

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Assistant Principal Accelerator Program Launches**

*Raleigh, North Carolina* – Each year North Carolina needs 250-300 highly trained school leaders who are ready to serve as principals, far more than the current supply. The shortage of principal-ready candidates hits highest needs schools especially hard where turnover is the highest and conditions are the most challenging. To fill the need, the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association (NCPAPA) is partnering with the Belk Foundation and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to accelerate the readiness of some of NC's strongest 3000+ assistant principals.

Through funding from the Belk Foundation and NCDPI, NCPAPA will establish the AP Accelerator Program, a statewide leadership initiative for rigorously selected Assistant Principals with a high potential for being fast-tracked into the principalship. Assistant Principals, who typically spend 3-5 years in the role, will enter the AP Accelerator Program and receive targeted leadership development and coaching from proven practitioners in the field. Using a concentrated curriculum of leadership development experiences and coaching, the program will accelerate the readiness of selected assistant principals to lead and turnaround high-needs schools. NCPAPA will pilot and refine the curriculum with one cohort of 20-25 Assistant Principals and add additional cohorts with a goal of adding 100 principal-ready candidates each year to the candidate pool for high-needs schools.

“Excellent school leaders are critically important for North Carolina teachers, students and families,” said Belk Foundation Executive Director Johanna Anderson. “The Belk Foundation is pleased to support the innovative AP Accelerator Program to prepare principals.”

“As we know through the Wallace Foundation, principal effectiveness has a critical impact on student achievement and teacher satisfaction,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt said. “By investing in our assistant principals early in their careers, we make an investment in the future of North Carolina students and teachers. We appreciate the partnership of NCPAPA in helping us making this professional development opportunity a reality.”

“Investing in targeted, concentrated support for our most promising assistant principals is the best and fastest way to increase our pool of leaders who are ready and equipped to successfully lead their own schools,” said Dr. Shirley Prince, Executive Director at NCPAPA.

“AP Accelerator will begin to address the divide between highly qualified and highly effective! Our curriculum provides content and strategies derived from administrative leaders who have been successful in school transformation. Our facilitators have transformed theory into actual site-based application,” said Tabari Wallace, Special Advisor to the Superintendent for Principal Engagement at NCDPI.

The Belk Foundation is a Charlotte-based family foundation that supports public education by strengthening teachers and school leaders, and ensuring that students are achieving on or above grade level by the third grade. Now in its fourth generation of family leadership, The Belk Foundation serves as the public expression of gratitude and commitment shown by the family that created the Belk department store organization. Since 2000, The Belk Foundation has invested more than \$53 million in our community. More information is available at [www.belkfoundation.org](http://www.belkfoundation.org).

NCASLD’s mission is to grow leadership capacity among aspiring and practicing school leaders through programs that are aligned to the research-based NC and National performance evaluation standards and competencies for highly effective school leadership. NCASLD works in concert with its affiliate organizations, NCASA, NCSSA, and NCPAPA to promote achievement of NC’s educational objectives with emphasis on the welfare and needs of all children. In existence since 1976, the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals’ Association is the preeminent organization and state voice for principals, assistant principals and aspiring school leaders.



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