

A Landscape Analysis of School Building Leadership Preparation Programs in New York State

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Abstract

In recent years, the landscape of K-12 educational leadership preparation has evolved nationally and in New York State (NYS). In this foundational landscape analysis report, our research team has identified currently active programs for school building leadership in the 2023-2024 academic year, collected relevant data about each, and analyzed tabulations to discern essential findings and implications for the field. Recommendations include important state and program policy shifts to ensure program sustainability, access, and quality over the coming decade, specifically related to credit requirements, adjunct/faculty ratios, instructional modalities, and DEI-related program content and recruiting efforts.

Introduction

In recent years, the landscape of K-12 educational leadership preparation has evolved nationally and in New York State (NYS). We've seen increased policy around program standards and topics of focus. As a representative group of faculty from leadership preparation programs, we set out to synthesize the influence of these shifting priorities and guidelines on higher education programs and their preparation of aspiring school leaders.

This research is made possible through the Diversity Leadership Initiative, supported by a grant from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to Stony Brook University. The initiative's aim has been to address the shortage of diverse and well-prepared K-12 school leaders throughout New York State. Facilitated by faculty from five universities, namely Stony Brook University, City College of New York, Fordham University, Hofstra University, and St. John's University, this initiative is a collaborative effort to promote a diverse leadership pipeline. This leadership preparation program investigation provides a foundation for exploring further initiatives.

Research Focus

We focused research efforts on school building leadership (SBL) preparation programs and omitted district leadership programs and doctoral programs with certification options. This targeted focus helps us understand and track changes as they relate to school leadership and its preparation, specifically. Three framing questions guided our research efforts:

1. What is the current landscape of SBL preparation programs throughout NYS?
 - a. How does program availability differ by region and public/private status?
2. What is the nature of program content, structure, and delivery?
 - a. How does this differ by region?
3. How do programs prepare leaders for diversity, equity, and inclusion practices?
 - a. How do these approaches differ by region?

**Landscape of SBL
Preparation
Programs in NYS**

**Nature of Program
Content, Structure,
and Delivery**

**Leader Preparation
for Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion
Practices in Schools**

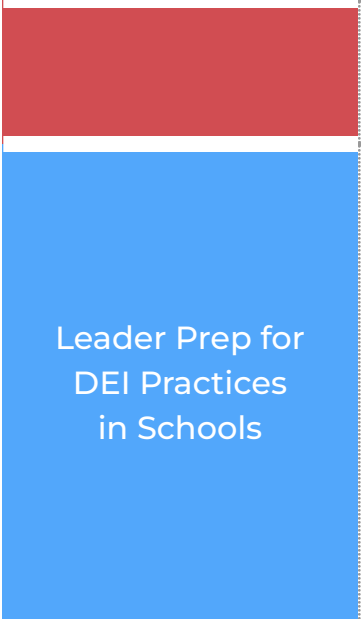
Clearly, a secondary focus of our efforts was determining regional differences in SBL preparation. We know the field is rapidly changing, marked by the addition of new programs and the closing of old programs (Perrone & Tucker, 2019). As such, analyzing data by region helps us understand how priorities and policies have been implemented across the state to varying extents and how a college or university's location may affect programming.

Relevance and Context

It's an appropriate time to conduct this landscape analysis because policy shifts and trends in higher education have evolved in recent years, particularly since 2018. Various challenges and innovations in response to those shifts have been documented — yet to this point it has remained unclear how prevalent these might be among programs (Fuller & Young, 2022 and Steele et al., 2021). First, we set out to document major factors influencing SBL programs.

Major Factors Influencing SBL Programs in NYS, Noted By Scholars

New Requirements and Standards	• New state requirements for licensure (Koonce, 2009; Pavlakis & Kelley, 2016); • Adoption of standards for leadership preparation and inclusion of internship requirements in most programs (Scott, 2018); • NBPEA's revised standards: the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (NBPEA, 2018); • NBPEA's revised standards: the National Educational Leadership Preparation Program Recognition Standards (NBPEA, 2018).
Cost Concerns and Shifting Methods	• A heightened sense of competition and cost differences (Baum & Steele, 2018); • Program cost viability impacting content and delivery (Baum & Steele, 2018);



Leader Prep for DEI Practices in Schools

- Demand for new methods for content delivery spurred by the pandemic, mainly online and hybrid formats.
- A stronger focus on diversity and equity, support for all students, and school improvement;
- An increased effort to diversify the leadership pipeline, including preparing and supporting aspiring leaders of color (Reyes-Guerra et al., 2022);
- The State’s framework for promoting DEI: Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (NYSED, 2018).

Clearly, we’ve seen an increased effort to prepare school leaders to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in schools. New York State leads in the area, taking great strides since 2018 to promote equitable practices in K-12 schools through its [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework](#) (CR-SE), which promotes DEI values such as diversity as it pertains to race and ethnicity, language, gender, disability, and sexual orientation; inclusive learning; and reducing institutional racism and cultural bias. The framework is grounded in four principles:

- Creating a welcoming and affirming environment;
- Holding high expectations and delivering rigorous instruction;
- Building inclusive curriculum and assessment;
- Committing to ongoing professional learning.

State officials provided guidelines for how to implement this framework to school districts, but not to institutions of higher education. This report seeks to understand and document how this shift in policy, and the other major influencing factors listed, have impacted educational leadership preparation across the state.

Research Methodology

To conduct the landscape analysis, we broke our research effort into three phases: identifying programs, collecting data about them, and, lastly, transforming our data into findings. More specifically, we:

1. Identified all New York State-approved and functioning leadership preparation programs;

2. Collected data about each program in three buckets:
 - a. Program content, structure, and delivery;
 - b. Focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in leader preparation;
 - c. Number of graduates during the 2023-2024 academic year.
3. Analyzed our tabulations for patterns and trends in the educational leadership preparation landscape in NYS.

Phase 1: Identifying Active SBL Programs

Our goal in phase one of research was to determine how many active SBL programs there currently are in New York State. To take this inventory, we first accessed NYSED's "Inventory of Registered Programs" page, which listed 50 state-registered school leadership programs. To identify which of these programs are still in operation and which have closed, we researched the applicable university and department website from August 2023 to June 2024. Using this website information, we confirmed program statuses.

Phase 2: Collecting Data from Program Websites, Survey Results, and IPEDS

With a definitive inventory of the active SBL programs in the state, we collected data about each program. We sought information on program content, structure, and delivery, the program's focus on DEI practices for school leader preparation, and the number of program graduates during the 2023-2024 academic year. We conducted this data collection by:

- Reviewing university and department website pages;
- Fielding our Program Features Survey to program directors;
- Extracting data from IPEDS.

From program webpages, we collected and compiled details into a spreadsheet and converted it into a statewide program directory that includes: geographic location; presence of active SBL programs and programs that combined SBL preparation with school district leadership (SDL) preparation; contact information; URL address.

