

**Wachovia TTI Grantee-Level Report Year One (2005-2006)  
Leadership Cluster – Education Fund (SUPI)**

**Introduction to the Evaluation Findings and How to Read the Report**

The Wachovia leadership cluster is represented by nine grantees which can be loosely categorized into three overarching program models as outlined below:

Preparation of aspiring leaders for principal positions in urban schools	Ongoing support and development for new & seasoned sitting principals	Training and development of inclusive leadership teams for school improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Leaders for New Schools</li> <li>• New York City Leadership Academy<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Education Fund (SUPI)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area Cooperative Educational Services</li> <li>• Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement</li> <li>• Lorraine Monroe Leadership Institute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A+ Foundation (ABPC)</li> <li>• Center for Teaching Quality</li> <li>• Southern Regional Education Board</li> </ul>

The evaluation was designed to analyze aggregate results across the cluster to help TCC identify best practices and effective approaches for developing school leaders. A site visit was conducted with each grantee and in most instances TCC collected qualitative and quantitative data from program stakeholders<sup>2</sup>. Over 300 participants, program staff and district observers shared their experiences through interviews or focus groups and 292 participants responded to the leadership survey representing seven out of nine organizations in the cluster.<sup>3</sup>

This Grantee-Level report is designed to present your organization with specific findings from the cluster evaluation for your internal consideration and show how your organization compares to others in the cluster on several key outcomes. The report sections that follow are:

- A. Definitions of Strategies and Outcomes
- B. Key Findings from the Cluster
- C. Organization Specific Evaluation Findings
  - Outcomes
  - Strategies (Factors of Success)
  - Inputs
- D. Recommendations for Program Enhancement

**A. Definitions of Strategies and Outcomes**

The evaluation looked at six main outcomes for the Year One evaluation. They include:

1. **Instructional Leadership:** Providing the necessary resources and support to enhance the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction

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<sup>1</sup> The New York City Leadership Academy's funding supports a comprehensive strand of services for aspiring and sitting principals through the Aspiring Principals Program, First Year Support and New School Intensive. GLISI, on the other hand, was funded for the Leadership Preparation Performance Coaching program where identified leaders will receive job-embedded coaching in required leadership proficiencies.

<sup>2</sup> Due to the nature of program activities, the Center for Teaching Quality and A+ Foundation did not participate in the survey for Year One.

<sup>3</sup> GLISI coaches did take the leadership survey but will not be included in the cluster level quantitative analysis presented later in this report. The result of the GLISI survey will be used to determine possible readiness factors for individuals interested in becoming coaches.

2. **Change Leadership:** Having a personal assurance in one's ability as a leader to facilitate and organize resources for school improvement and change
3. **Decision-making:** Guiding activities that facilitate action for school improvement and change
4. **Professional Support:** Utilizing the relationships with colleagues, peers and mentors for learning, sharing and advice
5. **Leadership Confidence:** Having an understanding and belief in one's capacity as a leader to influence the school environment
6. **Parental Leadership:** Implementing strategies that actively engage parents in the school environment and culture

When considering the strategies used by various grantees, TCC looked at three areas: content to be conveyed, support for the participant in the program, and the learning methods used to convey content and/or provide support. The survey analysis for Year One identified 14 distinct aspects of content, learning methods, and support that had an effect on achieving the outcomes:

1. **Content:** Providing information in both broad and focused areas. Content areas include:
  - Building Learning Communities: Concepts which pertain to establishing a professional learning within school, such as working with teams, and how to manage conflict, build consensus and lead change efforts.
  - Professional Development Leadership: Concepts which pertain to using techniques and tools to support the personal growth of teachers for student learning, such as how to use data and technology, conducting observations and monitoring professional growth plans.
  - Evaluative Leadership: Methods that school leaders will use to assess instruction such as modeling, evaluating curriculum, addressing curriculum issues and mentoring/coaching a teacher.
  - General Management: Elements of leadership that is administrative in nature and focus on establishing an appropriate school environment for learning. Some of the items included are budget development, building community relationship, managing school data, addressing discipline and school culture.
  - Personal Professional Development: Methods that a school leader would use to assess personal performance and growth such as creating a development plan and how to utilize a coach or mentor.
2. **Learning Methods:** The methods for conveying information or providing support, including opportunities to solidify information through practice. Learning Methods include:
  - Team Building: Activities where the leader engages in meetings, facilitates collaboration and communicates expectations to teachers and students.
  - Personal Reflection: Self-directed tasks that help the leader gather new information, discuss issues and assess their personal development.
  - General Management: Elements of practice that provide hands-on experience in the day-to-day experience of serving as a leader in the school

