



DEVELOPING RESONANT RESILIENT AND NIMBLE LEADERS

Prepared for AASA, The School Superintendents Association

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INTRODUCTION





District leaders face a range of current and emergent challenges that will require them to exercise resonant, resilient, and nimble leadership to sustain their organizations and empower employees. Future leaders must prepare teachers for learning environments that are currently undergoing demographic, technological, and economic transformations, changes that are expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Additionally, leaders themselves must also be prepared to lead in various political climates that pivot wildly and without warning. Teaching leaders to handle a single crisis or solve a single problem is not enough. District leaders must be resonant, i.e., they need to be in constant tune with their staff, community, and students; resilient, i.e., they need to have inner strength and health and project strength and optimism to meet challenges; and nimble, i.e., their skills, knowledge, and dispositions need to be honed to solve any problem and address any crisis – whether those challenges are political, demographic, technology, or economic.

To support their mission of developing school leader capacity at every level, AASA, The School Superintendent’s Association (AASA) has partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) to prepare the following report on developing resonant, resilient, nimble leaders. This report draws on available research examining school district leadership, including research across sectors relevant for school and district leaders. This report includes the following sections:

- **Section I** reviews key skills associated with resonant, resilient, and nimble leadership in the literature and available literature examining the impact of these skills on leadership outcomes.
- **Section II** reviews strategies to develop leadership skills and practice self-care to support resilience, including 360-degree assessment and mentoring strategies.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Based on our findings, Hanover presents the following practical applications of this research.

-  **Use a structured 360-degree assessment process to identify strengths and growth areas for leadership.** A 360-degree assessment allows leaders to compare their self-assessments of leadership skills to assessments from colleagues and other constituents, providing a more accurate assessment of leadership strengths and growth areas.
-  **Align leadership development with school and district level social emotional learning SEL programming.** The key skills for resilient and emotionally resonant leaders align with core SEL competencies, suggesting that strategies to build adult SEL will also improve leadership.
-  **Participate in professional networks to develop leadership skills.** Professional learning is most effective in the context of a professional network that enables collaborative learning among school and district leaders with similar job responsibilities.
-  **Identify opportunities to participate in mentoring, either as a mentor or mentee.** Mentoring provides emerging leaders with opportunities to develop leadership skills in authentic contexts and provides mentors with opportunities to further refine and develop their leadership skills.

KEY FINDINGS



Research finds positive effects of resonant and emotionally intelligent leaders on outcomes for organizations and students. A substantial body of research conducted across sectors correlates emotional intelligence with strong workplace performance and leadership effectiveness. In education specifically, research finds that emotional intelligence and empathy support superintendents in leading through crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and building positive school climates through their day-to-day leadership.



Leaders can develop skills and competencies for resonant and emotionally intelligence leadership by participating in professional development. Core emotional intelligence and SEL competencies are learned skills rather than static traits, meaning that leaders can intentionally develop these competencies in themselves and their teams over time. Professional learning that provides leaders with opportunities for deliberate practice of leadership skills builds these skills over time.



Mentoring is an essential strategy to build leadership capacity for emerging district leaders. Structured mentoring programs such as the Kansas Educational Leadership Initiative (KELI) provide emerging leaders with support from an experienced colleague, including feedback on their performance aligned to leadership standards. Effective mentoring and induction programs build on the academic content provided by university leadership preparation programs with more applied knowledge grounded in authentic contexts and provide mentors with opportunities to extend the reach of their leadership and further hone leadership skills.



Effective professional learning is customized to meet the needs and personal goals of individual leaders. Developing leadership skills requires a self-directed learning process in which leaders are motivated to close the gap between their ideal and realistic selves. If learning is not self-directed, the outcomes of professional development will likely be superficial and not yield long-term changes in leadership behaviors.

