

# Principal Supply and Demand Report

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“Never before has the bar been set so high for America’s public education system to ensure that every child achieves at high levels... Never have public schools counted more heavily on the nation’s nearly 84,000 principals to lead the instructional improvements needed to meet tough new state and federal mandates. Never has the resulting need to assure an adequate supply of candidates for school leadership positions been clearer. Yet never have these increasingly challenging and often thankless jobs seemed less enticing, or more difficult to fill.”

- The Wallace Foundation 2003

## **Introduction**

The implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 has placed standards and accountability at the forefront of the educational issues and thereby created a central focus on reforming schools to raise student achievement and close achievement gaps. In *Turning Points 2000*, Jackson and Davis (2000) assert that "one of the most consistent findings in educational research is that high-achieving schools have strong, competent leaders" (p. 156). Similarly, the literature on school reform consistently points to the key role school administrators play in creating high quality schools for our students.

In seeking to improve North Carolina’s schools and meet rigorous accountability demands it is essential that a careful examination of the supply and demand of school administrators across our state be undertaken. Many factors are known to influence the balance of supply and demand of principals. These factors include attrition of educators (promotion, career changes, retirement etc.), the number of licensed candidates graduating from approved education programs, student enrollment; federal, state and local policies, and economics (Department of Public Instruction, 2002).

This report is written in response to House Bill 257, 1993 Session Laws that directs the Board of Governors to:

Study the issue of supply and demand of school administrators to determine the number of school administrators to be trained in the programs in each year of each biennium. The Board of Governors shall report the results of this study to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee no later than March 1, 1994, and annually thereafter.

The purpose of this report is to provide data to the Education Leadership Task Force and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee concerning school administrator programs at the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina about the trends that influence supply and demand of school based administrators in North Carolina. For this study, school administrators are defined to include principals and assistant principals.

This report is divided into four parts:

- 1) Demographics
- 2) Demand Trends
- 3) Supply Trends
- 4) Discussion of Findings

## I. Demographics of North Carolina’s School Administrators

Demographic data collected by the Department of Public Instruction indicates that the average North Carolina principal is likely to be 45 or older (67% of current principals), and white (74% of current principals), with a master’s degree (74% of current principals). There are slightly more female principals than males (55% female) and the majority of principals have more than 20 years of education experience (62%).

The average assistant principal is younger than the average principal. In fact, less than half (49%) of all assistant principals are 45 or older, with 37% age 40 or younger. This represents an 11% increase from last year in the percentage of assistant principals age 40 or younger. Not surprisingly, the assistant principals in the state have less years of educational experience than principals. Only 41% have 20 or more years of educational experience. In terms of the demographics of assistant principals, the majority are female (60%) and in terms of ethnicity, 69% are white.

The following tables provide more detailed demographic data about North Carolina’s principals and assistant principals. Tables 1 and 2 provide information on the age of current school administrators. Tables 3 and 4 provide information on administrator’s total education experience. Table 5 and 6 provide information about the highest degree earned by NC school administrators. While the presenting aggregated data about school administrators highlights the situation throughout the state, sometimes great insight can also be gained from reviewing the information disaggregated by geographic region. As a result, the included tables all provide a statewide total, as well as disaggregated data by region for each indicator.

Table 1 below provides data about the age of current North Carolina principals. As indicated previously, 67% of all principals are 45 years or older. Furthermore, the data presented in Table 1 indicated that almost half (49%) of principals are age 50 or older. Importantly, in four geographic regions of the state, at least half of the principals are 50 years or older (Northeast 55%, South Central 56%, 52%, Southwest 50%, and West 50%).

**Table 1: Principal Age  
2005-2006**

| Age              | <40        | 40-44      | 45-49      | 50-54      | 55+        |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>496</b> | <b>274</b> | <b>397</b> | <b>600</b> | <b>485</b> |
| Central          | 99         | 37         | 72         | 113        | 83         |
| North Central    | 89         | 46         | 73         | 89         | 76         |
| Northeast        | 21         | 13         | 26         | 40         | 33         |
| Northwest        | 80         | 43         | 43         | 57         | 45         |
| South Central    | 43         | 27         | 55         | 98         | 61         |
| Southeast        | 56         | 31         | 37         | 65         | 49         |
| Southwest        | 75         | 46         | 59         | 95         | 86         |
| West             | 33         | 31         | 32         | 43         | 52         |

Table 2 provides data about the age of current North Carolina assistant principals. As indicated previously, just less than one half of all assistant principals are age 45 or older. As demonstrated in the table, well over half (65%) of the state's assistant principals are younger than 50 years of age. Notably, the 40 years or younger category in Table 2 contains the largest percentage of individuals in all but one region, with 37% of current North Carolina assistant principals in that age range.