buildings, such as delegating tasks, monitoring cleanliness, managing operations, overseeing discipline and soliciting resources.

- **Instructional Leadership**: Proactively engaged in personal and teaching staff development through observations, modeling effective technique and monitoring progress.
  - **Extended Group Learning**: Structured group activities through site visits and retreats.
  - **Self-directed Learning**: Individual activities to support the acquisition of information through literature reviews, workshops or coursework.
  - **Job Shadowing/Residency**: Formally organized internships or job-embedded learning opportunities under the supervision of an experienced educator.
  - **Mentoring/Coaching**: intense 1:1 interaction with a seasoned professional for moral support and/or skill development.
3. **Support**: Providing participants with the encouragement, interest, confidence and engagement to be successful in the program. The type of support observed was:
- **Peer Exchange**: Formally organized peer activities that support information exchange, relationship building and group learning such as discussion groups, conferences and workshops.

Inputs were also considered in the data analysis. These are the resources, materials, and people that exist within the program context. There were three input areas:

1. **Program Implementation**: This includes the intensity of the program, basis of the program - i.e. best practice models and research, grantee staff skills, knowledge and experience, and program funding.
2. **Participant “Fit”**: This includes recruitment and selection of participants and participant skills, knowledge, experience and buy-in to the program.
3. **Other Supporting Elements**: This includes school leaders’ skills, knowledge and experience, state and national standards, district support, peer teacher skills, knowledge and experience - including mentor/coach preparedness - and student skills and background.

The purpose of this short report is to present evaluation findings for the grantee and your comparative performance to the rest of the cluster. The report has two parts. The first section describes the overall cluster evaluation findings, and the second looks at the Education Fund’s individual performance.

## **B. Key Findings from the Cluster**

The overall analysis of data from the Leadership cluster indicates significant achievements by grantees in the short-term outcomes identified in the cluster logic model and measured by the evaluation. Specifically, 90% of the evaluation respondents achieved one or more of the six core, short-term outcomes after participating in TTI leadership programs. Improvements were particularly strong in three areas: instructional leadership, change leadership, and decision-making. In absolute terms, TTI participants

reported highest achievement in the area of leadership confidence, which is probably an indication of the decreased sense of isolation provided by participation and by an improved sense of capacity as they were exposed to new knowledge and skills.

Additionally, there is initial evidence that some long-term outcomes were materializing. Among tenured leader programs, qualitative evidence shows that improved school leadership is occurring, particularly in the areas of improved school culture and tone, and improved collaboration among administrators and teachers. Just under half of the programs (4/9) display some evidence that the strong ties between the program and the district have begun to generate district policy changes toward school leader empowerment and decision-making.

The evaluation found that a core set of strategies were most effective in leading to multiple, positive outcomes in leadership:

- Content: Direct content instruction in personal professional development (planning, reflecting, and learning to deliberately pursue one's own development as a leader).
- Learning Method: Opportunities to reflect on practice in an ongoing, structured manner.
- Learning Method: Opportunities to implement general administrative management techniques (thereby freeing time for leading change and improving instruction).
- Learning Method: Job shadowing and/or residencies were an effective method for experience-based learning.
- Learning Method: Generally speaking, programs that provided coaching/mentoring achieved higher outcomes in leadership.
- Support: Developing an ongoing relationship of exchange and support with peers to share ideas, motivate one another, and generate solutions.

