals (97%) report that they receive information about the program on a regular basis and three-fourths (73%) of MLDS superintendents agree.

In contrast, only half of the Non-MLDS superintendents (51%) and principals (46%) agree that they receive such information regularly, while one-third of superintendents (32%) and principals (41%) disagree. Also, although three-fourths (72%) of Non-MLDS superintendents believe they know how to get involved in MLDS, only 57% of non-MLDS principals agree, while 10% are undecided and 33% disagree.

Figure 2. Respondents' Overall Perceptions of MLDS

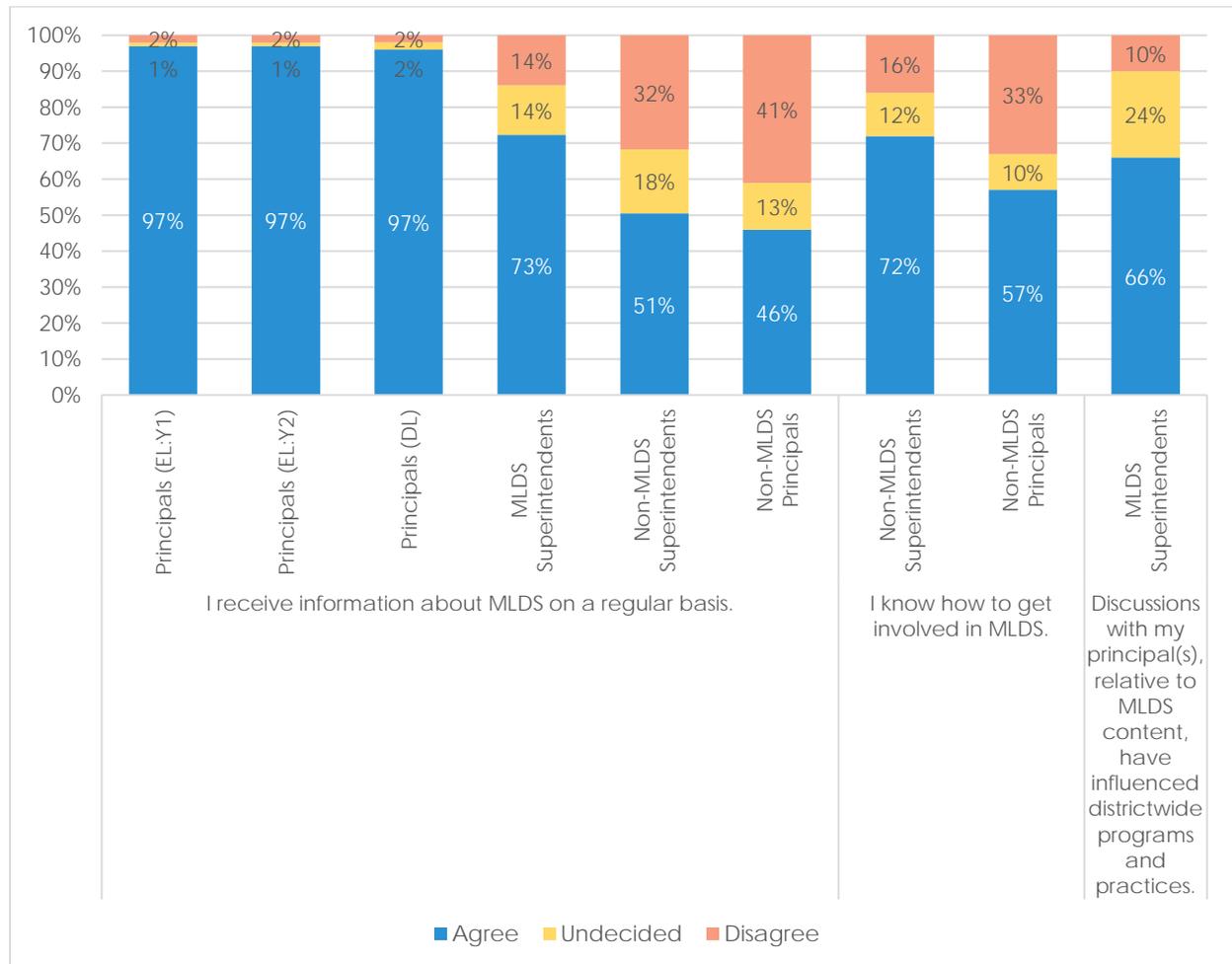


Figure 2 also shows that two-thirds of MLDS superintendents (66%) agree that the discussions with their principal(s), relative to MLDS content, have influenced districtwide programs and practices. This survey response is higher than the response in DESE's 2017-18 satisfaction survey in which 53% of superintendents indicated that their discussions with their principals, relative to MLDS content, had significant or moderate influences on districtwide programs and practices.

Summary

Principals and superintendents have very positive perceptions of MLDS. They agree that the purpose of the program is clear, and they know where to get information about MLDS. Through MLDS, they see a connection between principal leadership development and teacher and student outcomes. Principals report that they receive support from their district and RPDC. Communication, while strong, appears to be an area for further improvement.

CHAPTER FOUR: FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter examines the perceptions of educators on the degree to which MLDS is delivered as intended. It also examines whether the perceived fidelity of MLDS implementation is consistent across the nine regions.

The fidelity of implementation of MLDS can be considered across multiple dimensions (e.g., Dane & Schneider, 1998, as cited in a U.S. Department of Health & Human Services brief).^{xii-xiii} This formative review focuses on the dimensions of *Participant Responsiveness* and *Program Differentiation*—both of which can be adequately captured with survey and interview data.

Participant Responsiveness refers to the extent to which participating principals react to or engage in MLDS (e.g., their perceptions about the relevance, appropriateness, and helpfulness of MLDS, and their level of engagement). *Program Differentiation* refers to the degree that the critical components of MLDS are distinguishable from each other and from other programs.

Participant Responsiveness

Principals and superintendents believe MLDS is being implemented with fidelity.

I believe that MLDS is delivered as it was designed as observed from my principal.

-Superintendent

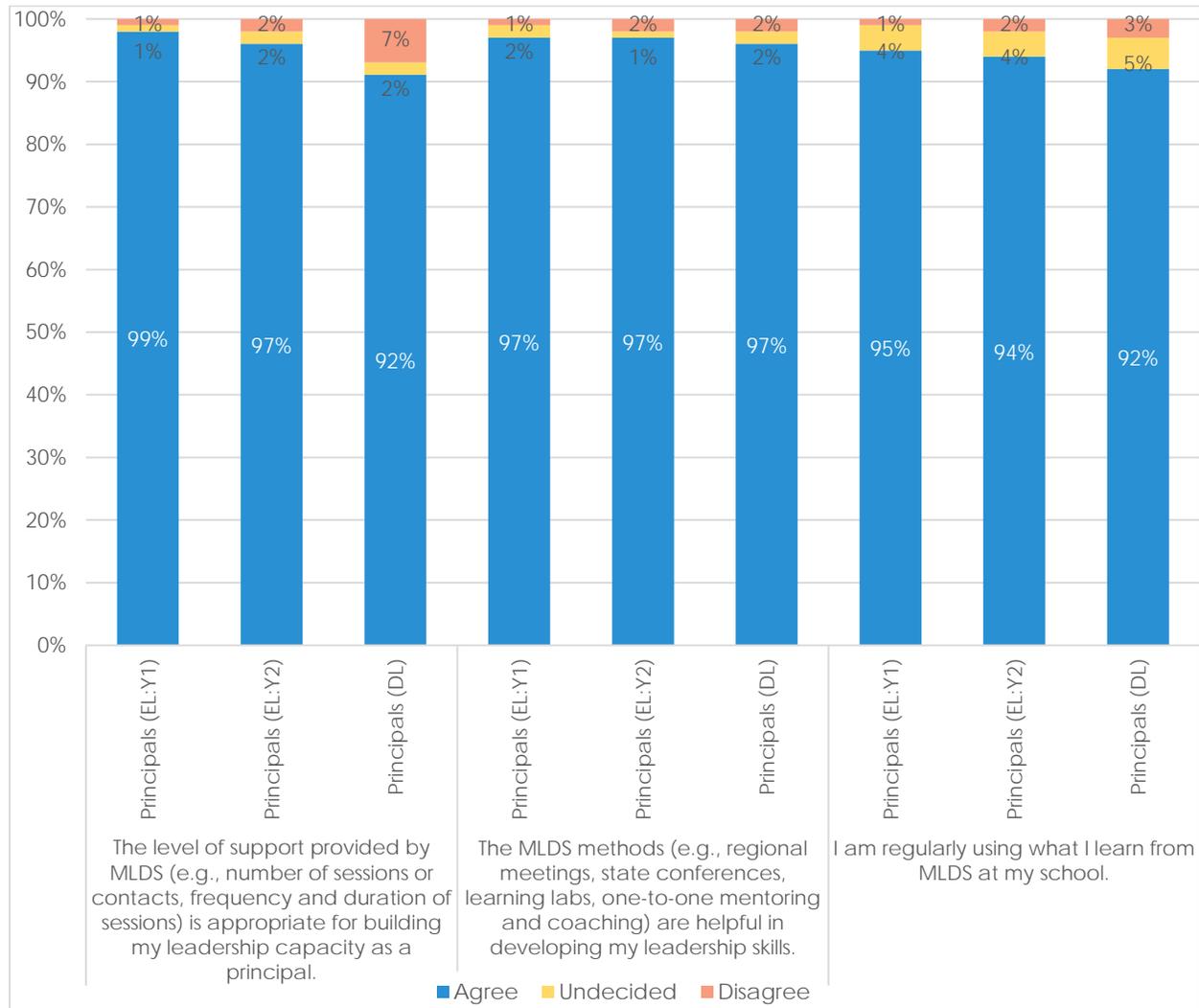
To me it is actually better than I thought...The more you stay in it, the better it becomes...It has done what it is designed to do.

-Principal

As Figure 3 shows, most principals agree that MLDS provides an appropriate level of support for building their leadership capacity (92-99% across the levels). In addition, 97% of principals across the levels believe that the MLDS methods are helpful in developing their leadership skills.

“I always came back with new learning that I could immediately put into action or in place. It was relevant.”

Figure 3. Perceived Fidelity of MLDS Implementation



The positive perceptions are echoed and elaborated upon in interviews and survey comments.