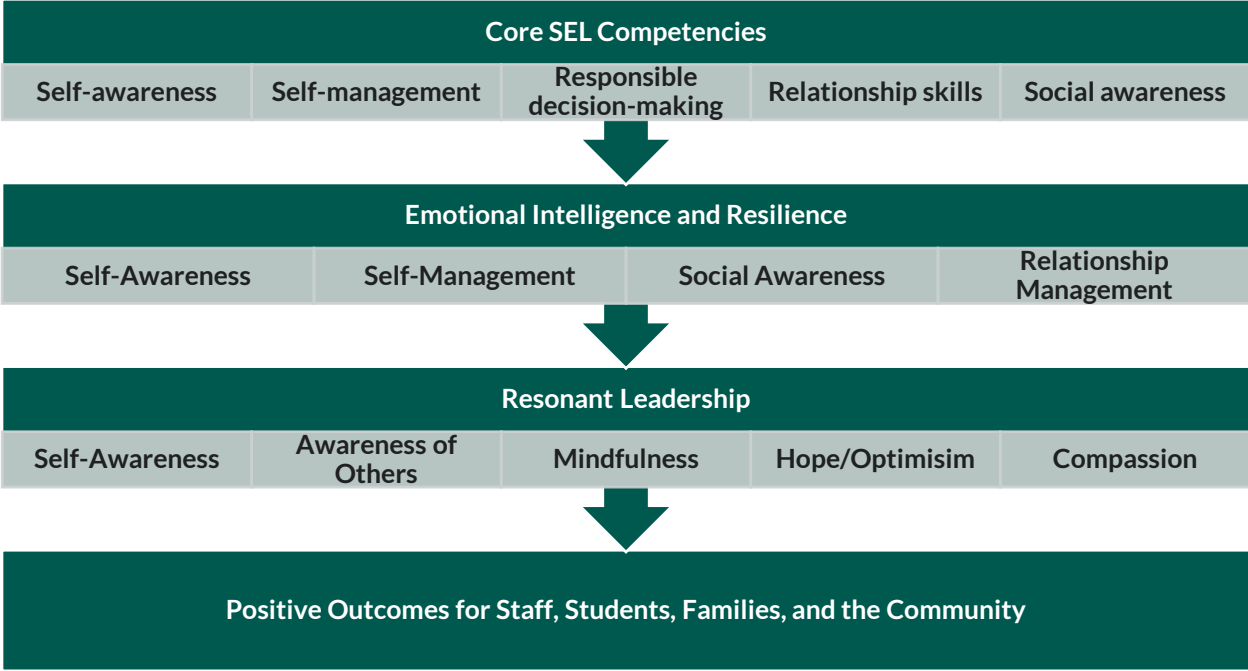


Educators across organizational levels can develop personal resilience by proactively practicing self-care, which includes the monitoring of one's own physical and psychological wellbeing and taking proactive steps to improve health and wellbeing. Leaders support self-care for their teams by collaborating with their teams to identify needs and agree on strategies to address them. These strategies will include policies to reduce burdens on teachers' time, such as streamlining communication or discontinuing low-priority initiatives, as well as strategies to create a positive school culture and communicate leadership support for teachers' hard work. Leaders should also practice proactive self-care to support their own resilience, and consider making a self-care plan to commit to self-care strategies.

SECTION I: SKILLS FOR RESONANT, RESILIENT, NIMBLE LEADERS

In this section, Hanover reviews the skills school and district leaders will need to sustain effective leadership amid internal and external challenges. Overall, the research reviewed in this section suggests that resilient and resonant leadership emerges from leaders’ development of SEL skills, as summarized in Figure 1.1. This section begins with an overview of the literature aligning core SEL competencies with resonant leadership before reviewing literature examining the impact of SEL for leadership on outcomes in schools and districts.

Figure 1.1: Development of Positive Leadership Outcomes from Core SEL Competencies



Source: Hanover Research’s Summary of the Secondary Literature

NIMBLE LEADERSHIP FOR CHALLENGING TIMES

School and district leaders face an increasing array of challenges related both to changes in teaching and learning within schools and to the external political, social, and economic context within which schools and districts operate. Research comparing superintendent roles across countries finds that context plays a significant role in the implementation of leadership skills.¹ A 2020 report on leadership across sectors by the accounting firm PwC identifies six key paradoxes leaders need to navigate so their organizations can succeed, listed in Figure 1.2.² To navigate these paradoxes, leaders need to be resilient and persistent in pursuing long-term goals while nimbly adjusting strategies and practices in response to feedback on effectiveness and changes in the district context.³

¹ Bredeson, P.V., H.W. Klar, and O. Johansson. “Context-Responsive Leadership: Examining Superintendent Leadership in Context.” *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 19:18, June 30, 2011. p. 9. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=superintendent+leadership&ft=on&id=EJ955996>

² “Six Paradoxes of Leadership.” PwC, April 2020. https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/assets/pdf/six-paradoxes_brochure.pdf

³ Hill, P. and A. Jochim. “Unlocking Potential: How Political Skill Can Maximize Superintendent Effectiveness.” Center on Reinventing Public Education, January 2018. p. 15. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=superintendent+leadership&ft=on&pg=2&id=ED581436>

Figure 1.2: Six Paradoxes for Leadership

Globally-Minded Localist	Leaders need to be embedded in their local context while bringing global knowledge to bear on the challenges facing their community
High-Integrity Politician	Leaders need to navigate the political context of their organization and develop support from a wide range of stakeholders while retaining a reputation for personal integrity
Humble Hero	Leaders need to communicate confidence while being willing to acknowledge mistakes and make course-corrections as needed
Strategic Executor	Leaders need to align the execution of day-to-day management functions with a strategic plan for their organization
Tech-Savvy Humanist	Leaders need to leverage technology resources while maintaining a focus on the human element of their organization
Traditioned Innovator	Leaders need to embrace innovation while remaining true to their organization's core purpose

Source: PwC⁴

Navigating these paradoxes requires leaders to adopt a nimble leadership style that transitions away from the traditionally directive style of management in which senior leaders identify the strategic direction of the organization and give orders to subordinates toward a distributed style of leadership in which senior leaders spread resources and decision-making authority throughout the organization to leverage innovation in support of shared goals.⁵ A nimble organization leverages innovation and a coherent strategy to consistently deliver strong results despite changing contexts.⁶ In the nimble leadership framework outlined in Figure 1.3, senior organizational leaders (such as the superintendent and superintendent's cabinet in the case of school districts) serve as architecting leaders, whose responsibilities include managing the strategy and culture of the organization as a whole to encourage innovation and autonomy while maintaining a focus on the organization's core mission and goals.⁷

⁴ Chart contents adapted from: "Six Paradoxes of Leadership," Op. cit.

⁵ Ancona, D., E. Backman, and K. Isaacs. "Nimble Leadership." *Harvard Business Review*, July 1, 2019.

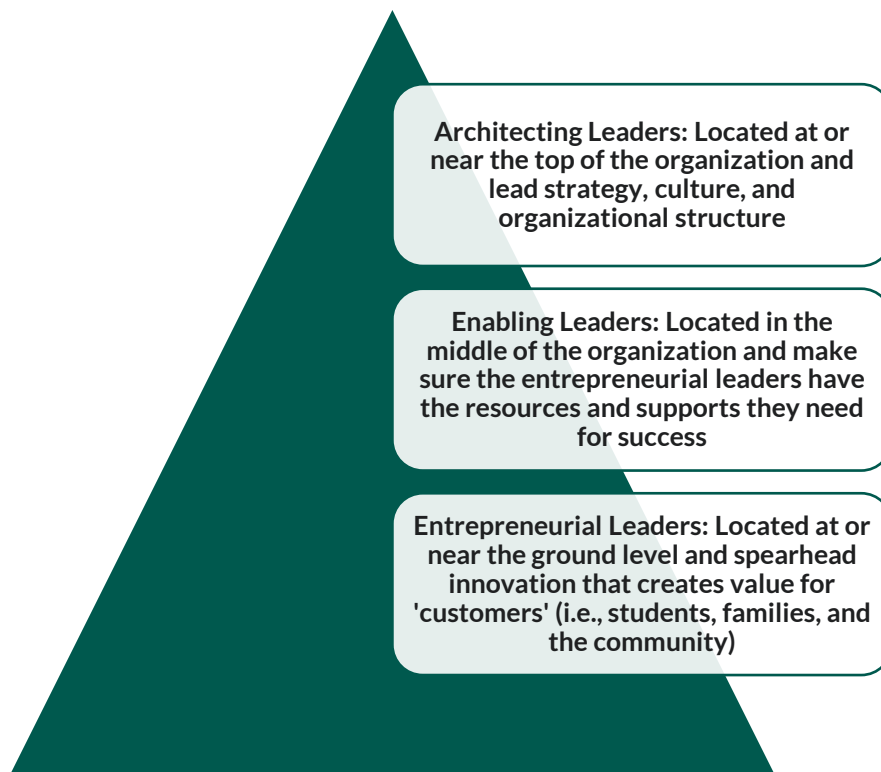
<https://empowerment.ee/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Nimble-Leadership-Walking-the-line-between-creativity-and-chaos-1.pdf>

