

# Leadership Development

## Summary of Evaluation Findings from 2019–2020

### Purpose of Evaluation

The main purpose of the 2019–2020 evaluation of the Department of Leadership Development was to evaluate the implementation of the newly developed assistant principal (AP) and principal hiring processes, designed to select a diverse group of equity-focused, effective novice leaders. The hiring process consisted of using an online video interviewing tool (HireVue) and an assessment center consisting of several tasks intended to assess candidates' abilities to perform job-related duties.

For a more comprehensive summary of the department, the department's goals, and the department's structure, please see the [2018–2019 summary report](#).

### Overview of Evaluation

The main purpose of the 2019–2020 evaluation of the Department of Leadership Development was to evaluate the implementation of the newly developed assistant principal (AP) and principal hiring processes, designed to select a diverse group of equity-focused, effective novice leaders. The hiring process consisted of using an online video interviewing tool (HireVue) and an assessment center consisting of several tasks intended to assess candidates' abilities to perform job-related duties.

Two major questions guided the evaluation work:

1. Was the hiring process operating as designed or intended?
2. Was the hiring process producing what was intended?

To address question 1, the evaluation examined operation-oriented evidence and data. Operation is a question of implementation; that is, what evidence indicated that all the pieces were in place for the new hiring process, and were those operating effectively? To assess if the process was operating as designed, much of the focus was on assessing the AP hiring process and principal hiring process by calculating analyses in regard to passing rates of candidates on the HireVue and assessment center, as well as analyzing feedback surveys provided to applicants who completed the HireVue interview and assessment center. Feedback surveys were also provided to those who were hired into a principal or AP position as a result of the HireVue and assessment center hiring process, to determine how prepared the new hiring process made them for their campus interviews and current positions.

To address question 2, the evaluation focused on understanding if the hiring process was performing as intended. It is important to understand that this was simply a question of production, not of impact; that is, what evidence indicated that the hiring process produced what it was supposed to? With the goal of having a hiring process



that selects a diverse group of equity-focused, effective novice leaders, the evaluation examined passthrough rates of applicants, with special attention to passthrough rates for certain demographic or other characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, program participation) to determine if a diverse group of candidates made it onto the highly qualified lists. For the purposes of this report, only passthrough data regarding program participation are included.

### Evaluation Methods

Feedback surveys were administered to AP and principal candidates regarding their experiences in the assessment center. While these surveys contained many questions, those most pertinent to the new hiring processes concerned perceptions of fairness, task or item relevance to the AP role, scoring, connection between tasks, and the use and helpfulness of the tool kit. Of note, in 2018–2019, feedback surveys were provided to AP and principal candidates in regard to both the HireVue process and the assessment center process. However, due to shifting timelines in response to COVID-19, feedback surveys were only gathered in regard to the assessment center process from AP ( $n = 23$ ) and principal ( $n = 14$ ) assessment center participants who engaged in the in-person assessment centers in February and early March. Additionally, in 2019–2020, recently hired principals and APs were asked several questions on the Employee Coordinated Survey about their experience interviewing for their current position, and how the hiring process might have prepared them for that experience and their experience in the current position. Thirteen APs and principals who were hired through the new hiring process responded to the survey items.

Passthrough rates were examined for AP candidates who completed their HireVue ( $n = 261$ ) and assessment center ( $n = 126$ ) in January through June 2020. Passthrough rates were also examined for principal candidates who completed their HireVue ( $n = 97$ ) and assessment center ( $n = 66$ ) in January through June 2020. From our analyses, we were able to ascertain how candidate groups differed in their progression through the hiring process and how candidates performed throughout each step of the hiring process.

### Results of Evaluation

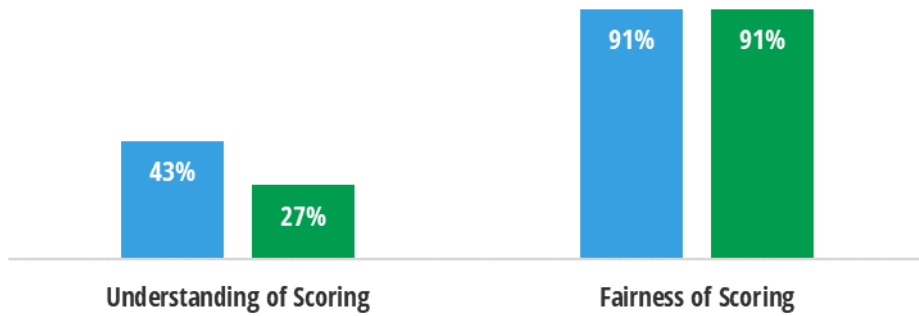
#### Evaluation of Hiring Process Operations

Related to feedback about the operations of the hiring process, several items from the assessment center feedback surveys concerning fairness, scoring, and the helpfulness of the tool kit from the assessment center feedback surveys were analyzed. Looking at fairness, even though most participants reported they did not know how the assessment center was scored, the majority of both AP and principal participants strongly agreed or agreed that the assessment center was fair. This can help the leadership development team understand the face validity of the hiring process (Figure 1).