MLDS is effective for many reasons. A few are: the New Principal Conference in Columbia, new principal workshops at the SCRPPDC, and coaching labs at area schools.

-Principal

The learning labs are invaluable! Being able to work within a school setting and receive feedback in such an encouraging manner has been powerful.

-Principal

It is expected that principals will bring back what they learn from the MLDS trainings and apply it to their real-life leadership practices. As a specialist explains:

We expose them to a lot of things... We try to make timely, practical trainings that are aligned with what is happening in the school. We try to make it easy to relate to what they are currently doing. Much of it is hands-on, working with colleagues in a safe place. My hope is that they will say, "I took this information and used it with my staff." The goal is for them to take it back to really help them become a better leader.

-Specialist

Figure 3 shows that **principals (92-95% across the levels) report they are regularly applying what they learn from MLDS at their school.** Interviewees reinforce this survey result.

My high school principal attended sessions and brought back very good methods such as the 30-second window observation technique that enhances the traditional format of pre-conference, observations, and post-conference. Teachers are receiving lots of feedback in specific areas as well as in broad strokes. I observed him in action.

-Superintendent

I thought the MLDS treatments and exercises were very good. A lot of those I brought back to my building. I liked knowing what the desired outcomes were and what the expectations were. It helped you know how people work. Everything transferred well back to the building.

-Principal

The stuff that we went over each time we met, it was really good... I always came back with new learning that I could immediately put into action or in place. It was relevant.

-Principal

Fidelity of Implementation across the Regions

When examining perceptions across regions, principals from all nine regions indicate that MLDS is being implemented with fidelity. Each region has an RPDC. As Table 3 shows, principals' responses comprise two groupings, both of which are highly positive. The Southeast and South Central regions have the highest percentages of principals strongly agreeing with the survey items and are grouped together. The principals from the other regions form an additional group, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Perceived Fidelity of MLDS Implementation across RPDC Regions

	Southeast & South Central				Other 7 RPDC Regions			
	N	SA	A	U	N	SA	A	U
The level of support provided by MLDS (e.g., number of sessions or contacts, frequency and duration of sessions) is appropriate for building my leadership capacity as a principal. *	124	81%	19%	1%	264	60%	36%	2%
The MLDS methods (e.g., regional meetings, state conferences, learning labs, one-to-one mentoring and coaching) are helpful in developing my leadership skills. *	124	82%	17%	0%	263	62%	33%	2%
I am regularly using what I learn from MLDS at my school. *	124	73%	25%	2%	263	55%	37%	5%

Note. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level. As the percentages of principals who disagree or strongly disagree were so small, the table shows only the percentages of principals who strongly agree (SA), agree (A), and are undecided (U) about the survey items.

Table 4 shows the responses from two survey items that help to explain the perceptions of principals from the two groupings of principals by region. Although principals from all nine regions are highly positive, higher percentages of principals from Southeast and South Central strongly agree than principals from the other seven regions that they receive support from their RPDCs in applying what they have learned from MLDS at their school (80% vs. 55%). They also strongly agree that MLDS provides customized support to address their specific needs (72% vs. 48%).

Table 4. Perceptions of MLDS Principals across RPDC Regions

	Southeast & South Central				Other 7 RPDC Regions			
	N	SA	A	U	N	SA	A	U
I receive support from my RPDC in applying what I have learned from MLDS at my school. *	124	80%	20%	0%	264	55%	35%	7%
I believe MLDS provides customized support to address my specific needs. *	124	72%	26%	2%	264	48%	41%	7%

Note. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level. As the percentages of principals who disagree or strongly disagree were so small, the table shows only the percentages of principals who strongly agree (SA), agree (A), and are undecided (U) about the survey items.

Interviewees and survey respondents from across the state believe MLDS is implemented with fidelity. This is DESE’s intent.

All regions are basically providing the same treatments and experiences especially through the first 2 years of the program... We are trying our darnedest to do that so that it does not matter if you are in the Southeast or the Northwest, you will get the same learning experiences.

-Specialist

Program Differentiation

Principals highlight a range of features that they believe make MLDS unique and impactful.

What I consider unique in my experience with MLDS is the communication and feedback I receive from my cohort both during scheduled sessions and outside of them. We act as a unified unit when it comes to learning, questioning, giving feedback, and asking for help. It is a unique experience when a person can feel absolutely comfortable asking questions and seeking information from those who otherwise would be strangers.

-Principal

Because of MLDS, we are able to discuss situational issues that are happening within our building/district and know that someone else might have fresh view of how to “fix” the problem or how to handle the situation better.

-Principal

I really believe that I've become a much better building leader. What is unique is that MLDS provides me with experienced leaders who have learned a great deal over the years. I believe some of my best ideas have come from conversations with experienced leaders.

-Principal

I find the focus on the specific logistics of how you lead a building and a district to be very unique and helpful. I have not participated in many programs that focus on the specifics of how you identify areas for change, and the process of making effective change happen in a school building. Understanding the “how” behind making effective changes has been incredibly helpful for me.

-Principal

Summary

Principals across regions and levels believe MLDS is implemented with fidelity. Principals and specialists believe the MLDS has many unique features.

“We act as a unified unit when it comes to learning, questioning, giving feedback, and asking for help. It is a unique experience.”

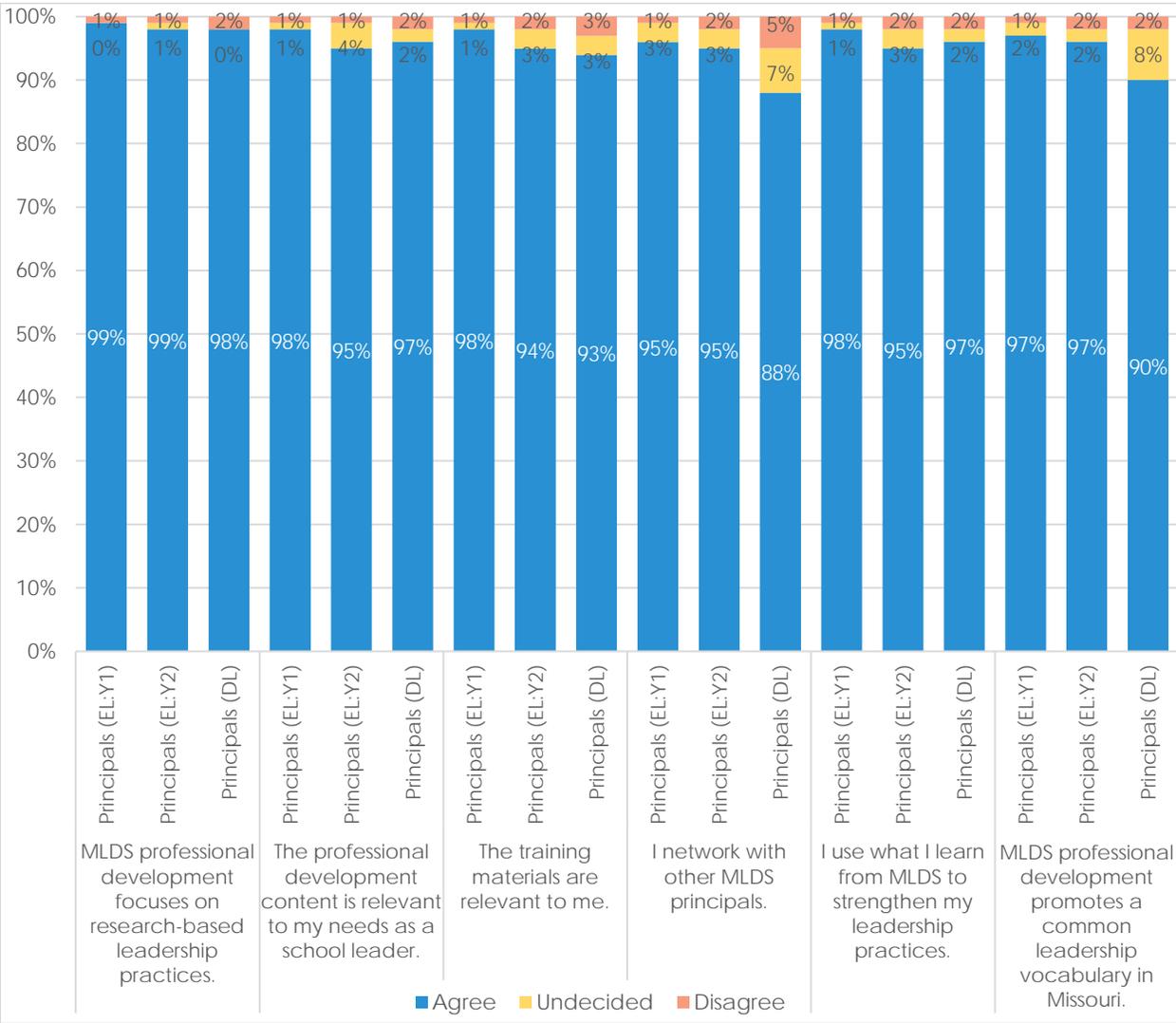
CHAPTER FIVE: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This chapter examines the perceptions of principals on the professional development that they receive from MLDS.

Principals at all levels are positive about MLDS professional development.

As Figure 4 shows, **principals at all levels are positive about MLDS professional development.** A dominant majority of principals (88-99% across the levels) agree with the survey items related to MLDS professional development. Their responses are consistent with the findings from the surveys collected by DESE in the fall of 2018 and spring of 2019 on the perceived usefulness of MLDS trainings.^{xiv}

Figure 4. Perceptions of Principals on Professional Development



Nearly all principals agree the professional development focuses on research-based leadership practices (98-99% across the levels). Principals indicate the professional development content and training materials are relevant to their needs as school leaders.

The materials are high quality and based on current research and current experts who are relevant and who I have heard speak and talk. They stay on top of the latest. They explain why we should change and why it would work.

-Principal

They are spot on with relevance and quality. There was a leadership tool to help you identify which kind of leader you are, your own leadership style, and how you work with other people. It made me look at myself differently and consider the strengths and weaknesses of others you work with.

-Principal

Superintendents also believe the training materials are of high quality. Some add that they, too, benefit from the materials.

The principal has shared the material and information from the sessions. I have been impressed with the good ideas from the training. In fact, we both have benefitted and grown.

-Superintendent

In conversation with the participants, the materials and experiences are very good and helpful in supporting leadership development.

