# The Essential Elements for Principal Residencies

The diagram shows the organization and relationship of the *Essential Elements for Principal Residencies*. Please note that principal residency programs occur as part of broader principal preparation programs, generally toward the end. After successful completion of the preparation program, candidates may become principals or may become teacher-leaders or assistant principals.
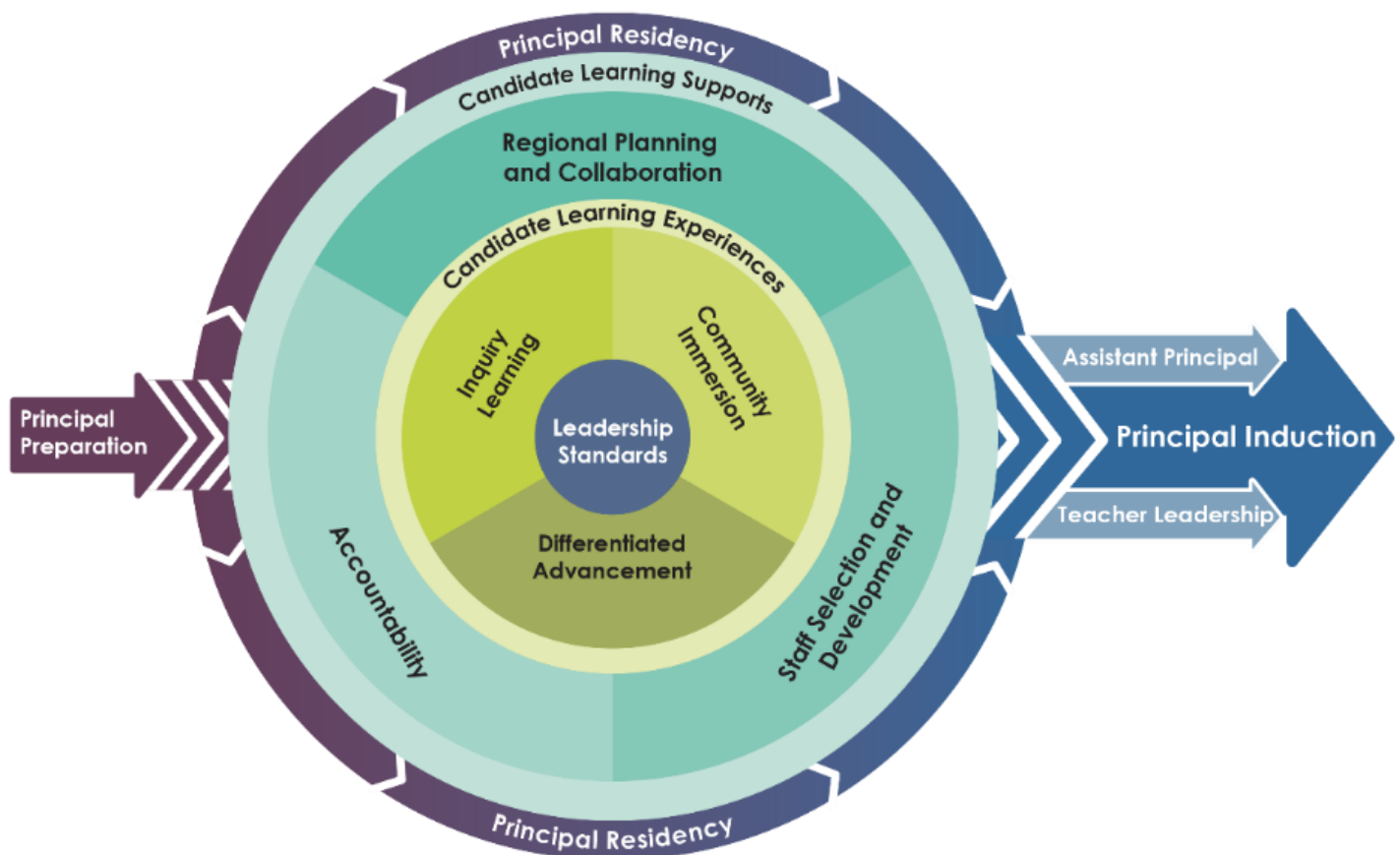
To access the full **Ready to Lead** publication, please visit: http://bit.ly/ResidencyDesign.

The following chart provides brief definitions of each Essential Element.

Candidate Learning Experiences

Element 1: Leadership Standards

Candidate performance expectations are written in behavioral terms to reflect candidates' future job responsibilities and national standards. Leadership competencies anchor the entire preparation program, including candidate assignment or "match" to the residency school and mentor, curriculum, advancement and evaluation.

Element 2: Differentiated Advancement

Each principal candidate has an individualized learning plan that reflects his or her strengths and weaknesses, as determined by selection and performance assessment information that moves candidates from guided learning and practice to more substantive leadership responsibilities. Principal candidate learning experiences scaffold skill and identity development, allowing candidates to learn content, experiment with leadership practice, and learn from mistakes. Formative assessment and feedback based on observation of candidate performance in the residency guide and accelerate candidate growth and development.

Element 3: Community Immersion

During the residency, principal candidates learn through immersion in two communities simultaneously. One is the professional community cultivated among the cohort of candidates in the preparation program. The second is the school community, where immersion includes participation in sustained, substantive, job-embedded learning experiences with opportunities for schoolwide decision making and assuming responsibility for authentic leadership work.

Element 4: Inquiry Learning

Individual candidate and candidate cohort learning is organized around cycles of inquiry, action and reflection on the impact of leadership on students, staff, schools and communities, with a primary focus on the schools in which immersion experiences occur.

Candidate Learning Supports

Element 5: Regional Planning and Collaboration

Preparation program planning and collaboration occur through a formalized partnership among preparation program faculty and staff, district representatives, K-12 educators, principal associations, and other stakeholders. The success of this collaboration relies on clearly defined decision-making authority and considers how well the program meets regional leadership workforce talent needs. Curriculum, instruction, mentoring, and assessment decisions are informed by all partners, who share responsibility for ensuring candidates have rigorous, meaningful and consistent learning experiences.

Element 6: Staff Selection and Development

All program faculty members, including mentor principals who support in-school residency experiences, demonstrate the requisite knowledge and skills to support candidates effectively. Intentional selection, training, and evaluation processes for facilitators, mentor principals, and coaches are in place and reflect the experience and skills needed to facilitate candidate learning, with an emphasis on participant assessment and feedback. Program leaders match principal candidates carefully with the mentors, coaches, and residency sites that are best positioned to meet their specific learning needs.

Element 7: Accountability

The program maintains systems and processes to collect, analyze and maintain longitudinal data on candidate perspectives on program quality, candidate progress, and candidate performance and retention after graduation for the purposes of monitoring and improving program coherence with standards, consistency across implementation contexts over time, and continuous program improvement.