

# A PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN TRANSFORMATION

Ford NGL U Profiles & Insights Report



**FORD  
NEXT GENERATION  
LEARNING** 

Community Connected Learning



**THIS FORD NGL PROFILES AND  
INSIGHTS REPORT FOCUSES ON  
THE ROLE AND EXPERIENCES OF  
BOTH EXECUTIVE AND CAREER  
ACADEMY PRINCIPALS.**

## → INTRODUCTION

We frequently hear from community representatives that one of the greatest benefits from being part of Ford Next Generation Learning (Ford NGL) is the support and insights gained from other communities. That is why we are always looking for new ways to share the experience, knowledge, and insights that each of you bring to the table. In response to your requests for more information about effective community structures and roles, we initiated a series of reports we call Profiles and Insights.

This Ford NGL Profiles and Insights report focuses on the role and experiences of both executive and career academy principals. Our goal was to gather personal perspectives from a cross section of principals and district leaders then provide those findings to our communities in an easy-to-access, condensed form. The interviews not only provided a chance to share successes, challenges, and solutions, but an opportunity to identify ways Ford NGL and the community can better support executive principals and academy principals.

While Ford NGL provides descriptions of key roles and structures, we recognize that every community will customize their structure and approach based on their situation and local variables. There are, however, commonalities among our communities that others can learn from. For each area of questioning, we have considered the responses and distilled a key thought or insight. Then, following many of the insights, we have summarized responses in a more detailed list. While some of the responses are grouped by subject area, bulleted items are not listed in a particular order or suggested priority.

Ford NGL sincerely appreciates the community leadership that supported this initiative. We are especially grateful for the time and thoughtful responses provided by all the interviewees. For the purpose of this report and to assure open and candid responses, discussions were conducted on a confidential basis.



## HOW DID WE GATHER THE INFORMATION?

To better understand the role and perspectives of school-building, career academy leadership (e.g., executive principal, academy principal), we conducted phone interviews with district and building leaders from five Ford NGL communities.

### Key Questions Asked

#### DISTRICT LEADERSHIP:

1. How long have you been in your current position?
2. Have you had previous experience with an academy model?
3. How does the Ford NGL Model change roles at the district leadership level?
4. What type of professional development or training has been done with the district leadership?
5. What have been your challenges at the district leadership level with an academy model?
6. How have the roles and responsibilities of the high school principals changed?
7. What other changes need to happen to enable the vision of the transformation?
8. What have you and/or the district leaders done to support the change in the roles and responsibilities?  
What supports are currently in place?
9. What types of professional development and training have been provided to the high school principals?  
Who has provided the training?
10. At the district leadership/principal levels, how are new hires on-boarded to the Ford NGL Academy Model?  
Who is responsible?
11. What resources would be helpful to you in implementing the Ford NGL Academy Model?

#### PRINCIPALS (EXECUTIVE AND ACADEMY):

1. How long have you been in your current position?
2. Have you had previous experience with an academy model?
3. How has your role changed in the Ford NGL Academy Model?
4. What have been your challenges in the Ford NGL Academy Model?
5. What are the key elements to success in the transformation? The Ford NGL Academy Model?
6. How has the school culture changed in this transformation?
7. What changes occur in an academy model that require a different leadership style?
8. Have you adjusted your leadership style, and if so, how?
9. Do you have a professional development plan that supports the Ford NGL Academy Model?
10. How has the district leadership supported changes to your position?
11. Has your evaluation changed, and if so, how?
12. How has your engagement with businesses and community changed? What types of resources/support/training have you had to assist with the engagement? What additional resources/support/training do you need?
13. How are new hires on-boarded to the Ford NGL Academy Model? Who is responsible?
14. What resources would be helpful to you in implementing the Ford NGL Academy Model?