**Table 2: Assistant Principal Age  
2005-2006**

| Age              | <40        | 40-44      | 45-49      | 50-54      | 55+        |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>909</b> | <b>346</b> | <b>332</b> | <b>419</b> | <b>430</b> |
| Central          | 152        | 41         | 59         | 78         | 71         |
| North Central    | 185        | 84         | 63         | 80         | 84         |
| Northeast        | 42         | 13         | 19         | 20         | 27         |
| Northwest        | 86         | 43         | 33         | 40         | 33         |
| South Central    | 81         | 35         | 39         | 57         | 51         |
| Southeast        | 78         | 45         | 33         | 45         | 47         |
| Southwest        | 241        | 59         | 58         | 84         | 91         |
| West             | 44         | 26         | 28         | 15         | 26         |

Table 3 provides data about the years of education experience of current North Carolina principals. The data indicate that across the state 62% of current principals have 20 or more years of experience. This trend is consistent across the state regions with the exception of two regions. In the South Central region almost three quarters (73%) of all principals have 20 or more years of educational experience. However, in the Northwest only slightly more than half (51%) of the current principals have at least 20 years of experience in education.

**Table 3: Principals' Years of Education Experience  
2005-2006**

| Number of Years  | <10        | 10-14      | 15-19      | 20-24      | 25-29      | 30+        |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>134</b> | <b>369</b> | <b>330</b> | <b>371</b> | <b>545</b> | <b>502</b> |
| Central          | 34         | 61         | 54         | 75         | 108        | 71         |
| North Central    | 25         | 68         | 51         | 62         | 93         | 74         |
| Northeast        | 3          | 17         | 24         | 13         | 36         | 40         |
| Northwest        | 25         | 58         | 47         | 33         | 57         | 48         |
| South Central    | 9          | 40         | 27         | 58         | 79         | 71         |
| Southeast        | 12         | 44         | 41         | 31         | 58         | 52         |
| Southwest        | 22         | 60         | 47         | 69         | 72         | 91         |
| West             | 4          | 21         | 39         | 30         | 42         | 55         |

Table 4 provides data about the number of years of education experience of current assistant principals. The data indicate that statewide, only 41% of current assistant principals have 20 or more total years of education experience, this is approximately only two thirds of the amount of principals with this level of experience. Importantly, across the state 22% of assistant principals have less than 10 years of education experience. In the Southwest, as many as 28% of current assistant principals have under 10 years of experience in education.

**Table 4: Assistant Principals' Years of Education Experience  
2005-2006**

| Number of Years  | <10        | 10-14      | 15-19      | 20-24      | 25-29      | 30+        |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>533</b> | <b>542</b> | <b>375</b> | <b>329</b> | <b>342</b> | <b>315</b> |
| Central          | 92         | 84         | 40         | 62         | 70         | 53         |
| North Central    | 108        | 115        | 84         | 56         | 72         | 61         |
| Northeast        | 19         | 29         | 21         | 17         | 16         | 19         |
| Northwest        | 42         | 50         | 46         | 39         | 28         | 30         |
| South Central    | 44         | 64         | 39         | 43         | 40         | 33         |
| Southeast        | 55         | 53         | 46         | 24         | 38         | 32         |
| Southwest        | 147        | 117        | 74         | 62         | 66         | 67         |
| West             | 26         | 30         | 25         | 26         | 12         | 20         |

Table 5 provides data about the level of educational attainment of current North Carolina principals. The data indicate that across the state 74% of current principals' highest degree earned is a Master's degree.

**Table 5: Principal Highest Degree Level Earned  
2005-2006**

| Degree Level     | Master's     | Specialist | Doctoral   |
|------------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>1,656</b> | <b>390</b> | <b>205</b> |
| Central          | 285          | 56         | 62         |
| North Central    | 284          | 52         | 37         |
| Northeast        | 89           | 35         | 9          |
| Northwest        | 192          | 57         | 19         |
| South Central    | 248          | 21         | 15         |
| Southeast        | 193          | 32         | 13         |
| Southwest        | 250          | 72         | 39         |
| West             | 115          | 65         | 11         |

Table 6 provides data about the level of educational attainment of current assistant principals. The data indicate that across the state 86% of current assistant principals highest degree earned is a Master's degree. Although, the numbers are rather low, it is important to note that the data indicate that there are assistant principals in every region whose highest degree earned is a bachelor's degree. In the Northwest, 3% of current assistant principals have not completed a degree program beyond the baccalaureate degree.

