Aspiring to Excellence:

A Proposal to Enhance Rural School Principal Effectiveness.

Administrators Planning Innovation for Rural Education (AsPIRE)

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The Center for Educational Leadership (CEL) facilitated the design of a pilot rural school-leadership initiative

- The Center for Educational Leadership began in 2010 as a partnership between the University of Tennessee and local school districts to grow the next generation of outstanding school leaders in Tennessee.

- Our flagship Leadership Academy has been cited as a national model for principal preparation in an intensive residency program.

- The Center also is a member and grantee of the Tennessee Transformational Leadership Alliance, designed to spread and sustain innovative ways to prepare school leaders.

Source: Tozer and Martinez, 2014

We convened successful rural school leaders to design an initiative aimed at improving the skills of rural principals

The Charge	- Rural school leaders in Tennessee face serious challenges that include isolation, high turnover and a lack of instructional leadership skills. - The Expert Design Team (EDT), a group of 23 talented and effective school leaders from across East Tennessee, was asked to design a leadership development program that would increase the number of effective rural school principals in our region and potentially across our state.
The Process	- Facilitated by the Center for Educational Leadership, the EDT met five times from May-September 2017 to review data, discuss common barriers to effective rural school leadership and document the exemplary practices they have used to overcome those challenges in their own schools. - The EDT used a "Design Thinking" framework to turn ideas into concrete recommendations for a potential initiative.
The Result	**The EDT recommended a leadership development program with four primary delivery models, each with a mentoring or coaching component.** - The next step is to share the proposal with the larger group of Tennessee K-12 and higher education leaders – known as the "Tennessee Thanksgiving Table" – who suggested the idea of a rural school-leadership development program.

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The EDT started with one key fact: Exemplary leadership is essential to a high-achieving, caring, well-run school

Great schools don't exist apart from great leaders.

Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn in school.

There are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader.

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Unfortunately, rural schools – particularly in East Tennessee – struggle to find effective leaders

Of the 174 public school principals who lead rural schools in the East and First CORE Regions:
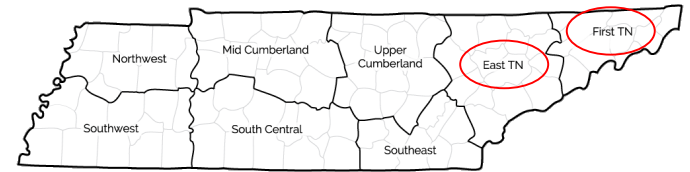
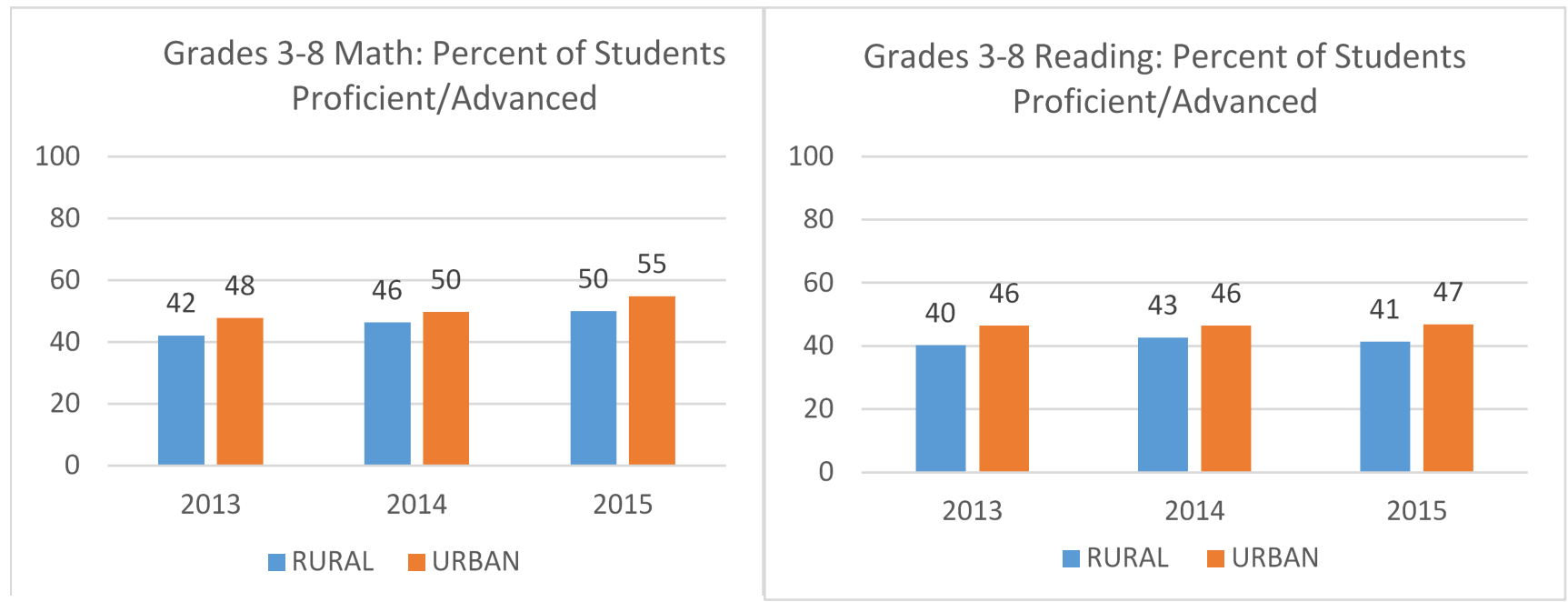|	
1. They stay in their jobs longer	■ Average tenure as principal: 5.7 years (state average for all principals: about 5 years) ■ Average service in their school: 4.5 years (just above state average)
2. They enter the principalship with substantially less experience	■ Average administrative experience: 1.9 years (2.7 years for urban and suburban school leaders) ■ Never been an assistant principal: 46 percent (31 percent for urban and suburban school leaders)
3. Their effectiveness ratings lag their peers	■ Score slightly below the state average on the TEAM Evaluation System
4. Their turnover rate is higher	■ Annual turnover rate: 22 percent (19 percent for all rural principals; 15 percent for ALL principals in the state)
5. They have fewer opportunities to improve their leadership skills	■ 25 percent return to the classroom, substantially higher than their peers