-Superintendent

The training materials are thorough and done right. If you visit their website you will find many resources. Even as a superintendent, the resources are good for me. I review and see areas where I can improve.

-Superintendent

Furthermore, Figure 4 and interview data show that the **principal-to-principal networking is a key and effective feature of the program.**

Collaboration and networking with other principals is an effective and important part of MLDS.

-Superintendent

The collaboration is an important part of the program. By utilizing the personal connections with other educators, I was able to improve PD for myself and those I'm leading. Also, since leadership is a demanding job, I don't always have the time to sift through the numerous resources available. It was helpful for me to hear what resources others had used as a way to expedite the process and target specific resources as needed!

-Principal

The networking component of MLDS is great! Being able to learn from like-minded colleagues is impactful to my development.

-Principal

Principals indicate MLDS trainings are strengthening their leadership practices and promoting a common leadership vocabulary across the state. Most principals (95-98% across the levels) report they make use of what they learn from MLDS to strengthen their leadership practices. In addition, principals (90-97% across the levels) agree that MLDS professional development promotes a common leadership vocabulary in Missouri.

I have been able to apply all aspects of MLDS into my daily school life on some level. Job well done!

-Principal

[The parts of MLDS that are making it effective are] Collaboration with others and a common vocabulary.

-Principal

I was able to take what I learned from a MLDS session and apply it immediately in my position.

-Principal

Summary

Principals and superintendents are very positive about the MLDS professional development. They believe the MLDS professional development focuses on research-based leadership practices, and the content and training materials are relevant and of high quality. Also, they agree MLDS trainings promote networking among principals, strengthen principals' leadership practices, and help to build a common leadership vocabulary in the state.

CHAPTER SIX: IMPORTANCE OF MLDS COMPONENTS

This chapter explores the perceptions of principals, superintendents, and specialists regarding the importance of MLDS components in strengthening principals' leadership practices and improving student learning.

MLDS focuses on 32 essential competencies of a transformational principal, currently embedded in 12 learning experiences. Each learning experience includes a number of treatments—specific activities and approaches—designed to foster mastery of the competencies.^{xv} Collectively, these are referred to as MLDS components.

Survey (Table 5) and interview data show that **principals and specialists believe the MLDS components are important for strengthening principals' leadership practices and improving student learning.** Across the levels, principals rate the competencies (59-67%) and learning experiences (80-86%) as very important. Principals also believe the treatments (58-64%) are very important. More than nine out of ten specialists also agree (91%, 100%, 100%, respectively).

Table 5. Perceived Importance of the Components for Current MLDS Principals and Specialists

Component	Educator Group	N	Very Important	Fairly Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not at all Important
How important are the following MLDS components in strengthening principals' leadership practices?							
Competencies	Principals (EL: Y1)	153	67%	28%	5%	0%	0%
	Principals (EL: Y2)	176	63%	30%	6%	1%	1%
	Principals (DL)	59	59%	24%	14%	3%	0%
	Specialists	11	91%	0%	9%	0%	0%
Learning Experiences	Principals (EL: Y1)	153	80%	19%	1%	0%	0%
	Principals (EL: Y2)	176	82%	13%	4%	1%	0%
	Principals (DL)	59	86%	8%	5%	0%	0%
	Specialists	11	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Treatments	Principals (EL: Y1)	151	64%	30%	6%	0%	0%
	Principals (EL: Y2)	176	58%	35%	6%	1%	1%
	Principals (DL)	59	61%	31%	8%	0%	0%
	Specialists	11	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%

“I think the competencies are very important. They give me areas of focus.”

Competencies

Principals and specialists appreciate the importance of the MLDS competencies. They feel the competencies are pivotal and practical.

I think the competencies are very important. They give me areas of focus. I am able to relate them to myself as far as what I am doing. I use them to set goals and find activities. I printed out the competencies on the emerging leader and look at those areas to define what I will work on and that I can improve on.

-Principal

They are working at keeping things very practical and not making it just hoops to jump through. When I leave these meetings, I always feel it was worthwhile.

-Principal

Well I think of course they are the foundation. You have to have those competencies in place. We have done a good job of meshing and blending these into the content... We really want them to take those competencies to heart and apply them in their school.

-Specialist

Learning Experiences

Similar to their perceptions of the competencies, principals and specialists believe the learning experiences are purposeful, relevant, and important.

Very helpful, very timely. The learning experiences were scheduled depending on time of year and what we should be doing. Then we knew what to focus on and what to look at. It was very purposeful.

-Principal

Those were very important topics. I felt like the learning experiences kept us interested.

-Principal

They were relevant and good. Of the 4 sessions I went to, I did not walk from any one of them thinking they were not all very good. It was all relevant.

-Principal

Treatments

Principals believe the MLDS treatments are effective, specific, and engaging. They also provide opportunities for collaboration and networking among principal colleagues.

I think they were very effective. The readings were all relevant...It was not all sit and get. We moved around a lot. That was the most valuable part being there: being able to talk to other people. The network side of it was very valuable to me. It helps you know, "It's not just me." I've called some of those people in my cohort and asked, "Hey how did you handle this?" It is nice having someone outside of the district to talk to about challenges.

-Principal

I will say the exercises were the most eye-opening and were most specific to what an administrator should do. For example, good ones included 30 second feedback and crucial conversations, how to get the message across but not be threatening. There was also a good one on time task analysis, making you think about what on earth you are doing during your day. All of those were very eye-opening. We talked about the practices and role played a lot.

-Principal

The activities were very engaging. Sometimes professional development can be really dry. But they really gave us things that were interesting and we could take them home and figure out how to apply it from there.

-Principal

In interviews, superintendents shared their overall perceptions of the value and effectiveness of the MLDS competencies, learning experiences, and treatments. Many superintendent interviewees believe these MLDS components are important and well-received.

The various components are important; they enhance the learning experience and impact. For example, dealing with equity to foster a more inclusive culture in our school. Equity is important for all leaders to understand, especially the white leaders in schools with a majority of students of color. MLDS provides vignettes to observe, problem solve and the identity work related to the concepts of equity and how to achieve outcomes. Leaders should know the concepts and how to show it.

-Superintendent

I think they are really good. In the conversations I had with the principals, it seemed they are well received. I would like to see more survey data.

-Superintendent

Summary

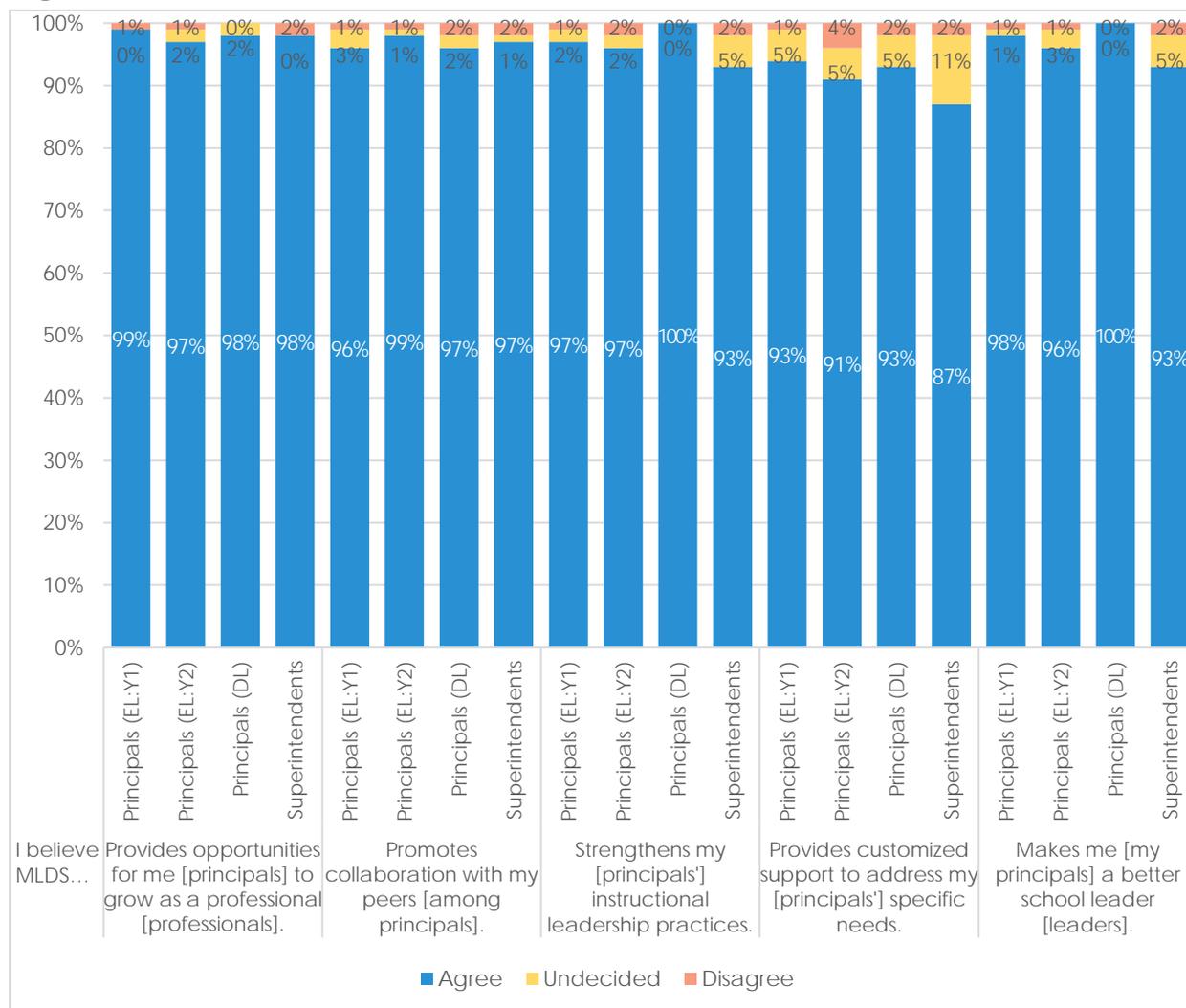
Survey and interview data consistently show that principals, superintendents, and specialists agree that MLDS competencies, learning experiences, and treatments are important in strengthening principals' leadership practices and improving student learning.

CHAPTER SEVEN: BENEFITS AND VALUE

This chapter focuses on the perceived benefits and value of participating in MLDS.

Figure 5 shows that principals and superintendents agree that MLDS supports the growth of principals, promotes collaboration, and strengthens principals' instructional leadership practices.