**Table 6: Assistant Principal Highest Degree Level Earned  
2005-2006**

| Degree Level     | Bachelor's | Master's     | Specialist | Doctoral  |
|------------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>24</b>  | <b>2,096</b> | <b>238</b> | <b>77</b> |
| Central          | 1          | 337          | 48         | 15        |
| North Central    | 5          | 438          | 31         | 22        |
| Northeast        | 1          | 97           | 20         | 3         |
| Northwest        | 8          | 193          | 28         | 6         |
| South Central    | 1          | 249          | 5          | 8         |
| Southeast        | 3          | 216          | 20         | 9         |
| Southwest        | 4          | 463          | 52         | 13        |
| West             | 1          | 103          | 34         | 1         |

Tables 7 and 8 provide demographic data for North Carolina's current principals and assistant principals respectively. The data indicate that, for principals, the vast majority (74%) of current principals is White, and about a quarter (23%) are Black. Additionally, 55% of principals are females. For assistant principals, 58% are female. In terms of ethnicity, slightly over two-thirds (69%) are White and just under a third (29%) are Black. Notably the data indicate that, for both principals and assistant principals, the Northwest and West regions of NC employ very few minorities as school administrators.

**Table 7: Percentage of Race and Gender of Principals  
2005-2006**

| Race/Gender      | Female - Asian | Female - Black | Female - Hispanic | Female - Am. Indian / Alaskan | Female - White | Male-Asian | Male - Black | Male - Hispanic | Male - Am. Indian / Alaskan | Male - White |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>1</b>       | <b>320</b>     | <b>8</b>          | <b>21</b>                     | <b>880</b>     | <b>3</b>   | <b>192</b>   | <b>1</b>        | <b>12</b>                   | <b>775</b>   |
| Central          | -              | 67             | 4                 | -                             | 173            | -          | 34           | -               | -                           | 115          |
| Northcentral     | 1              | 73             | 1                 | 2                             | 126            | 2          | 52           | -               | -                           | 110          |
| Northeast        | -              | 29             | -                 | 2                             | 31             | -          | 19           | -               | -                           | 51           |
| Northwest        | -              | 9              | -                 | 2                             | 119            | -          | 10           | 1               | -                           | 124          |
| Southcentral     | -              | 51             | 2                 | 14                            | 96             | -          | 29           | -               | 12                          | 78           |
| Southeast        | -              | 28             | -                 | 1                             | 110            | -          | 19           | -               | -                           | 76           |
| Southwest        | -              | 61             | 1                 | -                             | 143            | 1          | 25           | -               | -                           | 119          |
| West             | -              | 2              | -                 | 0                             | 82             | -          | 4            | 0               | -                           | 102          |

**Table 8: Percentage of Race and Gender of Assistant Principals  
2004-2005**

| Race/Gender      | Female - Asian | Female - Black | Female - Hispanic | Female - Am. Indian / Alaskan | Female - White | Male-Asian | Male - Black | Male - Hispanic | Male - Am. Indian / Alaskan | Male - White |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>3</b>       | <b>451</b>     | <b>9</b>          | <b>12</b>                     | <b>881</b>     | <b>1</b>   | <b>240</b>   | <b>4</b>        | <b>10</b>                   | <b>763</b>   |
| Central          | 1              | 82             | 1                 | 1                             | 145            | 1          | 44           | -               | -                           | 118          |
| North Central    | -              | 122            | 1                 | 1                             | 165            | -          | 77           | -               | 1                           | 121          |
| Northeast        | -              | 23             | -                 | -                             | 48             | -          | 16           | -               | 1                           | 30           |
| Northwest        | -              | 6              | 1                 | -                             | 107            | -          | 8            | -               | 1                           | 108          |
| South Central    | 1              | 49             | 2                 | 8                             | 84             | -          | 28           | 1               | 7                           | 76           |
| Southeast        | 1              | 44             | 1                 | 1                             | 106            | -          | 22           | 1               | -                           | 67           |
| Southwest        | 1              | 122            | 3                 | 1                             | 169            | -          | 43           | 2               | -                           | 168          |
| West             | -              | 3              | -                 | -                             | 57             | -          | 2            | -               | -                           | 75           |

## II. Demand Trends for North Carolina School Administrators

Table 9 outlines the principal retention rate from 1997-98 through the 2004-05 academic year. Since 1998 less than 10% of principals chose to leave their position after their first year. That percentage increases every year with 42% leaving the principalship after their seventh year.