Fielding the Program Features Survey

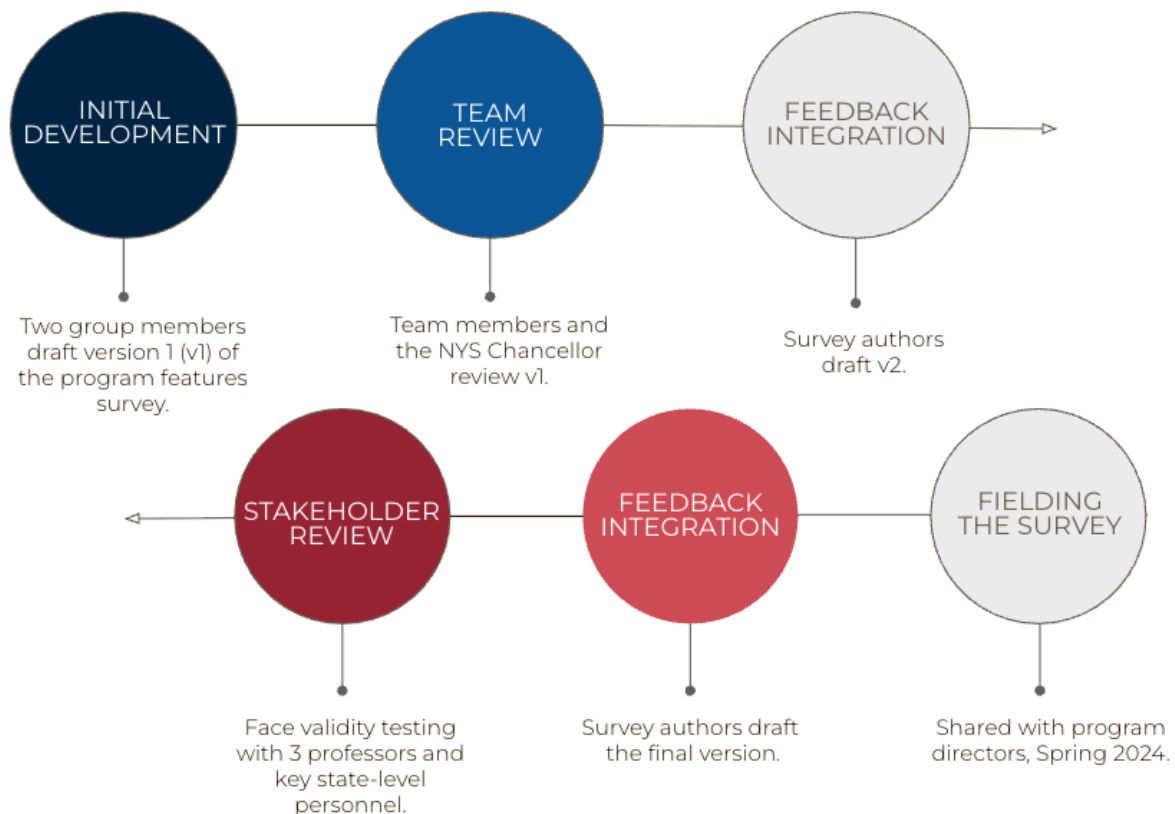
To field a comprehensive and accessible survey targeted at the program directors of active SBL programs in NYS, we followed an intentional process. First, two group members drafted the survey, which is grounded in essential tools and philosophies:

- New York State's CR-SE Framework
- Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)

- *Five Practices for Equity-Focused School Leadership* by Rabb, Generett, Good & Theoharis (2021)

Other team members, along with the NYS Chancellor, provided feedback to version one of the survey. Its authors integrated that feedback and shared version two with a broader pool of stakeholders — three professors from NYS educational leadership preparation programs in distinct regions and key state-level educational leaders. Survey authors then drafted the final version, and we distributed it via email to program directors during the Spring of 2024.

Program Features Survey Development Process



We reached a 75% response rate using an email campaign with five reminders. From there, we contacted program directors directly and conducted interviews. Through these methods, we achieved a **97% response rate**. We removed one program because the coordinator shared that their SBL program is embedded within a doctoral program and they did not provide information on their institution's free-standing SBL program. Thus, we ended with 35 responses to our survey.

Creating a Unique Dataset Using IPEDS

Using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), we analyzed data on school building leadership programs in NYS that met the following criteria during the 2023-2024 academic year:

- Leads to postgraduate certificate or master's degree;
- Prepares candidates for the role of principal or other school building leader (rather than superintendent or other district leader);
- Falls within common titling conventions for these types of programs in its IPEDS categorization.

From this targeted pool of programs, we focused on two outcomes — number of program graduates and type of certificate or degree awarded. *See Appendix A for data tabulation.* We also uploaded this final dataset to our Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and merged it with our survey results and website analysis data to meet the full scope of the project.

Phase 3: Transforming Data Into Findings

With so much data in hand from our processes of program identification, website culling and data organization, survey creation and fielding, and extraction of data from IPEDS, we turned our focus to the data itself. First, we combined the three disparate pools into one streamlined dataset. Then, where there were inconsistencies, we relied on the survey responses for the most up-to-date information. We analyzed this singular, clean dataset using SPSS. The software generated descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations on program attributes and program delivery, organized by region, as well as sector of the institution running the program (i.e., institution type, whether public or private). Statistical differences were tested where relevant.

Through this analysis, we discovered that some institutions have several programs in educational leadership or offer the same program in different modalities. In this instance, our analysis assumes that survey responses adequately reflect all versions of an institution's program, as we collected one survey per program from its director.

Research Findings

To determine the most helpful ways of diving into the data, we returned to the three questions framing our research. As a reminder, those are:

1. What is the current landscape of SBL preparation programs throughout NYS?
 - a. How does program availability differ by region and public/private status?
2. What is the nature of program content, structure, and delivery?

