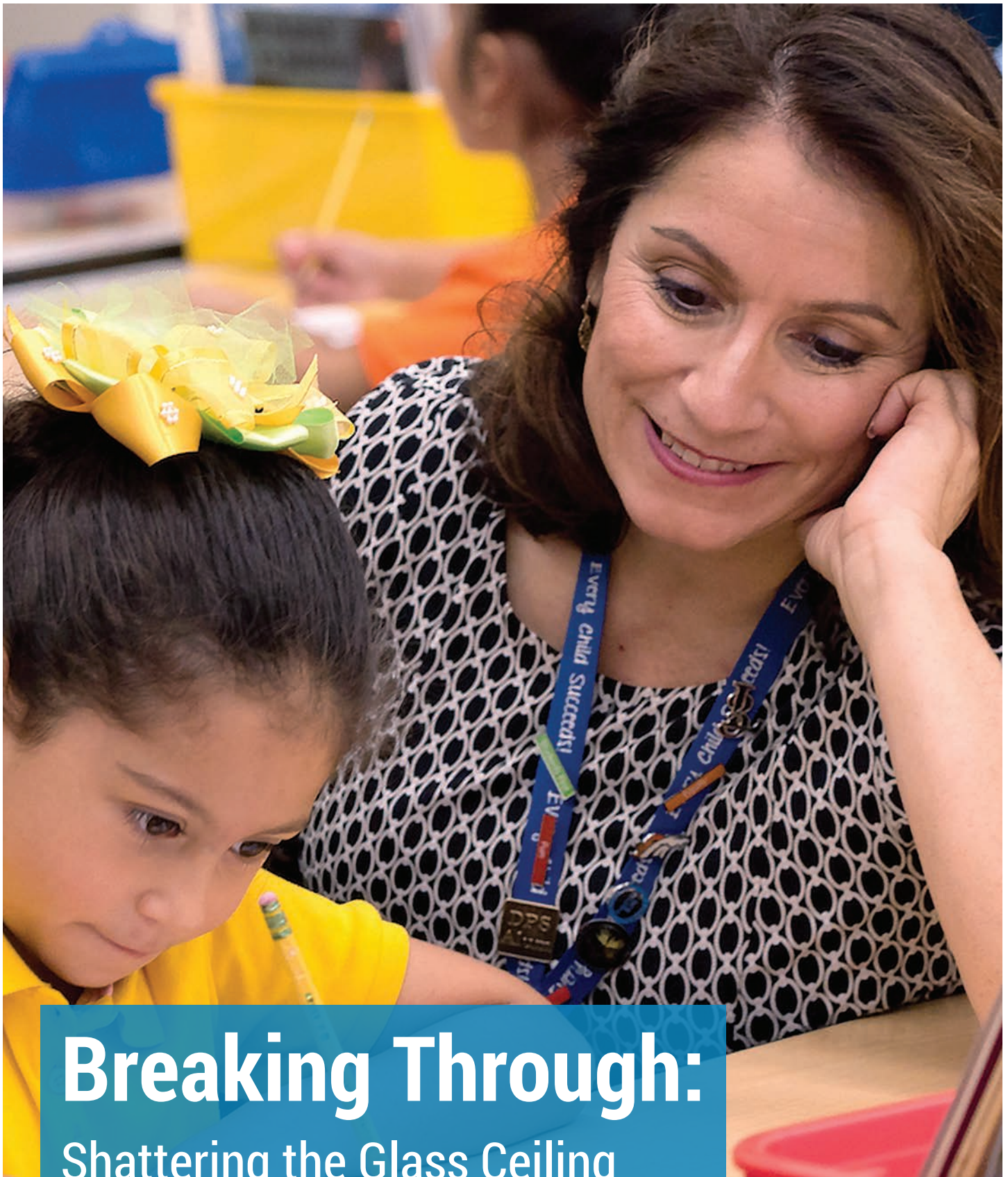


2019 April

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Breaking Through:

Shattering the Glass Ceiling
for Women Leaders



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ABOUT CHIEFS FOR CHANGE

Chiefs for Change is a nonprofit, bipartisan network of diverse state and district education chiefs dedicated to preparing all students for today's world and tomorrow's through deeply committed leadership. Chiefs for Change advocates for policies and practices that are making a difference today for students, and builds a pipeline of talented, diverse Future Chiefs ready to lead major school systems.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Chiefs for Change is grateful for the time, energy, and wisdom of the people who made this report possible. Foremost, Dr. Lillian Lowery and Hanna Skandera, who together have led and shaped our initiative to better serve promising women leaders. Having themselves shattered glass ceilings, they are now paying it forward. With determination and grace, Lillian and Hanna are helping a new generation of leaders overcome so many of the challenges described in this paper. Further, we thank the many others who helped us gain a clearer understanding of the problem and solutions: Dr. Sharon Contreras, Susana Cordova, Dr. Kendra Ferguson, Dr. Pete Gorman, Dr. Barbara Jenkins, Dr. John B. King Jr., Mollie Mitchell, and Dr. Penny Schwinn. Finally, this report builds on the critical work of many, notably AASA, The School Superintendents Association and the Council of the Great City Schools.

LETTER FROM DR. JULIA RAFAL-BAER



The irony is striking.

As educators, we're the people who tell kids they can be anything they want to be—that if they work hard, there are no limits to what they can achieve. Yet that hasn't been the case in school systems. We tell children to aim high—but very few women or people

of color actually reach the top. School districts and state education systems are overwhelmingly run by white men. That is a problem, not just because it goes against what we tell our kids but because it means kids and families are being deprived of those other leaders' skills and vision.

This is why we at Chiefs for Change created our Future Chiefs program. The logic was clear: if the nation's mayors, governors, and school boards did not see a pipeline of diverse leaders well-prepared for the top job, we'd help to build it. We set out to train a cohort of promising leaders in the skills crucial to the top job. We helped them develop their skills and build connections, so they'd be known and trusted when jobs came open, and we fostered networks for mentorship and support. In the effort to ensure we'd have the strongest possible leaders, who could create positive change focused on outcomes for kids, it felt like a necessary and natural step.

And at first, we felt pretty good about the results. After only a couple years, a third of those in the program had landed jobs as superintendents or state chiefs. The race statistics defied the national odds.

Then we looked at our results by gender. We realized that 83 percent of our male Future Chiefs had applied to become superintendents or state chiefs, while only 23 percent of their female counterparts did the same. Furthermore, of those who got the jobs, only one was a woman. It was a punch in the gut—and a call to action.

Two visionary former chiefs—Dr. Lillian Lowery and Hanna Skandera—worked with us to develop a plan. The first part of that plan was inventing a new strand of Future Chiefs programming, for women only. We started with a single event. It quickly became clear that participants had no other women-only networks to support their growth, foster trust, or help build new relationships. The Women in Leadership program became part of the solution. Happily, in just a short time,

we've seen the numbers change dramatically. Talented women like Susana Cordova, Dr. Penny Schwinn, and Angélica Infante-Green have landed high-profile chief roles, and we've doubled the proportion of our women stepping into searches from 23 to 46 percent.

The second part of the plan and our response to the problem was to talk about it—to name the problem, to acknowledge our current national metrics, and to identify solutions. That's what this report is about. We aren't the first to take on this issue, but in a moment of deepening attention and understanding on the challenges women face in the workplace and the political world, we aim to build on the good work of others, shining new light on the realities in education and going deep on actionable solutions.

This work is deeply personal to me.

I'm one of those people who had to be convinced—by a lot of people, and by generous mentors—that I could be a leader. Over time, I developed that confidence and rose to a cabinet-level position in a state department of education. There, I saw the systems and the behaviors that undermine that confidence and keep women from advancing. I experienced it. The actions and the attitudes that held us back and made us feel smaller than we were didn't just come from men. The truths we must tell to change our systems so more women are able to land the top job aren't comfortable or polite. But they are necessary. And everyone, at every level of our education systems, has a role to play in speaking their truths and fixing this.

Fixing it, to us, means creating a clear path to leadership for people who have the talent, energy, and vision to do great things for kids—but who have been overlooked in the past because they aren't part of the club. That means women, people of color, and particularly, women of color. Fixing it isn't a feel-good moment of agreeing to an airy goal. It's the hard work of making the realities transparent; building new networks; and changing career paths, workplace behaviors, and supports just as other sectors of the economy have begun to do. That's the vision we lay out in this paper.

We will fix it, by transforming the kind of opportunities the next generation of leaders will have. Not simply because the situation today is unfair to the women who might otherwise rise to leadership. But because it's unfair to the children they would serve.

Dr. Julia Rafal-Baer
Chief Operating Officer, Chiefs for Change



Breaking Through: Shattering the Glass Ceiling for Women Leaders

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Far too few women, and women of color, are leading K–12 school systems. Despite the increasing diversity of our nation’s schools, and the enormous representation of women at other levels of our public school systems, the vast majority of district superintendents and state chiefs are white men.

This is not merely a problem of fairness, of representation, or of opportunity. By squandering the promise of many of the nation’s best education leaders, we have created a talent crisis at the top of systems that serve millions of children. And changing that will require intentionally remaking a system that long ago put men in charge of women, not by happenstance, but by design.

By squandering the promise of many of the nation’s best education leaders, we have created a talent crisis at the top of systems that serve millions of children.

Chiefs for Change, a bipartisan network of some of the nation’s boldest, most forward-thinking state and district education leaders, is working to drive real and immediate change, by preparing a far more diverse pipeline of future leaders.

Chiefs for Change is now calling on school systems, school boards, mayors, and governors nationwide to make urgent changes to shift the gender balance at the very top levels of education leadership, by:

- **Setting clear, public goals for greater gender equity at the superintendent level—and demanding that search firms and school boards commit to work toward those goals and be transparent about progress**
- **Intentionally grooming more women for leadership positions, especially women of color, by providing them with not only mentors but active sponsors, and by building networks between them**
- **Providing greater coaching support and family-friendly policies.**

Today, women comprise the majority of the education workforce—except at the very top. Women are three-quarters of teachers, and more than half of all principals. Indeed, they make up the majority of cabinet-level administrators in districts—the handful of jobs just below the very top. Yet, they make up less than one third of district superintendents. Only 11 percent of superintendents are women of color, and only [13 percent of public school principals](#) are women of color. At the state level, 45 percent of chiefs are women; however, only 8 percent are women of color. (For more details on individual states, see the [Appendix](#).)

There are many reasons for this inequity. Some stem from the same pernicious, longstanding societal challenges that affect women across industries, such as the stereotypes about the traditionally male role of the chief executive; bias about the capabilities of women and of leaders of color; and patterns of women managing household and family commitments that might conflict with senior leadership roles.

Evidence, research, and experience show that school system leaders, policymakers, and other stakeholders can address this challenge through greater attention to the issue, more structured leadership and network development, more equitable recruitment and selection, and more supportive policies for leaders once they are on the job.