## PARTICIPANT PROFILES

- » **5 Ford NGL Communities:**
  - » Size of communities ranged from < 1100 to > 6200 high school students.
  - » All communities represented a diverse student population both ethnically and socio-economically.
- » **19 interviews were conducted.**
- » **Interviewed 3 positions:**
  - » District leadership – the individual who had a supervisory role over the high school management team (executive principal and academy principal)
  - » Executive principal – the individual responsible for providing overall leadership to the high school
  - » Academy principal – the individual responsible for the success of an academy/academies
- » **Those interviewed included 6 executive principals, 8 academy principals, and 5 district-level leaders.**
- » **Experience ranged from less than a year to 30+ years.**
- » **All interviewees are within communities that have adopted a wall-to-wall career academy structure.**
  - » Wall-to-wall career academies(CA) have three key structural components: 1) the small learning community structure with a team of teachers and shared cohort of students, 2) integrated curriculum with a career or industry theme and various career pathways, and 3) partnerships with employers, the community, and local colleges. In a wall-to-wall academy model, all students are enrolled in a CA.



## KEY INSIGHTS

The following list summarizes the main thoughts expressed regarding the impact of transforming to career academies and community-connected learning as it relates to the roles and responsibilities of executive and academy principals. A more detailed list of comments and observations is contained in the appendix at the end of this report.

**1. LEADERSHIP STYLE:** The leadership style of executive principals and academy principals in a community-connected, career academy model requires a shift from traditional methods to a distributed and collaborative approach. This shift is vital when transforming the high school from a traditional model to a career academy model. The career academy model requires a distributed leadership approach that supports principals moving from specific leadership roles to facilitating shared and collective leadership. Distributed leadership expands and supports capacity for change, and is focused on building relationships within the district and the community.

**2. CLIMATE AND CULTURE:** Climate and culture have deep roots in what we have known and experienced over time. Thus, it comes as no surprise that transforming climate and culture takes time, effort, effective communication, and actions consistent with a true commitment to the career academy model and community-connected learning. Making the change from how schools have traditionally operated to new structures and processes is essential. This requires adjustments to management strategies in order to prepare, support, and facilitate organizational changes.

**3. INTERNAL SUPPORT:** The level of internal support experienced at the academy principal level varies from community to community. Principals experiencing higher levels of internal support report a greater receptivity to new ideas. Critical to success is open and regular two-way dialogue between and among the district office, the high school staff, and external businesses and organizations. Individuals who have higher levels of internal support described more relevant professional development opportunities and a greater sense of autonomy and decision-making authority.

**4. BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** The challenges most frequently mentioned by those interviewed were issues associated with engaging and building powerful business and community partnerships. In a career academy model there are higher levels of engagement with the business and community partners. Principals felt they did not have the skills set to support these interactions. The principals are more actively engaged in the community and have more business and community members in their buildings; however, they felt a need for support and resources to assist in managing this new role.

**5. COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION ROLE:** Recurring themes to achieving success included effective master planning; keeping the master plan a “living” document; establishing tactical plans with specific implementation actions; and effective communication within the academy and with all stakeholder groups. While not all principals actively participated in the entire master planning process, they still have a key role in implementation and need to better understand the expectations in order to achieve success. Many expressed the need to have an “executive summary” of their specific action items required by the master plan.

**6. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** There are communities in which the master plan addresses and supports professional development with action plans at both the district and building level. In a few communities, the professional development for executive principals and academy principals is specified in a formal plan. In others, there is no formal plan, and the principal’s professional development is more self-directed. Most agreed there is not specific principal professional development, but rather they participate with the professional development for teachers or visit a high-impact, community study tour like the one offered by the Academies of Nashville.

**7. EVALUATION:** Executive principals and academy principals reported mixed feedback regarding their evaluations. Some said that their evaluations have not changed at all since moving to the career academy model while others said their evaluations were tied to the goals of the career academy model. In a majority of the schools, the evaluations are very traditional even though the structures and processes within the building have transformed. In addition, principals are required to evaluate staff, and these evaluations continue to be based on pre-transformation goals. Some principals stated they are working with their teachers to establish relevant career academy goals that align to the transformation.