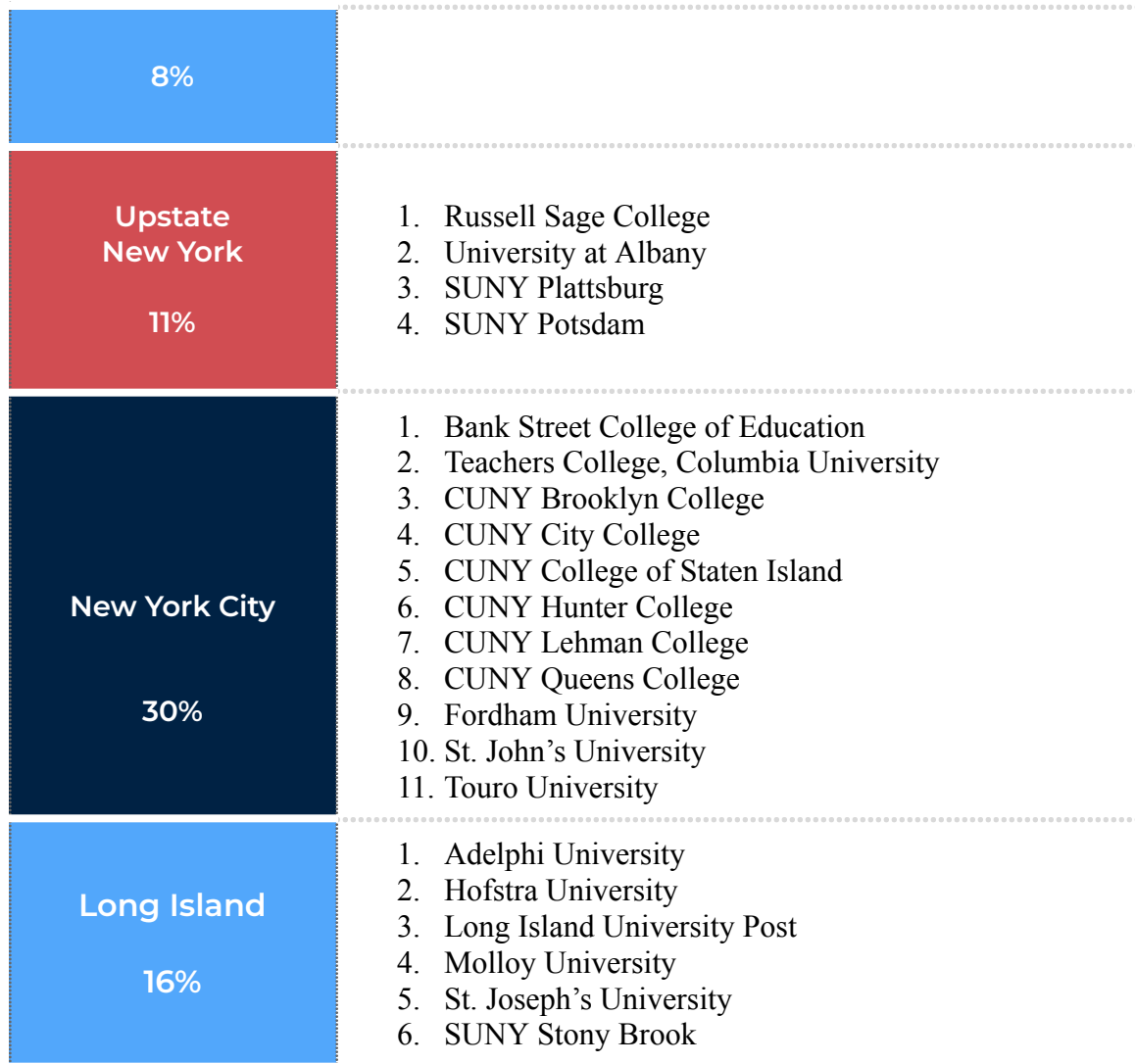
- a. How does this differ by region?
3. How do programs prepare leaders for diversity, equity, and inclusion practices?
 - a. How do these approaches differ by region?

The Landscape of SBL Programs in NYS

Through our research process for taking inventory of institutions with active SBL programs, we determined that there are currently 37 in New York State. Thirteen of the 50 institutions with programs listed on NYSED's "Inventory of Registered Programs" page have closed programs—a 26% decline in offerings across the state. Three institutions closed and ten institutions discontinued or put their SBL certification programs on hiatus. In terms of sector affiliation, 92% of closed institutions are private. No public institutions closed. The only public program to close was at CUNY Baruch. The large majority (69%) of closed programs were located in the New York metropolitan area. Our research confirmed the active status of each of the 37 programs — see Table 1 for details.

Table 1: Institutions Offering SBL Programs in NYS by Region

<i>Region and Share of Total</i>	<i>Institution</i>
Western New York 24%	1. Buffalo State University 2. Canisius College 3. Niagara University 4. St. Bonaventure University 5. St. John Fisher University 6. SUNY Binghamton 7. SUNY Brockport 8. University at Buffalo 9. SUNY Fredonia
Central New York 11%	1. Le Moyne College 2. SUNY Cortland 3. SUNY Oswego 4. Syracuse University
Lower Hudson Valley	1. Manhattanville University 2. SUNY New Paltz 3. Mercy University



The thirteen programs listed in NYSED's "Inventory of Registered Programs" that are no longer active fall into two categories: the program has shut down or the entire institution has closed. Those categories are as follows:

- **Closed Programs:**
 - CUNY Baruch College
 - Iona University
 - Manhattan University
 - New York Institute of Technology
 - New York University
 - Pace University
 - Relay Graduate School of Education
 - Utica University
 - University of Rochester
 - Yeshiva University

- **Closed Institutions:**
 - Concordia College
 - College of New Rochelle
 - College of St. Rose

Per our first framing question, we dove into the regional distribution of these 37 institutions with programs.

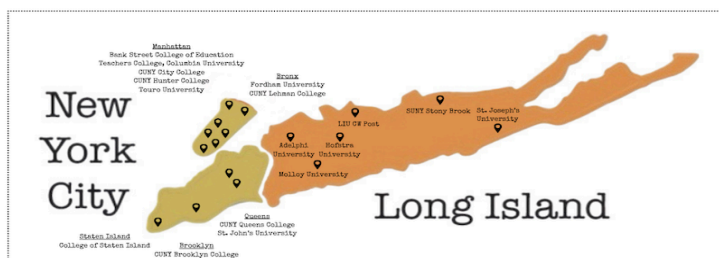
Regional Distribution

Beyond this inventory, a second priority of the project is to map the geographic spread of these 37 institutions with programs to consider how regional differences may impact programming. As such, we sorted and classified the institutions by the [regions designated by the state](#). As that analysis shows, the institutions are unevenly distributed across New York.

Over half (54%) of the institutions are located in the New York metropolitan area among NYC, Long Island, and Lower Hudson Valley. By individual region, New York City has the most institutions with programs at 30%, followed by Western New York at 24%, Long Island at 16%, Central New York at 11%, and Upstate New York at 11%. The Lower Hudson Valley has the fewest institutions with programs at 8%. See Figure 1 for visualization.

Figure 1: Distribution of Active Educational Leadership Preparation Programs in NYS by Region





Institution Type

The split between institution types is nearly even. Private institutions offer 51% of programs, while public institutions — State Universities of New York (SUNY) and City Universities of New York (CUNY) — offer the other 49% of programs. See Table 2 for details. (*Note: Synchronous is abbreviated to Synch; Asynchronous to Asynch.*)

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Institution Type, Program Focus, Credentialing Pathways, and Instructional Modalities by Region

		Region						Total
		Long Island	NYC	Central NY	Lower Hudson Valley	Upstate	Western	
Institution Type	Public	16.7%	60.0%	50.0%	33.3%	75.0%	50.0%	48.6%
	Private	83.3	40.0	50.0	66.7	25.0	50.0	51.4
Program Focus	SBL	50.0	30.0	50.0	0	75.0	25.0	37.1
	SBL and SDL	50.0	70.0	50.0	100.0	25.0	75.0	62.9
Credent- tialing Pathways	Master's	—	50.0	—	—	—	12.5	17.1
	Certificate	66.7	10.0	100.0	—	75.0	25.0	40.0
	Both	33.3	40.0	—	100.0	25.0	62.5	42.9
Instruc- tional Modalities	Hybrid	16.7	50.0	25.0	—	25.0	—	21.2
	Asynch	—	25.0	—	—	25.0	37.5	18.2

	Synch & Asynch	66.7	—	50.0	—	25.0	50.0	33.3
	Multiple	16.7	25.0	25.0	100.0	25.0	12.5	27.3
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Number of Graduates

The institutions' programs varied widely in the number of graduates earning either a postgraduate certificate or a master's degree. This ranges from a low of zero to a high of 165 graduates in 2024, based on IPEDS reporting data. Table 3 shows the average number of program graduates by region and the total number of graduates by region in 2024.