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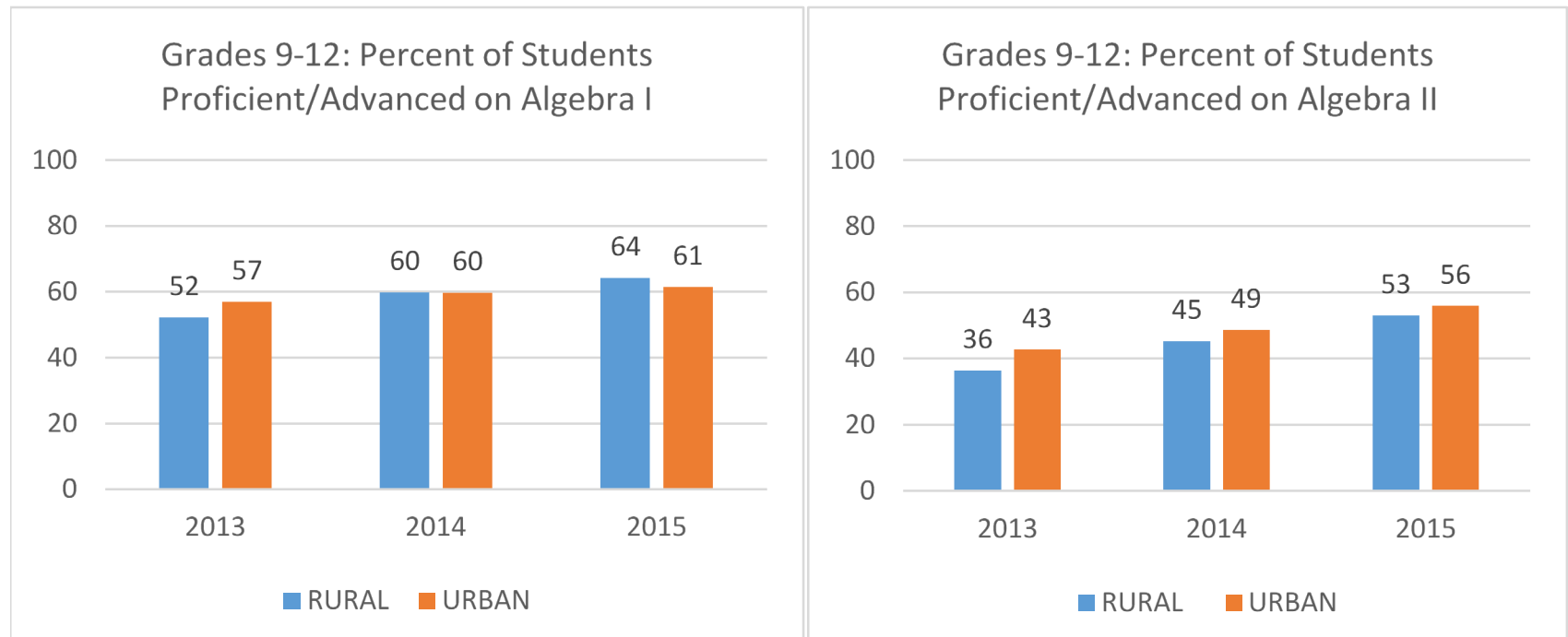
Source: Grissom, 2017

In addition, rural students in Tennessee lag behind their urban and suburban counterparts in 3-8 math and reading achievement

Figure 1: Grade 3-8 Students Proficient and Advanced on TCAP – Rural vs. Urban

Grades 3-8 Math: Percent of Students Proficient/Advanced

Year	RURAL	URBAN
2013	42	48
2014	46	50
2015	50	55

Grades 3-8 Reading: Percent of Students Proficient/Advanced

Year	RURAL	URBAN
2013	40	46
2014	43	46
2015	41	47

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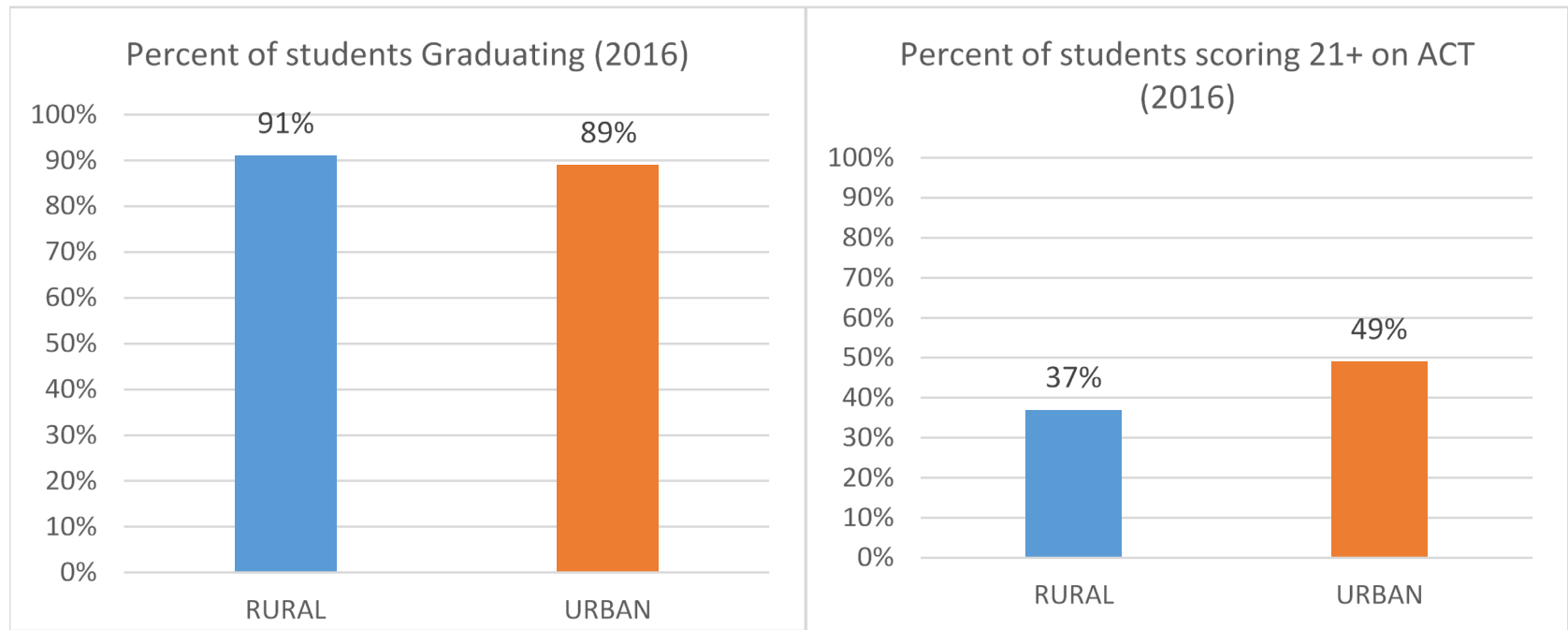Administrators Planning Innovation for Rural Education

Rural students in Tennessee have caught up to their urban and suburban peers in Algebra I proficiency, but trail them in Algebra II

Figure 2: Students Proficient and Advanced on TCAP EOCs – Rural vs. Urban

Grades 9-12: Percent of Students Proficient/Advanced on Algebra I

Year	RURAL	URBAN
2013	52	57
2014	60	60
2015	64	61

Grades 9-12: Percent of Students Proficient/Advanced on Algebra II

Year	RURAL	URBAN
2013	36	43
2014	45	49
2015	53	56

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Rural students in Tennessee graduated in 2016 at higher rates than urban and suburban peers, but fewer are college-ready

Figure 3: Student Graduation Rate and ACT score – Rural vs. Urban

Percent of students Graduating (2016): RURAL 91%, URBAN 89%

Percent of students scoring 21+ on ACT (2016): RURAL 37%, URBAN 49%

Research supports what the EDT knows: Rural school leaders can be overwhelmed, isolated and in need of support

Diverse array of responsibilities

- Rural principals can play **the role of change agent, classroom teacher, instructional specialist, assessment leader, community leader and parent liaison** on any given day.

- These challenges, combined with **lower rates of quality leadership preparation and significantly increased job complexity**, underscore the need to support rural principals' leadership skills.

Lack of mentoring support

- Research points to an **acute lack of on-the-job support** for principals in smaller and rural districts.

