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SYNOPSIS:

Existing law requires principals and assistant principals to complete five professional learning units every five years specific to serving in those administrative positions beyond the initial instructional leadership certification provided by state institutions of higher education.

This bill would create the School Principal Leadership and Mentoring Act.

This bill would require the creation and implementation of the Alabama Principal Leadership Development System and would require all principals and assistant principals to attend and satisfactorily complete the program.

This bill would provide a mentoring program for principals with less than two years of experience in that position.

This bill would also provide annual stipends for each principal and assistant principal who satisfactorily completes the program.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT



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To create the School Principal Leadership and Mentoring Act and the Alabama Principal Leadership Development System for public K-12 education; to provide for the creation and implementation of a mentoring program for new principals and a continuing professional learning program for principals and assistant principals; and to provide annual stipends for each principal and assistant principal who satisfactorily completes the program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the School Principal Leadership and Mentoring Act.

Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- (1) BOARD. The State Board of Education.
- (2) DEPARTMENT. The State Department of Education.
- (3) DESIGN TEAM. The group of individuals appointed to design the Alabama Principal Leadership Development System including, but not limited to, school leadership standards, principal leadership framework, design of a leadership academy, ongoing professional learning, mentoring, evaluation system, or any other aspect the design team determines necessary for the growth and development of successful school administrators.
- (4) HIGH-POVERTY SCHOOL. A school that has a free and reduced federal lunch student percentage of 75 percent or greater as determined by the most recent data posted or that provides meals to all students through the community



57 eligibility provision.

58 (5) LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOL. Any school that is  
59 identified as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement School,  
60 a Targeted Support and Improvement School, an Additional  
61 Targeted Support and Improvement School, a school with a D or  
62 F grade as defined by the Alabama Education Report Card,  
63 Chapter 6C of Title 16, Code of Alabama 1975, or a full  
64 support school or limited support school as defined by the  
65 Alabama Literacy Act, Chapter 6G of Title 16, Code of Alabama  
66 1975, or the Alabama Numeracy Act, Chapter 6H of Title 16,  
67 Code of Alabama 1975.

68 (6) MENTORING. A long-term relationship between a new  
69 principal mentee and a trained principal mentor that fosters  
70 the professional, academic, or personal development of the  
71 principal mentee.

72 (7) NEW PRINCIPAL. A principal who is serving in his or  
73 her first or second year as a principal.

74 (8) PRINCIPAL. An individual who is certified for the  
75 position of principal, as prescribed by the board, and who is  
76 employed full-time by a local board of education as the chief  
77 school administrator of a public school.

78 (9) PRINCIPAL MENTEE. A new principal who is  
79 participating in a mentoring relationship with a more  
80 experienced principal through which the principals may further  
81 define and articulate core values, grow instructional  
82 leadership competencies, and develop professional confidence.

83 (10) PRINCIPAL MENTOR. An experienced school  
84 administrator who guides new principals in defining and



85 articulating core values, growing instructional leadership  
86 competencies, and developing professional confidence.

87 (11) PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. A comprehensive, sustained,  
88 job-embedded, and collaborative approach to improving the  
89 effectiveness of principals in elevating student achievement  
90 through professional study.

91 (12) PROFESSIONAL LEARNING UNIT. A content-driven,  
92 long-term unit of professional study for instructional leaders  
93 that fully addresses all knowledge and ability indicators  
94 under at least one of the Alabama Standards for School  
95 Leaders, or a professional study that constitutes a  
96 professional learning unit that requires multiple professional  
97 learning experiences over time and is aligned with the Alabama  
98 Standards for School Leadership, the Principal Leadership  
99 framework, and the Alabama Standards for Professional  
100 Learning.

101 (13) PROGRAM. The Alabama Principal Leadership  
102 Development System created by this act.

103 (14) SCHOOL. A public school located in the state and  
104 providing instruction in grades preK-12, or any configuration  
105 of those grades.