Table 3: Average and Total Number of Educational Leadership Graduates by Region

Region	Average number per program			Sum among programs		
	Postgrad Certificate	Master's Degree	Total Graduates	Postgrad Certificate	Master's Degree	Total Graduates
Long Island	60	7	67	359	42	401
NYC	8	30	38	76	270	346
Central	32	6	38	126	25	151
Lower Hudson Valley	24	7	32	57	0	57
Upstate	13	2	15	39	6	45
Western	9	6	15	60	42	102
Total	23	13	36	733	407	1140

The average number of graduates by institution is smallest in Upstate New York and Western New York at 15 graduates each and largest on Long Island at 67 graduates. The state averages 13 master's degrees and 23 postgraduate certificates by program.

According to the IPEDS data, there were 1,140 educational leadership graduates statewide in 2024, 36% of whom earned a master's and 64% earned a postgraduate certificate (see Table 3). The total number of graduates varied widely by region, with 35% from Long Island institutions' programs. The smallest number of graduates comes from the Lower Hudson Valley and Upstate New York. These figures represent the location of the institution, not the graduate — as several institutions offer online programs, that may skew counting. Similarly, some programs partner with districts in other parts of the state, possibly skewing how graduates are counted by region, as well.

We also analyzed the number of graduates by institution type, as shown in Table 4. Private institutions average significantly more graduates per program (41) than public institutions (31). Combined, 56% of all graduates earned their degree or certificate from a private institution, half of whom earned a master’s degree.

Table 4: Average and Total Number of Educational Leadership Graduates by Institution Type

<i>Institution Type</i>	Average number			Sum among programs		
	Postgrad Certificate	Master's Degree	Total Graduates	Postgrad Certificate	Master's Degree	Total Graduates
Public	26	5	31	412	80	492
Private	20	20	41	321	327	648
Total	23	13	36	733	407	1,140

After compiling data on the 37 active SBL programs, their regional distribution, and institution type, and crafting tabulations on various program attributes, we can see a much clearer picture of the landscape of SBL programming in the state. We continued to dive into the data to better understand the nature of program content, structure, and delivery and how they differ among regions.

The Nature of Program Content, Structure, and Delivery

To address our second framing question, we organized data into three categories and analyzed them by institution type (i.e., public or private) and looked at regional differences among them. Those categories are:

- **Content** — academic focus, i.e., SBL vs. SBL/SDL combined
- **Structure** — credentialing pathways; number of credits; program cost

- **Delivery** — instructional modality; nature of faculty (i.e., full-time or adjunct)

What follows is our dataset looked at in different ways in varying combinations from these categories and subcategories, extracted from our numbers relevant to the 2023-2024 academic year. This set of tabulations aid our understanding of the nature of educational leadership preparation programs in NYS and implications thereof.

Program Content: Academic Focus on SBL or SBL/SDL Combined

To organize our data on program content, we looked at the academic focus of offerings across the state for educational leadership preparation. Specifically, we analyzed data on SBL programs versus SBL/SDL combination programs. According to our survey results, we found that the minority of institutions in the state — only 37% — offer SBL-only certificate programs (detailed in Table 2). The majority of institutions (63%) offer a combined SBL/SDL program. The percentages in Table 5 show that, overall, a dual certification pathway is most common, and that it's less accessible to obtain SDL certification in Upstate New York than in other regions of the state.

Table 5: Percentage of Program Academic Focus by Region

<i>Academic Focus</i>	<i>Region</i>			
	Lower Hudson Valley	Upstate	Western	NYC
SBL Only	0%	75%	25%	30%
SBL/SDL Combined	100%	25%	75%	70%

We also analyzed data on academic focus by institution type and found that private institutions are more likely to offer combined SBL/SDL certification programs (63%) than public institutions (56%). See Table 6 for this data and more data points about academic focus, credentialing pathways, and instructional modalities by institution type.

Table 6: Average Percentage of Program Focus, Pathways, and Modalities by Institution Type

<i>Program Attributes</i>		<i>Institution Type</i>		<i>Average</i>
		Public	Private	
Academic Focus	SBL	43.8%	37.5%	40.6%
	SBL/SDL	56.3	62.5	59.4
Credentialing Pathways	Master's	12.5	12.5	12.5
	Certificate	56.3	31.3	43.8
	Both	31.3	56.3	43.7
Instructional Modalities	Hybrid	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Asynch	13.3	20.0	16.7
	Synch and Asynch	26.7	40.0	33.3
	Multiple	40.0	20.0	30.0
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0

Through researching educational leadership preparation program options in the state, namely academic focus and its prevalence in different regions and across institution types, we're able to map the landscape of SBL and SBL/SDL programs.

Program Structure: Credentialing Pathways; Numbers of Credits; Cost

Diving into program structure, we analyzed our dataset related to credentialing pathways — whether a prospective student has a choice to pursue a postgraduate certificate program, a

master's program, or either in their region (see Table 3) — and averages among number of credits and tuition costs per program across region and institution type. We also wove in data points on selected student demographic markers, such as numbers of graduates identifying as female; separately, graduates identifying as white; separately, graduates residing in urban settings.

The distribution of credentialing pathways varies by region. In Central New York, all programs lead to a postgraduate certificate; there are no pathways to a master's degree. Similarly, the majority of programs in Upstate New York and Long Island — 75% and 67%, respectively — lead solely to a postgraduate certificate. In contrast, half of all programs in New York City lead to a master's degree only, 10% to a certificate only, and 40% to both. All programs in the Lower Hudson Valley lead to both a master's degree and a certificate. Regarding institution type as it relates to credentialing pathways, we found that private institutions are more likely than public institutions to offer both credentialing pathways. Public institutions are more likely to offer a certificate pathway only (see Table 6).

Across the state, the average number of required credits is about 31, but ranges widely from 22 to 36 credits (see Table 7). This range masks wide variations among the programs: five require 22-26 credits, while seven require 35-36 credits. The variation is unrelated to whether the focus of a program is SBL or SBL/SDL. By region and by institution type, the average number of required credits varies somewhat. By region, the average number of required credits is lowest in programs on Long Island, at 29 credits, and highest in programs in Upstate New York, at nearly 33 credits. By institution type, we found a statistically significant difference between the average number of required credits at public and private institutions. Public institutions require more credits on average (32.6) than private institutions (29.2) credits (see Table 7).