- Only 13 percent of new principals in one predominantly rural state (Wyoming) received formalized mentoring from their districts – a striking fact since **mentoring is required for new principals** among more than half of states.
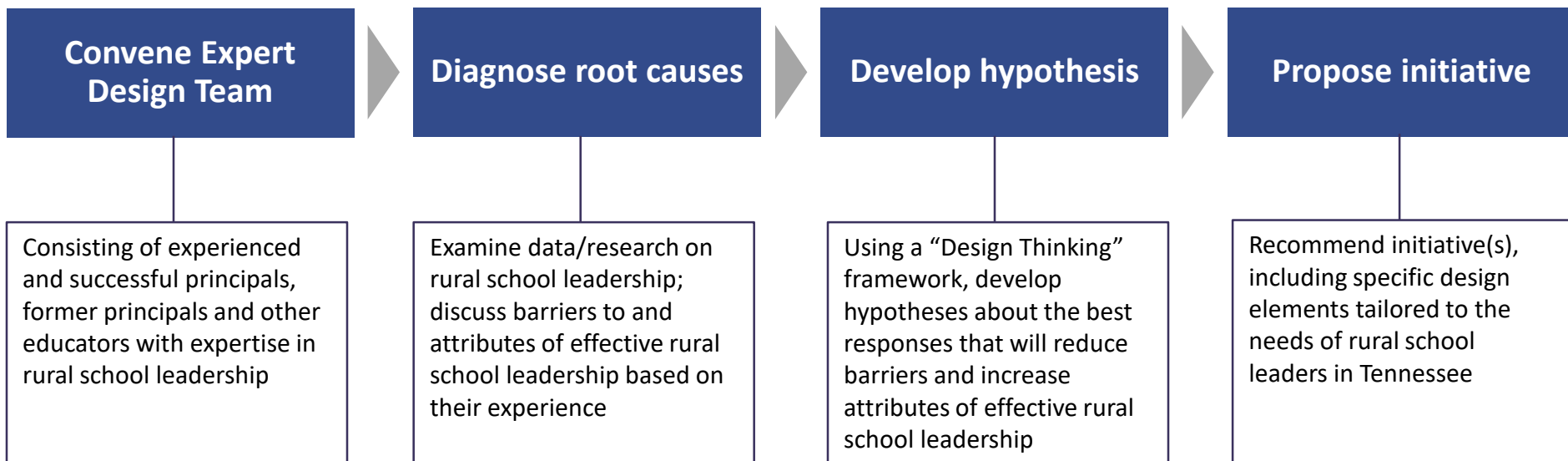
Scarcity of social and professional networks

- **Weak or limited professional learning opportunities and peer networks** – often a result of distance between districts – can create social isolation and reduce rural principal effectiveness.

- Other factors deter rural principals from being able to network professionally both inside and outside their immediate school community, including **lack of diverse views of staff members, the oppressiveness of an extreme workload and the challenge and expense related to travel.**

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Sources: Preston et al., 2013; Johnston et al., 2016

CEL convened expert principals to identify barriers to rural school-leader effectiveness and propose a pilot initiative that would address the issue

ROLES

Funded by: The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Commissioned by: Tennessee SCORE	**The Expert Design Team**	Facilitated by: Center for Educational Leadership	Supported by: Education First

THE DESIGN PROCESS

Convene Expert Design Team	**Diagnose root causes**	**Develop hypothesis**	**Propose initiative**
Consisting of experienced and successful principals, former principals and other educators with expertise in rural school leadership	Examine data/research on rural school leadership; discuss barriers to and attributes of effective rural school leadership based on their experience	Using a "Design Thinking" framework, develop hypotheses about the best responses that will reduce barriers and increase attributes of effective rural school leadership	Recommend initiative(s), including specific design elements tailored to the needs of rural school leaders in Tennessee

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The AsPIRE initiative was facilitated by Dr. Jim McIntyre, Director of the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Tennessee, with support from Anand Vaishnav and Tracy Nájera of Education First Consulting.

Design parameters helped shape the EDT's final proposal

Design Guidelines

1 Articulate the root causes of the most pressing obstacles to principal effectiveness in rural Tennessee

2 Develop one or more hypotheses as to how the proposed initiative(s) will address the root causes

3 Pilot initiative at a large enough scale to yield meaningful feedback

4 Execute the initiative soon and on a short cycle to evaluate feedback quickly

5 Include sitting, full-time educators as potential audience for the initiative

6 Develop a cost model that is reasonable and comparable to similar programs

7 Structure the initiative as a stand-alone program or integrated with other efforts

8 Align initiative with relevant educational leadership standards in Tennessee
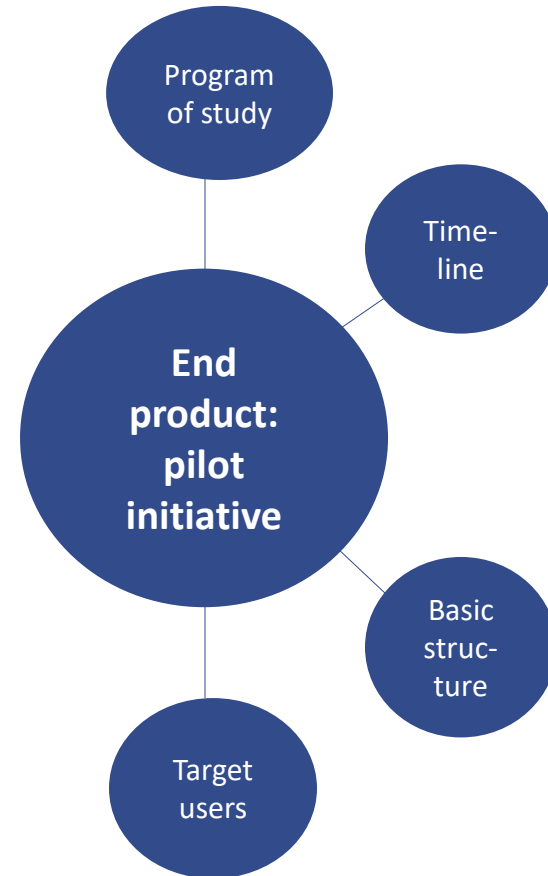
Program of study

Time-line

End product: pilot initiative

Basic struc-ture

Target users

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The 23-member EDT represents the best in rural school leadership in East Tennessee

EDT members were nominated by their superintendents or local philanthropic foundations. All have track records of improving student achievement in their schools.