**Table 9: Principal Retention Rates 1998-99 through 2004-2005**

| Cohort Year and Size        | % employed in public schools the following year | % employed in public schools 2 years later | % employed in public schools 3 years later | % employed in public schools 4 years later | % employed in public schools 5 years later | % employed in public schools 6 years later | % employed in public schools 7 years later |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>1998-99</b><br>N = 2,017 | <b>94%</b> (1886)                               | <b>88%</b> (1840)                          | <b>81%</b> (1732)                          | <b>75%</b> (1631)                          | <b>72%</b> (1583)                          | <b>66%</b> (1451)                          | <b>58%</b> (1277)                          |
| <b>1999-00</b><br>N = 2,095 | <b>94%</b> (1903)                               | <b>87%</b> (1816)                          | <b>80%</b> (1708)                          | <b>78%</b> (1682)                          | <b>70%</b> (1530)                          | <b>63%</b> (1380)                          | N/A  |
| <b>2000-01</b><br>N = 2,138 | <b>92%</b> (1862)                               | <b>85%</b> (1785)                          | <b>83%</b> (1768)                          | <b>77%</b> (1670)                          | <b>66%</b> (1443)                          | N/A  | N/A  |
| <b>2001-02</b><br>N = 2,168 | <b>92%</b> (1859)                               | <b>90%</b> (1889)                          | <b>85%</b> (1807)                          | <b>74%</b> (1596)                          | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  |
| <b>2002-03</b><br>N = 2,184 | <b>93%</b> (1884)                               | <b>89%</b> (1869)                          | <b>79%</b> (1683)                          | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  |
| <b>2003-04</b><br>N = 2,189 | <b>96%</b> (1930)                               | <b>86%</b> (1802)                          | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  |
| <b>2004-05</b><br>N = 2,216 | <b>93%</b> (1870)                               | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  |

Table 10 presents data on the number of employed assistant principals who were granted provisional licenses. According to the Department of Public Instruction, a one-year provisional license may be issued by local boards of education to individuals selected for employment as assistant principals if

- The local board has determined there is a shortage of persons who hold or are qualified to hold a principal's license and the employee enrolls in an approved program leading to a master's degree in school administration before the provisional license expires; or
- The employee is enrolled in an approved master's in school administration program and is participating in the required internship under the master's program.

Data from the last five years in North Carolina indicate that there was a sharp increase in the number of provisional licenses from 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 school years from 40 to 232. This represents nearly a 600% increase in the number of provisional licenses issued over that time period. Since 2001-2002, the number of provisional licenses has remained consistently high and, for the most part, continued to increase over time. For 2005-2006 the number of provisional licenses issued to assistant principals increased by about 15% from the previous year.

**Table 10: Assistant Principals with Provisional Licenses**

|                  | 1999-2000   | 2000-2001    | 2001-2002    | 2002-2003    | 2003-2004    | 2004-2005    | 2005-2006    |
|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>N=40</b> | <b>N=120</b> | <b>N=232</b> | <b>N=244</b> | <b>N=262</b> | <b>N=243</b> | <b>N=279</b> |
| Central          | 14          | 38           | 64           | 51           | 51           | 47           | 61           |
| Northeast        | 7           | 14           | 27           | 13           | 11           | 10           | 10           |
| Northwest        | 3           | 7            | 21           | 24           | 27           | 21           | 45           |
| South Central    | 4           | 16           | 33           | 48           | 46           | 43           | 43           |
| Southeast        | 4           | 20           | 39           | 54           | 46           | 45           | 33           |
| Southwest        | 3           | 14           | 33           | 37           | 55           | 53           | 43           |
| West             | 5           | 11           | 15           | 17           | 26           | 24           | 26           |

**Table 11: Comparison of Percent of North Carolina Schools by Region with Percent of Provisional Licenses**

| Region        | Percent of North Carolina Schools in Region | Percent of Provisional licenses 2005-2006 |
|---------------|---|---|
| Central       | 17% (401)                                   | 22% (61)                                  |
| North Central | 16% (373)                                   | 9% (24)                                   |
| Northeast     | 6% (134)                                    | 3% (7)                                    |
| Northwest     | 11% (269)                                   | 15% (43)                                  |
| South Central | 12% (288)                                   | 15% (42)                                  |
| Southeast     | 10% (238)                                   | 12% (33)                                  |
| Southwest     | 15% (353)                                   | 15% (43)                                  |
| West          | 8% (196)                                    | 9% (26)                                   |

**Table 12: Distribution of New Principals by Regions**

|                  | 99-00        | 00-01        | 01-02        | 02-03        | 03-04        | 04-05        | 05-06        |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>N=296</b> | <b>N=294</b> | <b>N=331</b> | <b>N=232</b> | <b>N=247</b> | <b>N=274</b> | <b>N=283</b> |
| Central          | 77           | 74           | 76           | 65           | 64           | 58           | 54           |
| Northeast        | 27           | 35           | 40           | 21           | 15           | 44           | 48           |
| Northwest        | 50           | 32           | 46           | 35           | 30           | 38           | 42           |
| South Central    | 38           | 50           | 50           | 30           | 32           | 30           | 45           |
| Southeast        | 33           | 32           | 40           | 23           | 35           | 38           | 34           |
| Southwest        | 44           | 44           | 53           | 35           | 47           | 19           | 25           |
| West             | 27           | 24           | 23           | 23           | 27           | 47           | 25           |