Within the leadership cluster model, the support strategies could be provided in a range of ways and combinations, including:

- Peer support (including school-based and/or program-based guidance from leadership team members, colleagues, etc.)
- Professional support (including mentors, coaches, expert-led sessions)

Support strategies may be embedded in or combined with a variety of learning methods. Regardless of the delivery method, having some form of peer and/or professional support was crucial to the achievement of five out of six leadership outcomes.

Next, the overall analysis indicates that mentoring/coaching of leaders provides a “boost” in achieving outcomes; programs with mentor/coaching components are significantly more likely to have higher outcomes, as the mentor/coach aspect enhances the effectiveness of other strategies in most cases.

Finally, the cluster evaluation identified several findings related to inputs, or program resources. In regard to recruitment and selection, analysis indicated that for aspiring leader programs, communicating high standards for selection appears to influence participant motivation and commitment to the program. For tenured leader programs, communicating high expectations for outcomes supports similar motivation. Another finding was related to participant “buy-in,” or motivation, and its relationship to individual success - participants should be able to opt into a program, rather than be

forced to participate. Further, a participatory needs assessment, which is then tied to a personal professional development plan, contributes to motivation for participation. Opportunities for participant feedback into the mentor matching process appear to increase the leader's sense of self-efficacy. And in regard to district support, the data indicates that active, demonstrated support for the PD program from the superintendent/district is a key element for motivating leader participation and for achieving outcomes.

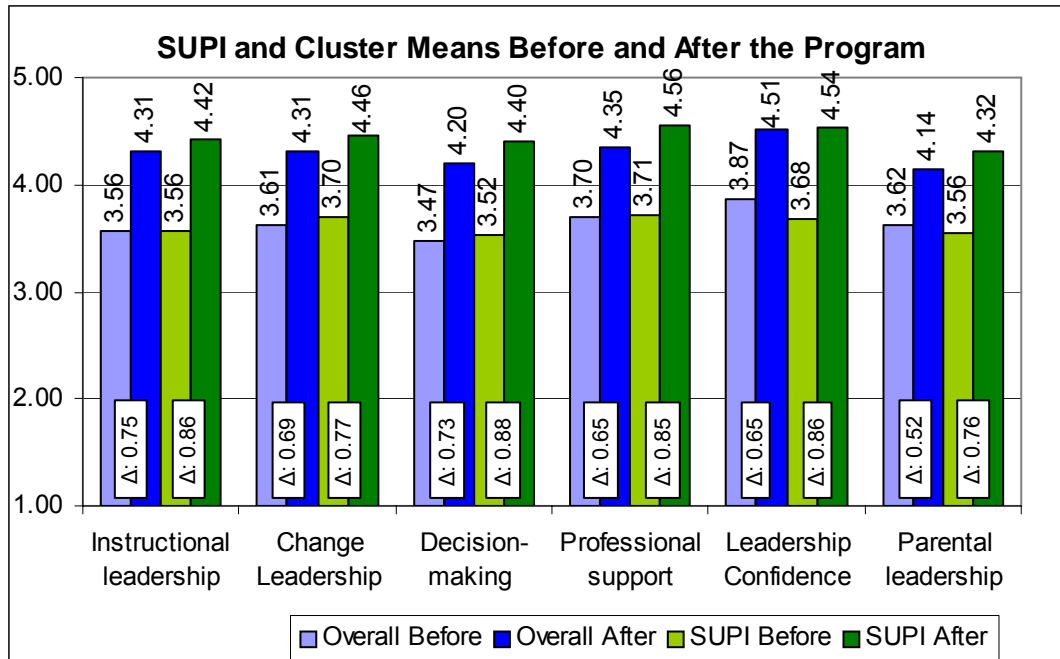
### **C. Education Fund Evaluation Findings**

Last year, the Education Fund served 39 people in the Superintendent Urban Principals Initiative (SUPI) with the TTI grant. There was a response rate of 97% for the leadership survey. In addition, focus groups were conducted with the three-person school teams and interviews were done with staff.