Table 7: Averages of Number of Credits and Tuition Cost by Region

	Region						
<i>Program Attributes</i>	Long Island	NYC	Central	Lower Hudson Valley	Upstate	Western	Total
Number of Credits	29.17	31.00	30.75	31.00	32.75	30.88	30.83
Tuition Cost Per Credit	\$915.75	\$764.78	\$552.50	\$840.33	\$516.91	\$700.56	\$725.21
Total Program Cost	\$26,077.50	\$23,911.89	\$16,930.50	\$26,210.00	\$17,463.73	\$20,625.96	\$22138.48
<i>Student Attributes</i>	Long Island	NYC	Central	Lower Hudson Valley	Upstate	Western	Total
Female	67.60	78.80	71.67	65.00	65.00	71.25	72.13
White	67.80	43.50	65.00	44.00	65.00	78.38	60.61
Residing in Urban Setting	18.33	88.80	40.00	28.33	17.50	24.38	43.09

Clearly, credit requirements pair with tuition costs in our data points. Analyzing relevant data related to program cost, we found wide variation among programs and regions. The average cost per course credit among programs is \$725 — ranging from a low of \$430 to a high of \$1,868. The average per credit tuition rate varies by region from a high of \$915 per credit on Long Island to a low of \$517 in Upstate New York (see Table 7). These regional differences reflect, in part, the prevalence of public and private institutions across regions. Private institutions' average per credit tuition is almost twice that of public institutions: \$991 vs. \$509 (see Table 8).

We found that the average total tuition (credits $\times$ tuition) among these programs is \$22,238. The range is wide, with a low of \$11,280 to a high of \$56,040. Regional differences largely account for this range: Lower Hudson Valley and Long Island have the highest average total tuition; Central and Upstate New York have the lowest. By institution type, we found that the cost of average total tuition is significantly higher at private institutions than at public institutions: \$29,079 versus \$16,498 (see Table 8).

Table 8: Average Number of Credits and Tuition by Institution Type

<i>Program Attributes</i>	<i>Institution Type</i>		<i>Average</i>
	Public	Private	
Average Number of Credits	32.59	29.17	30.83
Tuition Cost Per Credit	\$509.13	\$991.15	\$725.21
Total Program Cost	\$16,498.81	\$29,079.62	\$22,138.48

p<.01

We addressed program structure by analyzing data points on credentialing pathways, number of credits, and program costs by region and institution type. These tabulations help us see differences across the state in pathways and costs to better understand the landscape of educational leadership preparation in the state.

Program Delivery: Instructional Modalities and Nature of Faculty

To analyze differences among program delivery, we looked at data points in instructional modalities and nature of faculty (i.e., full-time vs. adjunct). We crafted tabulations by institution type and by region and looked at data points on selected student demographic markers, as in the other categories, but also looked at various program attributes by instructional modalities.

Staffing in programs varied widely among the institutions with an average of 2.7 tenure/tenure track and clinical faculty, ranging from zero to ten. Public institutions have a higher average number of faculty than private institutions (3.14 vs. 2.36). There are strong regional differences, too. Programs on Long Island and in Western New York have fewer faculty on average (1.33 to 1.44), while institutions in NYC and Upstate New York averaged almost three times the faculty members (4.0 to 4.3). In contrast, the average number of adjuncts across all institutions' programs is 10.4, with a wide range from zero to 78. There was no difference between the averages for public and private institutions in the number of adjuncts used (see Table 8), but this varies widely by region. Lower Hudson Valley has a low average of five adjuncts while Long Island has a high of 21 (see Table 9).

Table 9: Average Number of Full-Time Faculty vs. Adjuncts and Selected Student Demographic Markers by Institution Type

<i>Staffing Attributes</i>	<i>Institution Type</i>		<i>Average</i>
	Public	Private	
Average # of Full-Time Faculty (Tenure & Clinical)	3.14	2.36	2.70
Average # of Adjuncts	10.50	10.24	10.36
<i>Student Attributes</i>	<i>Institution Type</i>		<i>Average</i>
	Public	Private	
Female	73.00	71.31	72.13
White	61.20	60.06	60.61

Residing in Urban Setting	45.00	41.28	43.09
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p<.01

Looking at data on instructional modality, we found that there are four general ways programs deliver instruction: in a hybrid setting, with some in-person time and some online time; asynchronous only, with no in-person time and no specific meeting time online; synchronous and asynchronous, with some meeting time online and other individual work time online; and a combination of all of these.

None of the institutions offer a fully in-person program. Twenty-one percent offer hybrid only; 51% offer online only, including 18% asynchronous only and 33% synchronous and asynchronous. The remaining 27% offer their programs through multiple modalities (e.g., a hybrid program and an online program). There are some regional differences: programs on Long Island and in Western New York are online only, while all the Lower Hudson Valley programs include hybrid options. Public institutions are more likely to offer multiple instructional modalities (40% vs. 20%) than their private counterparts and as likely to offer a hybrid option (20%) (See Table 6.) We continued looking at data by instructional modality across various program attributes to map differences among delivery methods.

Table 10: Average Numbers of Selected Program Attributes by Instructional Modality

Program Attributes	Instructional Modalities				Total
	Hybrid	Asynch	Synch and Asynch	Multiple	
Total Average # of Graduates	21.8	27.0	50.3	23.4	32.7
# of Full-Time Faculty (Tenure & Clinical)	1.25	3.60	2.17	3.11	2.61
Number of Adjuncts	5.20	4.20	14.70	5.00	8.24
Tuition Cost Per Credit	726.67	632.75	759.60	643.39	701.20

# of Credits	30.67	28.20	30.60	32.00	30.63
% Female	76.17	63.25	78.75	66.88	72.12
% White*	79.00	70.25	70.63	47.88	65.50

*p<.05

Relationships and Patterns Among Attributes in Program Content, Structure, and Delivery

Exploring several relationships among program attributes, we found some patterns. We correlated the number of credits, tuition per credit, number of faculty and adjuncts, number of graduates, and percentage of students who are female or white (data not shown). There was no significant relationship among these, with the exception that the number of program graduates is significantly and positively related to the number of program adjuncts ($r=+.807$) and average tuition per credit ($r=+.389$).

There were discernible differences by modality, however (see Table 10). On average, asynchronous only programs are somewhat shorter than programs in other modalities, have the lowest tuition per credit, and have the lowest percentage of students who are female (63%). Online programs (combining synchronous and asynchronous modalities) have the highest average tuition per credit, number of adjunct faculty, percent of students who are female, and the largest average number of graduates.

The Landscape of Leader Preparation in DEI Practices

Our final category of inquiry was related to programs' preparation of aspiring school leaders' competence and capacity to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in schools. We used results from our Program Features Survey to create tabulations related to where and how DEI practices are woven into SBL programming across the state. Specifically, we explored whether, during the 2023-2024 academic year, programs had:

- A dedicated course on DEI content and practices;
- DEI instructional content and learning activities;
- Generally inclusive practices for marginalized groups, such as ELLs or LGBTQ+ groups;
- Alignment with the PSEL standards and CR-SE framework;
- Intentional recruitment practices from diverse groups.