⁶ Spaddock, S. "Leading a Nimble Organization." American Society for Public Administration, October 31, 2014.

<https://patimes.org/leading-nimble-organization/>

⁷ Ancona, Backman, and Isaacs, Op. cit., p. 1.

Figure 1.3: Framework for Nimble Leadership



Source: *Harvard Business Review*⁸

Nimble leaders manage change processes to enable the organization to improve and respond to changes in circumstances without being overwhelmed by change that is too rapid or insufficiently supported.⁹ Architecting leaders' role includes managing large-scale changes to the organization's culture, structure, or resources. These changes may be motivated by identified improvement needs, by changes in the external context, or by a need to ensure coherent implementation of strategy and processes across the organization. Because large-scale changes restructure processes and require changes in individuals' daily work, architecting leaders need to proactively engage constituents across the organization to generate buy-in for major changes.¹⁰ Figure 1.4 presents suggested change management strategies for nimble leaders in public-service organizations.¹¹ In the remainder of this section, Hanover reviews the role of resonant leadership in resilience in building constituent support for improvement and sustaining both the organization and individual leaders during challenging times.

⁸ Chart contents adapted from: *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁹ Spaddock, *Op. cit.*

¹⁰ Ancona, Backman, and Isaacs, *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹¹ Spaddock, *Op. cit.*

Figure 1.4: Change Management Strategies for Nimble Leaders



Source: American Society for Public Administration¹²

SKILLS FOR LEADERS

A 2019 study published in the *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation* identifies resonant leadership and resilience as key skills for school leaders. This study draws on in-depth interviews with a sample of school leaders in Pennsylvania and finds these leaders draw on skills associated with the resonant leadership framework developed by Richard E. Boyatzis and Annie McKee to sustain leadership in the face of adversity. These skills are listed in Figure 1.5.¹³ The resonant leadership framework draws on research finding that emotional reactions and states are often shared across groups, and leaders set the emotional tone for other group members. By exercising resonant leadership skills, leaders build positive emotions within their teams, in turn facilitating positive leadership outcomes.¹⁴

Figure 1.5: Resonant Leadership Skills for School Leaders



Source: *International Journal of Educational Leadership*¹⁵

¹² Chart contents adapted from: Ibid.

¹³ Turk, E.W. and Z.M. Wolfe. "Principal's Perceived Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership throughout Their Career." *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 14:1, 2019. p. 155.

¹⁴ Goleman, D., R. Boyatzis, and A. McKee. *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2013. pp. 8–9.
<http://dspace.vnbrims.org:13000/jspui/bitstream/123456789/4742/1/Primal%20Leadership%20-%20Goleman.pdf>

¹⁵ Chart contents taken verbatim from: Turk and Wolfe, Op. cit., p. 155.

Leaders who exercise resonant leadership build a positive organizational environment that engages others within the organization to pursue shared goals by flexibly deploying the six leadership styles listed in Figure 1.6.¹⁶ By generating buy-in for shared goals, resonant leadership encourages individuals across the organization to serve as entrepreneurial and enabling leaders, ultimately facilitating nimble leadership.¹⁷ A 2014 study of leadership in the nursing sector finds that resonant leadership improves employees' overall job satisfaction and sense of empowerment in the workplace while reducing workplace incivility and emotional exhaustion in employees.¹⁸ In contrast, organizations without resonant leaders may suffer from a negative climate that reduces shared commitment to organizational goals and may drive employee turnover.¹⁹

Figure 1.6: Leadership Styles for Resonance

STYLE	RELATIONSHIP TO RESONANCE	IMPACT ON CLIMATE	WHEN APPROPRIATE
Resonant Leadership Styles			
Visionary	Moves people toward shared dreams	Most strongly positive	When changes require a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed
Coaching	Connects what a person wants with the organization's goals	Highly positive	To help an employee improve performance by building long-term capabilities
Affiliative	Creates harmony by connecting people to each other	Positive	To heal rifts in a team, motivate during stressful times, or strengthen connections
Democratic	Values people's inputs and gets commitment through participation	Positive	To build buy-in or consensus, or to get valuable input from employees
Dissonant Leadership Styles			
Pacesetting	Meets challenging and exciting goals	Because too frequently poorly executed, often highly negative	To get high-quality results from a motivated and competent team
Commanding	Soothes fears by giving clear direction in an emergency	Because so often misused, highly negative	In a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround, or with problem employees

Source: *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*²⁰

A resonant leader can use their understanding of team members' emotional needs to intuit which leadership style is needed in a specific situation and adopt specific strategies associated with that style. Research across sectors finds the most effective leaders deploy a mixture of leadership styles to adapt to different situations, although the two dissonant styles, pacesetting and commanding, should be used sparingly due to their potentially negative impact on climate.²¹ The democratic leadership style may be particularly beneficial for

¹⁶ Smith, M.L. "Resonant Leadership and Emotional Intelligence in Plastic Surgery Leadership." *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Global Open*, 4:10, October 28, 2016. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5096549/>

¹⁷ Ancona, Backman, and Isaacs, Op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁸ Spence Laschinger, H.K. et al. "Resonant Leadership and Workplace Empowerment: The Value of Positive Organizational Cultures in Reducing Workplace Incivility." *Nursing Economics*, 32:1, January 2014. pp. 9–10.