**8. SUPPORT AND RESOURCES:** Most interviewees felt there was a need for, and significant value in, networking with those in similar roles. Such networking would allow them to focus on topics of common interest and need. There was wide consensus that current networking opportunities (conferences, associations, etc.) are focused on traditional high schools, and these opportunities do not meet the needs of career academy schools. The other valuable resource noted in multiple interviews was the support provided by Ford NGL Community Coaches (e.g., visits and check-in opportunities). The Ford NGL Community Coaches are individuals who have expertise in the career academy model and community-connected learning and assist the community with the transformation.

**9. OTHER CHALLENGES:** During the interviews, additional challenges were presented that are noteworthy and will require additional information to further evaluate and understand. Some of these challenges include master scheduling, funding for training, and creating a greater understanding of the career academy model in the elementary and middle school grades,

\*See the appendix for a detailed list of comments and observations about each insight topic.

## PONDER AND REFLECT: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This Ford NGL Profiles and Insights report describes some of the responsibilities, challenges, and needs of those who serve as executive and academy principals. Consistent with our emphasis on continuous improvement, it is valuable for all of us to consider the insights gleaned from these interviews and how they might impact our future planning and actions. Please take a few minutes to reflect on this report as it relates to your role and how you interact with and support school-building leaders and staff.

If you are not a school-building principal:

- » Are there ways you can provide your principals additional support or offer constructive, problem-solving suggestions?
- » Are there thoughts expressed or actions taken which might be useful in your situation?
- » Are there challenges listed for which you have found solutions that can help others?

If you are a school-building principal:

- » If you are a principal, can you relate to the comments made by those interviewed?
- » Are there thoughts expressed or actions taken which might be useful in your situation?
- » Are there challenges listed for which you have found solutions that can help others?

## FORD NGL U IS HERE TO HELP

The information described in this report will help Ford NGL U support not only executive principals and academy principals of pathways and career academies, but all of the vital roles necessary for community transformation, implementation of the career academy model, and powerful partnerships between schools and industry.

Ford NGL U is an online and in-person learning center that provides access to the tools, resources, and training used successfully by community stakeholders to plan, implement, and sustain their transformation using the Ford NGL Framework. Checkout all the available opportunities at [www.fordnglu.com](http://www.fordnglu.com), and be sure to sign up for updates to keep current on the latest and greatest that we offer to you.

We are always interested in connecting with you and hearing about the ways Ford NGL U can better support your transformation journey! Contact Jenn Edge at [TheU@fordngl.com](mailto:TheU@fordngl.com).

# APPENDIX: INSIGHTS DETAIL

## 1. LEADERSHIP STYLE

The leadership style of a principal in a community-connected, career academy model requires a shift from traditional methods to a distributed and collaborative approach.

If there was one area of agreement and consistency across the principals interviewed, it was in the area of leadership style. Long gone for most principals are the traditional roles and top down leadership styles that have been the norm since the 50s. Even before the educational transformation Ford NGL communities are part of today, there has been a shift from managing and enforcing to a greater emphasis on teaching and learning. Driven by student performance expectations, principals are called on to be more of an aspirational leader and agent of change. That doesn't mean that all managerial concerns and administrative responsibilities have gone by the wayside or that there is less of a need for high-end organizational and communication skills. Perhaps, however, that is why many of the principals felt their personal leadership style was already one that was supportive and collaborative, but now they were being called on to do more, to do it differently, and to do it better across the board.

What has changed, with the move toward implementing the Ford NGL Career Academy Model, are the demands and responsibilities of the role and the ways in which a supportive and collaborative approach to leadership must be applied. As one principal put it, "I have always had a collaborative style, but this takes it to a new level." Some acknowledged it can be a bit overwhelming, but all were enthused about the overall direction of their academy and the greater levels of autonomy they were experiencing in their role.

The following is a list of thoughts, observations and recommendations that were expressed in the interviews regarding roles and leadership style.