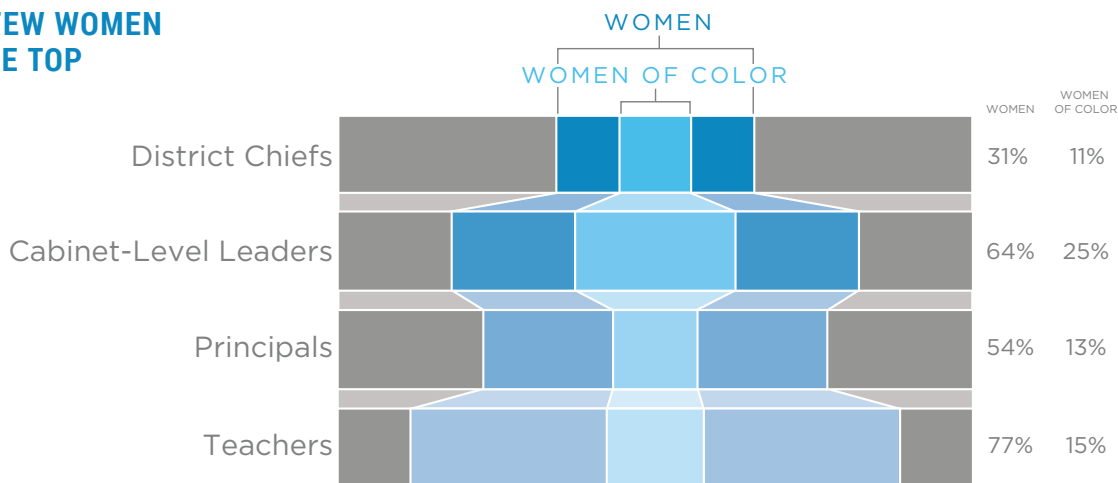
However, many of the barriers that keep women from becoming a superintendent are structural. Although many teachers are women, male-centric cultures and networks make it difficult for women to ascend to the top spot. Our interviews with education leaders indicate that recruiting processes are often run by men, and subject to the biases of school boards; searches tend to favor candidates with male-dominated backgrounds like

high school principalships and roles related to finance and operations. Then, of course, there is the job itself, which is all-consuming, requiring not only intense public scrutiny but also long days combined with nights and weekends—making it a particularly difficult role for those with young children. (These social and structural dynamics affect women of color even more profoundly: with lower representation throughout the pipeline, it can be even more difficult for them to break through into top leadership roles.)

It doesn't have to be this way. Evidence, research, and experience show that school system leaders, policymakers, and other stakeholders can address this challenge through greater attention to the issue, more structured leadership and network development, more equitable recruitment and selection, and more supportive policies for leaders once they are on the job. In addition, trailblazing leaders have amassed vital knowledge that can benefit future leaders, and some of their learnings are captured in this report. We also encourage male allies to step forward, as their voices and actions can carry great weight.

While Chiefs for Change believes that embracing all dimensions of diversity is vital, this brief focuses on the inequity among women in education leadership roles in districts and states. Join Chiefs for Change in this work by sharing the report, and by taking action to address this inequity. Together, we can ensure that the next generation's great women leaders end up where they should be: at the top.

TOO FEW WOMEN AT THE TOP



District chiefs data from Chiefs for Change analysis using publicly reported figures on local education agency websites as of November 2018 including superintendents from the top five largest districts in each state (note: Hawaii and the District of Columbia are single-district states); cabinet-level leader data from Chiefs for Change analysis of its members' cabinets using publicly reported information as available on gender, race, and ethnicity as of August 2018; principal and teacher data from the 2015-2016 edition of the [National Center for Education Statistics' National Teacher and Principal Survey](#)

INTRODUCTION

The underrepresentation of women—and women of color—in K–12 education leadership is a crisis that demands action. Our nation and America’s schools are diverse, and research confirms that a diverse teacher and leader workforce makes a strong, positive impact on our students and schools. Nevertheless, the large majority of system-level leaders in our school districts and state agencies are white men.

The issue is not a lack of women in the talent pool. In fact, women comprise the majority of roles in education—except at the very top. New research from Chiefs for Change shows that in K–12 education women comprise the large majority of jobs from teaching all the way through the superintendent’s cabinet—but that a glass ceiling has preserved a superintendency that’s by far majority male, and predominantly white.

Indeed, three-quarters of teachers and about half of all principals are women. According to an analysis conducted by Chiefs for Change, although three-quarters of teachers and half of principals and cabinet-level district administrators are women, just over 30 percent of the superintendents in large districts are women. Other studies by the [AASA](#), [The School Superintendents Association](#) and [Council of the Great City Schools \(CGCS\)](#) have found even fewer.

The pipeline of women of color is even more problematic. Just [13 percent of public school principals](#) are women of color, and just 11 percent of superintendents are women of color. At the state level, Chiefs for Change has calculated that women hold 45 percent of state chief roles, but only 8 percent are women of color. (For more details on each state, including the gender and race of both state chiefs and superintendents of the top five largest districts within each state, see the [Appendix](#).)

There are many reasons for this inequity, both societal and structural, which are detailed in the next section. But

we know the status quo can change. After the so-called “[Year of the Woman](#)” in politics, and with the attention to equity in education and other sectors, it’s time for leaders across the nation to shatter this glass ceiling.

Chiefs for Change is committed to building a bipartisan pipeline to leadership for leaders of color and women, primarily through our [Future Chiefs](#) program, which trains and mentors emerging leaders committed to the same vision and [beliefs](#) as our Chiefs for Change membership. Now, we want to engage school systems, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the conversation—and in taking action to address the problem. In the pages that follow, we unpack the challenge and suggest solutions designed to ensure that women—and women of color—have a genuine path to top leadership. Letting our top talent rise is part of how we serve children well—and how we build a more just world.



THE PROBLEM

BACKGROUND AND SECTOR COMPARISONS

The problem of the “glass ceiling” in business surfaced decades ago. [The term itself dates as far back as the late 1970s](#), describing the “invisible—but impenetrable—barrier between women and the executive suite, preventing them from reaching the highest levels of the business world regardless of their accomplishments and merits,” as the [US Glass Ceiling Commission](#) put it in 1995.

Despite attention to the problem in the ensuing decades, and a rising percentage of women in the ranks of college graduates and in the workforce, women still make up a low percentage of the leadership ranks in business, politics, and other sectors. In Fortune 500 companies, women recede from the pipeline steadily, holding 44 percent of employee positions, 37 percent of lower- and middle-management jobs, 27 percent of executive and senior management titles, and just 11 percent of top earning roles, according to [Catalyst](#). Meanwhile, [just five percent of Fortune 500 companies are led by a woman](#)—that’s 27 out of 500, none of whom are women of color. And although women made great gains in political representation in 2018, they still are far from equal representation. About a quarter of all mayors and state legislators and 18 percent of the nation’s governors are

women, according to the [Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University](#). Women of color represent an even smaller fraction of these positions.

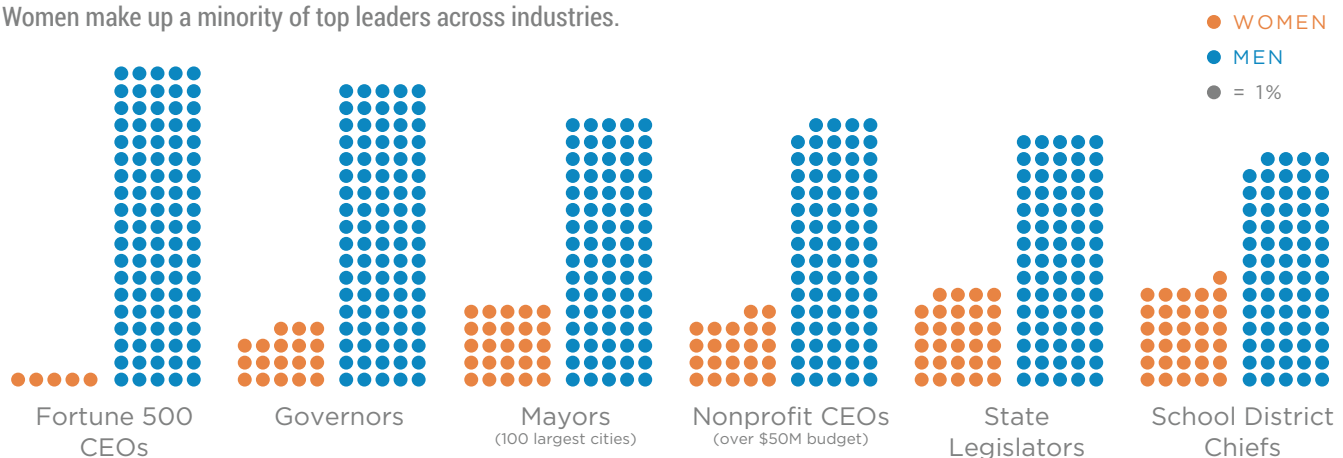
By comparison, the K–12 education workforce is female-dominated, but has long faced a steep drop-off at the top levels of leadership. In this way, it is similar to the healthcare and nonprofit sectors, where women make up nearly 80 percent of the overall workforce but only hold a fraction of top roles: [one in five](#) executives and board members at Fortune 500 healthcare companies are women, including just one woman CEO, and just [22 percent](#) of CEOs of the largest nonprofits (with budgets exceeding \$50 million) are women.

In education, traditionally, superintendents have been white men. The role was specifically designed for male leaders, and the power imbalance dates back to the 19th century. “The system required subordination,” David Tyack writes in his history of the American school district, *The One Best System*. “Women were generally subordinate to men; the employment of women as teachers thus augmented the authority of the largely male leadership.” One Denver superintendent during the 19th century further advised that if teachers had advice for their superiors, “it is to be given as the good daughter talks with the father... The dictation must come from the other end.”¹

1 Tyack, D. B. (1974). *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Vol. 95). Harvard University Press.

WOMEN LEADERS ACROSS INDUSTRIES

Women make up a minority of top leaders across industries.



Fortune 500 data from [Fortune Magazine's update on January 15, 2019](#); governors, mayors, state legislators data as of February 2019 from [Women in Elective Office 2019 Fact Sheet from the Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University](#); nonprofit CEO data based on nonprofits with annual budgets of \$50 million or more from the [2018 GuideStar Nonprofit Compensation Report](#); district chiefs data from Chiefs for Change analysis using publicly reported figures on local education agency websites as of November 2018 including superintendents from the top five largest districts in each state (note: Hawaii and the District of Columbia are single-district states)

“Since the creation of those first positions, the superintendency has been defined and institutionalized as men’s work,” explained the [AASA Mid-Decade Survey](#). “This stereotype was perpetuated by the perceived skills of the position. Highlighting the managerial aspect of the position kept the position almost exclusively male-dominated for decades.” [By 1998, Ohio State University professor Jackie M. Blount calculated that](#) “the odds for a male teacher becoming a superintendent are one in 40 and the odds for a woman teacher becoming a superintendent are one in 1,667.”