Dedicated Course

Our survey findings show that 32% of programs have a dedicated DEI or social justice course, with regional variation. Over half the programs in Central, Western, and Upstate New York require a dedicated DEI or social justice course; no programs on Long Island do. Looking at institution type, private institutions' programs were significantly more likely to have this type of course requirement than programs in public institutions (39% vs. 25%). Sample titles of DEI-focused courses include:

- Reading for Equity and Social Justice
- Leading for Excellence: Educational Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Culturally Responsive Leadership

Table 11: Dedicated DEI Courses and Curriculum Indicators by Region

<i>Region</i>	Dedicated DEI Course (%)	Average Extent of DEI Indicators
Long Island	0%	4.3
NYC	22	4.3
Central New York	50	4.5
Lower Hudson Valley	33	4.8
Upstate	50	4.0
Western New York	50	3.8
Total	32	4.2
<i>Institution Type</i>		
Public	25%	4.1
Private	39%*	4.3

*p<.05

Note: Percentages indicate the proportion of programs within each region that have a dedicated DEI course. Curriculum indicators reflect the average number of DEI-related measures integrated into the programs.

Almost all program directors (89%) indicated that DEI was integrated either moderately or extensively across all coursework (See Table 11). In open-ended questions, some program directors shared that in their programs, DEI-focused curricula occur throughout their coursework, rather than being situated in a particular course. For example, one program director explained that DEI-related content was the focus of a special education course but is also woven throughout other coursework. While some programs do dedicate a course to DEI-related learning, clearly some weave it throughout coursework.

Quotes from Program Directors on DEI Integration Into Coursework

- “[W]eave [it] intentionally throughout the program and internships.”
- “We weave DEI research and anti-racist leadership practices into each course. We use the text, Five Practices for Equity Focused School Leadership, over several of our beginning courses.”

Instructional Content and Learning Activities

We explored how and to what extent programs focused on skills development to help aspiring leaders enter schools with competence in DEI practices. Using a 5-point scale — 1 being “not at all true”; 5 being “to a great extent” — program directors rated the extent to which their programs covered 11 different DEI-related content and experiences for the typical student in their SBL certification program. Generally, they rated their programs highly in the areas of developing students’ capacity to strive for equity (4.9) and developing staff’s cultural competence (4.84). In fact, 91% of coordinators shared that their programs developed students’ capacity to strive for equity to a great extent. Around 83% of directors reported assessing DEI content either moderately (34%) or to a great extent (49%) (See Table 12 on the following page).

Table 12: Average Extent to Which Leadership Preparation Programs Cover Selected DEI Content and Experiences

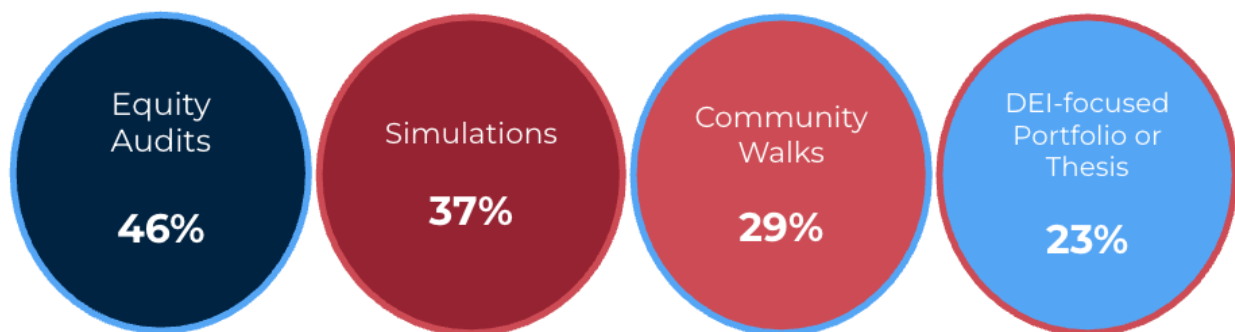
<i>DEI Content</i>	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strive for equity	31	4	5	4.90	0.301
Develop culturally relevant, coherent systems of curriculum and instruction	31	4	5	4.87	0.341
Develop professional capacity of staff	31	4	5	4.84	0.374
Support English Language Learners (ELLs)	31	2	5	3.68	0.945
Support students with disabilities	31	2	5	4.03	0.836
Support LGBTQ+ students	30	2	5	3.70	0.915
Support indigenous students	31	1	5	3.10	1.274
Emphasize continuous improvement	30	3	5	4.87	0.434

Integrate DEI throughout	31	2	5	4.42	0.923
Assess DEI skills	31	2	5	4.26	0.893
Expose students to research by scholars of color	30	1	5	3.80	1.095

In Table 10, we averaged these 11 DEI-related possible student experiences to give each region and institution type its own score on the extent to which DEI indicators appear in programs therein. Those results show an average “DEI depth” score of 4.2 — between “moderate” and “to a great extent” — among the 11 indicators. The range is 2.9 to 5, influenced somewhat by region, with a low in Western New York (3.8, or, “somewhat”) to a high in Lower Hudson Valley (4.8, or, nearly “to a great extent”). There was little difference in the average number of indicators between public and private institutions.

Some program directors shared activities they employed to support DEI-focused skills development, including case studies (86%), course texts (57%), and coursework on racial identity development (51%), which requires students to reflect on their background and how it has shaped their experience and perception of education and society. Directors also rated to what extent their programs exposed students to research by scholars of color (3.8) (see Table 12), with only around 30% indicating they did so “to a great extent.” Others shared activities they employ in open-ended questions. These include: equity audits; simulations; community walks; and a DEI-focused portfolio or thesis.

DEI-Focused Learning Activities Employed in NYS SBL Programs



On active learning, program directors shared insights, paraphrased here:

- The power of community walks and projects engage families and stakeholders;

- The learning activity called “action research” brings marginalized and minoritized students into the sphere of success;
- In each course in the program, students must engage in a simulation with a trained actor, and many of the simulations are DEI-focused.

A few directors shared about intensive learning experiences available through their institution, such as:

- “Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Healing Circles” available on campus;
- Optional participation in social justice teach-ins and annual events on campus;
- Optional participation in the “National Day of Racial Healing” events on campus.

Generally, program directors relayed that DEI-related instructional content and learning activities were a strong part of their educational leadership preparation programs.

Inclusive Practices

When it came to inclusive practices — skills development for competence and capacity in supporting individual student groups in schools — directors rated their programs lower (see Table 11). On the 5-point scale, in relation to various student groups, directors ratings included:

- A moderate focus on students with disabilities (SWDs) (4.0 out of 5)
- Less focus on ELLs (3.6)
- Less focus on LGBTQ+ students (3.6)
- Far less focus on indigenous students (3.0)

There were outliers to these lower ratings. A quarter of the directors rated their programs’ leadership development for supporting ELLs and SWDs highly, or “to a great extent,” and around a sixth did the same for LGBTQ+ and indigenous student support. Rating their programs’ integration of DEI practices and content and its assessment of DEI skills, directors rated their programs, on average, just above “to a moderate extent.” Other categories reflected positive ratings, as well, such as:

- The extent to which the program develops students’ leadership capacity to support DEI goals;
- The program’s emphasis on continuous improvement (4.87); 91% of directors rating “to a great extent”;
- The program’s teaching of how to support and develop culturally relevant, coherent systems of curriculum and instruction; all programs with strong ratings — 89% of directors rating “to a great extent.”

Overall, directors rated their programs positively in preparing aspiring leaders for DEI-integrated curriculum and instruction and broad school goals, but lower in addressing leadership capacity to support individual student groups in schools.