<https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/cwf/individuals/pdf/LeadershipandWorkplaceempowerment.pdf>

¹⁹ Smith, Op. cit.

²⁰ Chart contents taken verbatim from: Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, Op. cit., p. 55.

²¹ Ibid., p. 54.

organizations embracing nimble leadership, as nimble leadership relies on consultative decision-making to bring multiple perspectives to bear on challenges.²²

The *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation* study also identifies resilience as an essential prerequisite of resonant leadership.²³ **Because improvement initiatives often face substantial resistance from both internal and external stakeholders, resilient leadership is essential to securing the ultimate implementation of improvement initiatives.** Resilient leaders gradually build support for improvement over time, even in the face of initial rejection or failure.²⁴ The authors use a framework for resilience developed by the psychologists Karen Reivich and Andrew Shatté, which includes the seven skills listed in Figure 1.7.

Figure 1.7: Key Skills for Resilience



Source: *International Journal of Educational Leadership*²⁵

Another framework for resilience, outlined in the book *Resilient Leadership for Turbulent Times: A Guide to Thriving in the Face of Adversity*, focuses specifically on resilience for leaders in education. This framework groups skills for resilience into three sets outlined in Figure 1.8. Thinking skills address leaders' ability to accurately assess their current situation and possible strategies for improvement, while action skills address leaders' ability to take the actions needed for improvement even when doing so is difficult or challenging. Capacity skills address enabling factors that support leaders in taking action, including personal values, self-efficacy, and supportive relationships.²⁶

Figure 1.8: Skill Sets for Resilient Educational Leaders

Thinking Skills

- Resilient leaders understand their current situation and context accurately
- Resilient leaders demonstrate optimism about what outcomes are possible within existing constraints

Capacity Skills

- Resilient leaders have strong personal values, including ethics and values for educational outcomes
- Resilient leaders have a strong sense of personal efficacy
- Resilient leaders have a network for supportive relationships with colleagues, family, and friends

Action Skills

- Resilient leaders demonstrate perseverance in the face of adversity
- Resilient leaders demonstrate adaptability in the face of changing contexts
- Resilient leaders demonstrate courage by taking principled action in ambiguous circumstances
- Resilient leaders take personal responsibility for mistakes

Source: *Resilient Leadership for Turbulent Times: A Guide to Thriving in the Face of Adversity*²⁷

²² Ancona, Backman, and Isaacs, Op. cit., p. 8.

²³ Turk and Wolfe, Op. cit., p. 155.

²⁴ Hill and Jochim, Op. cit., p. 13.

²⁵ Chart contents taken verbatim from: Turk and Wolfe, Op. cit., p. 161.

²⁶ Patterson, J.L., G.A. Goens, and D.E. Reed. *Resilient Leadership for Turbulent Times: A Guide to Thriving in the Face of Adversity*. R&L Education, 2009. pp. 8–11. Accessed via Google Books

²⁷ Chart contents taken verbatim from: Ibid.

Other research aligns resonant leadership with the concept of emotional intelligence.²⁸ The academic literature defines emotional intelligence as “the ability to engage in sophisticated information processing about one’s own and others’ emotions and the ability to use this information as a guide to thinking and behavior.”²⁹ A substantial body of research conducted across sectors correlates emotional intelligence with strong workplace performance and leadership effectiveness.³⁰ A study drawing on qualitative research with district superintendents to examine crisis leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic finds that leaders identify empathy as a key skill for decision making in crises without defined protocols or guidance for leadership.³¹ A 2017 *Harvard Business Review* article co-authored by Richard E. Boyatzis identifies 12 essential skills for emotionally intelligence leadership within the domains presented in Figure 1.9. Emotionally intelligent leaders use each of these domains to understand their team’s emotional state and needs and generate a collaborative and trusting team culture.³²

Figure 1.9: Domains and Competencies for Emotional Intelligence

Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional self-awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional self-control • Adaptability • Achievement orientation • Positive outlook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Organizational awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence • Coach and mentor • Conflict management • Teamwork • Inspirational Leadership

Source: *Harvard Business Review*³³

Notably, these skills align substantially with the five core competencies of social and emotional learning (SEL) identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL): self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness. This finding suggests that initiatives to develop adult SEL as part of comprehensive school or district-wide SEL programming can improve leadership outcomes.³⁴

EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Research finds positive effects on educational outcomes when leaders at the school and district levels exercise the skills and competencies described above. As shown in Figure 1.10, these competencies support leaders in leading effectively, building positive relationships within their school or districts, forging strong

²⁸ Smith, Op. cit.

²⁹ Mayer, J.D., P. Salovey, and D.R. Caruso. “Emotional Intelligence: New Ability or Eclectic Traits?” *American Psychologist*, 63:6, 2008. p. 503. <https://cdn2.psychologytoday.com/assets/attachments/1575/rp2008-mayersaloveycarusob.pdf>

³⁰ Brackett, M.A., S.E. Rivers, and P. Salovey. “Emotional Intelligence: Implications for Personal, Social, Academic, and Workplace Success.” *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5:1, January 1, 2011. pp. 97–98.

³¹ Gonzalez, I. et al. “Crisis Leadership: The Experiences of Six Texas Superintendents during the COVID-19 Pandemic.” *Research in Higher Education Journal*, 41, May 2022. p. 9. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=superintendent+leadership&ft=on&id=EJ1347879>

³² Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, Op. cit., p. 30.

³³ Chart taken verbatim from: Goleman, D. and R. Boyatzis. “Emotional Intelligence Has 12 Elements. Which Do You Need to Work On?” *Harvard Business Review*, February 6, 2017. <https://hbr.org/2017/02/emotional-intelligence-has-12-elements-which-do-you-need-to-work-on>

³⁴ “What Is the CASEL Framework?” Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>

family and community partnerships, and implementing SEL for students and staff. These activities in turn drive positive school climates and positive social emotional and academic outcomes for students.³⁵

Figure 1.10: Relationship Between Leaders' SEL Competencies and Educational Outcomes



Source: Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center³⁶

A 2020 study drawing on a survey of 14,645 employees across industries finds that employees provide higher ratings of opportunities for growth in their work and report more positive emotions at work when they perceive their immediate supervisor as exercising emotionally intelligent behaviors. Employees with emotionally intelligent supervisors are also more likely to report engaging in behaviors associated with creativity at work, such as identifying new ways to achieve goals or ideas to improve efficiency.³⁷ This finding suggests that emotionally intelligent leaders can unlock the creativity of employees within the school or district to drive new ideas for improvement.