#### **1. Outcomes**

As seen in the following chart, the Education Fund exceeds the leadership cluster mean on all post-program outcomes. The net change in outcomes, as a result of program involvement, was higher (0.76-0.86) in contrast to the cluster (0.52-0.75) which had smaller net changes. The statistical analysis also determined that the SUPI program had a very large and significant effect on the outcomes achieved by the school leaders.

- There is a decreased sense of isolation because of the network among SUPI participants. "The field is more competitive than I thought. The idea of being able to pick up the phone is a big deal," a participant explained. SUPI has generated a small learning community of like-minded individuals who recognize the need for peer support in their endeavors. 97.4% of the participant agreed or strongly agree to achievement in professional support as a result of the SUPI program.
- The district firmly believes that the SUPI program is helping to increase the preparation of new leaders in Miami Dade County. "We found that 42% of the administration has less than 3 years experience. We are closing the gap between the demands for quality principals/administrators by placing well prepared instructional leaders in our high need secondary schools."
- Teacher leaders and assistant principals have developed more appreciation for leadership roles in their schools. Both groups of participants had "eye-opening" experiences to the enormity of the assistant principal and principal roles. They have become sensitive to the amount of paperwork that has to be done, the need to delegate tasks and the importance of working with teams. "I am fairly organized, but when you are in this position you are inundated and you have to prioritize people and paper," expressed an assistant principal.
- Principals in the program have learned to appreciate more of a shared or distributed leadership model. "I do not have to micro-manage. I am able to empower others and make them responsible and accountable. I trust them to do a good job and support them with tools. It may not be done the way I would do it but in the long-run it gets done. It is a de-stresser."