Alignment with PSEL Standards and CR-SE Framework

Our Program Features Survey also asked directors to reflect on their program’s alignment with the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership (PSEL) and the NYS Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (CR-SE). We found that directors rated their program’s meeting of four PSEL standards highly. Those standards are:

- Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness
- Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- Standard 5: Community of Care for Students
- Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel

These standards correlate to four CR-SE principles — also receiving high alignment ratings from directors — across various connections. Those are:

- Welcoming and Affirming Environment
- Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment
- High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction
- Ongoing Professional Learning

Though alignment ratings were generally high, Table 12 shows the exception — lower ratings in programs’ skills development for supporting specific student groups. This growth area is reflected in the 3.0-4.0 mean rating related to PSEL 5, “Community of Care for Students” and the CR-SE’s “Welcome and Affirming Environment” principle.

Table 13: Extent to Which Programs Address PSEL and CR-SE Aligned Standards

PSEL Standards	CR-SE Framework	Survey Items	Mean Rating
Standard 3 Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	Welcoming and Affirming Environment	Strive for equity	4.9
Standard 3 Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment	Integrate DEI throughout	4.5
Standard 4 Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction	Develop coherent systems of curriculum and instruction	4.9

Standard 5 Community of Care for Students	Welcome and Affirming Environment	Support students	3.0-4.0
Standard 6 Professional Capacity of School Personnel	Ongoing Professional Learning	Develop professional capacity of staff	4.8

Recruitment Practices

We inquired about how programs approach practices to recruit a diverse student body. While many directors shared commonplace recruitment practices, such as attending university recruitment events (50%) and doing social media outreach (48%), many also shared targeted strategies. Those include:

- Collaborating with local school districts (60%);
- Targeting professional organizations (30%), such as the Long Island Latino Teachers Association or the Long Island Black Educators Association;
- Offering scholarships to students from diverse backgrounds (15%).

Quotes from Program Directors on Recruiting a Diverse Student Body

- “[G]iven where [our institution] is situated, recruitment efforts are concentrated in the Bronx, and we typically attract Black, Latinx, and AAPI students, many of whom grew up in and work in the Bronx, along with a few white students.”
- “We have a scholarship for emerging leaders of color that we give out once a year to all students of color in our program.”

Landscape of Diversity In the Aspiring Leader Pool

In surveying directors about the racial and gender makeup of their program’s cohort, as well as the percentage of students residing in urban settings, we found the following averages across the state:

- 60% of students are white;
- 19% of students are African American;

- 14% of students are Hispanic;
- 2% of students are Asian American;
- 3% of students are listed as representing a race other than the four listed above;
- 72% of students are female (see Table 9);
- 43% of students reside in urban settings (see Table 9).

The latter two statistics on gender makeup and percentage of students residing in urban settings are fairly comparable across public and private institutions. These average percentages vary widely by region. NYC and Lower Hudson Valley have the lowest average percentage of students who are white; Western New York has the highest. In NYC programs, nearly 79% of educational leadership students are female, in contrast with 65-71% in other regions. Naturally, almost all students in NYC programs live in an urban setting (88%), in contrast with 17-18% of students at institutions in Upstate New York and on Long Island. Relationally, we found no statistically significant relationship between DEI-related program content and practices and student demographics or program attributes such as tuition rate or number of credits.

Discussion of Findings: Trends and Patterns in SBL Leadership Preparation in NYS

Our tabulations on educational leadership preparation in NYS and the nature of program content, structure, and delivery are full of rich findings. Patterns emerged that raise important questions about **sustainability, access, and quality** in the state's educational leadership preparation landscape. Though regional differences remain, these broad patterns hold relatively steady across the state. A main concern is that **increased program competition may be driving design and delivery**, evidenced by:

- Program closures;
- Reduced opportunities for in-person learning;
- Lower credit requirements;
- An increased reliance on adjunct faculty.

Trends in the data reveal details within each of these patterns. For instance, looking at the long-term sustainability of the field, we see that the overall number of programs has declined. Program closures have been mainly at private institutions in the NYC metropolitan area; while the majority of the state's programs are still concentrated in that region, this trend must be monitored over time. Turning to access concerns, we note a pattern in graduation numbers by region. Specifically, Long Island produces the most graduates — defined as aspiring school leaders awarded postgraduate certificates or master's degrees — while Upstate and Western New York produce the fewest. This trend suggests a geographic barrier to educational leadership

preparation access. While it's possible that online instructional modalities may mitigate this issue, the modality in and of itself raises questions around quality, as data trends show reduced opportunities for in-person learning across the state.

Pairing this modality trend with what the data shows is an increased reliance on adjunct faculty, it seems that large cohorts of aspiring school leaders may now be educated primarily by adjuncts online. Surprisingly, programs with more adjunct faculty and *higher* tuition graduated more students on average. Lastly, on quality, data trends reveal that credit requirements differ across regions and institution types. Long Island programs require the fewest credits and produce the most graduates across the state's regions. Private institutions require fewer credits than their public counterparts, seemingly to offset higher tuition costs. Taking these patterns and trends as a broad view of what's happening in the field, it's clear that **monitoring over the coming decade is essential to ensure sustainability, fair access, and quality of instruction and student experience.**

Patterns and Trends: Leadership Preparation in DEI Practices

Continuing, the latter portion of this research project concerned itself with how programs are preparing aspiring school leaders to competently deliver on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in schools. Our analysis reveals both encouraging practices and notable disparities.

Encouraging Practices	Notable Disparities
• Most programs integrate social justice explicitly throughout all coursework and internship experience; • High ratings on preparing leaders to support students with disabilities; • Adoption of PSEL and CR-SE framework; • Experiential approaches are not universal but may provide powerful models for engaging students in active, practice-based DEI exploration.	• Less than one-third of programs (32%) require a dedicated DEI or social justice course; • The extent of coverage is uneven across regions; • There are persistent gaps when considering developing leadership to support specific student populations, particularly ELLs, Indigenous students, and LGBTQ+ groups; • Instructional practices vary widely across programs.

A central finding is that just under one-third of programs (32%) require a dedicated DEI or social justice course. However, this average conceals regional differences. Programs in

Central, Western, and Upstate New York were more likely than others to require such coursework, with over half reporting a dedicated DEI course. In contrast, not a single program on Long Island offered this requirement. The Lower Hudson Valley and New York City programs fell in between, with approximately one-third to one-half reporting a course dedicated to DEI. Sectoral differences were also evident. Private institutions were more likely than public ones to require a dedicated DEI course (39% compared to 25%).

Most institutions' programs, regardless of having a dedicated course, integrate social justice explicitly throughout all coursework and internship experience. The regional differences suggest that, although most programs strive to address DEI, the extent of coverage is uneven. Importantly, program directors reported their strongest emphasis on broad principles—striving for equity, developing professional capacity, and cultivating cultural competence. In these areas, program ratings were consistently high, with nearly all directors reporting moderate to extensive integration of equity principles across coursework.

