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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Illinois Principals Association Examines Principal Pipeline in New Report

Springfield, IL – The Illinois Principals Association recently released a report on the principal pipeline and school leader turnover entitled “*Effective and Sustained Principals for Every Illinois Community*.” The report examines the critical role principals play in creating effective schools for every child, details the serious problem of principal attrition, and makes policy recommendations to help slow attrition and rebuild the principal pipeline.

“The rate of principal attrition and the lack of individuals entering the principalship in Illinois are at crisis points,” said Dr. Jason Leahy, Illinois Principals Association Executive Director. “Policymakers, school districts, the IPA and other stakeholders must make a concerted effort to invest in both current and future school leaders. *Effective and Sustained Principals for Every Illinois Community* offers recommendations to jumpstart conversations to develop strategies that ensure every Illinois school has an effective and sustained principal.”

Effective and Sustained Principals for Every Illinois Community illustrates many of the reasons principals are leaving the profession at a greater rate than ever before. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) have previously identified increasing student and staff social emotional issues, high-stakes accountability, a lack of decision-making authority, and obstacles to professional learning opportunities as some reasons that principals are increasingly leaving the profession. Locally, a 2019 IPA member survey indicated that over 50% of principals surveyed are under extreme stress 10 or more hours every week, even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Principal attrition not only creates a void of talented individuals to impact the lives of children, but the financial and qualitative effect of turnover is significant. Preparing and onboarding a new principal costs an average \$75,000 nationally, and student performance in Math and Language Arts generally decreases the year after a principal leaves and requires up to three years for a new principal to make up the loss.

To stem principal attrition and rebuild the principal pipeline, the Illinois Principals Association recommends policy changes at both state and school district levels which include:

- Support and maintain building administration staffing levels recommended by the Evidence Based Funding Model;
- Provide statewide leadership mentoring and coaching, especially to new principals;
- Provide continuous professional learning opportunities;
- Create alternative pathways to the principalship;
- Study why individuals are not choosing school leadership as a viable career path; and,
- Offer scholarships and other incentives to individuals who choose the principalship as a career path, especially for BIPOC individuals and other underrepresented groups.

For more information about *Effective and Sustained Principals for Every Illinois Community*, please visit <https://ilprincipals.org/advocate/principal-pipeline-crisis/>.

About the Illinois Principals Association

The Illinois Principals Association serves over 5,900 educational leaders statewide and whose mission is to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders. For more information about the IPA, please visit www.ilprincipals.org.

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