³⁵ Mahfouz, J., M.T. Greenberg, and A. Rodriguez. "Principals' Social and Emotional Competence: A Key Factor for Creating Caring Schools." Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center at Pennsylvania State University, October 2019. p. 5. <https://www.prevention.psu.edu/uploads/files/RWJF-PSU-Principals-Brief-2019-Final.pdf>

³⁶ Chat taken verbatim with minor alterations from: Mahfouz, Greenberg, and Rodriguez, Op. cit.

³⁷ Ivcevic, Z. et al. "Supervisor Emotionally Intelligent Behavior and Employee Creativity." *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 55:1, March 1, 2021. p. 83.

SECTION II: DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Core emotional intelligence and SEL competencies are learned skills rather than static traits, meaning that leaders can intentionally develop these competencies in themselves and their teams over time.³⁸ In this section, Hanover discusses strategies leaders can use to develop nimble and resonant leadership skills and resilience. This section begins with a review of the role of professional learning and professional networks, including mentoring relationships, in developing leadership skills. This section goes on to discuss self-care strategies to support resilience.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Leaders can develop resonant leadership skills by engaging in structured professional learning. For example, the financial services company Fifth Third BankCorp partnered with Case Western Reserve University to provide senior leaders with executive coaching focused on resonant leadership. Participants reported that the coaching program improved their resilience and management of personal stress and developed the emotional intelligence skills they needed to lead their teams more effectively. Several participants report that leadership coaching provided essential preparation to assume more senior leadership roles.³⁹

Although structured professional development to support leadership competencies is common in the corporate sector, structured professional development to support resonant leadership skills in school and district leaders remains an emerging field. However, structured training programs focused on mindfulness and emotional intelligence have demonstrated initial evidence of positive impacts on leadership skills for school principals.⁴⁰ Professional learning provides leaders with opportunities for deliberate practice of leadership skills and dispositions. Repeated opportunities for deliberate practice gradually improve leadership skills over time.⁴¹

Professional learning is most effective in the context of a professional network that enables collaborative learning among school and district leaders with similar job responsibilities. A 2022 study of district superintendents' financial leadership finds that superintendents report professional organizations and networks of colleagues as key sources of support for financial decision making. The authors propose the model presented in Figure 2.1 by which collaborative professional supports including enhanced initial preparation for superintendents and ongoing collaboration through mentoring and an expert network of colleagues increase the quality of financial decisions by superintendents while reducing the stress associated with financial decision-making.⁴²

³⁸ Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, Op. cit., p. 38.

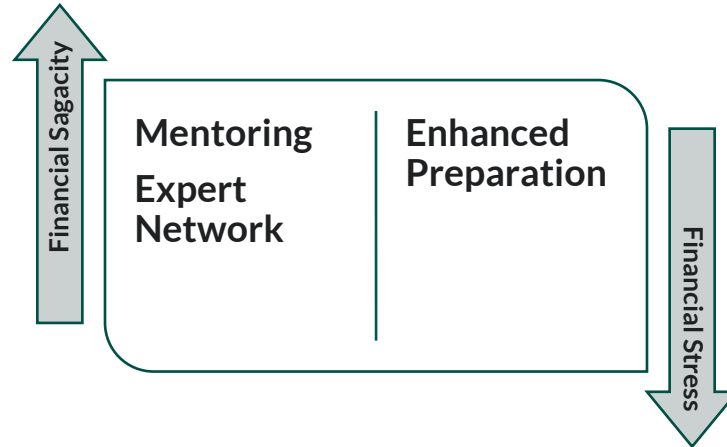
³⁹ Boyatzis, R.E. et al. "Developing Resonant Leaders through Emotional Intelligence, Vision and Coaching." *Organizational Dynamics*, 42:1, January 2013. p. 21.

⁴⁰ Mahfouz, Greenberg, and Rodriguez, Op. cit., p. 8.

⁴¹ Klocko, B.A. et al. "Public School Superintendent Sagacity: A Foundation for Financial Leadership." *Journal of School Administration Research and Development*, 7:1, 2022. p. 3.

⁴² Ibid.

Figure 2.1: Model for Collaborative Professional Supports' Contribution to Financial Decision-Making Outcomes



Source: *Journal of School Administration Research and Development*⁴³

Effective professional learning is customized to meet the needs and personal goals of individual leaders. Undifferentiated professional learning fails to build participants' motivation to learn, often resulting in short-term learning that does not lead to actual changes in leadership practice.⁴⁴ In contrast, self-directed learning builds learners' motivations to move towards an ideal self. Self-directed learning begins with an understanding of the learner's ideal state and their current state, which supports the cycle of self-directed learning presented in Figure 2.2.

⁴³ Chart contents taken verbatim from: Ibid.

⁴⁴ Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, Op. cit., p. 100.