And although the percentage of women superintendents has increased significantly over the last several decades, from just 6.6 percent in 1992 to the current rate of 25–30 percent, it is still far too low—and too white—relative to the significant numbers of women and women of color capable of leadership roles in our schools, districts, and state agencies.

The system we see today—and its imbalance—is a result of deliberate choices. We must take intentional action to fix it.

REASONS FOR THE DISPARITY IN WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Certainly, some of the reasons for these imbalances are complex societal factors that require broad action on many fronts. Other factors, however, reflect structural decisions. Leaders—superintendents, school boards, mayors, and others—have say over those structures and thus the power to change them.

Societal Reasons

Bias/Stereotypes About Capabilities of Women and Women of Color

As in other sectors, women are often not seen as potential leaders in education. “Organizational definitions of competence and leadership are still predicated on traits stereotypically associated with men: tough, aggressive, decisive,” explains [Harvard Business Review](#). “Men are seen as having leadership qualities like gravitas, while women are seen as having supporting-role qualities like dependability,” adds the [New York Times](#)—a dynamic that may explain why women thrive in the heavily relationship-dependent field of education but rarely reach the top spot. Moreover, the preponderance of white males in leadership positions tends to perpetuate more of the same [thanks to the simple human preference for the status quo](#). Former U.S. Secretary of Education

Dr. John King Jr., now president and CEO of The Education Trust, observes that “on the part of boards, and even governors and mayors, there’s an assumption of what leaders look like” and that these are often male decision-makers, “so the likelihood of folks replicating themselves is very high.”

These dynamics are often compounded for women of color, who may not be expected to lead or succeed. “Women of color are often just not seen as leaders, or if they are seen, it is as an ‘other’ or with surprise, and maybe with an implicit message that ‘you won’t be successful,’” says Dr. Kendra Ferguson, CEO of KIPP Memphis, who wrote her doctoral thesis on barriers to leadership for women of color in education. “For black women, that can create a loop of doubt, a sense of pain or anger that can stop you from doing your best thinking or alter your way of being.”

Household and Family Commitments

Despite the greater percentage of women graduating from college and entering the workforce, many still take primary responsibility for the care of their children, their households, and sometimes even their aging parents or other relations. “I fear that the obstacles that keep women from reaching the top are rather more prosaic than the scope of their ambition,” former State Department official and Princeton dean Anne-Marie Slaughter famously wrote in [The Atlantic in 2012](#). “These ‘mundane’ issues—the need to travel constantly to succeed, the conflicts between school schedules and work schedules, the insistence that work be done in the office—cannot be solved by exhortations to close the ambition gap.” Many of the women we interviewed have



articulated this as a challenge given the around-the-clock nature of some education leader roles.

Confidence Gap Between Women and Men

Whether by virtue of stereotypes or the limitations of their opportunities, research has found that women tend to be less confident than men, a trait that can hinder their pursuit of top leadership roles in any sector. “Compared with men, women don’t consider themselves as ready for promotions, they predict they’ll do worse on tests, and they generally underestimate their abilities,” [explain Katty Kay and Claire Shipman, authors of *The Confidence Code: The Science and Art of Self-Assurance—What Women Should Know*](#). As a result, women often hold themselves back from imagining or pursuing high-level careers for longer. A Korn Ferry [study](#) found that female CEOs worked in a higher number of leadership roles, functions, and companies prior to securing the top role than did their male counterparts.

In addition to confidence gaps that lead some women to take a longer runway to the top, many women [report](#) an intense focus on getting results rather than on their own ambition for advancement. Without some form of intervention to illuminate the path to the top job, such as horizontal and vertical moves in core functions, many women may not get there at all. Further compounding these confidence gaps, many women say they get less day-to-day support or access to senior leaders; face more harassment and everyday discrimination; and perceive additional scrutiny as the only woman in the room (see findings from [the annual Women in the Workplace survey conducted by LeanIn.org and McKinsey & Company](#).) “Women of color and lesbian women face even more biases and barriers to advancement—as do all women who deal with compounding biases because of their identity, background, or beliefs,” adds the report.

Structural Reasons

The Pipeline Is Skewed Toward Men

While women make up a simple majority of education leadership prior to the top rung (particularly compared to the managerial pipeline in business), there are several points along the path that position men more quickly and effectively for the top job. For example, more women tend to become elementary and middle school teachers than high school teachers, which tends to position them for leadership roles in those schools. However, district administration-level roles are often sourced from the ranks of high schools, which are often larger, with more community visibility (and more leaders).

Further, women who do end up working for a district or state agency tend to rise through instructional roles rather than roles related to finance or operations, the latter of which are often seen as grooming grounds for the superintendency. This is also true in business, [where women tend to occupy “corporate support functions” rather than management and financial roles](#).

These barriers are compounded by the formal and informal support that men receive. When organizations are male-centric, men build networks among themselves and bond through work projects and conferences. These function as fishing trips and golf tournaments do in the corporate sector: as informal connections that turn into greater access to formal leadership. A lack of formal mentorship and management training in education puts men at an advantage in this situation, making them more likely to ascend the ranks through the stronger relationships they have developed with male leaders.

Recruiting and Selection

As Chiefs for Change noted in [an earlier paper on the need for greater leadership capacity in school systems](#), nationally, the leaders of state departments of education [serve an average of 2.5 years](#), and leaders in our largest school districts [serve an average of 3.2 years](#). When these leaders leave, too often there’s no succession plan, and finding the next leader is a scramble. This is one of the problems our [Future Chiefs](#) program aims to address. As it stands, the search process, often led by search firms made up of former superintendents who are themselves white and male, is typically limited to a predictable slate of white male candidates, hardly a reflection of the true talent and diversity the country and its schools have to offer. While some have begun to put forward more racially and ethnically diverse candidates, our interviewees say gender is rarely on the radar of search firms and school board members.

“We sort of accept that we’re hiring the ‘best’ person and the ‘best’ fit,” says Chiefs for Change member Dr. Sharon Contreras, a black and Latina woman who is currently serving as the first woman and first Latina superintendent in North Carolina’s Guilford County Public Schools. “That allows boards to get away with not considering their student population and the makeup of their communities, and not thinking deeply about equity at the very top of the organization, which sets the tone for hiring practices across the organization.”

Women struggle to get ahead in these searches, and to maintain the confidence of school boards even once they

are selected for the role. [AASA found](#) that boards often emphasize financial experience as key hiring criteria. Although many women superintendents in the study managed to earn their roles without having ever had that responsibility, they were penalized for it later in their careers: nearly 82 percent of women superintendents indicated that “school board members do not see them as strong managers” and 76 percent felt that “school boards did not view them as capable of handling district finances.”

The Job Itself

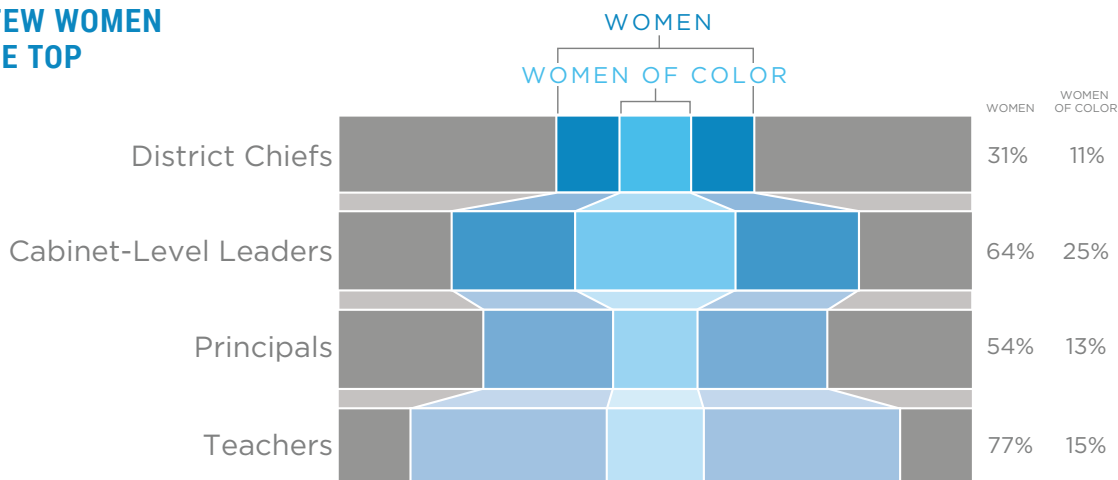
For women and men alike, the superintendent’s job is intense. “There’s not very many positions either in the public or private sector where you have this unusual stew of race and religion and income and language needs with everyone struggling over the one thing they care about the most, which is their children,” the Council of the Great City Schools’ Michael Casserly told [U.S. News & World Report](#). “So it makes the balancing act and the political demands, plus the demands for results, more acute than almost any other CEO-like position in any field one can imagine.”

Like many other senior leadership roles (including district cabinet positions), the position requires long days, as well as a presence at evening and weekend events and periodic travel to national events. That level of time commitment can be difficult to juggle alongside family responsibilities. “You need a supportive spouse or partner, but that’s true in any full-time profession,” says Chiefs for Change member Dr. Barbara Jenkins, who has served since 2012 as superintendent of Orange County Public Schools in

Florida. “Where men have the luxury of being outside of the home to be at late-night meetings, and attend sports events and be gone all weekend long, we [women] suffer from extraordinary guilt,” explains Dr. Lillian Lowery, former chief of both the Delaware Department of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education. Dr. Lowery is now vice president of student and teacher assessments at Educational Testing Service and co-facilitator of Chiefs for Change’s programming for women in leadership. “I understand why women are hesitant. We’re judged for missing events or bringing our children into the office, but not in the same way they judge men. The superintendency does not accommodate for child care or transportation to make it easier for women to take this step.”

The intensity of the position can also run headlong into another phenomenon facing women leaders: the so-called “glass cliff,” in which women are often brought in as the turnaround leader to take on the most challenging situations. “When an organization is in crisis, women are often seen as being able to come in and take care of a problem,” Anna Beninger, senior director of research and corporate engagement partner at Catalyst, a nonprofit focused on promoting women in business, told [Vox](#). “They’re effectively handed the mess to clean up.” In education, Dr. Ferguson says she has seen this play out repeatedly, especially among black women, who are often given opportunities when a role or organization is struggling, but pay a more significant penalty for failure than their male counterparts [due to the “double jeopardy” effect](#).

TOO FEW WOMEN AT THE TOP



District chiefs data from Chiefs for Change analysis using publicly reported figures on local education agency websites as of November 2018 including superintendents from the top five largest districts in each state (note: Hawaii and the District of Columbia are single-district states); cabinet-level leader data from Chiefs for Change analysis of its members’ cabinets using publicly reported information as available on gender, race, and ethnicity as of August 2018; principal and teacher data from the 2015-2016 edition of the [National Center for Education Statistics’ National Teacher and Principal Survey](#)

SOLUTIONS

With each talented woman or leader of color frustrated in her hunger to step up to top leadership, our talent pool for district and state chief positions shrinks—and school systems are worse off because of it. But we don't have to accept the status quo.