Table 13: Distribution of New Assistant Principals by Regions

|                  | 99-00        | 00-01        | 01-02        | 02-03        | 03-04        | 04-05        | 05-06        |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Statewide</b> | <b>N=379</b> | <b>N=467</b> | <b>N=580</b> | <b>N=329</b> | <b>N=453</b> | <b>N=453</b> | <b>N=402</b> |
| Central          | 91           | 117          | 139          | 99           | 127          | 118          | 92           |
| Northeast        | 30           | 42           | 52           | 39           | 27           | 41           | 32           |
| Northwest        | 57           | 61           | 87           | 39           | 50           | 63           | 52           |
| South Central    | 57           | 75           | 75           | 33           | 59           | 59           | 56           |
| Southeast        | 42           | 37           | 52           | 30           | 54           | 54           | 48           |
| Southwest        | 83           | 112          | 139          | 66           | 104          | 82           | 84           |
| West             | 19           | 23           | 35           | 23           | 32           | 36           | 32           |

### III. Supply Trends for North Carolina School Administrators

Table 14 provides data collected by the Department of Public Instruction related to the annual demand for principals and assistant principals. In 2005-2006, 68% of newly hired principals were assistant principals in their previous year of employment. Also, in 2005-2006, 50% of current assistant principals were classroom teachers in their previous year of employment and just over 25% were employed as assistant principal interns.

Table 14: Sources of New Principals and Assistant Principals

|   | 99-00 | 00-01 | 01-02 | 02-03 | 03-04 | 04-05 | 05-06 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| % of new principals employed as assistant principals in NC the preceding year | 77    | 76    | 75    | 78    | 81    | 77    | 68    |
| % of new principals not employed in NC schools the preceding year             | 9     | 5     | 9     | 5     | 3     | 6     | 14    |
|   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| % of new assistant principals employed as teachers in NC the preceding year   | 55    | 54    | 42    | 43    | 40    | 40    | 50    |
| % of new assistant principals employed as interns the preceding year          | 17    | 16    | 29    | 35    | 39    | 35    | 26    |

Table 15 provides the number of graduates from state Master’s in School Administration Programs (MSA) since the 1999-2000 academic year. North Carolina has seen an overall increase of 69% in MSA graduates since the 1999-2000 academic year. Over the past 3 years, however, production of MSA graduates has remained relatively stable, remaining around 400 per year.

**Table 15: Degrees Conferred in MSA Programs 1999-2000 through 2004-2005**

| Institution                               | 1999-2000 | 2000-2001 | 2001-2002 | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Appalachian State University              | 44        | 10        | 51        | 14        | 37        | 37        |
| East Carolina University                  | 71        | 64        | 103       | 112       | 49        | 56        |
| Fayetteville State University             | 13        | 25        | 21        | 31        | 25        | 24        |
| North Carolina State University           | N/A       | 55        | 92        | 82        | 67        | 66        |
| North Carolina Central                    | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       | 15        | 14        |
| University of North Carolina Chapel Hill  | 17        | 21        | 15        | 33        | 43        | 39        |
| University of North Carolina at Charlotte | 39        | 38        | 33        | 45        | 41        | 42        |
| University of North Carolina Greensboro   | 38        | 43        | 26        | 57        | 58        | 60        |
| University of North Carolina Pembroke     | N/A       | N/A       | N/A       | 6         | 25        | 24        |
| University of North Carolina Wilmington   | 7         | 13        | 14        | 16        | 25        | 24        |
| Western Carolina University               | 9         | 14        | 19        | 8         | 11        | 16        |
| UNC total                                 | 238       | 283       | 374       | 404       | 396       | 402       |

**Individuals in the Reserve Pool-** In addition to new graduates from MSA programs in North Carolina there are many individuals who are licensed as school administrators that are not currently employed in this capacity that constitute a reserve pool of prospective school administrators. Currently(2006), the DPI Licensure database indicates that there are approximately nineteen thousand (19,312) individuals holding administrative licenses in North Carolina . When you remove those in the pool with expired license (8,048), and those currently employed as assistant principals and principals and/or central office positions such as Directors, Superintendents, etc.. (6,017), that leaves 5,275 individuals holding administrative licenses who are not currently employed in this capacity. Of that 5,275, 59% (3,129) were not currently employed in public schools and the remaining 41% (2,146) were public school employees. Of the 2,146 individuals currently employed in North Carolina’s public school system 85% (1,829) were classroom teachers. Of these 1,829 individuals holding administrative positions who are currently employed as classroom teachers, a large majority, 60% (1,091) are age 50 or older.

### III. Discussion of Findings

#### Demographic Trends:

The data on principal age indicate that a significant percent of current school principals (49%) are over the age of 50 and almost half have 25 years or more of education experience, making them eligible for retirement over the next five years. In contrast current assistant principals are increasingly younger and more inexperienced. Thirty-seven percent are younger than 40 and 44% have less than 15 years of total educational experience. Ethnicity of current principals and assistant principals has remained constant since 2001: 1 of every 4 principals and assistant principals are members of an ethnic minority. Gender has also remained constant since 2001: approximately half of school level administrators are female.