Figure 2.2: Cycle of Self-Directed Learning



Source: *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*⁴⁵

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND 360-DEGREE ASSESSMENT FOR ACTION PLANNING

Beginning the cycle of self-directed learning requires leaders to have an accurate understanding of their own leadership, including strengths and growth areas. However, accurately understanding growth areas can be challenging for leaders. Most people tend to overestimate their own competencies, and individuals within the organization may be reluctant to provide honest feedback on growth areas to senior leaders. Overall, research suggests that senior leaders provide less accurate ratings of their own performance than other members of organizations.⁴⁶

A structured self-assessment process helps leaders more accurately reflect on their leadership strengths and weaknesses. All leaders are stronger in some leadership skills than others, and understanding relative

⁴⁵ Chart taken verbatim from: *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 93–96.

strengths and weaknesses helps leaders develop a management style that maximizes their effectiveness.⁴⁷ The authors of the book *Resilient Leadership for Turbulent Times: A Guide to Thriving in the Face of Adversity* have developed a [Leader Resilience Profile Survey](#) which school and district leaders can use to self-assess their skills within each of the three resilience skillsets for educational leaders.⁴⁸ Similarly, CASEL has developed a [Personal Assessment and Reflection Tool](#) designed for leaders and staff at all levels of a school district to self-assess their strengths and challenges aligned to the core SEL competencies, which align to core skills for resonant leadership. Self-assessing leadership skills develops self-awareness, which supports leaders in developing strategies to address growth areas in leadership skills.⁴⁹

Leaders can build on the results of individual self-assessments by soliciting feedback from colleagues using a 360-degree evaluation process. The 360-degree evaluation process reflects the assumptions listed in Figure 2.3.⁵⁰ During the 360-degree evaluation process, an evaluator collects data from multiple constituents who interact with a leader, such as administrators, parents, and community leaders, using a standardized survey or assessment instrument.⁵¹

Figure 2.3: Underlying Assumptions of 360-Degree Feedback



Source: *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*⁵²

School boards often use 360-degree evaluation to collect evidence to support summative evaluations of senior leaders, particularly superintendents.⁵³ Districts can also use 360-degree feedback as a formative tool to support leaders at all levels of the organization in developing leadership skills. When used for formative assessment, a 360-degree evaluation tool allows leaders to compare their own ratings to the ratings provided by other members of their organization, preferably direct reports. This comparison enhances leaders' self-

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 39–40.

⁴⁸ Patterson, Goens, and Reed, Op. cit., p. 13.

⁴⁹ Channell, M. "Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence in Leadership: How to Improve Motivation in Your Team." TSW Training, October 13, 2021. <https://www.tsw.co.uk/blog/leadership-and-management/daniel-goleman-emotional-intelligence/>

⁵⁰ Allen, J.G., M.M. Wasicsko, and M. Chirichello. "The Missing Link: Teaching the Dispositions to Lead." *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 9:1, March 2014. p. 4. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=leadership+self-assessment&ft=on&id=EJ1024114>

⁵¹ "What Is a '360-Degree Evaluation' of a Chief Executive (Superintendent or College President) and How Is It Used?" Oregon School Boards Association. https://www.osba.org/Resources/Article/AskOSBA/360_Supt_Evaluation.aspx

⁵² Chart contents taken verbatim with very minor alterations from: Allen, Wasicsko, and Chirichello, Op. cit., p. 4.

⁵³ "What Is a '360-Degree Evaluation' of a Chief Executive (Superintendent or College President) and How Is It Used?," Op. cit.

awareness and allows them to identify discrepancies between their own ratings and the ratings of colleagues or areas rated low by both the leader and colleagues as areas for improvement.⁵⁴

After identifying strengths and growth areas, leaders can use preventative and responsive strategies to address challenges related to leadership skills in specific situations.⁵⁵ These strategies include strategies for leaders to manage their own emotions during challenging conversations or activities, such as those listed in Figure 2.4. Selecting the most appropriate emotion management strategy for a specific situation enables leaders to provide feedback that will fulfill team members' emotional needs while building motivation to improve and high morale across the team.⁵⁶

Figure 2.4: Emotion Management Strategies

Preventative Strategies	Responsive Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice: Imagine the situation and prepare for it • Select another situation: Avoid the situation that causes the problem • Modify the situation: Change an aspect of the situation, such as they day and time for meetings • Modify the mood: Generate a different mood before the situation • Reappraise the situation: Consider what you can learn from the situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-talk: Think calming thoughts • Physiological techniques: Deep breath, stretch, stand up, walk • Change situation: Ask person to change a behavior, move their seat, switch rooms • Seek support of others: Talk to a colleague or friend • Intervening moment: Insert a pause between feeling and reacting

Source: Branford Public Schools⁵⁷

MENTORING

Mentoring is an essential strategy to build resonant leadership capacity for emerging district leaders.⁵⁸ An effective mentoring and induction program builds on the academic content provided by university leadership preparation programs with more applied knowledge grounded in authentic contexts.⁵⁹ District leaders who participate in mentoring programs report that mentoring has a strong effect on their leadership skills, particularly skills related to managing the political context of the district and engaging the community that they did not have opportunities to practice in previous roles.⁶⁰ A 2017 study focused specifically on the role of mentoring in leadership development draws on interviews with ten female superintendents in Texas who

⁵⁴ Moore, B. "Improving the Evaluation and Feedback Process for Principals." *Principal*, February 2009. p. 39.

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/mentoring/Documents/ImprovingEvalFeedbackProcessPrincipals.pdf>

⁵⁵ Torrence, B.S. and S. Connelly. "Emotion Regulation Tendencies and Leadership Performance: An Examination of Cognitive and Behavioral Regulation Strategies." *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, July 2, 2019.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6614202/>

⁵⁶ Seppälä, E. and C. Bradley. "Handling Negative Emotions in a Way That's Good for Your Team." *Harvard Business Review*, June 11, 2019. <https://hbr.org/2019/06/handling-negative-emotions-in-a-way-thats-good-for-your-team>

⁵⁷ Chart contents taken verbatim from: Caruso, D.R. "Educator Resilience and Trauma-Informed Self-Care Self-Assessment and Planning Tool." Branford Public Schools. p. 18. <https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Educator-Resilience-Trauma-Informed-Self-Care-Self-Assessment.pdf>

⁵⁸ Augustine-Shaw, D. "Developing Leadership Capacity in New Rural School District Leaders: The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute." *Rural Educator*, 37:1, 2016. p. 1.