Based on interviews with female and male chiefs and other experts as well as research, Chiefs for Change believes that school systems, policymakers, and other stakeholders can address this challenge through a series of clear, specific, actionable steps.

SETTING GOALS, TRACKING PROGRESS, AND IDENTIFYING SHORTFALLS

To date, in the education sector, there has been relatively little attention paid to the inequitable representation of women and women of color in district and state superintendent seats, other than a slight uptick in media coverage of the issue when a female superintendent is chosen in a major city.

We must begin to demand greater attention to this topic—along with solid goals and transparent tracking of progress toward them. Neither school boards nor search consultants are currently required to report to state agencies or to the public the number or qualifications of their applicants, let alone their gender or race/ethnicity—but doing so would go a long way toward demonstrating that female candidates are being considered in an equitable way.

ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL ISSUES, INCLUDING:

Widening the Pipeline

Districts and states have made great strides toward developing teacher and principal leadership, but we haven't placed that same focus on finding and preparing excellent candidates for state chiefs and district superintendents. [As Chiefs for Change has noted before](#), great system leaders must be trained, mentored, and given opportunities to lead. In addition, women superintendents tend to earn less—[roughly \\$20,000–\\$30,000 less than their male counterparts, according to CGCS](#); [the most recent AASA survey notes a lower salary floor for women and higher ceiling for men](#). “Depending on the school board offering the salaries, they sometimes don't realize women can do this job just

as well,” [AASA president-elect Deb Kerr told EdSurge](#). “It's a gender-equity challenge we're dealing with.” Addressing this salary inequity would be a simple step toward leveling the playing field.

Leadership Development

We must pay greater attention to leadership development and succession throughout districts and state agencies. This should start at the top: superintendents themselves ought to groom more leaders from within their own cabinets through “[coaching trees](#),” in which they develop future leaders who share a long-term vision for excellence and equity and grow the pool of qualified internal candidates for future openings. This could increase diversity by giving female and non-white candidates a clearer path to the executive suite. It would also allow effective approaches to take hold and be continuously improved upon over many years—which is essential to realizing strong outcomes for kids. For example, Chiefs for Change Board Chair and Louisiana State Superintendent of Education John White created an intentional path for growth by actively mentoring Chiefs for Change member Kunjan Narechania before she [stepped up](#) as chief of the state's Recovery School District. She also shadowed and received mentoring from other sitting chiefs through the Future Chiefs program.

Advice for Chief Candidates from Dr. Barbara Jenkins

- 1 You are a precious commodity. Take the time to make sure the role is the right match.
- 2 Search firm reps are not your agents. They work for the district. You are your own agent.
- 3 Be discerning about what you apply for, and demonstrate that you are mobile.
- 4 Do your homework. Be more prepared than your competitors. Know the financials and operations as well as the instructional landscape. Demonstrate business acumen.
- 5 Be realistic about tenure but not fearful. There will always be more opportunities.

Likewise, when Chiefs for Change Chief-in-Residence Dr. Pete Gorman served as superintendent in Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina), he implemented the use of “depth charts” and long-term succession planning for all senior roles across his team to ensure he was constantly developing his next generation of leaders. “I knew who was the next person up at every position, as well as the next job opportunity for everyone in middle management,” he says. “That helped us start to look at things in totality, whereas if you wait until the vacancy comes open, you go with whoever’s ready at the time.”

Being more proactive and diligent about such planning is particularly important for women leaders, given that many don’t imagine themselves as the superintendent until much later in their careers—and therefore can easily miss opportunities to prepare until it’s too late. “When they began their career, they did not plan to become superintendents, or even administrators; it just happened,” [found one research study that studied the career paths of 15 female superintendents](#). “They did not plan to become building or district leaders, but over time, they built confidence from formal leadership experiences and adapted their professional goals.” Intervening earlier to identify and develop promising women leaders and help them see the pathways to leadership through horizontal and vertical moves in various core operating functions is critical to position women leaders for the top job. District and state systems must actively design a development process that includes sponsorship, mentorship, and access to role models, shifting from mere encouragement to true execution of career moves into the C-suite and CEO role.

Network Development

In addition to developing leadership skills and qualities in potential superintendent candidates, school systems and talent developers must also work to build formal and informal networks among rising leaders. Newly appointed Denver Superintendent Susana Cordova built networks through both Chiefs for Change’s [Future Chiefs](#) program and its Women in Leadership programming and the [Association of Latino Administrators & Superintendents \(ALAS\)](#). She credits these programs with giving her “opportunities to hear from sitting chiefs and get really good examples of tools, protocols, and ways of working with boards” that helped her secure the top spot in Denver—and will help her succeed there.

Dr. Penny Schwinn, who was appointed as Tennessee’s Commissioner of Education in February 2019, cited the

PROFILE: Dr. Barbara Jenkins



Dr. Barbara Jenkins has spent the vast majority of her career in Orange County Public Schools in central Florida, where she attended and later taught school despite being told she was “too smart” to become a teacher. From serving as an elementary school principal to supervising a group of them, Dr. Jenkins rose quickly into education leadership, catching the eye of administrators in North Carolina’s Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, where she relocated for several years to run human resources.

When she returned to Orange County, Dr. Jenkins knew she was ready to become superintendent, and spent several years on the senior leadership team, including as deputy superintendent, before being named to the top spot in 2012. She says that her many years of work in the district helped her build both the skills and relationships she needed for the chief role, including the trust of teachers and principals and a deep understanding of the instructional context. Her superintendent mentored her for the role.

Dr. Jenkins advises other aspiring woman superintendents to round out their skills, including finance and strategy. She was asked to focus on finance, facilities, and operations while being groomed as a future superintendent, and also credits [her two-year Broad Academy fellowship](#) with preparing her for the role. “The board needs to hear that confidence and language from the female candidate so they are taken seriously,” says Dr. Jenkins, who was once told by a female board member, “Honey, any man with a high school diploma is going to be a stronger candidate than a woman with a Ph.D.”

Despite these wide skills, she took the advice of former U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige to focus her time and energy. She took on board and community relations, hiring or moving other leaders to drive finance and operations, as well as curriculum and instruction.

Throughout her career, Dr. Jenkins has turned to a wide range of mentors and sponsors—mostly men, she notes, who encouraged her to seek promotions—and spends a

power of such support in her preparation for the new role. She was the sole member of the governor's cabinet recruited from out of state. "Governors, mayors, and school boards don't choose leaders for roles like these out of the blue," she said. "They choose a leader based on what she stands for, what she's done, how she leads and manages, whether they feel like they can trust her. It takes a network to let people know you exist and who you are and to vouch for your beliefs and results. Future Chiefs, and the Women in Leadership initiative in particular, helped me to identify key trusted mentors and allies that supported me throughout my search, placement, and transition, and allowed me to build this critical network, intentionally and thoughtfully."

Such networking activities can help counter the informal male networking that inevitably happens among male superintendents and in other male-dominated positions that typically feed into the superintendency, such as those overseeing operations and finance. [A recent study](#) found that such networks—and the presence of "an inner circle of predominantly female contacts who are connected to many non-overlapping third-party contacts"—are particularly important for women, possibly because those women tended to invest time in one another and help connect one another to new opportunities. [A follow-up study](#) of MBA students found these networks help strengthen women's job search, interviewing, and negotiation strategies.

In addition, if we truly want our leaders to reflect the students they serve, the anchors in our leadership networks—including current leaders, sponsors, and even leadership development programs—must actively seek talent from underserved communities and backgrounds. Women and women of color—especially those from lower-income backgrounds—often have less access to these networks, and therefore to the political capital they need to advance.

Mentoring and Sponsorships

As leaders move beyond early-stage development pathways and ascend the ranks toward higher levels of responsibility, they benefit less from low-stakes supportive "mentors" and more from active "sponsors" who take ownership for their advancement. "When women reach the senior executive level, crucial support relationships shift from mentors, who offer encouragement and advice, to sponsors, who take a hands-on role in managing career moves and promoting executives as potential CEOs," found an [HBR](#) survey of female CEOs. "Whether that sponsor was a predecessor

lot of her time now paying it forward for both women and men of color, including Future Chief [Jesus Jara](#) who now [leads in Clark County \(NV\)](#) and [Vickie Cartwright](#) who is [now running the school system in Oshkosh \(WI\)](#), as well as female superintendents throughout Florida. In addition, Dr. Jenkins supports the Future Chiefs program by letting up-and-coming leaders shadow her on the job in her district and has attended on-the-ground strategic planning days with newly placed chiefs.

She also notes that her spouse was supportive, which she feels is essential to any ambitious full-time career, though they still had to have tough conversations about the timing of their moves and what that would mean for their two children. "A strong marriage can survive career moves; a weak marriage is going to struggle regardless of the level of your job," Dr. Jenkins says. In her moves to Charlotte-Mecklenburg and back to Orange County, she and her husband came as a package deal in her moves to Charlotte-Mecklenburg and back, with his work in real estate applicable to the needs of the district.

As a woman superintendent, Dr. Jenkins takes heed of advice on compromise from her mentor Arlene Ackerman. "Not every issue needs to be a battle to the death," she reflects. "I won't ever do something that's harmful to children, but are there compromises I can make that will get me to the greater good for the children?"

That said, she also emphasizes that women must be confident enough to walk away from a job or a situation. When she was being considered for the superintendent role in Orange County, one female board member asked if she would stay on as deputy if she wasn't chosen. "I said no, it's time for me to be superintendent," Dr. Jenkins recalls. "You have to be willing to walk away from a search if the opportunity is not what's right for you, and you have to be willing to make that clear to board members. There's a perception that female candidates will be more passive or accommodating; women have to make a concerted effort to come across as assertive and be willing to upend the status quo tactfully."

CEO, another senior executive, board member, or external CEO, the women discussed the indispensable support—including tough feedback—sponsors provided." Research has found that people with sponsors [are more likely](#) to have the confidence to ask for stretch assignments and pay raises, but that [men typically have twice as many sponsors as women](#).

Sponsors can be particularly valuable for women of color, says Dr. Ferguson of KIPP Memphis. “Without a sponsor, women of color are just not seen,” she says. “It’s not that they aren’t doing credible work, but without the access and someone lobbying for you, they do not have the same opportunities.” She has sponsored several of the emerging women leaders in her organization, people who she believed had high potential but low visibility, and spends time giving them both explicit feedback on the barriers to their leadership and opportunities to step up into greater responsibility. “I put myself and my reputation on the line to convince my colleagues,” she says.