Figure 5. Perceived Benefits and Value of MLDS



Principals (97-99% across the levels) and superintendents (98%) agree that MLDS provides opportunities for principals to grow as professionals. Comparable percentages of principals (96-99% across the levels) and superintendents (97%) believe MLDS promotes collaboration among principals.

MLDS supports the growth of principals, promotes collaboration, and strengthens principals' instructional leadership practices.

The collaboration with other principals and the RPDC staff have been immensely valuable. I enjoyed being pushed to think deeply and critically about my building, my staff, and myself.

-Principal

The collaboration and connections created by MLDS are extremely beneficial, especially for first year administrators.

-Superintendent

The collaboration with peers and the relationships that are built through this program are what I consider to be the most effective!

-Principal

Figure 5 also shows that most of the principals (97-100% across the levels) and superintendents (93%) believe MLDS strengthens principals' instructional leadership practices. Many interviewees describe the positive changes in principals' practices attributable to MLDS.

I have had improved conversations about craft and am more effective in my observations.

-Principal

I think it has been extremely valuable. I wish I could have done it last year. As a new administrator it is just key. You are just trying to survive that first year. It is hard to get time away from the building though. But it makes you more of a reflective practitioner.

-Principal

The MLDS experience is very valuable and we are now aligning the standards to our evaluations. Principals have the "look for" as they observe and work with staff. All of this should produce good results and fidelity to the standards.

-Superintendent

In addition to building a foundation of leadership skills needed by all principals, participants and executive supervisors indicate in surveys and interviews that MLDS is also able to respond to individualized needs. **Both principals (91-93% across the levels) and superintendents (87%) believe that MLDS provides customized support to address principals' specific needs.** Similarly, principals (96-100% across the levels) and superintendents (93%) believe the program makes principals better school leaders.

It has made me a better leader. Made me more aware of leadership skills I already have. And gave me an opportunity to look at new skills. It was really a paradigm shift in how to look at things. For me, this was particularly helpful in making the shift from instructional coach to principal.

-Principal

The focus and reflective nature of the MLDS content allows for principals to better wrap their mind around the primary tasks and goals associated with being an effective building leader.

-Superintendent

Facilitation and motivation through this program are top-notch. I feel very encouraged to learn from my mistakes and grow. I feel that I am growing from these experiences and feel more confident in how to approach difficult and challenging situations.

-Principal

Many respondents highlight the overall benefits and value of the program in interviews and survey comments.

I am very glad that my district is involved in MLDS. Over my career, I have hired a lot of principals and assistant principals who struggled with their beginning leadership role and this program supports and helps to grow better leaders.

-Superintendent

This [MLDS] is a valuable support system for new administrators within a unified region. I also appreciate the connections and mentorship from experienced principals.

-Principal

Participation in MLDS is very important and valuable. In fact, the new assistant principals that I brought in for next year will be required to participate.

-Superintendent

Summary

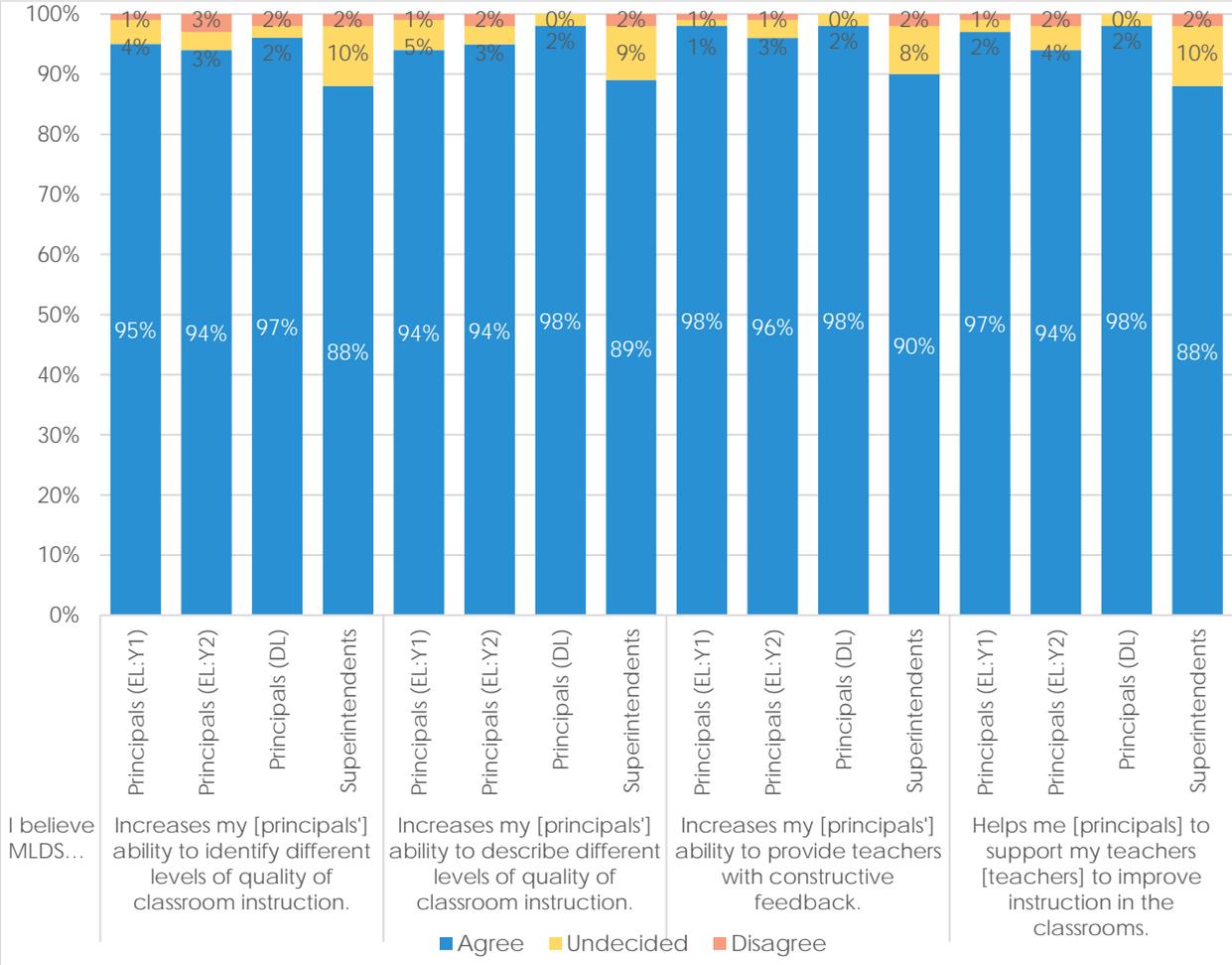
Principals and superintendents believe participating in MLDS is beneficial and valuable. They agree that MLDS enables principals to grow professionally and promotes collaboration among professional colleagues. They believe the program improves principals' instructional leadership practices. They agree MLDS provides customized support to address principals' needs and makes principals better school leaders.

CHAPTER EIGHT: MULTIPLE IMPACTS

This chapter examines the perceived impact of MLDS on improving instruction, student learning, and the professional growth and retention of principals.

As Figure 6 shows, principals and superintendents believe MLDS contributes to improvements in instructional leadership and classroom instruction.

Figure 6. Perceived Impact of MLDS on Instructional Leadership and Classroom Instruction



Impact on Principals’ Instructional Leadership Practices

Principals across the levels agree that MLDS increases their ability to identify (94-97%) and describe (94-98%) different levels of quality of classroom instruction. Nearly nine out of ten superintendents also agree (88%, 89%, respectively).

I have seen changes in three or four leadership practices. They are positive changes in the buildings. We all have a philosophy of education but you have to put that into practice and that's where the differences manifest themselves. The culture in the buildings has been impacted.

-Superintendent

MLDS has made a huge difference on leadership and the learning environment. It is more structured and has evolved over the years.

-Principal

This program has been life and career changing. It is my hope that even seasoned administrators have the opportunity to grow in a program such as this like I have my first two years.

-Principal

In addition, principals (96-98%) and superintendents (90%) believe MLDS increases principals' abilities to provide teachers with constructive feedback. Interviewees also credit MLDS with helping principals to give more constructive feedback to teachers. They indicate that the program helps to build trust and confidence of teachers in their principals.

Participants are better at observing and providing feedback to teachers and building trust and making change effectively. A lot of others things change as the result of this program.

-Specialist

I would say that my teachers have more confidence in me in that what I say is not just made up. My students have benefitted because I am able to provide them more guidance and to provide my teachers with more guidance as well. It all came from this source.

-Principal

Many also believe MLDS helps to improve the climate and culture of the schools, change the mindset of school leaders, and build better relationships between principals and teachers.

MLDS has definitely made a difference. Absolutely!!! I can see the culture changing in the middle school. There is a focus on data, collaboration, and teamwork.

-Superintendent

MLDS helps to improve the climate and culture of schools and build better relationships between principals and teachers.

It has made us more cognizant of how to build culture. We learned about things we could do with our teachers to build culture... One of the teachers commented that I seem much more calm and more at ease. I am on the go and I am in a hurry. I realized through the MLDS that I wasn't always saying, "How is it going?" I realized through the training that people think I am grouchy all the time. It has changed how I relate to teachers.

-Principal

My boss says that people in the building see me as a person who knows research well around instruction and can help with that... They see that I am trying to help teachers grow... Our culture has become more collaborative and the school functions more as a collective community.

-Principal

Impact on Classroom Instruction

Most principals (94-98% across the levels) and superintendents (88%) agree that MLDS helps principals to support teachers to improve instruction in the classrooms.

The system built confidence in my principal who is already outstanding. It helped him move from a more management position to an instructional focus. As you know, most principals are management-oriented leaders and it is harder to move to being an instructional leader using specific content strategies for feedback to teachers.

-Superintendent

I feel that this has really helped my teacher observations. When I step into a classroom to do evaluation, I'm more confident in giving them the correct score.