57% are female

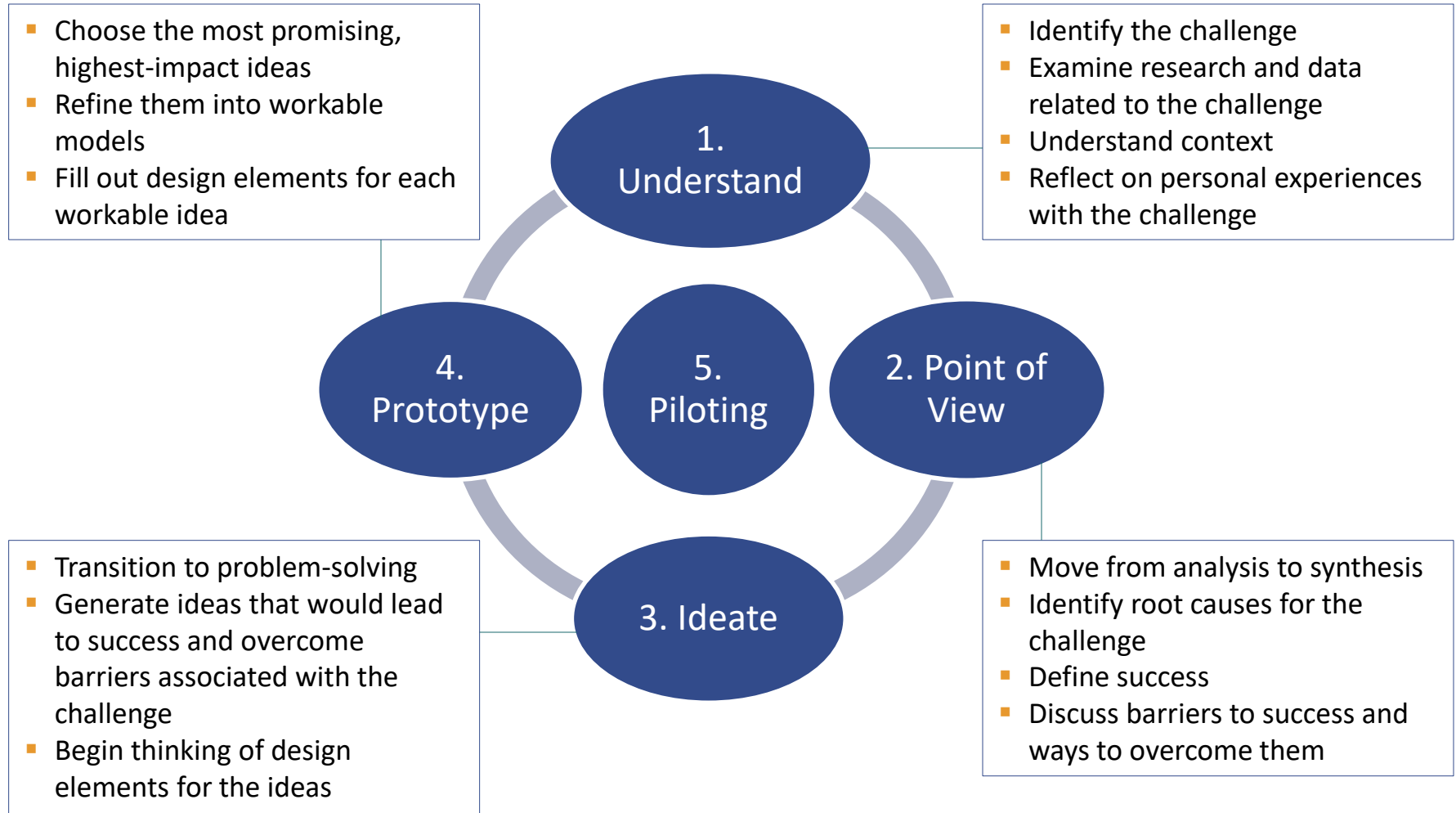Participants averaged **8.5 years** service in the principal role (2-19 year range)

96% are white

19 principals and 4 principal supervisors represent **every grade band**

Represented 15 rural school districts in 13 **counties** (95 total statewide)

The EDT used a "Design Thinking" framework to brainstorm, create and refine ideas for the initiative

- Choose the most promising, highest-impact ideas
- Refine them into workable models
- Fill out design elements for each workable idea

1. Understand

- Identify the challenge
- Examine research and data related to the challenge
- Understand context
- Reflect on personal experiences with the challenge

4. Prototype

5. Piloting

2. Point of View

- Transition to problem-solving
- Generate ideas that would lead to success and overcome barriers associated with the challenge
- Begin thinking of design elements for the ideas

3. Ideate

- Move from analysis to synthesis
- Identify root causes for the challenge
- Define success
- Discuss barriers to success and ways to overcome them

Step 1 – Understand: Through data and personal stories, the EDT began to identify challenges inherent in promoting successful rural school leadership
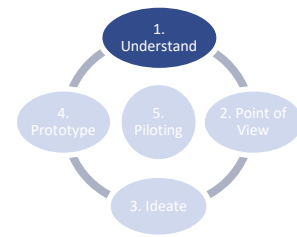
Meeting Actions

- Reviewed research and data on rural school leadership in East Tennessee compared with the rest of the state
- Shared stories of student success & implications for rural school leadership
- Engaged in a case study of rural school leadership challenges
- Shared stories of their own leadership successes and challenges

Key Themes

Research	Elements of Success	Barriers
- Data resonated with the group re: rural leaders' lower student achievement and generally less experience - Community and educator expectations are challenges	- Building relationships - Persevering on students' behalf "Keeping hope alive" for students - Individualizing responses for students - Finding common ground with difficult people	- Lack of mentoring - Struggle between instructional leadership and day-to-day duties - Isolation - Being new to a community - Lack of support from the top

Key Reflections for Next Meeting

- The EDT did not dwell on student achievement data. But there are numerous entry points to that discussion, e.g., asking what can rural school leaders do to keep effective teachers?
- The stage is set for getting EDT members to elaborate on their point of view regarding the successes and barriers they identified: What defines a good school leader? What are barriers to becoming one?

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Step 2 – Point of view: The EDT identified root causes of rural leadership challenges as well as attributes of successful rural school leaders
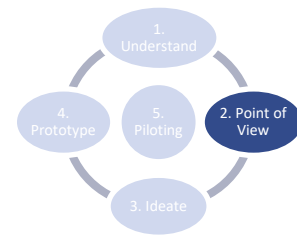
Meeting Actions	▪ Defined the characteristics and actions of an effective rural school leader ▪ Defined root causes of barriers to becoming an effective rural school leader ▪ Began a discussion about specific methods or delivery models to spread the attributes of and break down barriers to effective rural school leadership

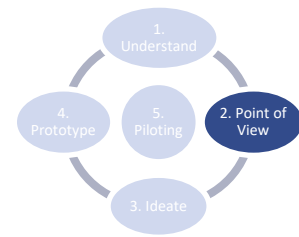|	**Attributes of Effective Rural School Leadership**	**Barriers to Effective Rural School Leadership**
Key Themes	▪ Demonstrates greater capacity for instructional leadership ▪ Creates a vibrant professional community that reduces isolation ▪ Builds and harnesses social and political capital ▪ Shares and distributes leadership to empower staff ▪ Sustains success	▪ Sacrifice of personal/family time for school/community needs ▪ Lack of a "bench"; rural school leaders end up carrying many burdens solo ▪ Goal conflict between educators and families of their students ▪ Overwhelming amount of work ▪ Fewer opportunities to learn from peers or mentors because of isolation

Key Reflections for Next Meeting	▪ The EDT pushed itself to think about what constituted successful leadership in the rural schools especially. The team determined that trust, social capital and connections to the community were essential in the rural context. ▪ The EDT also began discussing what specific methods, tools, resources or delivery models would increase attributes of and break down barriers to effective rural school leadership.