Likewise in business, of the 57 female CEOs interviewed by [HBR](#), “two-thirds said they didn’t realize they could be CEO until someone else told them, describing themselves as intensely focused on driving results rather than on their advancement and success.” By building in both mentorship for women early in their career, and sponsorship for women ascending into greater leadership, school systems can ensure that their most promising female leaders understand that the superintendency is within their grasp—and receive the support they need to get there.

Recruiting and Selection Processes

Prioritizing Gender Equity in the Superintendent Search and Selection Process

If we are going to move the needle on gender equity in superintendent roles, particularly among the nation’s 14,000 districts, school boards must demand that search firms bring forward more women and women of color during the search and selection process. Ideally, search firms would embrace this head-on, much the way that nonprofit education search firms like Promise 54 and Edgility Consulting are beginning to do with racial and ethnic diversity in their leadership searches. “I would love for search firms to have frank conversations with their clients around gender bias,” says Dr. Jenkins. “If the search firm only says they need a ‘diverse selection committee,’ that’s not enough. They need to raise the issue of bias and ask that the board consciously set those opinions aside as they consider the qualifications of these very capable candidates.”

At a minimum, The Education Trust’s Dr. John King Jr. suggests that school systems embrace the National Football League’s “Rooney Rule,” which requires every team with a head coaching vacancy to interview at least one diverse candidate, attending to gender as well as race. Congressional leaders have been using [a version](#)

PROFILE: Dr. Lillian Lowery

Longtime teacher Dr. Lillian Lowery loved classroom teaching and working with children on extra-curricular activities, first in rural North Carolina where she grew up, and later in Fairfax County, Virginia. As such, she initially resisted early recruitment calls urging her to apply for administrative positions. “I was not interested,” she recalls. However, she later realized that leading schools—and later districts—was an opportunity she ought to consider. As a high school principal, “I had far more influence from that perch in hiring teachers that were good for kids, choosing curriculum, and encouraging a holistic approach to teaching,” she says.



After an assistant superintendent stint in the Fort Wayne district in Indiana, and [going through the Broad Academy program](#), Dr. Lowery applied for and earned the job of superintendent in Delaware’s tiny Christina School District—and using the comprehensive financial audit techniques she learned from The Broad Center, quickly discovered she had inherited a financial disaster. “I found out in May that in June we wouldn’t be able to pay our employees—I didn’t create the mess, but I found it,” she recalls. “I had to go to Governor and ask to borrow \$20 million. With those loans, they set up a financial reserve committee to meet with legislators once a month, and through that I built great relationships with the team and the state.” Indeed, that challenging experience helped catapult her first into the position of state Secretary of Education in Delaware, and later state superintendent in Maryland.

Dr. Lowery’s path was smoothed by the many relationships she formed across those states, which helped her land those positions, but she also did a lot of work to get there. “It wasn’t like I went out looking for the jobs,” she says. “I did great work, I traveled, I rolled up my sleeves and got my hands dirty.” Her Southern roots led her to become deeply engaged in the community, and as a district administrator and as state chief she spent a lot of her time visiting schools.

Still, while she encourages female leaders to look to other women for support, Dr. Lowery believes that male mentors were vital to her success, as they provided her with access

of the rule to work toward hiring more diverse staff, and the TIME'S UP campaign recently [challenged](#) film studios to commit to hiring a female director on a feature film within the next 18 months. Ideally, at least two women and leaders of color ought to be included in any superintendent candidate pool; [research shows](#) that women and people of color are almost never chosen when there is just one of them because their differences are highlighted and decision-makers are at greater risk of choosing differently than their peers.

Likewise, we encourage school boards and search firms to commit to ending “tokenism” by not only finding, but actually selecting more qualified women leaders and women of color. In this way, we can ensure education leadership better reflects not only the diversity and lived experiences of its students, but also its teacher workforce.

Retaining More Women Superintendents

Developing great leaders shouldn't stop after chiefs are named or appointed, but must continue into the early months and years of an individual's tenure to ensure these chiefs outlast the dangerously low average tenure. This is particularly necessary for women and women of color, who face additional bias.

Coaching Support for New Chiefs

Many new chiefs find themselves isolated and without a community of support to turn to once they are on the job. All superintendents need this support, but particularly female superintendents, who often find themselves surrounded by an “old boys' network.” Dr. Jenkins believes woman superintendents need “a personal coach and lifeline, someone you can commiserate with when things go awry—better yet someone who can counsel you before you even go into that meeting.” Since its inception, Chiefs for Change has offered such critical coaching to its members, ensuring all members and Future Chiefs are paired with seasoned leaders who are still serving or those who have retired. This support should be provided not only to women leaders and leaders of color, but consistently to all new chiefs.

Transforming Structural Roadblocks

Changing the structural issues that create challenges for leaders with families requires using political capital, particularly when it involves changes to the status quo. When women rise to the top leadership positions, using these opportunities to create more inclusive policies that can open more doors for other women is crucial. [Research in the corporate sector has identified a range of](#)

and power. “If you can find women you can trust and who'll support you, that person can relate far better, but don't feel that's the only kind of mentorship you need,” she says. “The men who mentored me were in rooms I'd never been invited into, but they had the information, so they helped me navigate.”

That said, Dr. Lowery suggests that all aspiring leaders seek out mentors who can help them make the myriad connections they'll need when running a school system. A wide range of people will need to speak up on your behalf along the way, and they trust who they know. “Yes, I was black and female, but I had a track record,” she says of her hiring in Delaware and Maryland. “People were comfortable with me and knew I could get things done.”

Before stepping down from her post in Maryland in 2015 for the nonprofit and private sector, Dr. Lowery spent three years at the helm of Delaware's school system and the same in Maryland. To make the job sustainable, she learned from mentor (and former Fairfax County superintendent) Bud Spillane to “keep the main thing the main thing.” She worked hard to compartmentalize and block out negative noise in order to make the job sustainable, and urges other superintendents—men and women alike—to delegate wherever possible. “How do we set up superintendents with common-sense ways of doing the job so we don't exhaust people before they even get started?” Dr. Lowery wonders. “When do I as superintendent need to walk into the room? If I am always walking in, I am diminishing my effectiveness. I need to walk in when we have the right data and we're ready to take action.”

[policies](#) that make leadership roles more compatible with home and family responsibilities, such as [flexible hours and telecommuting](#); companies with these policies tend to have more women leaders, [one study found](#). While these may not be feasible in a district or state education chief role, school systems could help with job searches for spouses/partners of woman candidates, provide stipends for family care, compensate for early pension buyouts, allow short periods of telecommuting when leadership transitions occur in the middle of a school year to spend long weekends near family, and coordinate child care or transportation for their children.

Those benefits need not be specific to spouses or children—school systems could also find ways to ensure that the superintendent can maintain their health and relationships, such as coordinating gym memberships

or limiting evening and weekend meetings. In the business sector, work inspired by studying athletes has led to focusing on mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health of executives as a way to optimize their performance. “On the playing field or in the boardroom, high performance depends as much on how people renew and recover energy as on how they expend it, on how they manage their lives as much as on how they manage their work,” [say researchers Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz](#). “When people feel strong and resilient—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—they perform better, with more passion, for longer.”

In addition, flexible work schedules should become the norm at all levels of the system, and for women who temporarily opt out of leadership paths, there should be accelerated pathways to get them back onto strong leadership tracks with clear visibility into the top leadership positions. These policies could be negotiated in superintendent contracts and could benefit male candidates as well. There is no reason why the job of a superintendent—which oversees schools for the benefit of children and the well-being of a community—should be at odds with the care of children or a healthy individual lifestyle for the person sitting in that position.

Speaking up for the Next Generation of Women Leaders

Essential to the success of any chief is powerful, confident self-advocacy. Dr. Jenkins in particular offers thoughtful, detailed advice for women seeking the top job. (See [page 10](#) for Advice for Chief Candidates from Dr. Barbara Jenkins.) She urges women to recognize the hunger for talent in many districts, and to be careful in choosing where to apply, looking carefully at key indicators in a given district. And once in the interview, she says, women must be exceptionally prepared, demonstrating both business and instructional mastery, as well as a willingness to say the word “I.”

But women, she says, also have opportunities to advocate for other women—and must. “Bias doesn’t always come from men,” says Dr. Jenkins, who recalls a woman who discouraged her acceptance of a promotion because she was pregnant at the time. “I went into meetings about that position in a maternity dress and male leaders did not see my pregnancy as an obstacle. I honestly don’t think that she meant any harm. She thought she knew what was best, but female leaders need to be extremely conscious of supporting and mentoring and grooming other women.”

PROFILE: Hanna Skandera

Hanna Skandera took an unconventional path to becoming the chief in New Mexico. But her experiences setting goals, thinking strategically, and building teams across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors helped prepare her for the chief role.



Skandera was home-schooled, which forced her “to reflect on the purpose and value of school from a different lens, and to develop agency and curiosity,” she says. She was also pulled toward education by early experiences picking grapes on her grandfather’s raisin vineyards in central California, “developing a value for hard work and deep sense of gratitude.” Later, she coached young runners, which created a desire “to reach young people at formative ages and create as many pathways as possible for them.”

These experiences – along with a near-death experience at age 13 due to an undiagnosed medical condition—planted in Skandera a strong sense of purpose, as well as what she calls “grace, grit, and generational transfer” that have shaped her journey since. “Grace is the ability to do what you’re made to do. Grit is the faith to walk to the edge and the courage to live there,” she says. “Generational transfer is the humility to build on those who have gone before you and to invest in those who will come behind you.”

Her career began in research and public policy, both at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution and Pepperdine University’s Graduate School of Public Policy. At age 29, she was tapped to become Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger’s under secretary for education. A year and a half later, she joined Governor Jeb Bush in Florida as his deputy commissioner of education, followed by two years as senior policy advisor and deputy chief of staff to U.S. Secretary for Education Margaret Spellings.

Although she never served as a lead classroom teacher, Skandera believes it is important to “understand instructional excellence and high-expectations classrooms.” To gain that perspective, she launched a non-profit that supported classrooms for over six years.

Other women superintendents have had similar experiences, and urge their peers to not only be proactive in advancing their own careers but also to consider the advancement of women overall. “Women themselves are not using their political and social capital to help other women get into the superintendency in the ways we could and should,” says Guilford County’s Dr. Sharon Contreras, who says she’s faced more sexism from female board members than from males. “Women need to reflect on their own gender biases, because often we too believe the same stereotypes.”

Former New Mexico chief and Chiefs for Change Chief-in-Residence Hanna Skandera agrees that women need to prioritize care of themselves and their relationships. “Men are better at acknowledging what they need and building around it,” she says. “As women, we have to steward our relationships and our souls.” But advancing women in leadership, she warns, must align with what’s best for education overall. “For our next generation of women, we must be clear about our number one priority and purpose—changing the world for kids. We cannot afford to be distracted. The next generation’s future is at stake,” Skandera adds.