-Principal

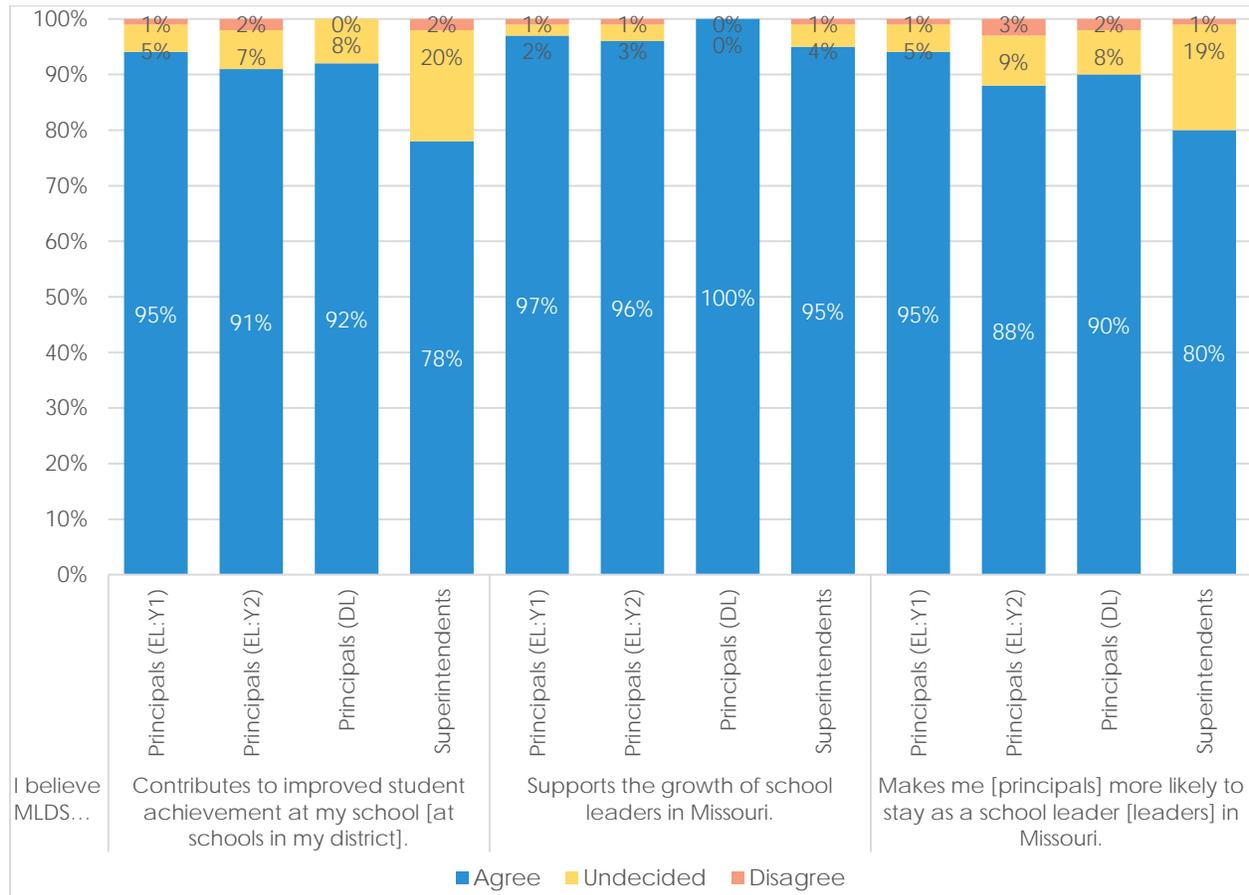
I can take what I am learning and not only does it strengthen my leadership capacity but I can use it with my teachers to develop and strengthen their abilities.

-Principal

Impact on Student Achievement

As Figure 7 shows, **more than 90% of principals and nearly 80% of superintendents agree MLDS contributes to improved student achievement.**

Figure 7. Perceived Impact of MLDS on Student Achievement and Principal Growth and Retention



I think, first and foremost, we are learning to give better feedback to teachers. I am confident it will have a positive impact on student achievement because we give teachers better feedback. That will improve their ability and instruction. I believe there is a strong correlation.

-Superintendent

On student achievement, yes, I think it has to have a positive impact because the principals are moving toward more of a transformational leader. That's the idea—transforming their schools and delivering better instruction and learning.

-Superintendent

I would say MLDS does improve student achievement.

-Principal

One-fifth of superintendents are undecided on the impact of MLDS on student achievement. Some would like to see more evidence of the program on student learning and achieve a better understanding of what types of training contribute to higher student growth.

I currently do not see a correlation between the resources allocated and student growth. I do hope desperately that there will be evidence and measurable improvement.

-Superintendent

We need to do more research into what types of training of principals are correlated with increased student achievement.

-Superintendent

Impact on Principal Growth and Retention

Figure 7 shows that **principals (96-100% across the levels) and superintendents (95%) believe MLDS supports the growth of school leaders in Missouri.**

I had a principal who went through MLDS and she faced a few challenges in her school. But with an excellent skill set, she coached teachers and teams of teachers and raised the performance of the students.

-Superintendent

The main difference is learning to become a visionary leader versus a manager. They are learning where the school should be, to lead from year to year rather than managing day to day. MLDS is helping the leaders lead us; to want to grow.

-Superintendent

I have been so impressed that I am requiring my new hire administrators to enroll and participate in the MLDS.

-Superintendent

Approximately 90% of principals and 80% of superintendents agree that MLDS makes principals more likely to stay as school leaders in Missouri.

Although quantifying the impact of MLDS on principal retention is beyond the scope of this formative review, there is early evidence showing that MLDS is helping to retain principals. According to DESE's analysis (2019)^{xvi} of the retention rate in Missouri across all levels of principalship, "approximately 77% of first year principals return for a second year. After three years, 51% of Missouri's principals leave their position. By year five, just 30% of that first year cohort remains."

In contrast, 92% of the *Emerging Level* principals (Years I and II combined) have moved into their second or third year as a building leader. DESE's analysis of 2018-19 data further indicates that the retention rate for MLDS principals (*Emerging Level–Years I and II; Developing Level–Year I*) has risen to 97.6%.

Summary

Principals, superintendents, and specialists believe MLDS contributes to improvements in instructional leadership, classroom instruction, and student learning. In addition, they agree the program helps to enhance the climate and culture of the schools, and build better relationships between principals and teachers. They agree MLDS strengthens principals in giving more constructive feedback to teachers, and are confident MLDS enhances the growth and retention of school leaders in the state.

CHAPTER NINE: ENHANCING FACTORS

This chapter describes the MLDS components that respondents perceive as enhancing the effectiveness of the program. Building on and reinforcing these components is central to helping to achieve a broader reach and deeper impact throughout the state.

Consistency of Implementation

Many respondents highlight the consistency of MLDS implementation across the state and regional flexibility. As one specialist mentioned, the implementation is by design very consistent across the board, with the exception of only a few things being regional.

I think we are really tight with our fidelity. We made an agreement of the must do's so that everyone is getting the same experiences. We want that to be very consistent. Only a few things are regional. We are very strong and very consistent.

-Specialist

Most respondents believe **consistency in implementation helps to make MLDS effective.**

The factors that enhance implementation are the attendance; the instruction is clear, concise and consistent and applicable wherever you go.

-Superintendent

[The parts of MLDS that are making it effective are] Statewide consistency with regional flexibility norm.

-Specialist

It is effective because of the commonality of training by leadership specialists from across the state. I know that what I am receiving is the same as what my colleagues in other parts of the state receive.

-Principal

Instructional Focus

The focus on instruction contributes to the program's effectiveness. Interviewees and survey respondents underscore the importance of this focus.

The factors that have enhanced the implementation of the MLDS are collaboration with other leaders in the state and more focus on instruction.

-Superintendent

[The parts of MLDS that are making it effective are] Decision making, expanding their professional learning network, internal growth as a leader (ex. recognizing and developing excellent instruction through coaching lab, strategies for feedback, personal leadership platform)—these are just a few of the learning experiences/treatments that leaders are exposed to so they can take and apply them in their schools.

-Specialist

There was a focus on student learning that emphasized looking at instructional practices and providing feedback. We help our teachers to accentuate those successful practices.

-Principal

Some respondents recommend further strengthening the instructional focus of MLDS.

I am concerned that we do not fully support their foundational understanding of effective instruction. We jump right into feedback and coaching.

-Specialist

Continue to focus on what good instruction is and should look like. Help people get better at sound instruction.

-Superintendent

Provide more help in recognizing what actual good instruction looks like. What are some of the instructional strategies I should be recognizing as effective?

-Principal

Research-Based Strategies

MLDS exposes principals to various research-based strategies during the trainings. Respondents believe **the emphasis on researched-based strategies also helps to make the program effective.**

The research proven strategies are extremely helpful in justifying new methods.

-Principal

The focus on researched-based strategies is a cornerstone of the program's effectiveness.

MLDS is effective because it teaches research-based practices and then uses coaching labs to help you learn to apply the information.

-Principal

[The parts of MLDS that are making it effective are] Research-based practical learning experiences, and coaching labs where job embedded learning occurs.

-Specialist

The review of quality research, the time to network, and time to observe teachers in other districts and receive personal feedback have been meaningful.

-Superintendent

Networking and Collaboration

Networking and collaboration among principals is a major strength of the program. Working with peers reduces feelings of isolation and provides a sounding board for tough decisions. The consistent implementation of MLDS enhances these networking opportunities.

MLDS is not just a "training." It provides a support network of experienced administrators to counsel a new administrator through processes in the job.

-Superintendent

It is truly a network and support group that gives me the tools—from basic to advanced—for success in my role.

-Principal

Two pieces are really important. First, coming together as a group for the training session with the same people coming consistently. They network and see that they are not alone. The other is the coaching labs when we are going out into the school and observing teachers. We meet as a group afterward and discuss how we can help our teachers.

-Specialist

The information shared is relevant and timely. The networking aspect has allowed me to make many positive changes in my school.

-Principal

Hands-On Learning Experiences

Many principals find the hands-on learning experiences beneficial and valuable. When experienced leaders share practical strategies in actual school settings (e.g., through school visits and classroom walkthroughs), it enables principals to apply what they learn from MLDS directly to their respective schools and classrooms.

The hands-on labs were a great asset to give leaders a chance to practice the skills being taught and discussed.

-Principal

The "labs" days/hands-on training in classrooms with real teachers at other buildings allowed me to put into practice the strategies we learned during sessions.

-Principal

The director did evaluation walk-throughs with my principal after taking over mentoring her. This was very beneficial to her as it gave her support and confidence in evaluations.