⁵⁹ Wells, C.M. "Preparing Superintendents for Building Teacher Leadership: Implications for University Programs." *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation*, 5:2, 2010. pp. 5–6.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?q=superintendent+leadership&ft=on&pg=2&id=ED511018>

⁶⁰ Mitchell, C. "Program Preps New Superintendents For Pressures of District Leadership." *Education Week*, 34:18, January 21, 2015.

were recognized as highly effective leaders by their districts, regional education support agencies, or professional associations. Participants report that mentorship supports leadership development through the avenues listed in Figure 2.5.⁶¹

Figure 2.5: Benefits of Mentoring for Emerging Leaders

Professional Exposure	Mentors provide mentees with direct exposure to aspects of the leadership role
Recognizing the Needs of Employees	Mentors model empathetic leadership and intentionally supporting the professional growth of employees
Inspirational Motivation	Mentors model the importance of motivating and developing a sense of purpose in others for leadership.
Idealized Influence	Mentors engage mentees in a learning community with a shared vision for success

Source: *Education Leadership Review*⁶²

Experienced leaders can extend the reach of their leadership and further develop their own leadership skills by serving as formal or informal mentors to emerging leaders within their organization. Research examining mentoring across sectors finds that mentors develop their own leadership skills by practicing leadership in the mentoring context.⁶³ A 2018 study of superintendent leadership to support school reform notes that superintendents who mentor emerging leaders within their organization prepare these emerging leaders to serve as effective superintendents in other districts, and support succession planning within their own districts. Preparing an emerging leader within the district to assume the superintendent role when the current superintendent steps down ensures the sustainability of improvement initiatives and the ongoing effectiveness of district leadership.⁶⁴

CASE STUDY – KANSAS EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) offered by Kansas State University College of Education in partnership with the Kansas State Department of Education, Kansas Association of School Boards, United School Administrators of Kansas, and Kansas School Superintendents’ Association provides an example of a structured mentoring and induction program for emerging leaders. KELI was established in 2011 with the dual mission of providing induction support and ongoing professional learning for school and district leaders, including superintendents, principals, and special education directors.⁶⁵ Induction supports are customized to meet the specific needs of each group.⁶⁶

The induction program for superintendents includes a combination of mentoring activities and structured professional learning sessions. Figure 2.6 lists required mentoring activities. These activities include in-person and virtual meetings with an assigned mentor, who is an experienced superintendent working in a

⁶¹ Howard, E., C. Msengi, and S. Harris. “Influence of Mentorship Experiences in the Development of Women Superintendents in Texas as Transformational Leaders.” *Education Leadership Review*, 18:1, December 2017. pp. 71–75.

⁶² Chart contents adapted from: Ibid.

⁶³ Lee, J., H. Sunderman, and L. Hastings. “The Influence of Being a Mentor on Leadership Development: Recommendations for Curricular and Co-Curricular Experiences.” *Journal of Leadership Education*, 19:3, July 2020. p. 46. https://journalofleadershiped.org/jole_articles/the-influence-of-being-a-mentor-on-leadership-development-recommendations-for-curricular-and-co-curricular-experiences/

⁶⁴ Hill and Jochim, Op. cit., p. 14.

⁶⁵ “Brochure.” Kansas Educational Leadership Institute. <https://www.coe.k-state.edu/collaborations/partnerships/kansas-educational-leadership-institute/documents/KELI-brochure-2020-edit.pdf>

⁶⁶ “Mentoring/Induction Services for Kansas Educational Leaders.” Kansas Educational Leadership Institute. <https://www.coe.k-state.edu/collaborations/partnerships/kansas-educational-leadership-institute/mentoring-induction-services.html>

similar setting to the new leader.⁶⁷ Each mentor participates in professional coaching during their first year as a mentor to develop coaching skills.⁶⁸ Mentors provide feedback on demonstrations of performance by the emerging leader, ensuring that emerging leaders receive structured feedback to support professional growth.⁶⁹ The mentoring process aligns with the [Professional Standards for Educational Leaders](#) developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, and encourages emerging leaders to reflect on the alignment of their own leadership activities with these standards.⁷⁰

Figure 2.6: KELI Mentoring Activities

- Interaction July through June with mentors who have been successful Kansas superintendents in similar settings.
- At least one face-to-face site visit each month—to be scheduled with the assigned mentor.
- Additional regular contacts with mentors as needed and as scheduled by phone, email, skype, facetime, or other technology.
- Receive monthly checklists from KELI of topics of timely concern for district leaders.
- Attendance at the opening KELI orientation session.
- Attend one state board of education meeting and one Council of Superintendents meeting during the year. Check dates and verify location on the KSDE website. If event attendance at a state board meeting or Council of Superintendents meeting is not possible, the KELI Executive Director will work with the mentee to identify a suitable substitute. Attendance at the meetings is highly recommended due to the importance of both for district leaders. (Live streaming/recording is permissible for one of the two meetings).
- Complete at least two performance demonstrations, jointly selected by the mentor and mentee to be observed by the mentor for the purpose of giving quality feedback for professional growth. Suggestions include local board meeting, a staff session or assembly, special presentation, etc. For Assistant Superintendents, the mentor/mentee can agree upon one alternative activity for one of the performance demonstrations if beneficial to his/her leadership role.
- Complete a required end-of-the-year reflection on the first-year experience. The end of the year reflection should focus on professional growth as a district leader. Mentors can assist by suggesting areas that might be included.
- Attend one legislative/advocacy committee meeting or hearing during the year (local or state, KASB Governmental Relations, city/county wide forum).

Source: Kansas Educational Leadership Institute⁷¹

Each participant attends three Cohort Group Meetings with other emerging district leaders in their region, each of which includes panel and small group discussions focused on a topic of importance to superintendent leadership.⁷² These meetings provide an opportunity for emerging leaders to network with other emerging leaders in their area and develop a collaborative peer network to support ongoing leadership growth.⁷³

⁶⁷ “Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent Mentoring/Induction Components.” Kansas Educational Leadership Institute. <https://www.coe.k-state.edu/collaborations/partnerships/kansas-educational-leadership-institute/superintendent-assist-super.html>

⁶⁸ Augustine-Shaw, Op. cit., p. 6.

⁶⁹ “Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent Mentoring/Induction Components,” Op. cit.

⁷⁰ Augustine-Shaw, Op. cit., p. 2.