Partnering with Male Allies

At the same time, the voices of male, and white, allies carry great weight in advancing women and women of color in the superintendency, just as they do in business. Katherine W. Phillips, a professor of organizational management at Columbia University and director of its Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. Center for Leadership and Ethics, [told the *New York Times*](#) that she advises women to build a circle of support that includes at least one man. “I guarantee you that in a big workplace, there is a man who can support you. You have to find him,” she says. “As many of the messages that we’re getting these days, that men are essentially afraid to do this, there are men out there who are ready and able to be your champion.”

“Several other African American women told me I would never get this job if a white male didn’t speak up for me,” agrees Dr. Contreras. “That doesn’t mean that as women we have no influence, but those with political capital must speak on our behalf.” She urges men to bring the next generation of women leaders into their networks, mentioning them to the chamber of commerce, inviting them to participate in conversations with the school board, and ensuring that they’re visible in the community.

Former Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) superintendent Dr. Pete Gorman, who now coaches

“Each one of these roles taught me how important people are in creating opportunities and how to incentivize the outcomes you care most about,” she recalls. “They taught me how to manage significant budgets and identify the strategic levers to make a difference for our students.”

Experience in the private sector fueled an interest in returning to public leadership, so Skandera was ready to recommit to making tough decisions on behalf of kids in 2010 when she sat down with the new Governor-elect Susana Martinez of New Mexico. She was there to give the incoming Governor advice on education—and walked out with a job offer to lead the state’s education department.

Skandera found a huge gulf between being a deputy or undersecretary and being the chief, and advises other aspiring chiefs to make sure they are ready for that kind of responsibility. “There is nothing quite like being the only one standing on the line,” she says. “There is a lonely place where you are making a decision, particularly one that’s unpopular. I loved it but I could not have put into words the difference until I lived it.”

Skandera persisted in the position for nearly seven years, the first four of which she served without Senate confirmation, largely due to political squabbles. At times, the state’s male-dominated culture also made her feel particularly unwelcome. Yet, she said, she viewed those challenges as “opportunities to focus on what matters most and to reinvest in my commitment to students.”

Throughout her career, Skandera has relied upon a “personal advisory board” that she has consulted on key decisions since she was a teen, with members ranging from pastors and teachers to bosses and mentors. “As a leader, the most important component of success is to know your mission and consistently drive toward it,” she says. “For me, that was never to lose sight of our kids, their success, nor the sacrifices needed to keep their best interest front and center.”

Skandera also believes in building a strong team around her. “Know where you add unique value and build a team that is better than you are in every area they are leading,” she says. “They’ll give you the courage and perseverance when needed, the grit when you’re wavering, and a clear reminder that no one can do this work alone.”

Developing new leaders within that team is also vital for continuing the work over time. When she stepped down in 2017, she handed the reins to her deputy, Christopher Ruskowski (Future Chief, Cohort 1), who continued to

Future Chiefs as Chiefs for Change’s Chief-in-Residence, regrets he didn’t do more to encourage female leaders; although 17 people from his cabinet have become superintendents, only five were women. “I often traveled with our cabinet to events and activities to expose them to developmental opportunities. I sometimes traveled alone with men but I did not travel alone with women,” he says. “Looking back, I wish I traveled more with small groups to make sure that I did not deprive any individuals of growth opportunities.” Sometimes the best thing a male leader can do is intentionally make space for more voices and listen to them, including those of women and women of color, says Education Trust’s Dr. King. “If there’s a meeting and all the leaders in the meeting are going to be men, figure out how to get women leaders into the room—even if that means the size of the meeting gets larger,” he notes.

push forward the policies and programs she put in place until the end of Governor Martinez’s second term. “We must acknowledge the people and the supports that made it possible for us to lead,” she says. “Respect that work has happened before you’ve arrived, and prepare to hand the baton off to the next generation.”

As she reflects on what it will take to ensure that more women become district and state chiefs, Skandera believes women ought to support one another. “You’re only stronger if you contribute to others as much as others contribute to you,” she says, urging us to use challenges “as fuel to recommit to our purpose to students and drive toward impact.”

CONCLUSION

Well over a century ago, America’s public school systems were designed as places where men told women what to do. Today, as in so many other types of organizations and industries, the legacy of that past—the systems, cultures, networks, and behaviors—remains pervasive. Just as is true with racial inequities in the workplace, change is possible and practical for women leaders. It’s just hard work.

As this paper has laid out, that work isn’t mysterious. We know much about what to do, and we’re rapidly learning more. It’s a matter of will, commitment, and investment. This must be a priority for all state and local leaders and everyone who works in education.

This must be a priority for all state and local leaders and everyone who works in education.

The risk is that changing the odds for women leaders will fall into the category of nicety rather than necessity, and that powerful people will pay lip service and let it fall down the priority list.

That would be a shameful error. We need visionary leaders for our school systems. And in a field that invests

incalculable resources—not just money, but the time and attention of entire communities and states—in selecting the right leader, a pattern of squandering the potential of so much of the talent pool is indefensible.

And it may well be that there’s a tipping point where this work will get easier—when more women are in positions to drive it. Women superintendents may be able to make the job more manageable and feasible for other women—and for everyone else. That is a change that can benefit not only the adults in our system, but also our students. Anne-Marie Slaughter, former State Department official and Princeton dean, has [said](#), “Only when women wield power in sufficient numbers will we create a society that genuinely works for all women. That will be a society that works for everyone.”

At Chiefs for Change, we didn’t discover or invent this work. But we are committed to reexamining and strengthening our own efforts to ease the path for exceptionally talented leaders who don’t look like most of today’s superintendents and chiefs. We’re in.

But this is everyone’s work.

Undoing the patterns of the past, turning the spotlight on an unacceptable reality, building new practices and cultures—all of that is, fundamentally, an act of leadership.

What will you do?

Building a Diverse Pipeline: The Future Chiefs Program

At Chiefs for Change, we are focused on building a supportive community among district and state chiefs so they can bring their best to the important work of leading our nation's school systems—and so they are prepared and supported in that work. State and district chiefs have enormous influence over what America's 50 million public school students learn, how schools function, and how they attract, support, and keep strong teachers and principals. Few pathways exist to help identify and prepare candidates for state and district chief roles, let alone programs specifically targeted at bringing diversity into the seat. Because there's so little practical preparation, too many women leaders and leaders of color are isolated, lacking the peers and resources they need to succeed in the role.

One of our most critical efforts is [Future Chiefs](#), a leadership development program that identifies talented, diverse leaders and provides them with the experiences and preparation they will need to become savvy, strong district and state chiefs right from the start. To address the need for more diversity at the top, we have made a commitment to preparing cohorts of Future Chiefs that are bipartisan and aim to be at least 75 percent leaders of color and 50 percent women.

Yet we are redoubling our focus on women, and women of color, because of a much clearer understanding now about the struggles our female Future Chiefs have faced. Indeed, this report is part of an effort to do more to support women leaders and to shine a spotlight on the barriers to their ascendance to the top job.

The Future Chiefs effort represents a deep immersion in leadership preparation. Over the course of a 12-month program, Future Chiefs cohort members benefit from learning experiences that include:

- Individualized monthly coaching from former district and state chiefs
- Shadowing current Chiefs for Change members
- Training in public speaking, media preparation, and board relations
- Consultancies to work through case studies of problems of practice with Chiefs for Change members and partners

- Access to the Chiefs for Change network of members and partners

- Support in search and placement for chief roles, including portfolio building and transition support

Despite significant successes in placing men in top jobs, we have seen much more limited success with women candidates. We responded to that challenge with the creation of a specific strand of preparation specifically for women leaders. Prior to launching our Women in Leadership programming in August 2018, only seven percent of our women obtained a state or district chief role compared to 42 percent of our men. Since then, happily, those numbers are improving. As of February 2019, 23 percent of our women Future Chiefs have landed the top chief job. During that same time period, we also increased the proportion of our women stepping into a state or district chief search from 23 percent to 46 percent (compared to 83 percent of our men who stepped into a chief search).

Our Women in Leadership programming is designed specifically for our female Future Chiefs and involves confidential women-only cohort convenings to allow these leaders to speak frankly about the challenges of the superintendency, the barriers that stand in their way, and how they can support one another in dismantling those barriers. In doing so, we have created a space for our women Future Chiefs to grow in trust, relationship, and leadership. And we're proud that since we launched the programming three of our Future Chiefs were selected as chiefs: Susana Cordova was selected as superintendent in Denver, Dr. Penny Schwinn was selected as state chief in Tennessee, and Angélica Infante-Green was selected as state chief in Rhode Island.

"I am in this role because of Chiefs for Change," says Cordova, who took over as superintendent in Denver after 30 years of working in the district as a teacher, principal, and administrator, including two years as Deputy Superintendent. She cites the support and preparation she received throughout her job search as crucial to securing the top position.

But we have so much further to go to reach the moment where women have an equal chance to bring their talents to the top job.

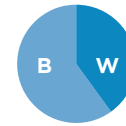
Join Chiefs for Change in calling attention to this challenge and its solutions by sharing this report—and what your organization is doing about it.

APPENDIX

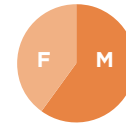
Gender and Race/Ethnicity of State and District Education Leaders, by State

ALABAMA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Eric Mackey	W	M
Mobile County Schools	Chresal Threadgill	B	M
Jefferson County Schools	Craig Pouncey	W	M
Baldwin County Public Schools	Eddie Tyler	W	M
Montgomery Public Schools	Ann Roy Moore	B	F
Birmingham City Schools	Lisa Herring	B	F



RACE/ETHNICITY
40% White
60% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

ALASKA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Michael Johnson	W	M
Anchorage School District	Deena Bishop	W	F
Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District	Monica Goyette	W	F
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District	Karen Gaborik	W	F
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	Sean Dusek	W	M
Juneau Borough School District	Bridget Weiss	W	F



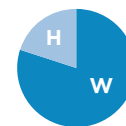
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



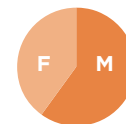
GENDER
20% Male
80% Female

ARIZONA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Kathy Hoffman	W	F
Mesa Public Schools	Ember Conley	W	F
Tucson Unified School District	Gabriel Trujillo	HIS/LAT	M
Chandler Unified School District #80	Camille Casteel	W	F
Peoria Unified School District	Linda Palles Thompson	W	M
Gilbert Unified School District	Shane McCord	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
0% Black
20% His/Lat



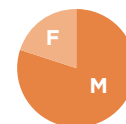
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

ARKANSAS

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Johnny Key	W	M
Little Rock School District	Michael Poore	W	M
Springdale School District	Jim Rollins	W	M
Pulaski County Special School District	Charles McNulty	W	M
Bentonville School District	Debbie Jones	W	F
Rogers School District	Marlin Berry	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



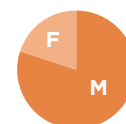
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

