Understanding and Addressing Principal Turnover: A Research Review

NASSP and LPI have partnered on an intensive research project to identify the causes and impact of principal turnover nationwide. Through this collaboration, the team has identified what causes principal turnover and seeks to raise awareness of the issue through data analysis and original research presented in a series of four briefs, available online now:

Principal turnover can be disruptive to school progress, often negatively impacting teacher retention and ultimately leading to lower gains in student achievement. Explore which principals are less likely to leave, which schools are most vulnerable to principal turnover, and five key strategies to reduce it.

Drawing on insights from focus groups with administrators representing diverse backgrounds and student populations, this brief delves into the catalysts for principal turnover in greater detail. Discover school leaders’ unique challenges and learn concrete ways to support principals and help them succeed.

Read an outline of pivotal recommendations from the final report, including specific strategies that policymakers—working in local districts and states as well as the federal government—can use to address factors most likely to address principal turnover. Plus, learn more about the summary of the study’s findings.

Marking the culmination of the collaboration between NASSP and LPI, this final comprehensive document reveals key findings and survey data as well as places the research initiative into the context of the broader education landscape. Research techniques used to collect the study’s data, expanded data reports and infographics, and recommendations for how policymakers can create legislation to support and retain high-quality school leaders are also presented.