Responses on the Employee Coordinated Survey items asked of recently hired APs and principals also helped to shed light on how the hiring process operated. Of the 13 APs and principals who were hired after successfully completing the HireVue and assessment center, most ( $n = 12$ ) said they were invited to two or more interviews for a campus leadership role. Additionally, most surveyed APs and principals stated that networking was a key component of successfully securing their current position. This shows that, while successfully completing the new hiring process is important, even when on the highly qualified list, individuals may need to do more than simply apply to jobs through the Applitrack system. It appears that networking or emailing campus leaders may be helpful for securing a position. Moreover, most APs and principals in the sample felt that both the HireVue and assessment center processes helped them to prepare for their campus interviews for their current position. Many also felt that the assessment center tasks exemplified tasks they often need to do in their current role, such as reviewing data, collaborating with others, and observing teachers. Lastly, several APs and principals stated that the feedback they received from the assessment center helped them to understand where they could improve, which was useful in preparing for the campus interviews.



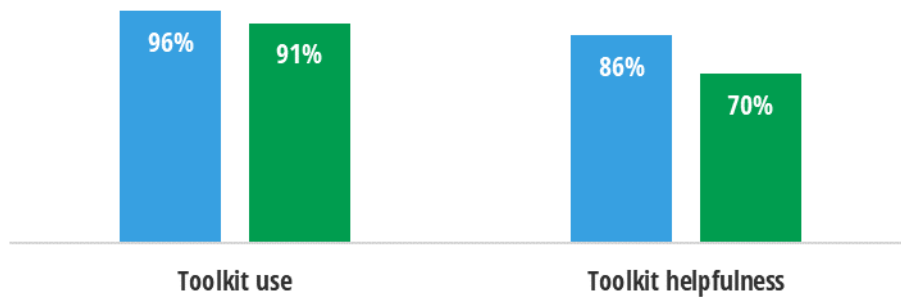
Figure 1. The majority of AP and principal candidates perceived the HireVue and assessment center scoring processes to be fair, despite most not knowing how either was scored.



Source. Spring 2020 AP and principal feedback surveys.

As for the tool kit, most used the kit and found it helpful. These findings were more prominent for AP assessment center candidates than for principal candidates (Figure 2).

Figure 2. AP assessment center candidates used the tool kit more and found it more helpful than did principal assessment center candidates.



Source. Spring 2020 AP and principal feedback surveys.

### Evaluation of Output and Department Accomplishments

Output is a question of production, not of impact; that is, what evidence indicated that the new hiring process produced what it was supposed to (i.e., a leadership pipeline that produces diverse, equity-focused leaders)? To address the question of production, passthrough rates for APs and principals were calculated and examined using different disaggregations.

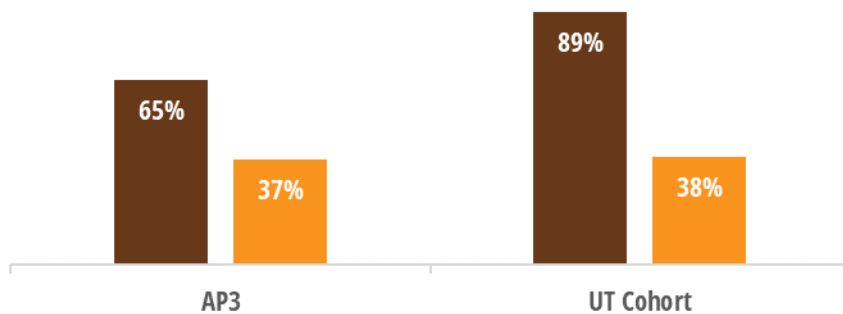
#### HireVue Passthrough Rates: Assistant Principals