- » The workload has increased, but the more my team and I know about the transformation, the less anxious we become about what we need to do.
- » It's not an easy system to navigate. There is a huge learning curve, and you and the staff must believe in it. When you do, you can move forward knowing everyone is there with the same vision and for the right reasons.
- » There are more people at the table.
- » Our roles now require more dialogue with partners, with the teachers, and with the students.
- » The business relationship side is much different including being involved in industry councils and finding real-world experiences and opportunities both in coursework and in extracurricular activities.
- » One of the biggest challenges is finding ways to effectively work with business partners and engage them with the classroom and our students.
- » How exactly do you transition, and how do you shift the culture?
- » The principal must surrender certain levels of control, and initially that can feel uncomfortable.
- » You must put systems in place that have meaning to everyone.
- » There is much more autonomy than in the traditional approach.
- » Because there are multi-layers of distributed leadership, it requires a deeper kind of communication.
- » It requires adjusting your leadership style for the "personality" and needs of the groups and businesses you are working with.
- » Executive principals must tailor their style to each principal and academy.
- » Principals must be on message and vision focused.
- » It does give the principal leverage to help teachers see the importance of what they do.
- » It is easier to motivate students, because you can show them the relevance of what they are learning.



- » We must create a rigorous, real-world student experience, so it changes how we think, how we support learning, and how we communicate.
- » The questions before us include, “How do we tailor learning for each student, and how do we make the career dream of each student come true?”
- » There is a need to make creative use of the managerial aspects of the principal’s role and move toward instructional leadership.
- » In our role it is critical that we broaden our view and have a more holistic view of our students.
- » We must dig into the curriculum standards and align it with our pathways.
- » Across the board, leadership is not about power but the ability to persuade others to do what is best for our students and the community.
- » Career academies do not have a hierarchy of leadership if you do it right.
- » At the executive principal level, it’s no longer task-oriented. The executive principal needs to make sure the academy principals are fully supported.
- » We think of it as a pyramid with students at the top and the principal(s) supporting at the bottom. The leadership role is as more of an advocate and resource for the other academy leaders.

## 2. CLIMATE AND CULTURE

**Climate and culture have deep roots in what we have known and experienced over time. Thus, it comes as no surprise that transforming climate and culture takes time, effort, effective communication, and actions consistent with a true commitment to the career academy model and community-connected learning.**

**As one principal put it, “Changing the climate and the culture takes a while, but we are starting to feel the ‘buy-in.’ Students and teachers seem to know where they are in the process and where they are going. Parents have a greater understanding and are more supportive. There are still some teachers and district personnel unsure of the new direction, but greater communication and ongoing dialogue is moving the needle. We are gaining momentum.”**

**Comments and observations regarding climate and culture included the following.**

- » Our students feel safer.
- » The whole building feels calmer.
- » The students feel part of a smaller learning community.
- » Enrollment numbers are up with students from other districts.
- » Students feel like they have a home. They have an identity, and that influences others. For example, middle school kids are talking about academies and are more focused on learning.
- » Teachers and students feel more connected.
- » Declaration day was really when teachers and students saw themselves as a true part of their academy and pathway.
- » We see the biggest changes in the teachers and students who are getting into project-based learning.
- » Students are seeing and communicating with more people. They experience more people who have a personal interest in them and their future.
- » The climate and culture have changed, because the district did a good job of communicating with the community. Teacher buy-in has been good, in part, as a result of good training from the hub (nashvillehub®), and leadership has come from many layers including from district, to teacher teams, to student ambassadors
- » There is a more intentional effort to build a sense of community.
- » We have seen a decrease in the need for discipline.
- » Attendance has improved.

- » When first rolled out, there was plenty of apprehension and frustration, but all that is improving as time goes by.
- » For teachers, at first it was all a bit overwhelming, but they feel it is best for the kids and connecting to their future.
- » It takes some time and ongoing communication, but parents are seeing the importance and value of career academies and pathways.
- » Students are now more interested in careers and experiences outside of the building.
- » The culture has changed, in part, because we established norms about behaviors, dress, and how we talk and relate to each other.