⁷¹ Chart contents taken verbatim from: “Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent Mentoring/Induction Components,” Op. cit.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Augustine-Shaw, Op. cit., p. 2.

Figure 2.7: Sample Cohort Group Meeting Topics



Source: Kansas Educational Leadership Institute⁷⁴

In addition to induction supports for emerging leaders, KELI supports ongoing collaborative professional learning through seminars that address topics identified as of interest by participating leaders. Each seminar includes presentation on the selected topic followed by time for collaborative discussion and networking among participants.⁷⁵

A 2016 study draws on participant surveys to assess the impacts of KELI's induction and ongoing professional learning programs. Respondents provided strong ratings of all aspects of the program, with 100 percent of mentors and mentees agreeing that the induction program supports the professional growth of emerging leaders.⁷⁶

SELF-CARE FOR RESILIENCE

Educators across organizational levels can develop personal resilience by practicing self-care, which includes the monitoring of one's own physical and psychological wellbeing and taking proactive steps to improve health and wellbeing.⁷⁷ School leaders who participate in professional learning focused on self-care strategies such as mindfulness and wellness skills report that this professional learning enhances their resilience and enables them to persist through leadership challenges.⁷⁸

Although much of the literature examining self-care for leaders in education focuses on addressing acute burnout, proactive self-care is more effective in supporting long-term resilience.⁷⁹ Leaders can develop a self-care plan that includes specific commitments to self-care activities and identifies the supports leaders will need for self-care.⁸⁰ Figure 2.8 presents strategies for educators to sustain their commitment to self-care recommended by the U.S. Department of Education's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center.

⁷⁴ Chart contents taken verbatim from: "Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent Mentoring/Induction Components," Op. cit.

⁷⁵ Augustine-Shaw, Op. cit., p. 7.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 11.

⁷⁷ Pate, C. "Self-Care Strategies for Educators During the Coronavirus Crisis: Supporting Personal Social and Emotional Well-Being." WestEd. p. 1. <https://www.wested.org/resources/self-care-strategies-for-educators-covid-19/>

⁷⁸ Superville, D.R. "SEL for Principals: How a Professional Development Program Serves Their High-Stress Needs." Education Week, September 24, 2021. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/sel-for-principals-how-a-professional-development-program-serves-their-high-stress-needs/2021/09>

⁷⁹ Skanes, F. "But Who Cares for the Leader?" ASCD, January 5, 2022. <https://www.ascd.org/blogs/but-who-cares-for-the-leader>

⁸⁰ Hydon, S. "Understanding Educator Resilience & Developing a Self-Care Plan." Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center, U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Healthy Students. p. 38. [https://rems.ed.gov/docs/RSE_508C\[1\].pdf](https://rems.ed.gov/docs/RSE_508C[1].pdf)

Figure 2.8: Strategies to Sustain Commitment to Self-Care

Incorporate self-care into daily routines

Identify a peer or colleague as a 'self-care buddy'

Advocate for self-care in professional learning

Share ideas for self-care across the organization

Monitor compassion fatigue

Recognize commitment to specific self-care actions

Source: U.S. Department of Education⁸¹

Leaders should focus on self-care strategies to promote resilience across the organization in addition to personal self-care. Building resilience in employees is a core strategy of nimble leadership to support change management.⁸² Authentic support for self-care goes beyond encouraging staff to practice individual self-care strategies to encompass systemic strategies that reduce stress and build resilience among staff.⁸³ Surveys of teachers suggest that encouragement to practice self-care without strategies to reduce workload and support teachers are likely to be ineffective and can be perceived as condescending.⁸⁴ In contrast, a systematic approach to resilience creates positive relationships, policies, and organizational norms for all team members.⁸⁵

Resonant leaders match supports for self-care to their teams' support needs by collaborating with their teams to identify needs and agree on strategies to address them. In many cases, these strategies will include policies to reduce burdens on teachers' time, such as streamlining communication or discontinuing low-priority initiatives.⁸⁶ Support strategies may also include improvements to overall school climate and culture, which research identifies as a key contextual factor supporting teacher resilience.⁸⁷ Figure 2.9 presents suggested leadership strategies to promote teacher resilience.

⁸¹ Chart contents adapted from: Ibid., p. 41.

⁸² Spaddock, Op. cit.

⁸³ "How School Leaders Can Create the Conditions to Support Teacher Self-Care." New Leaders, July 26, 2022. <https://www.newleaders.org/blog/how-school-leaders-can-create-the-conditions-to-support-teacher-self-care>

⁸⁴ Klein, A. "Superficial Self-Care? Stressed-Out Teachers Say No Thanks." *Education Week*, March 1, 2022. <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/superficial-self-care-stressed-out-teachers-say-no-thanks/2022/03>

⁸⁵ Johnson, M.M. "Self-Care Is Not Enough!" *Educational Leadership*, July 11, 2022. <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/self-care-is-not-enough>

⁸⁶ "How School Leaders Can Create the Conditions to Support Teacher Self-Care," Op. cit.

⁸⁷ Mullen, C.A., L.B. Shields, and C.H. Tienken. "Developing Teacher Resilience and Resilient School Cultures." *AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice*, 18:1, 2021. p. 14.

Figure 2.9: Leadership Strategies to Promote Teacher Resilience

Demonstrating Supportive Administration

- Communicating a clear school vision
- Recognizing teachers' hard work, initiative, and achievement
- Discussing issues with teachers
- Making decisions fairly
- Effectively using professional development time

Streamlining Teachers' Workload

- Using technology effectively
- Reviewing feedback and grading practices for workload
- Making collaborative planning efficient
- Reviewing data collection and management systems
- Communicating effectively
- Considering workload implications of changes to job duties
- Monitoring overall workloads

Creating a Positive School Culture

- Making supports available within the school
- Facilitating mutually supportive relationships among staff
- Supporting team-building and professional learning
- Providing induction supports for new teachers
- Collaboratively planning curriculum
- Identifying and recognizing resilient teachers

Source: AASA *Journal of Scholarship and Practice*⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Chart contents adapted from: *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.

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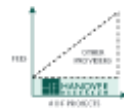
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