A more complex analysis of the demographics of North Carolina School administrators was completed by the Rand Corporation in 2004. Rand found several important findings related to the supply and demand of school administrators in North Carolina that is important to note here. First, Rand reported that “the gender gap is alive and well.” Their analysis “revealed that, across the board, females in the North Carolina public school system are less likely than males to advance to administrative positions. When we controlled for other characteristics, men were still four times more likely than women to become principals directly (that is, without first serving as an assistant principal), and over three times more likely to become assistant principals. Rand also found in their analysis that “the administrative pipeline may not be well primed to sustain increases in the proportion of minority principals.

Given the lack of ethnic diversity of school administrative positions in North Carolina and the imbalance between the percentages of North Carolina school teachers that are female versus the percentage of NC school administrators that are female, there is reason that in the future a more detailed exploration of principal supply and demand should be undertaken. This exploration would pay detailed attention to exploring the demographics of current school administrators, the available pool and the pipeline to the principalship.

#### Demand Trends:

Over the seven years of data presented this report, the demand for new principals has remained reasonably constant, with an average of 280 new principals are needed each year. Similarly, the data indicate that over the same time period the number of new assistant principals hired annually has remained relatively stable, with an average of about 435 new assistant principals being hired each year. Yearly increases in average daily membership (ADM) suggest a gradual constant increase in the number of schools and subsequently school administrators required in North Carolina each year for the next few years. Data regarding principal retention has consistently shown that approximately 25% of principals are no longer employed in NC public schools after 4 years. This number jumps to almost 35% after six years. The nature of an aging principalship with large percentages having 25 years of service will likely continue to fuel turnover rates at the levels presented for the past seven years. On the other hand, with solid production of new MSA graduates remaining consistent over the past few years and increasing numbers of assistant principals under the age of 40, is suggestive that the possibility of a principalship that is getting younger over time.

## Supply Trends:

Two hundred forty-seven (247) principals were hired in 2005-06, of which, 168 (68%) were employed as assistant principals in the prior year. Additionally, 453 assistant principals were hired in 2005-06. The total net number of school administrator candidates that were needed in 2005-06 subsequently was 532. The UNC system institutions produced 402 MSA graduates in 2004-2005. Based on the number of graduates from the University of North Carolina system MSA programs in 2004-2005, North Carolina produces 76% of the needed administrators in North Carolina to fill positions created by new school construction/expansion and turnover. Based on the last five year's of data, 5% of the school administrators that are hired annually come from other states.

Importantly, although available MSA graduates and out of state candidates would represent over 80% of the required candidates available and qualified to fill the 532 vacancies in school administration, 279 currently employed Assistant principals had only provisional certification. Prior principal supply and demand reports indicated that in 2003-2004, 37% of the new assistant principal positions were filled by school administrators with only provisional licenses. This is important to note because it evidences the fact that more individuals were hired with provisional licenses than the total shortfall between the number of MSA's prepared and the number required to fill all vacancies. This highlights the fact that not all of the state's MSA graduates are actually entering into school administration upon completion of their programs.

This is further evidenced by the presence in North Carolina of a significant reserve pool of licensed school administrators not currently employed in this capacity. In fact there were 2,500 individuals in this reserve pool of licensed school administrators not over the age of retirement or employed in positions outside of the school system in 2002. Importantly, 56% (1,400) of these individuals were employed as teachers in 2002. Significantly, to better understand the complexity of the supply and demand issues in North Carolina, consider that in 2002, about 665 new school administrators were hired. In 2000-01, 283 candidates completed MSA degrees and were available to fill the 665 vacancies in school administration during the fall of that academic year. Additionally, approximately 5% of these vacancies were likely filled by qualified candidates coming from out of state. The reserve pool at this time in North Carolina consisted of 1,400 fully qualified potential school administrators employed in the school system as teachers which indicates a more than sufficient number of qualified candidates available in the state to meet the demand, yet based on previous data we estimate that at least 85 of the 665 vacant positions were filled by assistant principal who had only provisional licenses.

The above data suggest that there is not a great shortfall of qualified individuals available to fill the annual demand for new school administrators. However, the data do imply that there exists a disconnect through which a sufficient number of qualified candidates are not applying to fill vacancies. The fact that North Carolina continues to see an increase in the number of provisional licenses each year despite a large reserve pool of qualified candidates and a reasonable level of production from UNC system MSA programs indicates that this problem may be worsening over time.