-Superintendent

Support from Mentors and Specialists

Figure 8 shows that 95-97% of **principals across the levels report the mentors and specialists effectively support them** in their leadership role. Many interviewees also view the mentors and specialists as important, knowledgeable, helpful, and dedicated.

Just like the teacher is the single most determining factor in increases in student achievement, next to the teacher, the mentor for the MLDS beginning principal is just as important.

-Superintendent

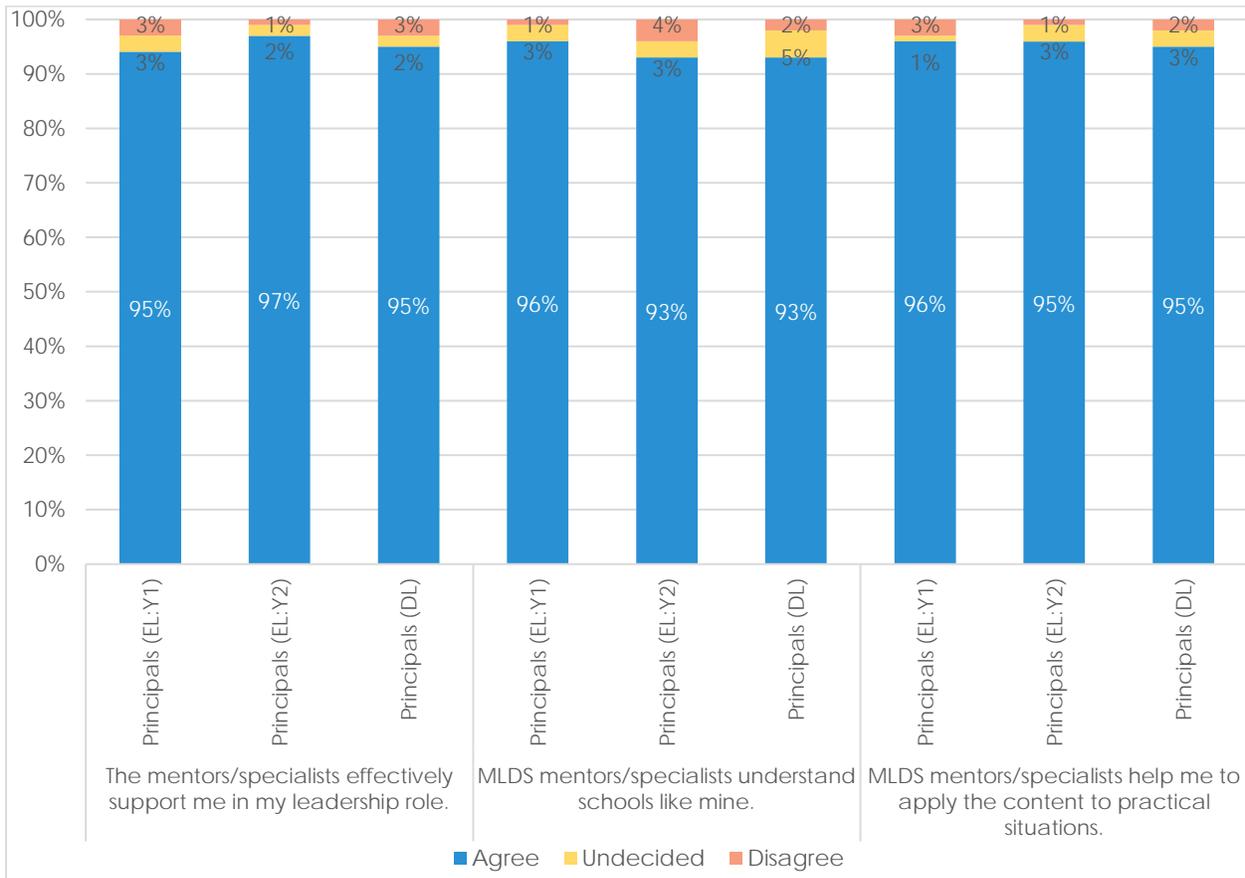
The specialists and coaches are highly skilled and very effective. When I decided on a customized approach to the MLDS, the presenter listened to our input and studied our district and designed excellent trainings.

-Superintendent

The MLDS specialists were very good. Anytime I wanted or needed to reach out, they would get back immediately. Any of those discussions that I had, they were very supportive.

-Principal

Figure 8. Perceptions of Principals on Mentors and Specialists



The support from mentors and specialists increases the effectiveness of MLDS. Many respondents describe the mentors and specialists as very effective. Principals indicate in their survey responses (Figure 8) that they believe mentors and specialists understand schools like theirs (93-96% across the levels) and help them to apply what they learn from MLDS to practical situations (95-96% across the levels). In interviews, principals and superintendents describe the skills and impact of mentors and specialists.

I think they were both really good...They were supportive, stopped in at the school, checked in with us, and were easily accessible. They have been really helpful and engaging in presenting the material in a way that really makes sense.

-Principal

I always feel like they go above and beyond, trying to make themselves available, present opportunities, and reach out. I think all the principals think they are an accessible resource to them.

-Superintendent

The mentors are easy to work with and willing to help in any way that they can. The coaching sessions are especially helpful in learning how to observe and how to give feedback. I then received feedback on how well I gave feedback. Very effective and a great learning opportunity.

-Principal

Very effective. They are credible leaders. They have done that. They have been successful as leaders. I work with 3 mentors and coaches.

-Superintendent

Summary

Multiple components contribute to the success of the program. Principals, superintendents, and specialists believe having a consistent implementation across the state, which focuses on instruction and researched-based strategies, helps to make MLDS effective. In addition, they agree that networking and collaboration among principals and hands-on learning experiences contribute to the effectiveness of MLDS. Many principals also believe that the support from mentors and specialists helps to make MLDS particularly effective.

CHAPTER TEN: EMERGING ISSUES

This chapter identifies a few emerging concerns that may have implications as MLDS continues to scale up. These concerns are largely outgrowths of program components that are proving to be effective. By anticipating and examining these concerns, the state can be ahead of the curve when making any needed mid-course refinements.

Program Scale and Customized Support

As the program goes to greater scale, a challenge is to continue to provide customized support to a growing number of MLDS principals. Specialists are concerned that the increasing workload and principal-specialist ratio are going to affect the capacity and time available to individualize their support to principals.

Growth is a concern. We are a bit overloaded as far as time to spend with each leader because our numbers are large in each region. It's a great problem to have at this early stage in MLDS.

-Specialist

The growing number of participants. It's a great problem to have; however, it is hard to personalize and truly coach each individual principal when the specialist/participant ratio is 2:200.

-Specialist

Groupings of Principals in MLDS Trainings

Recognizing that there are nuanced differences among principals and schools, many respondents hope the groupings of principals in MLDS trainings can become more differentiated over time. They identify possible differentiating factors such as community context (e.g., urban vs. rural) and school size.

Administration in small, rural schools is much different than in larger schools. Most aspects of leadership training apply across the board, but the small school perspective really needs some unique support.

-Superintendent

Clear effective strategies for urban schools is lacking.

-Principal

I am a principal in a very small rural school district and how we deal with topics is sometimes very different than those of principals in much larger districts.

-Principal

I'd like to meet with people from the same size school during the day. There have been times when someone from a bigger school will talk about a "problem" or issue they are having, that would be a blessing to us.

-Principal

Participants also discuss school groupings that can be differentiated based on the school or grade level, or Title I status.

I really like hearing the different perspectives of people in the room, but I would benefit from time to collaborate with elementary people.

-Principal

Meetings are only once a month and the leaders are from different grade levels, sometimes making the experiences very different.

-Principal

I would like a stronger focus on how to improve Title I schools, but not all the schools in my cohort are Title I, so it is not relevant for all of them.

-Principal

Sometimes, principals perceive a mismatch between the backgrounds of the participants and the trainers. In some instances, the trainers are largely from rural settings when the participants are from urban areas. In others, the presenters come from elementary schools and participants are primarily from middle or high schools.

The MLDS specialists have seen a lot as principals for a long time. That makes it run smooth. They are well organized. The roadblock is there is not a person who has been in urban schools. I see some things that work in certain areas but not in others...Adding that diversity would really be beneficial. They are not knowledgeable in those areas.

-Principal

Going to visit the schools is exciting. However I am in an urban school and many of the participants and facilitators are not from urban schools. Although we have similar

dynamics that occur, many are dissimilar. It would be good to have more professional development about successful practices in urban schools.

-Principal

As MLDS scales up, and builds the foundational leadership skills of increasing numbers of participating principals statewide, the state will be better positioned to group principals on a differentiated basis.

Time Away from Building

Many respondents believe a core strength of MLDS is the opportunity to network and collaborate with other principals. They feel that having the time away to engage in the learning activities together is a real asset of the program.

It's always tough to leave our buildings but it was time well spent. I was more effective upon returning to my building with new tools to utilize.

-Principal

This program strength also has unintended consequences. **Several principals and superintendents describe the time away from the building as a concern.** Time away is particularly challenging for those who serve as the only administrator in the building.

I know mine hates being out of the building, especially for first year when he is already challenged by everything being new.

-Superintendent

One challenge for me was dealing with the guilt of leaving the building to work on my personal growth. I would take advantage of opportunities outside of the school day.

-Principal

While trying to run a building and everything that goes with that, it is tough to be focused at these meetings. I make it a point to leave my phone and laptop in the car and check it only during breaks. It is a tough time commitment but also a very much needed one.

-Principal

Sometimes, the location of MLDS convenings means that the required travel for participants can be substantial.

The location for training in the upcoming school year is too far away for my administrators to participate.

-Superintendent

The locations of the meetings were often very far.

-Principal

I live an hour and a half away. I am not sure the benefit of the program outweighs the time away from the building. A possible solution might be to make this option available in a few more locations in the evening.

-Principal

Consistency of Support from Mentors

Survey and interview data show that most respondents and interviewees are extremely positive about the mentoring component of MLDS (see Chapter Nine), yet **there are concerns that a few mentors have minimal contact with principals**. A few of the mentors are less proactive, accessible, or are not meeting the needs of their mentees.

The mentor was not active in my principal's development at all. The mentor would not return emails or phone calls. Finally, my principal sought help from the director.

-Superintendent

I felt like my own mentor was too busy with his own job to provide a lot of direction to me.

-Principal

For me, the biggest disappointment has been my mentor. That is no fault of the MLDS... Unfortunately, my mentor just is not as hands-on as I would like for her to be.