CALIFORNIA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Tony Thurmond	B	M
Los Angeles Unified School District	Austin Beutner	W	M
San Diego Unified School District	Cindy Marten	W	F
Long Beach Unified School District	Christopher J. Steinhauser	W	M
Fresno Unified School District	Bob Nelson	W	M
Elk Grove Unified School District	Christopher R. Hoffman	W	M



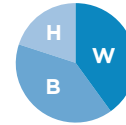
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

COLORADO

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Katy Anthes	W	F
Denver Public Schools	Ron Cabrera	HIS/LAT	M
Jefferson County Public Schools	Jason Glass	W	M
Douglas County School District RE-1	Thomas Tucker	B	M
Cherry Creek School District	Scott Siegfried	W	M
Aurora Public Schools	Rico Munn	B	M



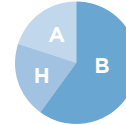
RACE/ETHNICITY
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40% Black
20% His/Lat



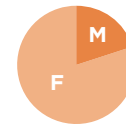
GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

CONNECTICUT

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Dianna Roberge-Wentzell	W	F
New Haven Public Schools	Carol Birks	B	F
Bridgeport Public Schools	Aresta Johnson	B	F
Hartford Public Schools	Leslie Torres-Rodriguez	HIS/LAT	F
Waterbury Public Schools	Verna Ruffin	B	F
Stamford Public Schools	Earl Kim	AAPI*	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
0% White
60% Black
20% His/Lat
20% AAPI*



GENDER
20% Male
80% Female

DC

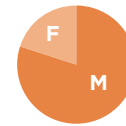
DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Hanseul Kang	AAPI*	F
District of Columbia Public Schools	Amanda Alexander	B	F

DELAWARE

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Susan Bunting	W	F
Red Clay Consolidated School District	Jill Floore	W	F
Christina School District	Richard L. Gregg	W	M
Brandywine School District	Mark Holodick	W	M
Appoquinimink School District	Matthew Burrows	W	M
Indian River School District	Mark Steele	W	M



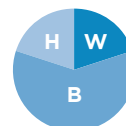
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
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0% His/Lat



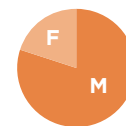
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

FLORIDA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Richard Corcoran	W	M
Miami-Dade County Public Schools	Alberto M. Carvalho	HIS/LAT	M
Broward County Public Schools	Robert Runcie	B	M
Hillsborough County Public Schools	Jeff Eakins	W	M
Orange County Public Schools	Barbara M. Jenkins	B	F
School District of Palm Beach County	Donald Fennoy	B	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
20% White
60% Black
20% His/Lat



GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

GEORGIA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Richard Woods	W	M
Gwinnett County Public Schools	J. Alvin Wilbanks	W	M
Cobb County School District	Chris Ragsdale	W	M
DeKalb County School District	R. Stephen Green	B	M
Fulton County Schools	Jeff Rose	W	M
Clayton County Public Schools	Morcease J. Beasley	B	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
40% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

HAWAII

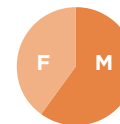
DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Christina Kishimoto	HIS/LAT	F

IDAHO

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Sherri Ybarra	W	F
West Ada School District	Mary Ann Ranells	W	F
Boise School District	Don Coberly	W	M
Nampa School District	Paula Kellerer	W	F
Pocatello/Chubbuck School District	Doug Howell	W	M
Bonneville Joint School District	Charles Shackett	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



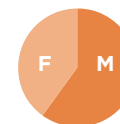
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

ILLINOIS

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Tony Smith	W	M
Chicago Public Schools	Janice Jackson	B	F
School District U-46	Tony Sanders	W	M
Rockford School District 205	Ehren Jarrett	W	M
Indian Prairie Comm. Unit School District 204	Karen Sullivan	W	F
Plainfield School District 202	Lane Abrell	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
00% His/Lat



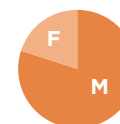
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

INDIANA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Jennifer McCormick	W	F
Indianapolis Public Schools	Lewis D. Ferebee	B	M
Fort Wayne Community Schools	Wendy Robinson	B	F
Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation	David B. Smith	W	M
Hamilton Southeastern School District	Allen Bourff	W	M
South Bend Community School Corporation	Kenneth Spells	B	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
40% White
60% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

IOWA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Ryan Wise	W	M
Des Moines Ind. Comm. School District	Thomas Ahart	W	M
Cedar Rapids Community School District	Brad Buck	W	M
Davenport Community School District	TJ Schneckloth	W	M
Sioux City Community School District	Paul Gausman	W	M
Iowa City Community School District	Stephen F. Murley	W	M



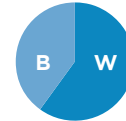
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



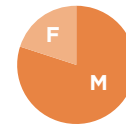
GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

KANSAS

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Randy Watson	W	M
Wichita Unified School District	Alicia Thompson	B	F
Olathe Unified School District	John Allison	W	M
Shawnee Mission School District	Michael Fulton	W	M
Blue Valley Unified School District	Todd White	W	M
Kansas City Kansas Public Schools	Charles Foust	B	M



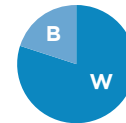
RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
40% Black
0% His/Lat



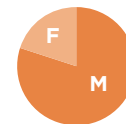
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

KENTUCKY

DISTRICT	LEADER	ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Wayne Lewis	B	M
Jefferson County Public Schools	Martin "Marty" Pollio	W	M
Fayette County Public Schools	Emmanuel "Manny" Caulk	B	M
Boone County Public Schools	Randy Poe	W	M
Warren County Public Schools	Rob Clayton	W	M
Hardin County Public Schools	Teresa Morgan	W	F



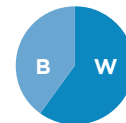
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

LOUISIANA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	John White	W	M
Jefferson Parish Public Schools	Cade Brumley	W	M
Orleans Parish School Board	Henderson Lewis, Jr.	B	M
East Baton Rouge Parish Public Schools	Warren Drake	W	M
Caddo Parish Public Schools	Theodis Lamar Goree	B	M
St. Tammany Parish Public Schools	W. L. "Trey" Folse, III	W	M



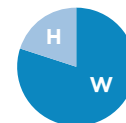
RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
40% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

MAINE

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Pender Makin	W	F
Portland Public Schools	Xavier Botana	HIS/LAT	M
Lewiston School Department	Bill Webster	W	M
Bangor School Department	Betsy M. Webb	W	F
Auburn Public Schools	Katherine Grondin	W	F
Regional School Unit No. 06 (MSAD 05)	Paul Penna	W	M



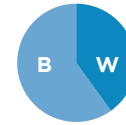
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
0% Black
20% His/Lat



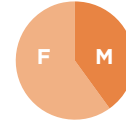
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

MARYLAND

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Karen Salmon	W	F
Montgomery County Public Schools	Jack R. Smith	W	M
Prince George's County Public Schools	Monica Goldson	B	F
Baltimore County Public Schools	Verletta White	B	F
Baltimore City Public Schools	Sonja Brookins Santelises	B	F
Anne Arundel County Public Schools	George Arlotto	W	M



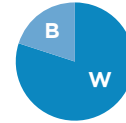
RACE/ETHNICITY
40% White
60% Black
0% His/Lat



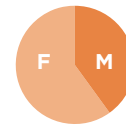
GENDER
40% Male
60% Female

MASSACHUSETTS

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Jeff Riley	W	M
Boston Public Schools	Laura Perille	W	F
Springfield Public Schools	Daniel Warwick	W	M
Worcester Public Schools	Maureen Binienda	W	F
Brockton Public Schools	Kathleen A. Smith	W	F
Lynn Public Schools	Patrick Tutwiler	B	M



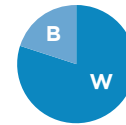
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



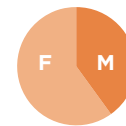
GENDER
40% Male
60% Female

MICHIGAN

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Sheila Alles	W	F
Detroit Public Schools Community District	Nikolai Vitti	W	M
Utica Community Schools	Christine Johns	W	F
Dearborn City School District	Glenn Maleyko	W	M
Plymouth-Canton Community Schools	Monica L. Merritt	B	F
Ann Arbor Public Schools	Jeanice Kerr Swift	W	F



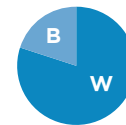
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



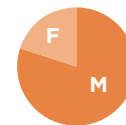
GENDER
40% Male
60% Female

MINNESOTA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Mary Cathryn Ricker	W	F
Anoka-Hennepin Public School District	David Law	W	M
St. Paul Public School District	Joe Gothard	B	M
Minneapolis Public School District	Ed Graff	W	M
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Ind. S.D. No. 196	Mary Kreger	W	F
Osseo Public School District	Jim Bauck	W	M



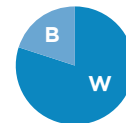
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



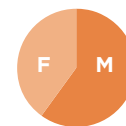
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

MISSISSIPPI

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Carey Wright	W	F
DeSoto County School District	Cory Uselton	W	M
Jackson Public School District	Errick L. Greene	B	M
Rankin County School District	Sue Townsend	W	F
Harrison County School District	Roy Gill	W	M
Madison County School District	Kimber Halliburton	W	F



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



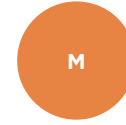
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

MISSOURI

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Margie Vandeven	W	F
Springfield Public Schools	John Jungmann	W	M
St. Louis City School District	Kelvin R. Adams	B	M
Rockwood R-VI School District	Eric Knost	W	M
North Kansas City School District	Dan Clemens	W	M
Fort Zumwalt R-II School District	Bernard J. DuBray	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



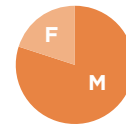
GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

MONTANA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Elsie Arntzen	W	F
Billings Public Schools	Greg Upham	W	M
Great Falls Public Schools	Tammy Lacey	W	F
Missoula County Public Schools	Mark A. Thane	W	M
Helena Public Schools	Tyler Ream	W	M
Bozeman Public Schools	Rob Watson	W	M



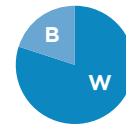
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



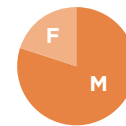
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

NEBRASKA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Matthew Blomstedt	W	M
Omaha Public Schools	Cheryl Logan	B	F
Lincoln Public Schools	Steve Joel	W	M
Millard Public Schools	Jim Sutfin	W	M
Papillion-La Vista School District	Andy Rikli	W	M
Bellevue Public Schools	Jeff Rippe	W	M



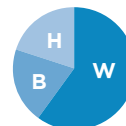
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



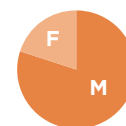
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

NEVADA

DISTRICT	LEADER	ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Steve Canavero	W	M
Clark County School District	Jesus Jara	HIS/LAT	M
Washoe County School District	Traci Davis	B	F
Elko County School District	Todd Pehrson	W	M
Lyon County School District	Wayne Workman	W	M
Carson City School District	Richard Stokes	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
20% Black
20% His/Lat



