

Title: The Perceptions of Maryland School Principals on the Quality and Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates and the Role the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Has Played in Improving the Quality and Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates

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#### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed-method design study is to evaluate how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented throughout the state of Maryland. The study examines Maryland principal perceptions as to whether or not the Task Force recommendations have been implemented in their county school districts. The study also examines if the implementation of the Task Force recommendations has made a positive difference in attracting quality candidates to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

This study utilized a mixed-method design that consisted of both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component of this study was comprised of a researcher-designed survey that utilized a Likert-type scale to assess principal perceptions. The qualitative component of the study was comprised of both an open-ended survey question and post survey interviews with two school superintendents.

Based on the results of this study, acting principals in the state of Maryland perceive that a shortage of quality principal candidates does still exist, however, it appears that, as a result of school districts implementing at least some of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship

recommendations, the principal shortage does not appear to be as dire as it was ten years ago. Follow up interviews with two Superintendents from Maryland support the fact that a shortage does still exist, but is not as severe as ten years ago.

Other states facing a shortage of quality school principals may use this study and learn from Maryland's efforts to address their own shortages. The state of Maryland should view these results with pride, knowing that their efforts to address a shortage of qualified principals appears to be working. However, the state should look for ways to ensure that the recommendations are being implemented consistently across the state. Other states should also note the importance principals in this study place on internships, mentorships, and professional development. States should implement or continue to sponsor professional development opportunities for practicing and aspiring principals.