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The EDT got more specific about the definition of effective rural school leaders

An effective rural school leader is one who:

Is an instructional leader	Creates a personal and professional community	Builds and harnesses social and political capital	Shares and distributes leadership	Sustains success
▪ Knows instruction (e.g., methods, data, assessment practices)	▪ Listens and leads from the front	▪ Immerses himself/herself in and understands his/her community's context	▪ Empowers others to solve problems individually and collectively	▪ Ensures success for kids at any and all costs
▪ Honors best practices of teaching students in poverty	▪ Builds a culture of efficacy (no excuses)	▪ Enhances student learning through partnerships with industry and higher education	▪ Delegates work	▪ Creates or fosters talent pipelines
▪ Cares for children	▪ Demonstrates immense will to succeed	▪ Engages with and advocates for parents, families and community members	▪ Solicits feedback	▪ Encourages career advancement
▪ Is a systems thinker	▪ Cares about well-being of staff, and of self	▪ "Keeps the dream" for students and "promotes the dream" with families	▪ Builds a leadership team that is open to new ideas	▪ Builds a "bench"
▪ Builds child-centered goals	▪ Combats isolation	▪ Speaks truth to power	▪ Asks for support when needed	
▪ Focuses on each child's individual success both through building relationships and analyzing results				

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Step 3 – Ideate: The EDT began brainstorming solutions that would address barriers to and build the attributes of effective rural school leaders
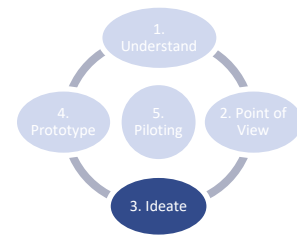
Meeting Actions

- Finalized definition of effective rural school leadership
- Defined the highest-impact delivery models to spread the attributes of and break down barriers to effective rural school leadership
- Identified and explored the design elements of those delivery systems

Key Themes

Highest-Impact Delivery System to Promote Effective Rural School Leadership

- "Mastermind" groups of peers to engage in problems of practice
- Learning networks to focus deeply on major issues or themes
- Cohort experiences to encourage peers to learn and discuss content together
- Residency programs to give aspiring rural school leaders experience and exposure to the role

Design Elements to Consider

- Size and participants
- Length and frequency
- Basic structure
- Program of study
- Resources required
- Barriers to participation and mitigation
- Mentoring and/or coaching component
- End product or goal

Key Reflections for Next Meeting

- The EDT narrowed down the highest-impact delivery models and largely agreed on definitions.
- The team also focused on mentoring vs. coaching and how those could be integrated into the delivery models.
- Getting more specific on design elements will be critical.

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Step 4 – Prototype: The EDT prioritized the highest-impact solutions and suggested details for each regarding scope, audience, risks and mitigation
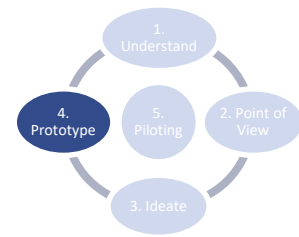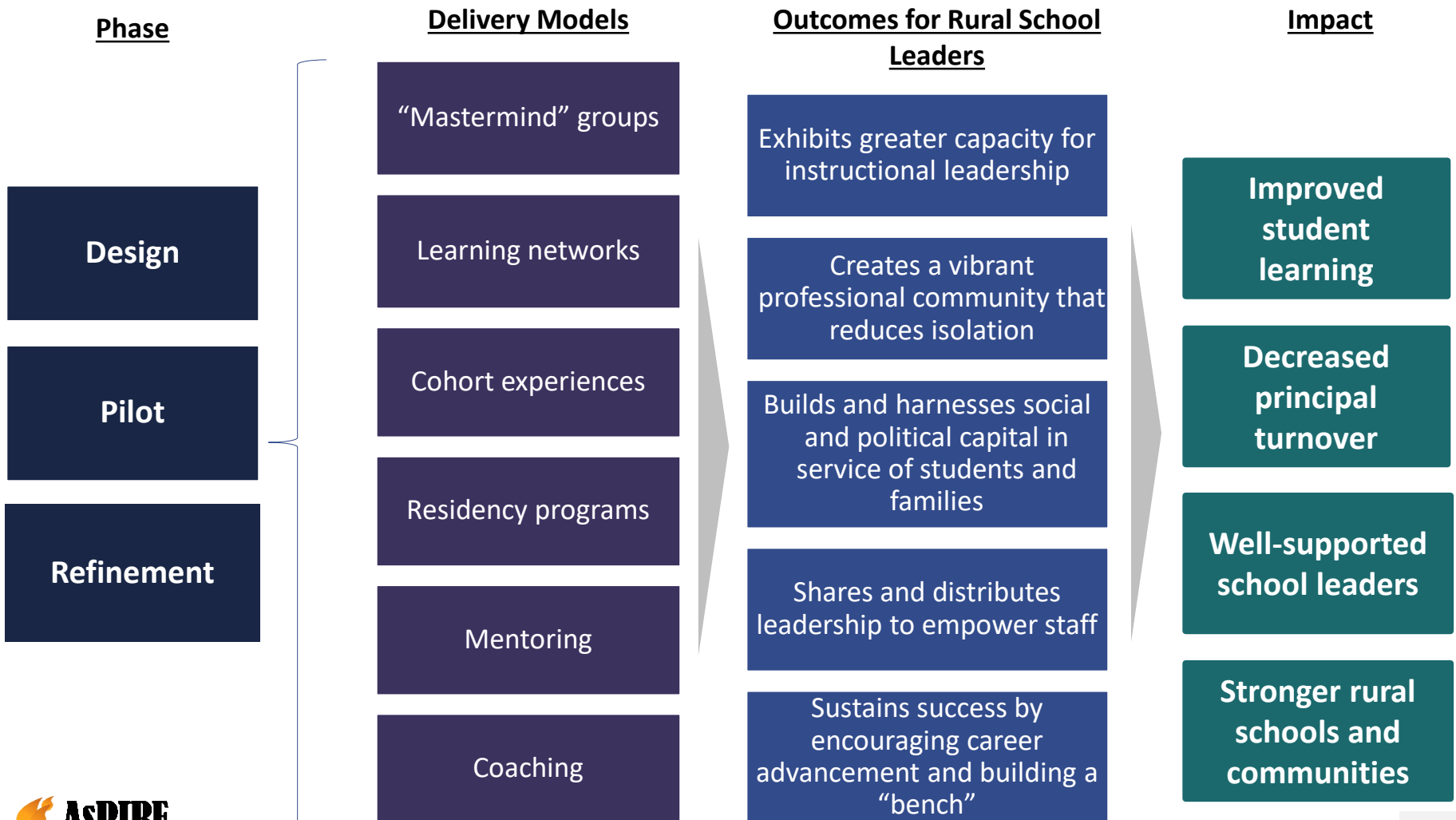
Meeting Actions	- Worked on advanced prototyping: completing design elements for each of the chosen delivery models - Prioritized the most important delivery models by considering both intensity and experience of target audience - Concluded design work of EDT
Key Themes	- See subsequent slides on proposed delivery models and design elements - Nearly all EDT members asked to stay involved in some capacity.

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Our vision: If we design an initiative that addresses the root causes of leadership challenges in rural areas, we can encourage and spread effective leadership in rural schools

Phase	Delivery Models	Outcomes for Rural School Leaders	Impact
Design **Pilot** **Refinement**	"Mastermind" groups Learning networks Cohort experiences Residency programs Mentoring Coaching	Exhibits greater capacity for instructional leadership Creates a vibrant professional community that reduces isolation Builds and harnesses social and political capital in service of students and families Shares and distributes leadership to empower staff Sustains success by encouraging career advancement and building a "bench"	**Improved student learning** **Decreased principal turnover** **Well-supported school leaders** **Stronger rural schools and communities**

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Proposal: An initiative that would offer learning opportunities best-suited to build attributes of effective rural school leaders

Less intense ─────────────────────────────────────► More intense

Mastermind Group	**Learning Network**	**Cohort Experience**	**Residency**
Definition: A facilitated group of school leaders who convene regularly in person or virtually to discuss pre-determined issues or readings on rural education as well as their own "problems of practice."	**Definition:** A facilitated group of school leaders who convene regularly for a set period of time on a specific topic(s) that are taught more informally through readings, discussion, walkthroughs or speakers. Could result in a certificate of participation or micro-credential.	**Definition:** A group of school leaders selected for a formal learning experience (e.g., a course or intensive multi-week experience) during which they learn about a specific topic(s) together and from each other, with an expectation of an ongoing relationship. Could result in course or TASL credit.	**Definition:** A structured experience in which aspiring rural school leaders learn coursework, are placed full-time with a successful school leader for a set period of time, complete a work product and receive a credential.