### 3. INTERNAL SUPPORT

**The level of internal support experienced by the academy principal varies from community to community. Principals experiencing higher levels of internal support are reporting: a greater receptivity to new ideas; more open and regular 2-way dialogue between district office and high school management; relevant professional development opportunities; and a greater sense of autonomy and decision-making authority.**

**Some actions and observations made regarding the importance of internal support, it's challenges, and the ways to improve it include the following.**

- » The district has been very helpful by being transparent and providing lots of correspondence and documentation.
- » There are no secrets regarding expectations.
- » We conduct lots of one-on-one and group meetings.
- » Support is greater now that we have more people around the table.
- » In our case, the district has not done enough. What are the metrics? How do we reflect?
- » Some at the district office still see things through a traditional lens.
- » One thing that made us feel and think as more of a team was having a district level retreat.
- » The executive principal is a voice at the table, not as someone in charge, but as a partner.
- » The executive principal serves as a link to the district and deals with much of the managerial duties, so that the academy principals can keep their focus on the academy itself.
- » Having check-ins with the assistant superintendent, shared data dashboards, by-weekly check-ins with our coach, and solid structures in place provide a greater sense of support, direction, and unity.

### 4. BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

**The challenges most frequently mentioned by those interviewed were issues associated with engaging and building powerful business and community partnerships. Principals generally do not feel equipped with the skills to manage the business and community partnerships. They understand and observe the high value in these partnerships but are not confident they are providing the needed leadership to build lasting relationships.**

**The following is a consolidated list of challenges as shared by those interviewed.**

- » How do we make initial interaction with potential partners like less of a “first date?”
- » I know the business owners, but I don't have the time to go much further.
- » There is a big difference between what educators believe and what business believes.
- » We are not accustomed to asking the community for input and developing engaged business partnerships.
- » Principals are not experienced or comfortable reaching out to the business community.
- » It is often easier to look to the past and revert to what has always been done.
- » History can leave remnants of distrust.

- » We need to do a better job of listening to all stakeholder groups.
- » Creating and maintaining collective ownership by all stakeholders is an ongoing challenge.
- » It is extremely difficult to visualize and communicate what a community partnership looks like when it is beneficial and healthy for all parties.
- » Sometimes we hesitate to reach out not wanting to waste the time of champions in the community.
- » It is a change from the past, so it is sometimes difficult to be open to input from the community.
- » There are so many pathways it is difficult to get sponsorships for each.
- » It is challenging to foster understanding and support in the community and bring all of us together.
- » It is difficult to assemble the right information and provide it to the community, to the teachers, and to the students on a timely and regular basis.
- » Teachers don't always know what to ask for, and business doesn't always know what to offer.
- » External partners don't get the training we do, so they don't share the same context.
- » More needs to be done to address the implications of the career academy model on the curriculum.
- » Work needs to be done on rolling out common grading practices with the goal of stepping up to standards-based grading.
- » There are still some staff that look for ways not to be successful in our transformation.
- » Determining, gathering, automating, and managing data is a big, unresolved task.
- » Bring community partners into the school to add credibility and relevance.
- » Be intentional about having employers complete the related training before working with the students.
- » Offer branding (sponsorship) of pathways linked to delivering specific benchmarks in years 2 through 4.
- » Having a teacher assigned to coaching is instrumental to building strong community relationships.

## 5. COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION ROLE

**Reoccurring themes to achieving success in the transformation included effective master planning; keeping the master plan a “living” document, establishing tactical plans with specific implementation actions; and effective communication within the academy and with all stakeholder groups.**

**The following is a consolidated list of methods, approaches, and resources that interviewed executive and academy principals use and recommend for achieving success and addressing challenges.**

- » The master planning process supported by a strong mix of key stakeholders is essential.
- » Continue to refer to the community study results.
- » Keep the master plan a living, breathing document. Stay on plan.
- » Do everything through the lens of a career academy.
- » Have tactical plans with specific action steps.
- » Preparation really makes a difference, and with preparation you can see how much better you can connect with the students.
- » It is helpful to know there are resources and structures in place to support your efforts.
- » As you implement the master plan, incorporate the team's ideas and the network's best practices.
- » Layers of leadership creates shared responsibility. You are not alone.
- » Principals should develop implementation plans with the academy team.
- » Consider what stays the same at the building and what changes in the academy model.
- » Develop a strong communications plan that includes regular meetings throughout the year with teachers and administrators.
- » Keep challenges on the table.
- » Press partners at the district to help with solutions.
- » Develop a plan that includes a detailed communication and marketing campaign.