106 (15) SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR. Includes principals and  
107 assistant principals.

108 (16) SUPERINTENDENT. The State Superintendent of  
109 Education.

110 Section 3. (a) (1) A design team shall be appointed to  
111 develop the program. In selecting design team members, the  
112 superintendent may consult with professional associations that



113 primarily serve school administrators, higher education  
114 partners, and others to facilitate a design team with  
115 expertise in elementary, middle, and high school leadership,  
116 as well as curriculum, school climate, data management,  
117 assessment, instruction, mentoring, and other areas necessary  
118 for leading a school with high expectations for academic  
119 achievement and growth and a positive school climate. At a  
120 minimum, the membership of the design team shall include all  
121 of the following:

122           a. The State Superintendent of Education, or his or her  
123 designee.

124           b. Three serving principals, including a high school,  
125 middle school, and elementary school principal appointed by  
126 the Board of Directors of the Council for Leaders in Alabama  
127 Schools.

128           c. Three serving assistant principals, including a high  
129 school, middle school, and elementary school assistant  
130 principal appointed by the Board of Directors of the Council  
131 for Leaders in Alabama Schools.

132           d. Two local superintendents of education appointed by  
133 the Board of Directors of the School Superintendents of  
134 Alabama.

135           e. Three serving public school teachers, including a  
136 high school, middle school, and elementary school teacher  
137 appointed by the Board of Directors of the Alabama Education  
138 Association.

139           f. Two members who are each serving as a member of a  
140 local board of education appointed by the Board of Directors



141 of the Alabama Association of School Boards.

142 g. One member who is serving as an instructor at an  
143 institution of higher education in the state and is familiar  
144 with the responsibilities and roles of principals appointed by  
145 the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

146 h. Two members appointed from the state at-large by the  
147 Board of Directors of the A+ Education Partnership.

148 i. Four members appointed from the state at-large by  
149 the Governor.

150 (2) The appointing authorities shall coordinate their  
151 appointments to assure the team membership is inclusive and  
152 reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and  
153 economic diversity of the state.

154 (b) To assist in developing and implementing the  
155 program, the department may contract with a professional  
156 learning organization in the state that has demonstrated  
157 successful experience in providing training to principals in  
158 distributive and collaborative leadership. In addition, the  
159 design team may contract with a national organization with  
160 demonstrated expertise in the most current research related to  
161 effective principal leadership.

162 (c) The goal of the program is to increase the  
163 effectiveness of school administrators resulting in improved  
164 academic outcomes for all students. At a minimum, the program  
165 shall provide all of the following:

166 (1) Statewide infrastructure that provides consistent  
167 access to sustained, high-quality professional learning and  
168 mentoring for school administrators.



169 (2) Updated Alabama Standards for School Leadership and  
170 Principal Leadership framework to reflect recent research and  
171 best practices, which shall replace the Alabama Standards for  
172 Instructional Leaders.

173 (3) Principal Leadership framework, which shall guide  
174 development of the program. This framework shall satisfy the  
175 requirements of the instructional leadership framework in the  
176 Alabama Numeracy Act and shall provide guidance for all of the  
177 following:

178 a. A clear and shared vision for principal leadership,  
179 including the following domains for principal effectiveness:  
180 Visionary leadership, instructional leadership, innovative  
181 leadership, managerial leadership, and relational leadership.

182 b. Recognizing and supporting excellent instruction  
183 through the use of high-quality instructional materials and  
184 evidence-based teaching practices.

185 c. Supporting evidence-based best practices of  
186 high-quality professional learning.

187 d. Data driven instructional leadership to continuously  
188 drive improvement in student achievement, including managing a  
189 multi-tiered system of supports to improve student  
190 achievement.

191 e. Effective coaching and management of school-based  
192 academic coaches.

193 f. Norms for participation and collaboration in  
194 coaching cycles to strengthen teacher practices.