Mentoring and/or **coaching** can be a part of these experiences, e.g., the mastermind group leader serves as a mentor to one or more participants; or the school leader with whom a resident works serves as a mentor.

- **Mentoring:** Pairing of a school leader with a more experienced peer from whom the leader can learn specific strategies and tactics for his/her job and understand decision-making processes. Typically, mentoring is part of a required induction program for new principals and is time-bound (1-3 years).

- **Coaching:** Intentional pairing of a school leader with a trained expert who provides "just in time" services on a predetermined set of goals or objectives aimed at improving the school leader's effectiveness.

Elements of these delivery models will cross over; they are not mutually exclusive

Mastermind Group

Learning Network

- A learning network can feature problems of practice (signature feature of a "mastermind group") as part of its sessions.

Residency

Cohort Experience

Mentoring

- A residency can be a kind of cohort experience for its participants.
- A resident also can have the school leader with whom he or she is placed as a mentor.

Residency

Coaching

- A residency should have coaching as a part of its experience, or as something that continues for a year or two after the residency concludes.

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Delivery model #1: Mastermind Group (low intensity)

Description: A facilitated group of school leaders who convene regularly in person or virtually to discuss pre-determined issues or readings on rural education as well as a focus on their own problems of practice.

Program Elements

Program of Study	Basic Structure	Participants	Barriers to Participation & Mitigation
The program of study would be based on the needs of the individual or the group as a whole. This information may be gathered through a needs assessment based on interests and areas of concern.	The group would meet online monthly or every other month and meet face-to-face quarterly. Quarterly meetings also may include a site visit at a participating school district. The program would run from August through May with a set agenda and facilitator to maintain forward momentum.	Administrators, principals and assistant principals. All participants would benefit regardless of their experience level. This opportunity provides space for peer-to-peer conversations and solution-oriented discussions.	*Participants* ▪ Challenging time and schedule issues ▪ Addressing travel and distance limitations in some areas

Other Features

Mentoring and/or Coaching	Length	Frequency	Size	End Goal
Mentoring from a successful administrator with at least 5 years experience	10 months: beginning in August and ending in May	Twice per month for 60 minutes or monthly for 90 minutes	7- 10 participants	The end goal is personal and professional growth

Delivery model #2: Learning Network (moderate to low intensity)

Description: A facilitated group of school leaders who convene regularly for a set period of time on a specific topic(s) that are taught more informally through readings, discussion, walkthroughs or speakers. Could result in a certificate of participation or micro-credential.

Program Elements

Program of Study	Basic Structure	Participants	Barriers to Participation & Mitigation
The program of study would be developed through a needs assessment with participants. The results will determine the focus topics around needs, interests and strengths of individuals.	Large group with small-group breakouts led by a team of facilitators. Small-group discussion on focused topics led by facilitators and/or mentors. Coaching needs would be determined after the group is formed and survey results are collected.	Principals and assistant principals. Participants represent varying levels of experiences and backgrounds. The goal is to develop a sustainable network of peers who can connect and advise each other on specific problems of practice on an as-needed and ongoing basis.	*Participants* ▪ Addressing time issues ▪ Challenging travel issues ▪ Setting schedules *Program* ▪ Communicating expectations ▪ Varying the modality of interactions to meet the needs of all participants (online vs. face-to-face)

Other Features

Mentoring and/or Coaching	Length	Frequency	Size	End Goal
Mentoring and coaching are both separately included in this delivery model	10 months and revisit annually to revamp and reorganize	Once a month in person (1½ - 2½ hours) with online pre-work and reflection	25-35 participants	TASL certification and/or micro-credential

Delivery model #3: Cohort Experience (moderate to high intensity)

Description: A group of school leaders selected for a formal learning experience (e.g., a course or intensive multi-week experience) during which they learn about a specific topic(s) together and from each other, with an expectation of an ongoing relationship. Could result in course or TASL credit.

Program Elements

Program of Study	Basic Structure	Participants	Barriers to Participation & Mitigation
The program of study is aligned to the Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CCSSO) and the five attributes of an effective rural principal identified by the EDT. A needs assessment would be used to develop the professional learning plans/program of study.	The program would consist of two days per month for professional learning and application of learning and for follow-up and mentoring activities. Outside mentors, group facilitators and coaches will work with participants, meet one-on-one and gather of evidence of progress.	Aspiring administrators, principals and potentially teacher leaders. Cohort diversity is an important feature, and each should have a balanced and strategic grouping to reflect a wide array of experiences (e.g. demographic, tenure, grade-bands, subject areas, etc.)	*Participants* • Addressing the distance and travel issues • Arranging for time off campus *Program* • Ensuring high-quality speakers and professional development leaders • Selecting personnel

Other Features

Mentoring and/or Coaching	Length	Frequency	Size	End Goal
Mentoring and coaching are both separately included in this delivery model	15-18 months	1-2 days per month and virtual meetings as needed	15-20 participants	Certified Rural School Administrator and/or TASL certification

Delivery model #4: Rural Leadership Residency (high intensity)

Description: A structured experience in which aspiring rural school leaders learn coursework, are placed full-time with a successful school leader for a set period of time, complete a work product and receive an academic and/or licensure credential.
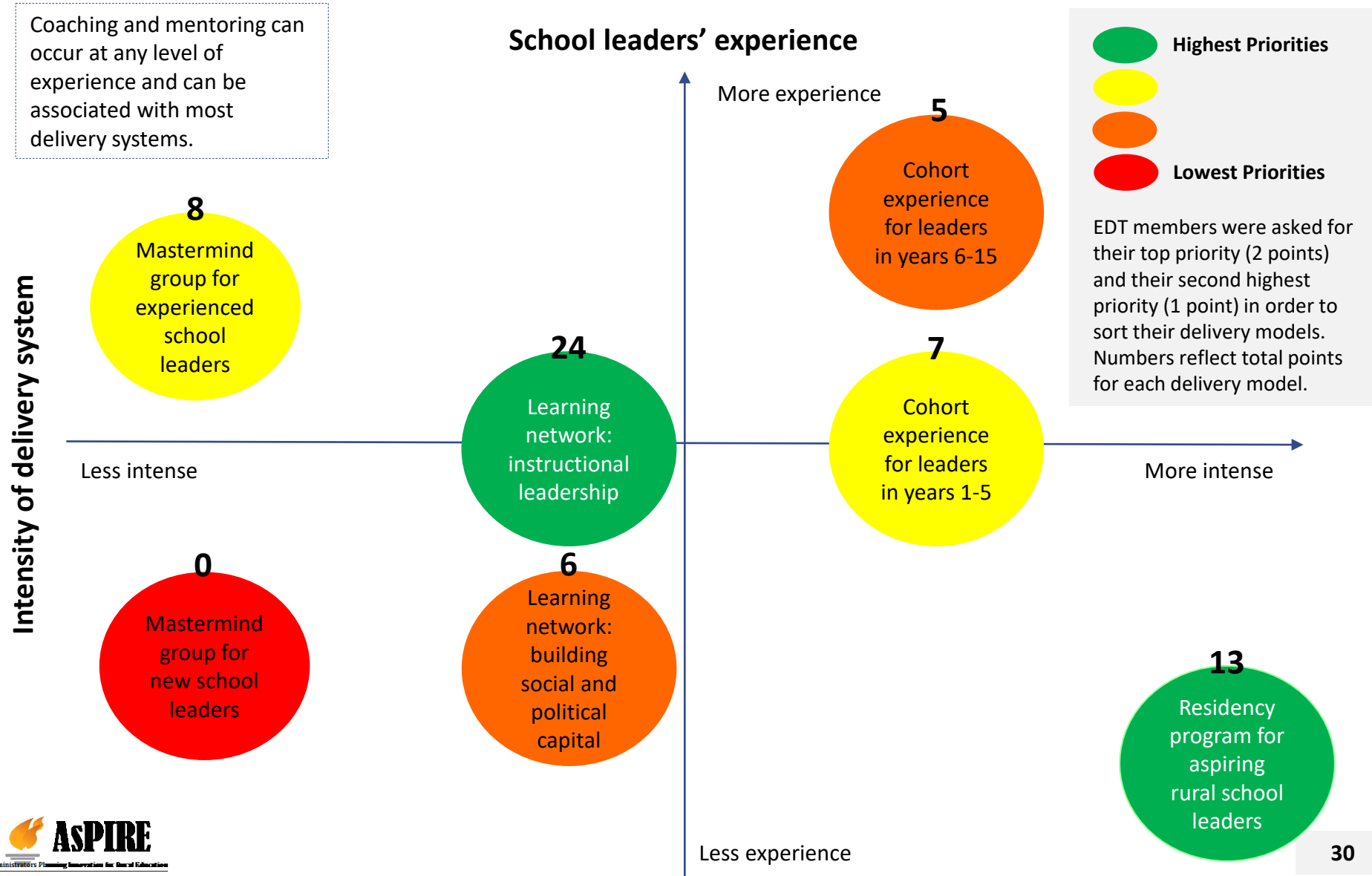
Program Elements