At the same time, findings reveal persistent gaps when considering developing leadership to support specific student populations. While programs rated themselves highly in preparing leaders to support students with disabilities, average scores dropped when considering English Language Learners and LGBTQ+ students, and fell even further for Indigenous students. This discrepancy highlights a tension between a strong general commitment to equity and a lack of depth in preparing leaders for the diverse realities of particular student groups.

Instructional practices also varied widely across programs. The majority used DEI-focused case studies and texts, and about half incorporated identity development courses. Fewer programs reported experiential or community-based practices such as equity audits, simulations, community walks, or thesis projects focused on equity. Some directors, however, described innovative practices, such as simulations with trained actors or participation in campus-based racial healing initiatives. These practices suggest that while experiential approaches are not universal, they may provide powerful models for engaging students in active, practice-based learning about DEI.

Recruitment efforts further demonstrate the ways in which institutional context shapes DEI commitments. Most programs recruited primarily from local school districts, with some drawing on professional associations or offering targeted scholarships for aspiring leaders of color. Private institutions appeared somewhat more proactive in these targeted efforts. Student demographics varied significantly by region: while New York City and the Lower Hudson Valley reported lower proportions of White students and higher proportions of students of color, programs in Western New York reported the highest percentages of White enrollment. Female students represented a large majority overall with their concentration especially high in New York City programs.

Taken together, these findings point to a system that has made substantial progress in weaving DEI principles into leadership preparation but still demonstrates unevenness across regions, sectors, and student groups. Programs have aligned their curricula with state standards and frameworks, but weaker ratings for supporting English Language Learners, Indigenous students, and LGBTQ+ students highlight areas where programs fall short on building welcoming and affirming environments. Ultimately, these findings underscore both the promise and the challenge of preparing equity-focused school leaders in New York. Programs have broadly embraced the need for DEI integration, but differences remain by region and by institution type.

Implications and Recommendations

This report was prepared at the same time as the state was revamping its certification requirements, leading to changes in leadership preparation program registration requirements. While the findings shared here provide useful implications for program policy and state policy, a follow-up study of programs would be warranted to learn about the program delivery impact of the recent licensure changes.

Recommendations for State Policy

Our findings suggest that a re-investment in and monitoring of program quality is important to the future of the field. Now, with consideration to new state licensure requirements requiring combining building and district leadership preparation, it's ever more essential. While the state requires alignment to national leadership standards, we question the following:

- Whether quality preparation can be fostered and sustained in fully asynchronous programs, where students never meet;
- Whether programs requiring fewer than 30 credits can prepare candidates to meet standards for both building and district leadership;
- Whether a fully adjunct-staffed program can:
 - Sufficiently develop and sustain coherent, high-quality instruction;
 - Recruit diverse candidates for admissions;
 - Monitor program outcomes;
 - Stay current with research and field priorities;
 - Coordinate and integrate program components. student feedback and field relations.

Therefore, **we recommend that the state set expectations for program quality in support of the national standards and establish parameters for program delivery,**

particularly the number of credits, adjunct/faculty ratios, and asynchronous/synchronous and face-to-face contact time ratios.

We also recommend that the state work with national accreditation agencies (such as AAQEP and CAEP) to establish recommended adjunct/faculty ratios, as exists for other professions, such as counseling.

To reduce competition and its unintended effects on program quality and to stabilize the field, **we recommend that the state establish a moratorium on approving new educational leadership preparation programs.**

Given the state's strong stance on DEI and the CR-SE framework for schools and districts, we expected a stronger emphasis on DEI-related leadership preparation than we found in our survey results. **We recommend that the state add a program requirement to demonstrate how they are preparing leaders to implement the CR-SE framework and assess candidates' DEI proficiency in coursework and field work.**

To increase diversity among candidates in the leadership pipeline, **we recommend that the state provide scholarships and other funding opportunities to support candidates and programs in their diversity efforts.**

Recommendations for Program Policy

Our analysis of program structure suggests that programs are struggling to balance credits, modality, staffing, and tuition costs to maintain competitive enrollments. **We are concerned that this is yielding shortened preparation, high adjunct/faculty ratios, and no in-person student contact.**

With the new state licensure policy, programs must now expand the scope of their preparation to encompass preparation for both building and district leadership readiness. Such necessity competes with these structural considerations and may lead to higher adjunct/faculty ratios and more asynchronous coursework. The added competition for students, particularly in the greater NYC area, may drive institutions to reduce credit requirements, resulting in a superficial coverage of the new state requirements, yielding more poorly prepared leaders.

As such, we recommend that programs rethink their asynchronous/synchronous and face-to-face balance and evaluate the impact of fully asynchronous programs on measures of candidate readiness, such as through the NYS leadership exams and candidates' post program career advancement.

Lastly, looking beyond the scope of our research to new topics, we are concerned with the expanded use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, that students may not be producing authentic work products. While not addressed in our survey, we are concerned about the potential abuse, particularly for students in asynchronous-only programs. We recommend that programs examine how to increase face-to-face interactions and assessments to curb potential abuse and improve the quality of preparation.

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Appendix B

NYS Leadership Preparation Programs by Number of Graduates and Type of Certificate or Degree Awarded (2023-3024)

IPEDS Category Key:

<i>IPEDS Category</i>		<i>Marked in Table 2 "IPEDS Category" Column as...</i>
Educational Leadership and Administration, General	→	1
Educational, Instructional, and Curriculum Supervision	→	2
Other/Educational, Instructional, and Curriculum Supervision	→	3
Educational Administration and Supervision	→	4
Superintendency and Educational System Administration	→	5
Educational Leadership and Administration, General (Distance)	→	6
Educational Administration and Supervision, Other	→	7
Elementary and Middle School Administration/Principalship	→	8

Institution of Higher Education	IPEDS Category	Postgraduate Certificates Awarded	Master's Degrees Awarded
Adelphi University	1, 2 (<i>programs marked as</i>)	8	0

	<i>distance)</i>		
Bank Street College of Education	1, 2	6	124
SUNY Binghamton	1	18	0
CUNY Brooklyn College	1	0	30
Canisius College	3, 4	10	6
CUNY City College	1	17	4
Fordham University	1	5	22
Hofstra University	1	14	1
CUNY Hunter College	5		
CUNY Lehman College	1	10	15
Le Moyne College	1	25	25
Long Island University Post	1 (<i>programs marked as distance</i>)	77	39
Manhattanville University	1, 3	16	3
Mercy University	3, 4	0	19
Molloy University	1	93	0
Niagara University	7	5	25
CUNY Queens College	1	1	16
Russell Sage College		0	0
St. Bonaventure University	1	14	2
St. John Fisher University	1	0	7
St. John's University	2	22	16
St. Joseph's University (Registered in BK)	1	2	2

Stony Brook University	1	165	0
SUNY New Paltz	8	57	0
SUNY Brockport	1	0	4
SUNY Cortland	1	32	0
SUNY Fredonia	7	13	0
SUNY Oswego	1	45	0
SUNY Plattsburg	2, 8	25	0
SUNY Potsdam	1	14	0
Syracuse University	1	24	0
The College of State Island	1	15	0
Touro University	1	0	43
University at Albany	1	0	6
University at Buffalo	1	0	5
Teachers College, Columbia University	1	0	139
Buffalo State University	1	11	0