Overall, 39% of applicants who were invited to HireVue passed their HireVue. Participants in the University of Texas (UT) program and those in the Assistant Principal Preparation Program (AP3) were more likely to pass (at an 89% and 65% passing rate, respectively) than were those who did not participate in the UT program or AP3 (Figure 3). These differences in passthrough rates for participation in a preparation program suggest alignment between the curriculum of these programs and the hiring process and desired competencies of Austin Independent School District

When analyzing passthrough rates for selection bias (i.e., adverse impact), the general approach was to use the four/fifths (or 80%) rule, which specifies that if the selection rate for any group is less than 80% of the selection rate for the group with the highest selection rate, there is evidence of adverse impact. This newly calculated ratio is called an impact ratio. However, in the case of small sample sizes, the literature cautions against calculating adverse impact as a means to identify bias, because selection bias is often overidentified when sample sizes are too small (Collins & Morris, 2008; Roth et al., 2006). Specifically, adverse impact should only be calculated using groups that make up more than 2% of the applicants (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission et al., 1978). When impact ratios are very close to 80%, it is necessary to further search for evidence of adverse impact, using another common rule for assessing the probability of adverse impact truly taking place: the flip-flop/reverse-one rule. As stated by the flip-flop rule, if the selection of one more person from the minority group and one fewer person from the majority group would shift the results of adverse impact, then evidence of adverse impact is not likely (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission et al., 1978; Roth et al., 2006).

(AISD) campus leaders. Furthermore, the preparation programs are understood to be specifically tailored to AISD's leadership framework. This provides more evaluative evidence that the preparation programs' curricula and the hiring processes are aligned with the campus administrator performance review (CAPR) and leadership framework, given the stronger performance in HireVue by those who participated in one of these specialized programs than by those who did not. This same trend, in which performance was higher for individuals who participated in a specialized program, is suggested in subsequent sections as well.

**Figure 3.** AP participants who were in a preparation program were more likely to pass HireVue than were those **not in a program**.

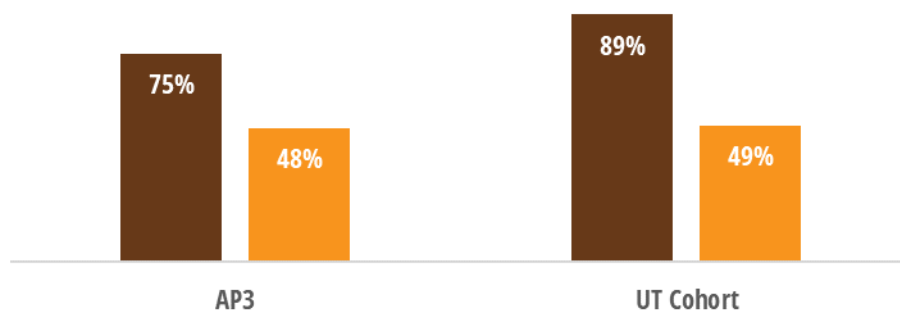


Source. Spring 2020 AP HireVue process data.

### Assessment Center Passthrough Rates: Assistant Principals

Fifty-two percent of those who were invited to the assessment center passed. When looking at assessment center passthrough rates, participation in a preparation program again, and as expected, improved passing rates for AP candidates (Figure 4).

**Figure 4.** AP participants who were in a preparation program were more likely to pass the assessment center than were those **not in a preparation program**, with the greatest advantage being for those in the UT cohort.



Source. Spring 2020 AP assessment center data.

### HireVue Passthrough Rates: Principals

Complementary analyses using principals' HireVue and assessment center data were conducted to identify if some of the key indicators for successful completion of these processes looked different from what was learned from examining the AP data in detail. These analyses highlight differences and similarities of passthrough rates for

participation in the Principal Preparation Program (P3). In sum, participating in P3 increased passing rates for principal candidates on HireVue.

About 60% of individuals who were invited to complete a HireVue for a principal role passed their HireVue. Participants in P3 were more likely to pass than were those not in P3 (Figure 5). Again, this higher passing rate of the HireVue interview for P3 members can likely be attributed to the preparation for an AISD principal role that is provided in the P3 program.

**Figure 5.**

**Principal HireVue participants who were in P3 were more likely to pass HireVue than were those not in the program.**



*Source.* Spring 2020 principal HireVue process data.

### Assessment Center Passthrough Rates: Principals

Sixty-five percent of individuals who were invited to the principal assessment center passed. Overall, we see that those who participated in P3 passed more frequently than those not in the program, and passthrough rates for principal applicants in the assessment center were mostly similar across race/ethnicity.