## V. Conclusion

According to anecdotal reports, schools in the United States are having difficulty recruiting and hiring school administrators, and the reigning perception has been that the difficulty stems from a general shortage of people qualified to be school administrators. This perception was called into question recently by three studies based on empirical information on administrative careers. These studies, all of which were summarized in a Policy Brief by the Wallace Foundation (2003), suggest that the supply of nominally qualified (e.g., certified) individuals available to serve as school administrators is indeed adequate.

- Rand Corporation 2004

The issue of school administrator supply and demand in North Carolina should not be viewed simplistically as a shortage of candidates being trained to fill annual vacancies. Instead, a more complex examination of school and administrator supply and demand is needed. Of critical importance would be to examine factors such as administrator quality, reasons for administrative turnover, percentage of MSA graduates not pursuing school administrative positions and their reasons for not entering these positions.

There are a few recent studies available that can shed some light onto the issue of school administrator supply and demand in North Carolina. One such study was undertaken by the Rand Corporation. Rand Corporation (2004) completed an analysis of the career paths of school administrators in North Carolina. Their analysis revealed that the number of school administrators in North Carolina has grown substantially, but not primarily as a result of increases in the numbers of principals. Between 1987 and 2001, the total number of school administrators grew by 61 percent (compared to 46 percent for teachers), but this growth was not evenly distributed across administrative positions. Rand found that during this time the number of assistant principals increased by 71 percent, the number of school principals increased by only 11 percent and the number of superintendents declined by 16 percent.

It is essential to highlight the fact that while Rand documented a large increase in administrative positions they noted that “we found no evidence that this growth in the number of positions--which translates into demand for school administrators--ran up against a limited supply of candidates. Thus Rand’s findings were similar to those of this report suggesting that the shortage in candidates applying to fill school administrative vacancies in North Carolina is not simply an issue of a shortage in supply. Instead the issue is the direct result of a variety of forces working together including (but not limited to) a lack of incentives or presence of disincentives for pursuing school administrative positions

Last year’s Principal Supply and Demand Report concluded with some speculation as to why current MSA graduates may not be stepping up to fill vacant school administrative positions. The report concluded that:

Based on conversations with superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and MSA graduates, an interesting trend appears. Less MSA graduates seem to be interested with actually becoming an assistant principal, which is the gateway to the principalship. The data suggest that the universities are actually producing

more MSA graduates than every before, but provisional certification for assistant principals has increased almost 600%. One would think that with the significant increase in MSA degrees that there would not be a need for a provisional certified assistant principal. Based on the above mentioned conversations, the trend that is becoming popular is: Many MSA graduates decide to become nationally board certified which provides a 12% salary increase. Given that the MSA degree provides a 10% salary increase, the MSA graduate can achieve a 22% pay increase without becoming an assistant principal. In fact, if a nationally board certified teacher becomes an administrator and no longer meets the requirement of being at least 70% in the classroom, he or she will lose the 12% salary increase designated for National Board Certification.

The rationale provided in the prior year's report provides a possible example of one factor that potentially contributes to the shortage of qualified individuals seeking employment as school administrators. The actual situation likely results from a complex array of factors that intertwine and overlap to contribute to the seeming shortage of candidates. Some empirical evidence to support the above contention comes from three recent independent research studies that examined the nature, extent and underlying causes of the current problems in the labor market for principals. All three of the studies were commissioned by the Wallace Foundation. Based on the findings of these studies, the Wallace Foundation (2003) asserted that " policies and practices aimed solely at adding more certified candidates to the pipeline miss the core challenges underlying the difficulty many districts are having in attracting and retaining high quality leaders. These challenges include inadequate incentives to draw high quality leaders to the neediest schools with the most difficult working conditions, counterproductive hiring practices, and regulatory hurdles. Taken together, the lack of initiatives to address these challenges is inhibiting efforts to attract enough qualified candidates to the very schools and districts that most desperately need them."

While the work of the Wallace foundation represents what is happening on a national level, studies such as the one discussed previously conducted by the Rand Foundation, which was conducted in North Carolina, suggest that many of what is evidenced on a national level is also occurring in North Carolina. The findings of this report considered in the context of the findings of Rand and Wallace imply that careful examination be undertaken to explore the extent to which inadequate incentives, disincentives, and regulatory hurdles impact the supply and demand of high quality school administrators in North Carolina.