195 (4) Comprehensive instruction on school leadership and  
196 other relevant topics aligned to the new Alabama Standards for



197 School Leadership and the Principal Leadership framework.

198 (5) Additional resources for those schools that have  
199 difficulty in recruiting and retaining effective school  
200 administrators.

201 (6) Competitive grants or technical assistance, or  
202 both, to encourage local school districts to develop principal  
203 pipeline programs.

204 Section 4. Commencing with the 2023-2024 school year,  
205 the design team shall develop the program in three phases,  
206 with increasing complexity and accountability, and implemented  
207 in the following stages:

208 (1) Commencing with the 2023-2024 school year, each  
209 school administrator shall develop a comprehensive  
210 professional learning plan to be implemented beginning in the  
211 2024-2025 school year, and in each subsequent school year  
212 thereafter. In addition to required professional learning  
213 units, the plan shall include an additional five days of  
214 high-quality professional learning targeted to building skills  
215 for school leadership as identified in the annual professional  
216 learning plan. The department shall publish a list of  
217 acceptable professional learning programs, or otherwise  
218 approve professional learning experiences for this purpose  
219 aligned to the Alabama Standards for School Leadership and  
220 Principal Leadership framework including, but not limited to,  
221 a menu of microcredentials, additional in-person academies,  
222 field experiences, and other advanced work. Each professional  
223 learning plan shall include at least one goal related to  
224 student academic growth or achievement, or both, and at least





225 one goal for school climate. School administrators in  
226 elementary schools shall participate in early literacy and  
227 numeracy professional learning recommended by the  
228 superintendent for their individual schools as part of their  
229 high-quality professional learning plan.

230 (2) Commencing with the 2024-2025 school year, each new  
231 principal shall work with a principal mentor for two  
232 consecutive years. A principal mentor shall be selected based  
233 on his or her successful experience as a school leader and  
234 commitment to developing principal mentees in school  
235 leadership. A training program for principal mentors shall be  
236 developed, or selected, by the design team.

237 (3) No later than the fall of 2025, a year-long  
238 leadership academy shall be developed by the design team. The  
239 leadership academy shall be aligned to the Alabama Standards  
240 for School Leadership and Principal Leadership framework.

241 (4) No later than the fall of 2025, the design team, in  
242 partnership with a national expert, shall develop an  
243 evaluation system for all participating school administrators.  
244 The evaluation system shall be aligned to the Alabama  
245 Standards for School Leadership and Principal Leadership  
246 framework and shall include measures of student growth and  
247 achievement and all of the following domains for principal  
248 effectiveness:

- 249 a. Visionary leadership.
- 250 b. Instructional leadership.
- 251 c. Innovative leadership.
- 252 d. Managerial leadership.



253 e. Relational leadership.

254 (5) No later than July 1, 2024, the design team shall  
255 recommend to the superintendent a schedule for implementation  
256 of the program so that all principals shall have the  
257 opportunity to begin the program not later than the 2029-2030  
258 school year.

259 Section 5. (a) Any appropriation by the Legislature  
260 shall be used, in part, to fund salary supplements and related  
261 benefit costs for school administrators and other costs  
262 relating to the program.

263 (b) (1) The department shall provide an annual  
264 supplement of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to any  
265 principal and up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to any  
266 assistant principal who successfully completes the program, is  
267 employed full-time in a public preK-12 school, and is properly  
268 certified by the state. The department shall provide  
269 additional supplements of up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000)  
270 to any principal and up to two thousand five hundred dollars  
271 (\$2,500) to any assistant principal serving in a  
272 low-performing school or high-poverty school. The amount of  
273 any supplement provided by this subdivision is subject to  
274 appropriations by the Legislature. Successful completion of  
275 the program shall consist of the following:

276 a. Beginning with all then currently employed  
277 principals and assistant principals, as of October 1, 2024,  
278 annual completion of five additional days of approved,  
279 high-quality professional learning as described in Section 4.

280 b. Beginning with all newly employed, first-time



281 principals, as of July 1, 2024, or later, annual completion of  
282 five additional days of approved, high-quality professional  
283 learning and participation in a new school administrator  
284 mentor program.

