

## College of Education & Leadership

### *The Development of a Skills and Competencies Based Assessment and Development Model for School Principals and Administrators in Jamaica*

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The Ministry of Education does not have an established, coordinated, and coherent system for training principals and administrators for today's schools. Considering the significant link between teacher quality and student achievement and, therefore, school improvement, the need for specific and unique professional development for school principals becomes more pronounced. However, there has not been a needs assessment of the professional development needs of the principals regarding the skills and competencies needed to facilitate a comprehensive school improvement initiative.

The purpose of this study was to determine the skills and competencies that could be offered to principals through professional development that will lead to school improvement.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the Educational Leadership Policy Standards (ELPS), the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC), and Andrews University (AU), in conjunction with current research were used to identify leadership standards, skills, and competencies which are viewed as critical for success in principalship. The criteria for their selection were that they (a) be national in scope, (b) have made proactive leadership development a central focus of their mission, and (c) be well recognized in the professional literature. Data collected from these selected organizations were examined, analysed and sorted using the Taba Inductive Strategy, resulting in the establishment of twelve skills categories, each with their respective competencies designed for effective principal development.

The results of this research study on identifying the skills and competencies need of school principals to lead school improvement suggests that principals need to become proactively engaged in activities that will help them create and sustain high-performing learning systems that ensure that all teachers and students meet high standards. Principals recognized that they must build team commitment in order to create a learning organization for effective organizational development and continuous improvement. They noted that understanding the change process is essential to sustaining continuous growth. They conclude that effective principals must be developed and supported with the latest knowledge about what works and that research must be continued to better understand schools and the challenges of school leadership.