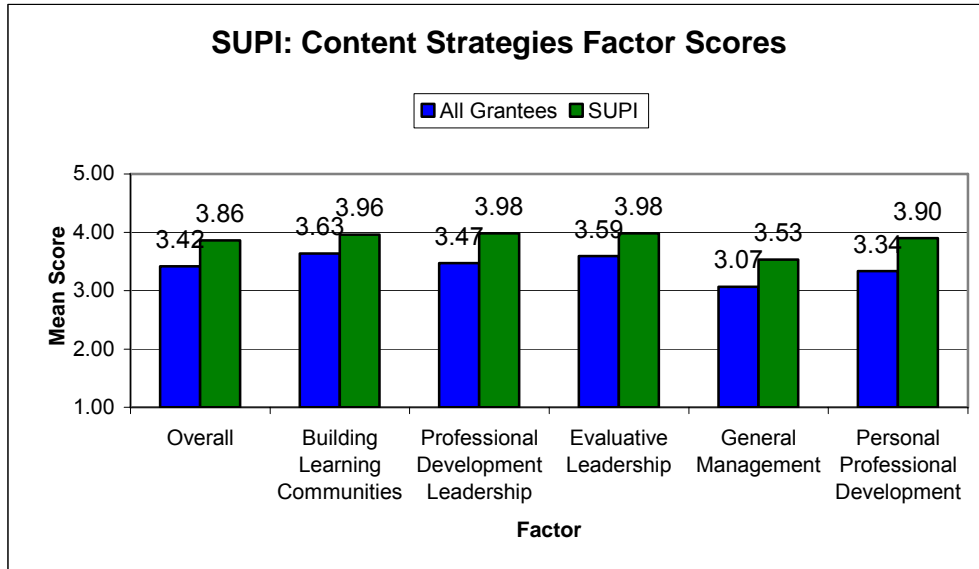


## 2. Factors of Success (Strategies): What worked to achieve the outcomes?

### Content

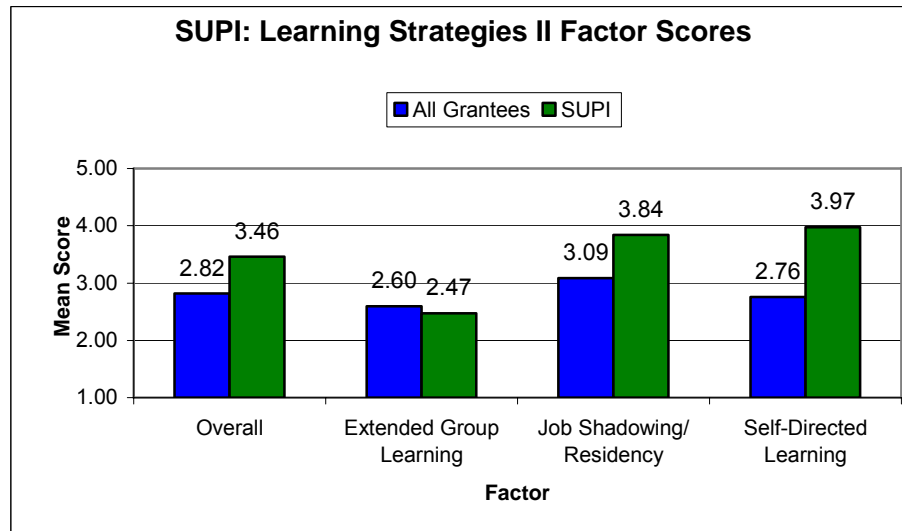
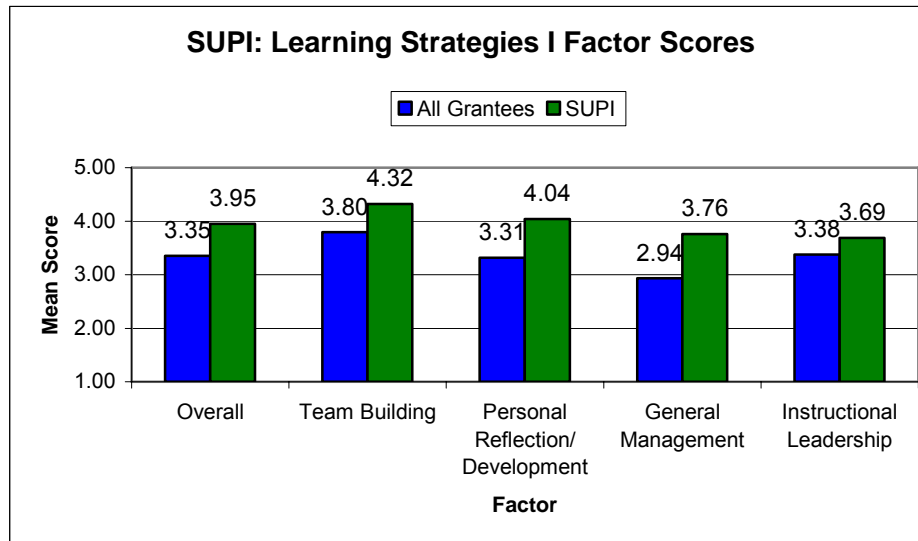
As the following chart reveals, the SUPI program provided high levels of content relative to the overall cluster; this focus on applicable content influenced the strong outcomes that SUPI attained among program participants. The TCC overall cluster evaluation determined that the following strategies were more likely to achieve results for the outcomes previously outlined:

- Content on general management was more likely to increase outcomes in professional support, while information on personal reflection/development significantly influenced professional support and leadership confidence.
- Opportunities to practice general management more likely enhanced outcome attainment in change leadership and decision-making. In addition, practicing personal reflection yielded results in instructional leadership, decision-making and leadership confidence.
- Mentoring/Coaching is considered a boost factor, which is significantly more likely to increase high outcome attainment.
- Among the content strategies that have the strongest effect on outcome attainment, it is useful to note that less than half (45.9%) of the SUPI leaders who responded to the survey indicated that they received information on general management.
- By contrast, 69.4% of participants indicated that they received content on personal professional development.