-Principal

Summary

As MLDS scales up and more principals participate in the program, it will be challenging to provide customized support to meet the individual needs of all principals. Many participants hope the groupings of the participants can become more differentiated. There are also concerns related to the time needed for principals to be away from their schools and the consistency of support from mentors. These emerging issues largely result from program components that are proving to be effective.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the Missouri Leadership Development System, the state is focusing on developing, supporting, and strengthening the leadership capacity of all Missouri school principals. In the aggregate, **the dominant recommendation emerging from the interviews and survey responses is to stay the course.** The early implementation of MLDS is well-received in the field. The following issues and recommendations should be considered as the basis for making targeted refinements to the program.

Issue One: Principal Support

Overview

Principals across the levels believe MLDS provides an invaluable opportunity to develop their leadership craft and network with colleagues. They are confident that the program will improve classroom instruction, student learning, and principal retention.

Recommended Action

Continue to focus on effective, research-based practices and strategies. Many respondents believe that this focus is a cornerstone of the program's effectiveness. They find such practices and strategies effective in developing their leadership and improving instruction. The state should continue to focus on evidence-based practices and strategies; this focus should include disseminating synopses of the latest educational research to participants on a regular basis (e.g., bi-monthly).

Further strengthen the relevance and applicability of the learning activities. Respondents find it particularly helpful when the learning activities are relevant and applicable to their individual contexts or school characteristics. Some approaches to strengthening the relevance of the learning activities may include: (a) creating groupings based on principal and school characteristics (e.g., school level, enrollment, and locale) so as to create more cohesive and homogeneous groups; and (b) broadening the background and experience of specialists or speakers to meet the diverse needs of principals.

Experiment with training formats. Having to be away from the school to participate in MLDS is a concern for several MLDS principals and a factor deterring other principals from participating. Time away can be especially challenging for small schools where the principal is the only administrator in the building. As MLDS scales up, implementers should conduct focused experiments with training formats, such as: (a) providing principals with digital collaboration options; (b) delivering some trainings via the Internet; (c) making available an online video library; (d) scheduling some sessions on weekends; and (e) having more half-day training sessions. The effectiveness of these approaches should then be evaluated.

Consider providing certification or micro-credentials for MLDS participants. A certification attests to a status or level of achievement. Micro-credentials provide educators with competency-based recognition for the skills they master. As MLDS goes to greater scale, certification and micro-credentials provide added incentive for others to get involved in the program.

Issue Two: Mentors and Specialists

Overview

The effectiveness of the support from mentors and specialists plays a major role in principal leadership development. Principals across the levels appreciate the assistance they receive from the mentors and specialists. A key to the continued effectiveness of MLDS is to ensure that the quality and consistency of this support is commensurate with the need.

Recommended Action

Provide more guidance and training to mentors. Survey and interview data show there are variations in application and practice of the mentor component. While most of the respondents believe their mentors are effective, there are reservations that some mentors are less accessible or supportive. To ensure all principals receive high quality, ongoing support from mentors, clearer guidelines on the role of mentors (e.g., qualifications, expectations, responsibilities, frequency of contact) as well as trainings should be provided.

Keep building the specialist team. Principals, superintendents, and central office administrators have high regard for the work of the specialists, and many principals hope to receive more customized support applicable to their unique school settings. The resources currently available, however, prevent the specialists from fully providing such needed support. In 2019, three specialists were added to the MLDS specialist team.^{xvii} These additions strengthen the ability of the specialist team to accommodate increasing participation and support for principals. It is recommended the state keep building the specialist team to better meet the needs of individual principals within the state.

Issue Three: Superintendents and Evolving District Needs

Overview

Principals find the program most impactful when there is a direct connection between what their districts and schools need and what MLDS offers. Moving forward, MLDS needs to be anticipatory about how superintendents perceive the changing leadership needs of their principals.

Recommended Action

Convene superintendents to understand what districts need from the program. As the rollout of MLDS expands, it will be important to continue to make an explicit effort to understand how the principal leadership development needs of districts are evolving. Also, it will be valuable to learn how the superintendents are increasing awareness of the program and addressing potential barriers to principal participation within their districts.

Summary

Leaders and practitioners across the state believe that MLDS is implemented with fidelity, effective in supporting and developing principals, and moving in the right direction. They have confidence that the program is having a positive impact on principal leadership practices, classroom instruction, and student achievement. Building on the accomplishments of MLDS to date, Missouri is well-positioned to build the capacity of all principals in the state to become impactful leaders.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ Unless otherwise noted, information related to MLDS in this chapter was obtained from the *MLDS Emerging Level Participant Guide* and the *MLDS Developing Level Participant Guide* available at <https://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/educator-development/missouri-leadership-development-system> or email correspondence with state officials.

ⁱⁱ Across the state of Missouri, there are nine Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDCs). Established by DESE, RPDCs are designed to serve the professional development needs of public school teachers and leaders. Each center differs from the others as the goal is to meet the needs of educators of each region. A school district may choose to utilize services from any RPDC. Each RPDC has a number of MLDS specialists. The total number of specialists has increased from nine in 2016-17 to 13 in 2018-2019.

<https://education.missouri.edu/rpdc/>

<https://semo.edu/rpdc/about.html>

<https://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/educator-development/regional-professional-development-centers>

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (May, 2019). *Missouri Leadership Development System: Executive Summary*. Retrieved from <https://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/educator-development/missouri-leadership-development-system>

ⁱⁱⁱ Branch, G. F., Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2013). School leaders matter: Measuring the impact of effective principals. *Education Next*, 13(1), 62-69; Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning*. New York: The Wallace Foundation.

^{iv} Louis, K. S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., & Anderson, S. E. (2010). *Learning from leadership: Investigating the links to improved student learning: Final report of research to the Wallace Foundation*. University of Minnesota and University of Toronto.

^v Clark, D., Martorell, P., & Rockoff, J. E. (2009). School principals and school performance. *CALDER Working Paper 38*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

^{vi} U.S. Department of Education. (2019). *Principal turnover: Stayers, movers, and leavers*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_slb.pdf

^{vii} Levin, S., & Bradley, K. (2019). *Understanding and addressing principal turnover: A review of the research*. National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Learning Policy Institute.

^{viii} Gates, S. M., Baird, M. D., Master, B. K., & Chavez-Herrerias, E. R. (2019). *Principal pipelines: A feasible, affordable, and effective way for districts to improve schools*. Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation.

^{ix} The Wallace Foundation. (2019). Principal pipelines: A major strategy to improve student achievement districtwide (Frequently Asked Questions). Retrieved from <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/FAQ-Principal-Pipelines.pdf>

^x Appendix C provides the responses of previous MLDS principals. Appendix D reports the perceptions of non-MLDS principals, and Appendix E of non-MLDS superintendents. Responses of the specialists and central office administrators are not reported due to the small numbers of respondents. The number of respondents is small for specialists (N = 11), MLDS central office administrators (N = 29), and Non-MLDS central office administrators (N = 19). Specialists (91-100%) agree with almost all the survey items. The only exception is their response to the statement, "I believe MLDS provides customized support to address principals' specific needs." where 82% of the specialists agree. Responses of the central office administrators are consistent with those of the superintendents.

^{xi} Research shows that the Mann-Whitney U test and the T-test work equally well in most cases for Likert-scale survey items. The Mann-Whitney U test is preferred, however, when the distribution of the responses is skewed. See, for example, De Winter, J. C. F., & Dodou, D. (2010). Five-point Likert items: T test versus Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon. *Practical Assessment Research & Evaluation, 15*(11), 1–16.

^{xii} Dane, A. V., & Schneider, B. H. (1998). Program integrity in primary and early secondary prevention: Are implementation effects out of control? *Clinical Psychology Review, 18*, 23–45.

^{xiii} U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2015). *Evaluation brief: Measuring implementation fidelity*. Children's Bureau, Office of the Administration for Children & Families. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/measuring-implementation-fidelity>

^{xiv} The survey data collected by DESE on the fall 2018 and spring 2019 MLDS trainings show that almost all of the participants believe what they learned at the training sessions would be extremely useful or somewhat useful to them in their role as school leaders. Nearly nine out of ten participants (88%, 87%, respectively) think it would be extremely useful.

^{xv} Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (May, 2019). *Missouri Leadership Development System: Executive Summary*. Retrieved from <https://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/educator-development/missouri-leadership-development-system>

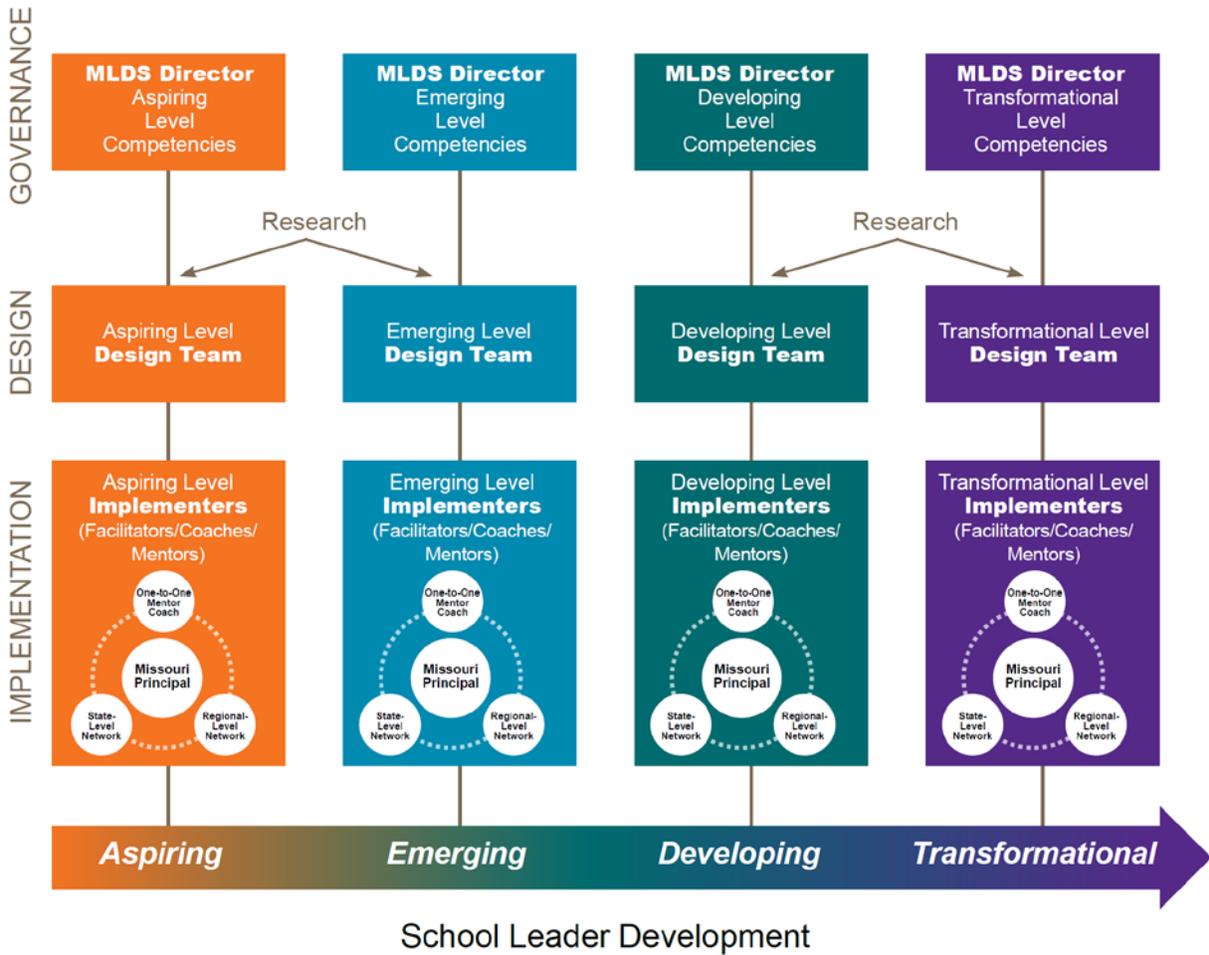
^{xvi} Ibid.