Examining passthrough rates for different groups, 92% of P3 cohort members who were invited to the principal assessment center passed, while only 59% of those not in P3 passed (Figure 6). This provides further evidence that the preparation provided in AISD preparation programs (e.g., P3) may help individuals successfully complete the new hiring processes and gain a spot on the highly qualified list.

**Figure 6.**

**Principal assessment center participants in P3 were more likely to pass the assessment center than were those not in P3.**



*Source.* Spring 2020 principal assessment center data.

Due to the shutdowns related to COVID-19, some assessment centers were hosted virtually. The first AP assessment center was hosted early in the Spring 2020 semester, and therefore was done in person. The subsequent two assessment centers were conducted virtually. More information regarding the virtual format of the assessment centers is available upon request. To determine if there were differences in these two formats, the passthrough rates of candidates who completed a virtual assessment and those who completed an in-person assessment center were compared. Both principal candidates and AP candidates passed through the virtual and in-person assessment centers at similar rates, with candidates passing slightly more frequently in the in-person format. However, when looking at impact ratios, evidence for adverse impact was not found. Therefore, it can be concluded that assessment center passthrough rates were comparable by format for both principal candidates and AP candidates.

## Summary of Evaluation Findings

In 2019–2020, evaluation focused on continuing to monitor and assess the HireVue and assessment center processes in relation to AP and principal hiring practices. To help ensure that the new hiring processes were operating as designed, survey feedback from current APs, current principals, AP candidates, and principal candidates provided perceptions of the hiring process. Data related to the usefulness of the tool kit, fairness of the hiring process, understanding of the scoring, campus interview process, and helpfulness of the HireVue and assessment center experience in regard to campus interviews were gathered, and results indicate generally positive perceptions of the new hiring process.

Preliminary data continued to guide our understanding about whether the new hiring processes were producing what they were intended to produce: a group of highly qualified, diverse, equity-focused leaders. Regarding diversity, efforts were made in 2019–2020 to ensure that trends found in 2018–2019 (i.e., minority groups were not passing through the hiring processes at rates comparable to those of White candidates) would not continue. In alignment with these efforts, passthrough rates on the assessment center indicate that minority candidates actually were more likely to pass through the assessment center than were non-minority candidates. Therefore, moving forward, if this trend continues, AISD could see applicant pools of APs and principals that are more racially and ethnically diverse. Passthrough rates also indicated that participating in a preparation program (i.e., AP3, P3, the Texas State program, or the UT program) did help participants pass both the HireVue and the assessment center, and therefore increased the odds of those participants gaining a spot on the highly qualified list. This speaks to the rigor and curriculum of these programs and should further incentivize interested candidates to participate in such a program to prepare for a campus leadership role.

## Recommendations and Future Directions

In the upcoming years of HireVue and assessment center implementation, several recommendations based on the department’s workflow and the summative results provided in this report, are to:

- continue to monitor passthrough rates and examine if adverse impact has occurred as more candidates participate in the hiring process. For future AP and principal openings, as well as for specialized leadership programs (i.e., AP3, P3, UT program, Texas State program), the district should continue to engage in strategic recruitment to increase applications from minority candidates.
- consider if the highly qualified lists can be shared with necessary staff in a dynamic way to increase accessibility and usability of the lists. This way, principals can see when someone from the list is no longer available as they choose to drop off the highly qualified list or get hired elsewhere.
- implement a standardized process for archiving HireVue and assessment center applicants. Creation of an Excel sheet to serve as a database that contains all AP and principal applicants who have ever completed a HireVue or an assessment center would aid in efficiency and the ability to analyze applicant data.

- streamline processes that occur before and after the HireVue and assessment center.
- determine ways to ensure both candidates and hiring staff are aware of the appropriate actions that need to be taken after a candidate has been added to the highly qualified list (e.g., networking, emails to principals, letters of intent).
- consider examining the CAPR scores (if available) of campus leaders hired as a result of the new hiring process, to determine how their scores compare with those of campus leaders not hired as a result of the new hiring process.

As progress is made to ensure all pieces of work are implemented and performing well, the department’s current and desired levels of performance toward the department’s goals (i.e., creating a leadership pipeline that reflects AISD’s values and fosters a selection and development mindset) can be measured. Additionally, as the new processes continue to be in place for more time, it will become increasingly appropriate to determine if the goal of the department is being met. Moreover, after the department’s work has been fully implemented, and performance on its goals is being measured, we can focus on evaluating potential impacts (i.e., increasing administrator quality, increasing retention, increasing campus climate and culture, and increasing student achievement).

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