285 c. Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, all then  
286 currently employed and new principals, in addition to the five  
287 additional days of high-quality professional learning,  
288 participation in the evaluation system created in Section 4.

289 d. Beginning with the 2029-2030 school year, all then  
290 currently employed principals, in addition to the five  
291 additional days of high-quality professional learning,  
292 participation in the evaluation system created in Section 4  
293 and participation in and completion of the year-long  
294 leadership academy in accordance with a schedule for  
295 completion as developed and disseminated by the  
296 superintendent.

297 e. Beginning with the 2029-2030 school year, for newly  
298 employed principals, annual completion of five additional days  
299 of high-quality professional learning, participation in the  
300 evaluation system created in Section 4, participation and  
301 ultimately completion of the mentorship program, and  
302 participation in and ultimately graduation from the year-long  
303 leadership academy.

304 (2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1), any individual  
305 employed as a principal on July 1, 2024, shall be exempt from  
306 the mentoring requirement.

307 (c) Upon completion of the evaluation system, it is the  
308 intent of the Legislature that additional supplements be



309 provided to principals who meet or exceed student growth goals  
310 as identified through the evaluation system in low-performing  
311 schools and high-poverty schools.

312 (d) On or before January 1, 2024, the superintendent  
313 shall submit a report to the Legislature detailing the number  
314 of school administrators expected to receive the annual  
315 supplement provided in subsection (b) for the 2025 fiscal  
316 year. The report shall be submitted to the Chair of the Senate  
317 Finance and Taxation Education Committee, Chair of the House  
318 Ways and Means Education Committee, and the Legislative Fiscal  
319 Officer.

320 Section 6. (a) The Legislature shall annually  
321 appropriate to the department an amount sufficient to cover  
322 the actual costs of developing and implementing the program  
323 including, but not limited to, the awarding of stipends and  
324 grants and the hiring of additional staff as necessary. Any  
325 appropriations shall be subject to the provisions, terms,  
326 conditions, and limitations of the Budget and Financial  
327 Control Act, the Budget Management Act of 1976, and this act.

328 (b) The department shall provide technical assistance  
329 to local boards of education as necessary to ensure compliance  
330 with this act.

331 (c) The board may adopt rules as necessary to implement  
332 and enforce this act.

333 Section 7. (a) On or before the first legislative day  
334 of the 2025 Regular Session, the superintendent shall submit a  
335 report to the Legislature regarding the design and  
336 implementation status of the program. The report shall be



337 submitted to the Chairs of the Senate Finance and Taxation  
338 Education Committee, Senate Education Policy Committee, House  
339 Ways and Means Education Committee, and House Education Policy  
340 Committee.

341 (b) On or before the first legislative day of the 2026  
342 Regular Session, the superintendent shall submit a report to  
343 the Chairs of the Senate Finance and Taxation Education  
344 Committee, Senate Education Policy Committee, House Ways and  
345 Means Education Committee, and House Education Policy  
346 Committee that details all of the following:

347 (1) The method for identifying exemplary, high-quality  
348 principal mentors to participate in providing instruction  
349 through the program.

350 (2) The number of school administrators, by title, who  
351 attended the program during the immediately preceding year and  
352 the number of those school administrators who successfully  
353 completed the program.

354 (3) The number of school administrators, by title,  
355 expected to participate in the program during the immediately  
356 succeeding year.

357 (4) The number of principals who have met or exceeded  
358 their student growth goals as identified through the  
359 evaluation system.

360 (5) The manner in which the department expects to  
361 measure the success of the program, including measuring  
362 improved retention, improvements in school climate, and  
363 improved student outcomes.

364 (6) A recommendation concerning whether to continue the



365 program, any recommended changes to the program, and the  
366 estimated cost of continuing the program.

367 Section 8. This act shall become effective immediately  
368 following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its  
369 otherwise becoming law.