### Learning Methods

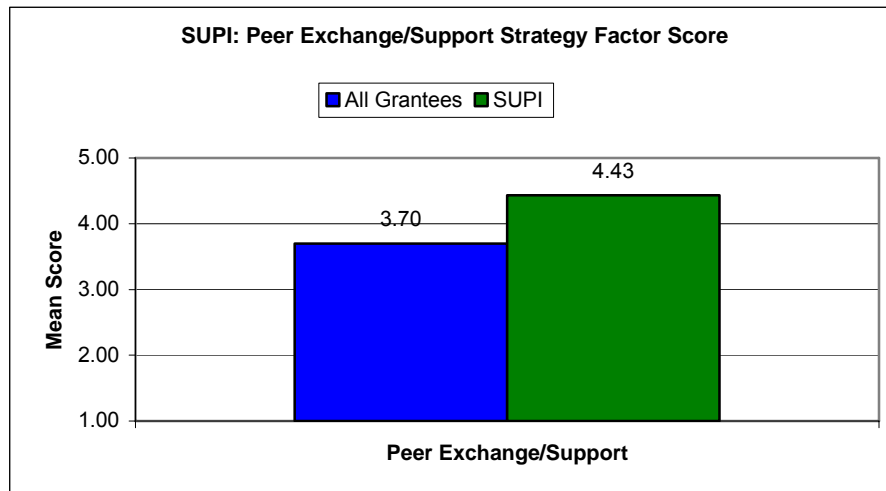
- Many participants (64.9%) perceived that they were given a chance to practice general management, and 78.9% indicated that they practiced personal reflection/development.
- Most SUPI participants considered the action research project a good way to address a need at their school. Naturally, there were some complaints about the timing and the rush to finish the work due to the late start of the program. Despite this, teams addressed critical issues such as truancy and reading achievement. A few teams saw interest increase among other staff members as they noticed how effective action research is and how it can support key decisions.
- The nine week internship gives SUPI participants a real look at the responsibility of leaders in the school and at the district level. A teacher leader noted, “the internship has been good because it has provided some hands-on experience that has been great.” The district leaders concur that at the secondary school level, where responsibility is more compartmentalized, the internship “forces an individual to take over the entire building and have complete responsibility for the school while the host principal works at the district.”



### Support Strategies

- 87.5% of the participants identified that they were assigned a mentor or coach during the SUPI training. The layers of mentoring and coaching in the SUPI program surround the participants with multiple human resources and expertise to support their development. Teachers look to the assistant principal for guidance. In turn, the assistant principal can seek support from the principal and the entire team benefits from a professional partner and the other teams in the program.
- Sharing sessions were highlighted as a critical part of the SUPI program. “The sharing sessions are an important part of the program. You are able to speak with peers outside of the building. It has created a network for us. We have even had email exchanges to address operations issues,” noted an assistant principal.
- Professional partners are believed to add significant value to the growth of the teams in the SUPI program. “Our professional partner tells us the truth. That is what you need from a mentor, not someone unwilling to help you improve yourself. She doesn’t just give us information, she will throw out open-ended questions, forcing us

to think through and discuss our decisions.” The professional partners are actively engaged in training sessions and school visits, making themselves readily accessible for the teams when needed.



### 3. Inputs

- The use of national speakers and experts for training was well received by the SUPI teams. The aspiring leaders found that the speakers approach to sharing knowledge was “not theoretical but more engaging..[they] made it true to what you are experiencing as a leader everyday in school.” The participants like that the speakers came with diverse perspectives and that their messages were relevant.
- The extent of the professional partners’ experience, knowledge and expertise adds to success achieved by each team. With a high level of experience, teams feel that the professional partner has more credibility, thus teams tend to trust a partner’s advice because they are speaking from a strong knowledge-base.

### D. Recommendations

- SUPI might give consideration to placing the internship during the 2<sup>nd</sup> marking period. Participants really value the hands-on experience but would like it to be carefully placed in the calendar to avoid major activities in the school like testing.
- Although the teams enjoyed the comfort of staying in their own schools during this time, a few would like to explore the option of rotations to others school to increase the challenge.