Program of Study	Basic Structure	Participants	Barriers to Participation & Mitigation
School coursework to include: instructional leadership, school law, climate/culture, athletics, finance, human resources, federal programs, communication and technology. Would feature guest speakers and experts in the area of rural education.	The program includes candidates shadowing a successful administrator four days a week. Ideally, candidates will meet weekly with each other and their facilitator. This could also take place once a month, in different locations and also virtually.	Aspiring administrators, assistant principals (up to three years experience) and teacher leaders. Programs that partner with a school system for the residency experience will result in a graduate degree in administration upon completion, and potentially licensure.	*Participants* ▪ Funding for participants (e.g. stipends) ▪ Setting affordable tuition rate *Program* ▪ Providing an administrator stipend for participation ▪ Selecting effective practitioner partners

Other Features

Mentoring and/or Coaching	Length	Frequency	Size	End Goal
Mentoring and coaching are both separately included in this delivery model	10-15 months	Weekly shadowing and weekly or monthly cohort meetings in person or virtual	Up to 15 participants	Graduate Degree: M.Ed and/or Ed.S Leadership Certificate

The EDT ranked delivery models in order of importance after examining each one for intensity and participants' experience

Coaching and mentoring can occur at any level of experience and can be associated with most delivery systems.

School leaders' experience

More experience

Highest Priorities

Lowest Priorities

EDT members were asked for their top priority (2 points) and their second highest priority (1 point) in order to sort their delivery models. Numbers reflect total points for each delivery model.

Intensity of delivery system

Less intense

More intense

Less experience

8
Mastermind group for experienced school leaders

5
Cohort experience for leaders in years 6-15

24
Learning network: instructional leadership

7
Cohort experience for leaders in years 1-5

0
Mastermind group for new school leaders

6
Learning network: building social and political capital

13
Residency program for aspiring rural school leaders

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While there were differences within some delivery models, these stood out as overall priorities:

1   Learning Network: instructional leadership

2   Residency for Aspiring Rural School Leaders

3   Mastermind Group: experienced school leaders

4   Cohort Experience: leaders in years 1-5 (novice)

5   Learning Network: building social and political capital

6   Cohort Experience: leaders in years 6-15 (intermediate)

7   Mastermind Group: new school leaders

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Similarities exist amongst the proposed programs regardless of the audience or level of intensity

Need for strong and committed facilitators

Access to mentoring and coaching

Focus on relationship-building and collaborative learning with peers

Rural Leadership Training

Opportunities for blended and face-to-face learning

Learning across the professional continuum *(novice to experienced)*

Challenges of time, distance and funding

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We surveyed EDT members on what they enjoyed about the design experience and what they would change*

Overall experience: 4.0 (of 4.0)

Professional development experience: **3.8 (of 4.0)**

Design Thinking process for program design: **3.9 (of 4.0)**

90% reported willingness to continue EDT participation
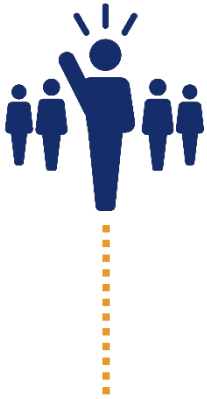
"This was a great experience, and leaders were willing to be honest and work toward a common goal."

"For my personal, professional development, I would love to have more time with this group to focus on problems specific to rural schools and schools in poverty."

"Organized, planned and thoughtful."

"I feel more time is needed to fully develop the work."

"I was honored to be part of the AsPIRE program."

* Survey responses were returned from 22 out of 23 EDT members at the final meeting on Sept. 6

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Learnings: The EDT's five-month experience generated ideas about what to keep and what to modify in terms of process

What we would do differently …

Increase length of time of EDT's work

- The EDT met five times from late May to early September. The team could have met one or two more times.
- Alternatively, the EDT could have met for longer than two hours each (there was one four-hour session).

Add more racial diversity to the EDT

- The EDT was diverse in terms of age, gender, viewpoints and background, but not race.
- We discussed sharing the EDT's recommendations with a more diverse group of rural school leaders as we prepare for implementation.

What we would do the same …

Start with background and data

- Grounding the EDT's work in data and facts about rural school leadership in Tennessee at the first meeting helped establish context.
- Providing national data as comparison to the rural context would have helped to define the significance of the rural challenge.

Invest time up front in team-building

- EDT members devoted much of the first and second meetings to sharing their personal stories, histories and successes of their work in rural schools.
- That helped team members build trust and enabled them to work together more closely in future meetings.

Process recommendations: For teams engaged in similar design work, the EDT's experience generated some lessons learned

Provide adequate time for collaboration

- Add a few more meetings than you think you need. You always can cancel.

Encourage trust-building

- Start with ways for the team to get to know each other through personal stories of student success and struggle.
- Not only will it generate ideas, but it will build relationships and enable more understanding.

Emphasize an evidence-based approach

- The research and data on rural school leaders in Tennessee was critical to set the context and dispel any myths.
- It might have been helpful at the start to share some additional research on basic features of similar school leadership initiatives in the rest of the country.