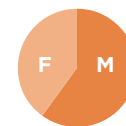
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

NEW HAMPSHIRE

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Frank Edelblut	W	M
Manchester School District	Bolgen Vargas	HIS/LAT	M
Nashua School District	Jahmal Mosley	B	M
Derry School District	Mary Ann Connors-Krikorian	W	F
Concord School District	Terri Forsten	W	F
Bedford School District	Michael Fournier	W	M



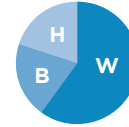
RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
20% Black
20% His/Lat



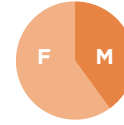
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

NEW JERSEY

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Lamont Repollet	B	M
Newark Public School District	Roger Leon	HIS/LAT	M
Jersey City Public Schools	Marcia V. Lyles	B	F
Paterson Public Schools	Eileen Shafer	W	F
Elizabeth Public Schools	Olga Hugelmeyer	W	F
Toms River Regional School District	David Healy	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
20% Black
20% His/Lat



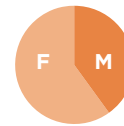
GENDER
40% Male
60% Female

NEW MEXICO

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Howie Morales	HIS/LAT	M
Albuquerque Public Schools	Raquel Reedy	HIS/LAT	F
Las Cruces Public Schools	Gregory Ewing	W	M
Rio Rancho Public Schools	Sue Cleveland	W	F
Gadsden Independent Schools	Travis L. Dempsey	W	M
Santa Fe Public Schools	Veronica Garcia	HIS/LAT	F



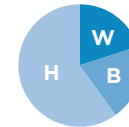
RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
0% Black
40% His/Lat



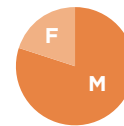
GENDER
40% Male
60% Female

NEW YORK

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Mary Ellen Elia	W	F
New York City Department of Education	Richard Carranza	HIS/LAT	M
Buffalo Public Schools	Kriner Cash	B	M
Rochester City School District	Barbara Deane Williams	W	F
Yonkers City School District	Edwin M. Quezada	HIS/LAT	M
Syracuse City School District	Jaime Alicea	HIS/LAT	M



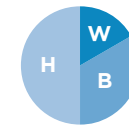
RACE/ETHNICITY
20% White
20% Black
60% His/Lat



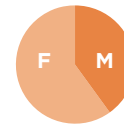
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

NORTH CAROLINA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Mark Johnson	W	M
Wake County Public School System	Cathy Moore	HIS/LAT	F
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Clayton Wilcox	HIS/LAT	M
Guilford County Schools	Sharon L. Contreras	B/HIS/LAT	F
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools	Beverly Emory	W	F
Cumberland County Schools	Marvin Connelly Jr.	B	M



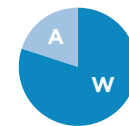
RACE/ETHNICITY
20% White
40% Black
60% His/Lat



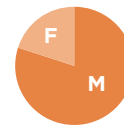
GENDER
40% Male
60% Female

NORTH DAKOTA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Kirsten Baesler	W	F
Bismarck Public Schools	Jim Haussler	W	M
Fargo Public Schools	Rupak Gandhi	AAPI*	M
West Fargo Public Schools	Beth Slette	W	F
Minot School District No. 1	Mark Vollmer	W	M
Grand Forks School District	Terry Brenner	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat
20% AAPI*



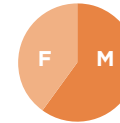
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

OHIO

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Paolo DeMaria	W	M
Columbus City Schools	Talisa Dixon	B	F
Cleveland Metropolitan School District	Eric Gordon	W	M
Cincinnati City School District	Catherine Laura Mitchell	B	F
Toledo City School District	Romules Durant	B	M
South-Western City School District	Bill Wise	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
40% White
60% Black
0% His/Lat



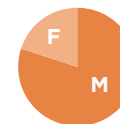
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

OKLAHOMA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Joy Hofmeister	W	F
Oklahoma City Public Schools	Sean McDaniel	W	M
Tulsa Public Schools	Deborah Gist	W	F
Edmond Public Schools	Bret Towne	W	M
Moore Public Schools	Robert Romines	W	M
Putnam City Public Schools	Fred Rhodes	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



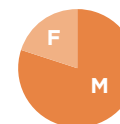
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

OREGON

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Colt Gill	W	M
Portland Public Schools	Guadalupe Guerrero	HIS/LAT	M
Salem-Keizer School District	Christy Perry	W	F
Beaverton School District	Don Grotting	W	M
Hillsboro School District	Mike Scott	W	M
Bend-LaPine School District	Shay Mikalson	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
0% Black
20% His/Lat



GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

PENNSYLVANIA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Pedro Rivera	HIS/LAT	M
School District of Philadelphia	William R. Hite, Jr.	B	M
Pittsburgh Public Schools	Anthony Hamlet	B	M
Central Bucks School District	John Kopicki	W	M
Reading School District	Khalid N. Mumin	B	M
Allentown City School District	Thomas E. Parker	B	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
20% White
80% Black
0% His/Lat



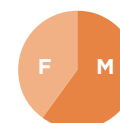
GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

RHODE ISLAND

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Ken Wagner	W	M
Providence Public Schools	Christopher N. Maher	W	M
Cranston Public Schools	Jeannine Nota-Masse	W	F
Warwick Public Schools	Phillip Thorton	W	M
Pawtucket School District	Patti DiCenso	W	F
Woonsocket Public Schools	Patrick McGee	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



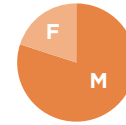
GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

SOUTH CAROLINA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Molly Spearman	W	F
Greenville County School District	W. Burke Royster	W	M
Charleston County School District	Gerrita Postlewait	W	F
Horry County Schools	Rick Maxey	W	M
Berkeley County School District	Eddie Ingram	W	M
Richland School District No. 2	Baron R. Davis	B	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



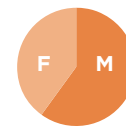
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

SOUTH DAKOTA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Ben Jones	W	M
Sioux Falls School District	Brian Maher	W	M
Rapid City Area School District	Lori J. Simon	W	F
Harrisburg School District	Jim Holbeck	W	M
Aberdeen School District	Becky Guffin	W	F
Brandon Valley School District	Jarod Larson	W	M



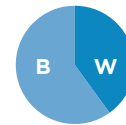
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

TENNESSEE

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Penny Schwinn	Multi	F
Shelby County Schools	Dorsey E. Hopson, II	B	M
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	Shawn Joseph	B	M
Knox County Schools	Bob Thomas	W	M
Hamilton County School District	Bryan Johnson	B	M
Rutherford County Schools	Bill C. Spurlock	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
40% White
60% Black
0% His/Lat



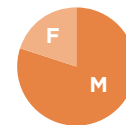
GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

TEXAS

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Mike Morath	W	M
Houston Independent School District	Grenita Latham	B	F
Dallas Independent School District	Michael Hinojosa	HIS/LAT	M
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District	Mark Henry	W	M
Northside Independent School District	Brian Woods	W	M
Fort Worth Independent School District	Kent Paredes Scribner	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
60% White
20% Black
20% His/Lat



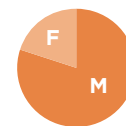
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

UTAH

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Sydnee Dickson	W	F
Alpine School District	Samuel Y. Jarman	W	M
Davis School District	Reid Newey	W	M
Granite School District	Martin W. Bates	W	M
Jordan School District	Patrice Johnson	W	F
Canyons School District	James Briscoe	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



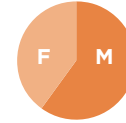
GENDER
80% Male
20% Female

VERMONT

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Daniel French	W	M
Essex Westford School District	Beth Ellen Cobb	W	F
Champlain Valley School District	Elaine Pinckney	W	F
Burlington School District	Yaw Obeng	B	M
Maple Run Unified School District	Kevin Dirth	W	M
South Burlington School District	David Young	W	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
60% Male
40% Female

VIRGINIA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	James Lane	W	M
Fairfax County Public Schools	Scott Brabrand	W	M
Prince William County Public Schools	Steven L. Walts	W	M
Loudoun County Public Schools	Eric Williams	W	M
Virginia Beach City Public Schools	Aaron Spence	W	M
Chesterfield County Public Schools	Mervin B. Daugherty	W	M



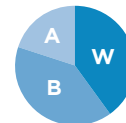
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

WASHINGTON

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Chris Reykdal	W	M
Seattle Public Schools	Denise Juneau	AIAN*	F
Spokane School District	Shelley Redinger	W	F
Lake Washington School District	Jane Stavem	W	F
Tacoma School District	Carla Santorno	B	F
Kent School District	Calvin J. Watts	B	M



RACE/ETHNICITY
40% White
40% Black
0% His/Lat
20% AIAN*



GENDER
20% Male
80% Female

WEST VIRGINIA

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Steve Paine	W	M
Kanawha County Schools	Ron Duerring	W	M
Berkeley County Schools	Manny P. Arvon	W	M
Wood County Schools	William Hosaflook	W	M
Cabell County Schools	Ryan Saxe	W	M
Raleigh County Schools	David Price	W	M



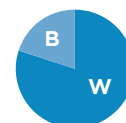
RACE/ETHNICITY
100% White
0% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
100% Male
0% Female

WISCONSIN

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Carolyn Stanford Taylor	B	F
Milwaukee Public Schools	Keith Posley	B	M
Madison Metropolitan School District	Jennifer Cheatham	W	F
Kenosha School District	Sue Savaglio-Jarvis	W	F
Green Bay Area Public School District	Michelle S. Langenfeld	W	F
Racine Unified School District	Lolli Haws	W	F



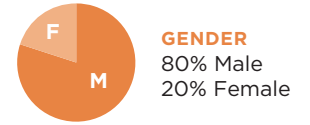
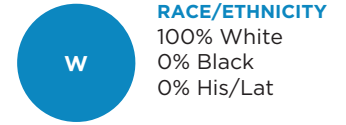
RACE/ETHNICITY
80% White
20% Black
0% His/Lat



GENDER
20% Male
80% Female

WYOMING

DISTRICT	LEADER	RACE/ETHNICITY	GENDER
State Chief	Jillian Balow	W	F
Laramie County School District No. 1	Boyd Brown	W	M
Natrona County School District No. 1	Steve Hopkins	W	M
Campbell County School District No. 1	Alex Ayers	W	M
Sweetwater County School District No. 1	Kelly McGovern	W	F
Albany County School District No. 1	Jubal C. Yennie	W	M



Superintendents listed include superintendents from the top five largest districts in each state as of November 2018, including Hawaii and the District of Columbia, which are single-district states. State chiefs listed include all 50 states and the District of Columbia as of January 2019. Please note that the pie charts include figures only from district superintendents listed based on publicly available information on gender, race, and ethnicity as verifiable.

His/Lat stands for Hispanic/Latino.

*AAPI stands for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; AIAN stands for American Indian or Alaska Native.