### Appendix A: LEAs by Region

For the purpose of this report, LEAs were grouped into the following 8 geographic regions:

| Central   | Northeast   | North Central   | Northwest  | South Central  | Southeast   | Southwest  | West  |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| Alamance-<br>Burlington<br>Caswell County<br>Chatham County<br>Davidson<br>County<br>Lexington City<br>Thomasville<br>City<br>Forsyth County<br>Guilford County<br>Orange County<br>Chapel Hill-<br>Carrboro<br>Person County<br>Randolph<br>County<br>Asheboro City<br>Rockingham<br>County<br>Stokes County | Beaufort County<br>Bertie County<br>Camden County<br>Edenton/Chowa<br>n<br>Currituck<br>County<br>Dare County<br>Gates County<br>Hertford County<br>Hyde County<br>Martin County<br>Pasquotank<br>County<br>Perquimans<br>County<br>Pitt County<br>Tyrrell County<br>Washington<br>County | Durham Public<br>Edgecombe<br>County<br>Franklin County<br>Granville<br>County<br>Halifax County<br>Roanoke Rapids<br>City<br>Weldon City<br>Johnston County<br>Nash-Rocky<br>Mount<br>Northampton<br>County<br>Vance County<br>Wake County<br>Warren County<br>Wilson County | Alexander<br>County<br>Alleghany<br>County<br>Ashe County<br>Avery County<br>Burke County<br>Caldwell County<br>Catawba County<br>Hickory City<br>Newton Conover<br>City<br>Davie County<br>Iredell-<br>Statesville<br>Mooresville City<br>Rowan-<br>Salisbury<br>Surry County<br>Schools<br>Elkin City<br>Mount Airy City<br>Watauga County<br>Wilkes County<br>Yadkin County | Bladen County<br>Columbus<br>County<br>Whiteville City<br>Cumberland<br>County<br>Harnett County<br>Hoke County<br>Lee County<br>Montgomery<br>County<br>Moore County<br>Richmond<br>County<br>Robeson County<br>Scotland County | Brunswick<br>County<br>Carteret County<br>Craven County<br>Duplin County<br>Greene County<br>Jones County<br>Lenoir County<br>New Hanover<br>County<br>Onslow County<br>Pamlico County<br>Pender County<br>Sampson County<br>Clinton City<br>Wayne County<br>Public | Anson County<br>Cabarrus County<br>Kannapolis City<br>Cleveland<br>County<br>Kings Mt district<br>Shelby City<br>Gaston County<br>Lincoln County<br>Charlotte-<br>Mecklenburg<br>Stanly County<br>Union County | Buncombe<br>County<br>Asheville City<br>Cherokee<br>County<br>Clay County<br>Graham County<br>Haywood<br>County<br>Henderson<br>County<br>Jackson County<br>Macon County<br>Madison County<br>McDowell<br>County<br>Mitchell County<br>Polk County<br>Rutherford<br>County<br>Swain County<br>Transylvania<br>County<br>Yancey County |

### Appendix B: Historical LEAs by Region

**For the purpose of longitudinal analysis in this report, LEAs were grouped in the following 7 geographic regions:**

| Central       | Northeast    | Northwest        | Southcentral    | Southeast    | Southwest       | West           |
|---------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Alamance-     | Beaufort     | Alexander        | Anson           | Brunswick    | Cabarrus        | Avery          |
| Burlington    | Bertie       | Alleghany        | Bladen          | Carteret     | Kannapolis City | Buncombe       |
| Caswell       | Camden       | Ashe             | Columbus        | Craven       | Cleveland       | Asheville City |
| Chatham       | Chowan       | Burke            | Whiteville City | Duplin       | Davidson        | Cherokee       |
| Durham Public | Currituck    | Caldwell         | Cumberland      | Greene       | Lexington City  | Clay           |
| Franklin      | Dare         | Catawba          | Harnett         | Jones        | Thomasville     | Graham         |
| Granville     | Edgecombe    | Hickory City     | Hoke            | Lenoir       | City            | Haywood        |
| Guilford      | Gates        | Newton-Conover   | Lee             | New Hanover  | Gaston          | Henderson      |
| Johnston      | Halifax      | City             | Montgomery      | Onslow       | Lincoln         | Jackson        |
| Nash          | Roanoke      | Davie            | Moore           | Pamlico      | Charlotte-      | Macon          |
| Orange        | Rapids City  | Forsyth          | Richmond        | Pender       | Mecklenburg     | Madison        |
| Chapel Hill-  | Weldon City  | Iredell-         | Robeson         | Sampson      | Rowan           | McDowell       |
| Carrboro      | Hertford     | Statesville      | Scotland        | Clinton City | Stanley         | Mitchell       |
| Person        | Hyde         | Mooresville City |                 | Wayne        | Union           | Polk           |
| Randolph      | Martin       | Stokes           |                 |              |                 | Rutherford     |
| Asheboro City | Northhampton | Surry            |                 |              |                 | Swain          |
| Rockingham    | Pasquotank   | Elkin City       |                 |              |                 | Transylvania   |
| Vance         | Perquimans   | Mt. Airy City    |                 |              |                 | Yancey         |
| Wake          | Pitt         | Watauga          |                 |              |                 |                |
| Warren        | Tyrrell      | Wilkes           |                 |              |                 |                |
|               | Washington   | Yadkin           |                 |              |                 |                |
|               | Wilson       |                  |                 |              |                 |                |