Strive for diversity of all kinds on the design team

- There are few school leaders of color in rural East Tennessee. But an initiative that aims for impact needs to include a variety of perspectives.
- Seek participants in other parts of the state or region if necessary, as well as from differently-sized systems (urban, rural).
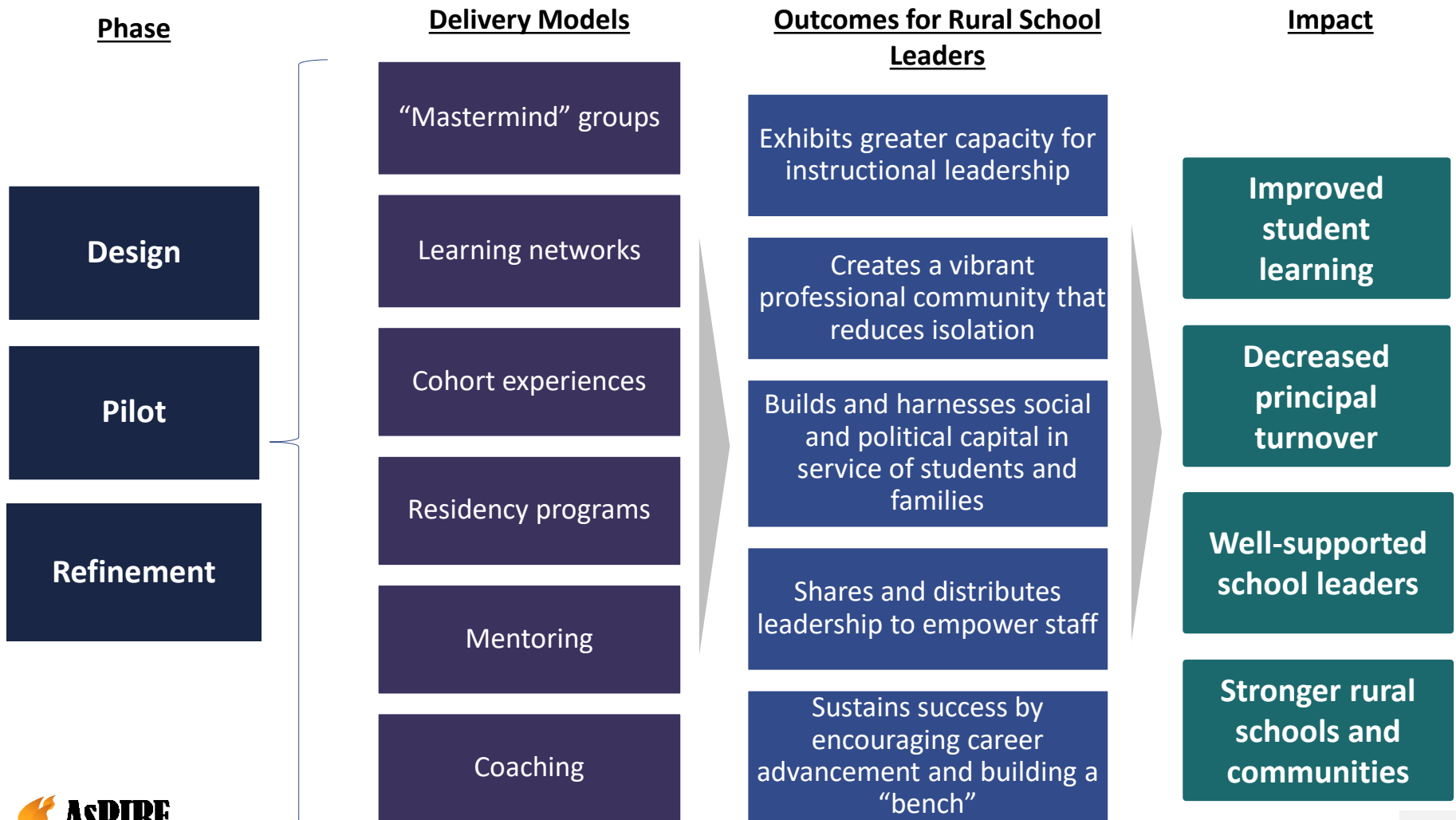
Use a framework like Design Thinking

- Following a step-by-step framework allows team members to know the goal of every meeting and how each meeting flows from the previous one into the next one.

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RECAP: Our vision: If we design an initiative that addresses the root causes of leadership challenges in rural areas, we can encourage and spread effective leadership in rural schools

Phase	Delivery Models	Outcomes for Rural School Leaders	Impact
Design **Pilot** **Refinement**	"Mastermind" groups Learning networks Cohort experiences Residency programs Mentoring Coaching	Exhibits greater capacity for instructional leadership Creates a vibrant professional community that reduces isolation Builds and harnesses social and political capital in service of students and families Shares and distributes leadership to empower staff Sustains success by encouraging career advancement and building a "bench"	**Improved student learning** **Decreased principal turnover** **Well-supported school leaders** **Stronger rural schools and communities**

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Some delivery models will require significant organizational and financial investments, while others are less resource-intensive

DELIVERY MODEL AND INTENSITY	CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS	RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS	TIMELINE
MASTERMIND GROUP	**Low:** Existing staff can serve as facilitators and conveners	**Low:** Sponsoring organization can provide physical/virtual space, facilitators, materials	**Planning:** Fall 2017-winter 2018 **Launch:** Spring 2018
LEARNING NETWORK	**Low:** Can start with EDT and develop programming with members as a pilot	**Low:** Sponsoring organization can provide physical/virtual space, facilitators, materials	**Planning:** Fall 2017-winter 2018 **Launch:** Spring 2018
COHORT EXPERIENCE	**Medium:** Existing staff will need additional time to plan programming, admissions guidelines, etc.	**Medium:** Content likely will be easy to develop, but linking to credit-bearing credential will take time	**Planning:** Fall 2017 - spring 2018 **Launch:** Summer 2018
RESIDENCY	**High:** Will need full-time programming and administrative staff	**High:** Hire staff, develop curriculum, recruit partner districts, create support structures, market program	**Planning:** Fall 2017 - Spring 2019 **Launch:** Fall 2019

Less intense → More intense

Needed for all: landscape scan on similar programs (budget, resources, lessons learned, programming, staffing)

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Immediate next steps include finalizing the proposal and determining a timeline for launch of each delivery model

Timeline	Key Tasks

Timeline

Key Tasks

SEPTEMBER 2017 – OCTOBER 2017

- Submit design proposal to the Gates Foundation
- Share proposal with the Tennessee Thanksgiving Table and other stakeholders
- Refine proposal as necessary
- Determine which delivery models can start immediately vs. those that need additional planning (e.g., residency)

NOVEMBER 2017 – JANUARY 2018

- Seek funding for pilot stage
- Conduct deeper national landscape scan of existing rural school leadership initiatives (online research, interviews)

FEBRUARY 2018 – APRIL 2018

- With research concluded, continue to build out details (budget, staffing, resources) of appropriate delivery models, including sponsoring organization if not CEL
- Conduct small-scale local market research on demand
- Launch at least one delivery model (learning network)

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- Tennessee Thanksgiving Table: Lyle Ailshie, Dorsey Hopson, Drew Kim, Vicki Kirk, Mike Krause, David Mansouri, Jim McIntyre, Candice McQueen, Sara Heyburn Morrison, Sharon Roberts, Nate Schwartz, Teresa Sloyan, Renata Soto, Jamie Woodson

Additional Stakeholders

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- Elgin Foundation
- Niswonger Foundation
- University of Tennessee-Martin
- Nominating superintendents: Lyle Aishlie (Kingsport City); Rob Britt (Blount County); James Carter (Union County); Charles Edmonds (Jefferson County); Edwin Jarnagin (Grainger County); Kelly D. Johnson (Clinton City); Gary Lilly (Bristol City); Dale Lynch (Hamblen County); Tim Parrott (Anderson County); Steve Starnes (Hawkins County); Bob Thomas (Knox County); Jason Vance (Loudon County)

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