^{xvii} Ibid.

APPENDIX A: MLDS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The MLDS Commission

State Educational Agency | Education Administration Programs
Professional Associations | Regional Service Centers



Source: MLDS Emerging Level Participant Guide. Available at <https://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/educator-development/missouri-leadership-development-system>

APPENDIX B: MLDS 2-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR FOR EMERGING LEVEL PRINCIPALS

LE 1 Critical Firsts |
 LE 2 Excellent Instruction |
 LE 3 Understand Self & Others |
 LE 4 Decision Making |
 LE 5 Shaping School Culture |
 LE 6 Making Time

2016	July	Engagement Platform Regional Meeting	LE 1	LE 2	LE 3	LE 6	
	Aug.	Engagement Platform Online Event / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 1	LE 2	LE 3	LE 6	
	Sept.	Engagement Platform Learning Lab	LE 2				
	Oct.	Engagement Platform Mentor/Coach / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 1	LE 2	LE 3	LE 6	
		Connect/Extend Learning Lab	LE 2				
	Nov.	Engagement Platform Regional Meeting	LE 4	LE 6			
2017	Dec.	Engagement Platform Mentor/Coach / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 1	LE 2	LE 3	LE 6	
	Feb.	Engagement Platform Regional Meeting	LE 2	LE 3	LE 4	LE 5	LE 6
	Mar.	Engagement Platform Learning Lab	LE 2				
		Engagement Platform Online Event / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 2	LE 3	LE 4	LE 5	LE 6
	May	Engagement Platform Mentor/Coach / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 2	LE 3	LE 4	LE 5	LE 6
		Connect/Extend Learning Lab	LE 2				
2018	July	Engagement Platform Regional Meeting	LE 5	LE 6			
	Aug.	Engagement Platform Learning Lab / Connect/Extend Learning Lab	LE 2				
	Sept.	Engagement Platform Learning Lab / Connect/Extend Learning Lab	LE 2				
	Oct.	Engagement Platform Mentor/Coach / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 5	LE 6			
		Connect/Extend Learning Lab	LE 2				
	Nov.						
	Dec.	Engagement Platform Mentor/Coach / Connect/Extend Learning Lab	LE 2				
	Jan.						
	Feb.	Engagement Platform Regional Meeting	LE 2	LE 3	LE 5	LE 6	
	Mar.	Engagement Platform Online Event / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 2	LE 3	LE 4	LE 5	LE 6
		Engagement Platform Learning Lab	LE 2				
	April	Engagement Platform Mentor/Coach / Connect/Extend Regional Meeting	LE 2	LE 3	LE 4	LE 5	LE 6
May							
June							

Source: MLDS Emerging Level Participant Guide. Available at <https://dese.mo.gov/educator-quality/educator-development/missouri-leadership-development-system>

APPENDIX C: PERCEPTIONS OF PREVIOUS MLDS PRINCIPALS

	N	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Overall Perceptions				
The purpose of MLDS is clear to me.	58	98%	0%	2%
I know where to get information about MLDS.	58	95%	2%	3%
I receive information about MLDS on a regular basis.	58	90%	2%	9%
I see a connection, through MLDS, between leadership development and student learning.	58	93%	5%	2%
I receive support from my district in applying what I have learned from MLDS at my school.	58	86%	5%	9%
I receive support from my RPDC in applying what I have learned from MLDS at my school.	58	93%	3%	3%
Fidelity of Implementation				
The level of support provided by MLDS (e.g., number of sessions or contacts, frequency and duration of sessions) is appropriate for building my leadership capacity as a principal.	58	93%	5%	2%
The MLDS methods (e.g., regional meetings, state conferences, learning labs, one-to-one mentoring and coaching) are helpful in developing my leadership skills.	58	97%	2%	2%
The mentors/specialists effectively support me in my leadership role.	58	93%	3%	3%
I am regularly using what I learn from MLDS at my school.	58	95%	2%	3%
Professional Development				
MLDS professional development focuses on research-based leadership practices.	58	100%	0%	0%
The professional development content is relevant to my needs as a school leader.	58	93%	5%	2%
MLDS mentors/specialists help me to apply the content to practical situations.	58	95%	2%	3%
MLDS mentors/specialists understand schools like mine.	58	93%	3%	3%
The training materials are relevant to me.	57	96%	2%	2%
I use what I learn from MLDS to strengthen my leadership practices.	58	97%	2%	2%
I network with other MLDS principals.	58	91%	3%	5%
MLDS professional development promotes a common leadership vocabulary in Missouri.	58	91%	3%	5%

	N	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Benefits and Value I believe MLDS...				
Provides opportunities for me to grow as a professional.	58	98%	0%	2%
Promotes collaboration with my peers.	58	100%	0%	0%
Provides customized support to address my specific needs.	58	88%	7%	5%
Strengthens my instructional leadership practices.	58	97%	2%	2%
Makes me a better school leader.	58	97%	2%	2%
Impact I believe MLDS...				
Increases my ability to identify different levels of quality of classroom instruction.	58	93%	3%	3%
Increases my ability to describe different levels of quality of classroom instruction.	58	88%	7%	5%
Increases my ability to provide teachers with constructive feedback.	58	98%	0%	2%
Helps me to support my teachers to improve instruction in the classrooms.	58	93%	5%	2%
Contributes to improved student achievement at my school.	58	88%	10%	2%
Makes me more likely to stay as a school leader in Missouri.	58	90%	5%	5%
Supports the growth of school leaders in Missouri.	58	98%	0%	2%

MLDS Component	N	Very Important	Fairly Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not at all Important
How important are the following MLDS components in strengthening principals' leadership practices?						
Competencies	58	59%	34%	3%	2%	2%
Learning Experiences	58	78%	17%	3%	0%	2%
Treatments	58	55%	38%	3%	2%	2%

APPENDIX D: PERCEPTIONS OF NON-MLDS PRINCIPALS

	N	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Knowledge				
I am aware of MLDS.	93	82%	4%	14%
I receive information about MLDS on a regular basis.	94	46%	13%	41%
I know how to get involved in MLDS.	94	57%	10%	33%
I see a connection between leadership development and leadership practices.	95	89%	5%	5%
I see a connection between leadership development and student learning.	95	93%	3%	4%
I see a connection between leadership practices and student learning.	95	94%	2%	4%
Value and Impact				
I believe high quality leadership development and support...				
Provides opportunities for principals to grow as professionals.	94	97%	2%	1%
Promotes collaboration among principals.	94	97%	2%	1%
Strengthens principals' instructional leadership practices.	94	94%	5%	1%
Builds principals' confidence as school leaders.	94	94%	5%	1%
Increases principals' ability to identify different levels of quality of classroom instruction.	94	93%	6%	1%
Increases principals' ability to describe different levels of quality of classroom instruction.	94	93%	6%	1%
Increases principals' ability to provide teachers with constructive feedback.	94	93%	6%	1%
Helps principals support teachers' classroom instruction.	94	95%	4%	1%
Contributes to improved student achievement at a principals' school.	94	94%	5%	1%
Makes principals more likely to stay as school leaders in Missouri.	94	84%	12%	4%
Supports the growth of principals in Missouri.	94	94%	5%	1%

APPENDIX E: PERCEPTIONS OF NON-MLDS SUPERINTENDENTS

	N	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
General Beliefs				
I am aware of MLDS.	57	86%	5%	9%
I receive information about MLDS on a regular basis.	57	51%	18%	32%
I know how to get involved in MLDS.	58	72%	12%	16%
I see a connection between leadership development and leadership practices.	58	90%	9%	2%
I see a connection between leadership development and student learning.	58	91%	7%	2%
I see a connection between leadership practices and student learning.	58	93%	7%	0%
Value and Impact				
I believe high quality leadership development and support...				
Provides opportunities for principals to grow as professionals.	58	95%	5%	0%
Promotes collaboration among principals.	58	98%	2%	0%
Strengthens principals' instructional leadership practices.	58	95%	5%	0%
Builds principals' confidence as school leaders.	58	97%	3%	0%
Increases principals' ability to identify different levels of quality of classroom instruction.	58	91%	9%	0%
Increases principals' ability to describe different levels of quality of classroom instruction.	57	91%	7%	2%
Increases principals' ability to provide teachers with constructive feedback.	57	93%	4%	4%
Helps principals support teachers' classroom instruction.	57	96%	4%	0%
Contributes to improved student achievement at a principals' school.	57	93%	7%	0%
Makes principals more likely to stay as school leaders in Missouri.	57	86%	12%	2%
Supports the growth of principals in Missouri.	56	91%	7%	2%