



School Leadership: Key Investments to Support the Success of the American Families Plan

Overview

President Biden's American Families Plan (AFP) presents a vision of increased access to higher education, a well-compensated and diverse teacher and early childhood educator workforce and increased access to a high-quality early childhood education. We specifically appreciate President Biden's plans to address teacher shortages, improve teacher preparation, and strengthen pipelines for teachers of color. We believe this proposal can be further strengthened and supported by including school leaders. We propose recommendations to build on the strong vision in the AFP and invest directly in improving school leadership for the 52 million students in America's public schools.

Recommendations

There are many opportunities in the AFP to uplift opportunities for school leaders to better serve our children, of those opportunities, we've included three key strategies to improve the plan. Given principals' critical role in supporting teachers, students, and school communities, we recommend that school leaders be included throughout the AFP:

- **Include school leadership as a "high demand" field and make aspiring school leaders eligible for two years of subsidized tuition at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).** While 52 percent of U.S. students identify as people of color, just over 22% of principals identify as leaders of color and, a national analysis found that the average cost to recruit, prepare, and hire a new principal is \$75,000.¹ By directing resources to school leader preparation programs at HBCUs, TCUs and MSIs we can not only strengthen the pipeline of school leaders but also diversify the profession. The AFP can achieve this by:
 - Including school leadership as a "high demand" field as part of the \$5 billion in expanded institutional aid grants for HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs, and target 2% of that funding specifically for developing or strengthening school leadership programs.
 - Making aspiring school leaders eligible for subsidized tuition at HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs.
- **Invest in educator and school leadership.** We commend President Biden's call to invest \$2 billion to support programs that leverage teachers as leaders, such as high-quality mentorship programs for new teachers and teachers of color. Teacher leaders play a critical role and build the pipeline for principals. To boost teacher leadership, school leaders—who help identify and provide ongoing support to those teachers seeking an expanded leadership role—must be leveraged. To that end, we recommend adding \$400m in additional funds focused on school leadership to recruit, prepare, train, and support school leaders. This funding will help ensure that every school is led by a well-prepared and supported principal who creates the school-level conditions for the success of every teacher and classroom, builds a strong school culture, and supports teacher leaders as they advance in their careers.
- **Include principals and other school leaders any time educators are mentioned.** Given the understandable assumption that the term "educator" is specific to teachers, we encourage the language in AFP to specifically name principals and other school leaders as they too play a significant part in improving outcomes for all children.

¹ School Leaders Network. (2014). [Churn: The High Cost of Principal Turnover](#).