- » Use communication to keep the mission and vision in focus.
- » Emphasize how important teachers are as leaders.
- » Develop meaningful roles.
- » Seek input and encourage others to speak-up.
- » When sharing what needs to be done, cultivate an understanding for the “why.”
- » Take meaningful steps to excite the parents about what is happening, because their excitement is influential.
- » Provide training in teaming and collaboration.
- » Build a school, student, and faculty identity.
- » Stage supportive events and celebrate successes.
- » Make students feel like they belong.
- » Keep the focus on the students.
- » How effectively we help students select pathways and how well we are aligned with student and community needs is key.
- » A measure of success is the number of students we provide true work-based experiences.
- » There is a significant change for the better in climate and culture as teachers and students get into project-based learning (engagement, ownership, belonging, overall enthusiasm).
- » Regular communication and in-person visits from a Ford NGL coach make a big difference.
- » When interviewing candidates for employment, identify those who buy into the career academy approach.
- » Onboard all staff members (Career Academy 101).
- » When onboarding new employees, go through everything from the master plan, to the career academy model, to academy coaching.
- » As staff is added or changed, make sure they have training in Nashville.
- » Provide professional development opportunities for your teachers.
- » Make sure teams meet two times a week.
- » Expose students to hands-on learning in the real-world careers they are interested in as early as possible.
- » When everything points to a reason (not just student achievement), principals feel a stronger sense of identity. They are more purpose driven and more excited about the work.
- » Create a catalogue with a planning tool to help students see themselves in a career.
- » Recognize that building success is a day-to-day process and communicate the value that day-to-day progress brings.
- » Remember that transformation takes time, so hang in there as the work and the team establishes the right track.
- » Ford NGL yearly reviews really help with understanding where we are.

## 6. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is a key pillar to building a successful transformation. In some, professional development for executive principals and principals is specified in a formal plan. In others, professional development is more self-directed. Professional development cited as high-value training experiences include the Academies of Nashville Study Visit.

Questions about professional development generated some of the common and ongoing challenges faced by most communities such as time and funding. Responses also suggested specific content areas where new training and tools specific to supporting the academy model and building community relationships are needed. The following are some of the comments we received regarding professional development for principals.

- » Funding – we just don’t have enough especially for things like training.
- » More needs to be done in the way of training specific to principals.

- » We would benefit from in-house sessions on marketing and scheduling.
- » More needs to be done to address implicit bias and racial inequity.
- » Help with academy communication and marketing materials would be beneficial.
- » Restructuring teacher teams is difficult.
- » I read books and find other resources to increase my knowledge.
- » Principals should engage in study around coaching and building leadership.
- » We must achieve divisional goals first and then focus on the building.
- » There has not been much in the way of academy specific training for principals.
- » We have a management PD plan and a team PD plan.

## 7. EVALUATION

Executive principals and academy principals reported mixed feedback regarding their evaluations. Some said that their evaluations have not changed at all since moving to a career academy model while others said their evaluations were tied to the goals for the career academy model. Regarding teacher evaluations, executive principals and principals pointed out that they are driven by state requirements. They continue to use evaluation rubrics such as the School Advanced and/or the Charlotte Danielson Framework. While these evaluation rubrics are not specific to academies, principals generally agreed that they can work in an academy environment with modifications.

Whether done on a formal or informal basis, it is clear that more communities could benefit from connecting master plan and academy goals and objectives to individual performance evaluations. The following responses indicate that some of those evaluation connections are being made, but there is a need to integrate those connections more purposefully into the evaluation process.

- » Evaluation has not changed but does reflect academy goals.
- » We need to find a new way to evaluate my performance.
- » Evaluations are dictated by the state; however, I have an individual scorecard based on the successes of the academies.
- » My evaluation has not changed, but I do bring evidence of academy successes.
- » There are currently no discussions about changing evaluations.
- » Teacher evaluations have not changed and are tied to state requirements.
- » We are trying to make adaptations to the Danielson framework to connect to CA goals.
- » Teachers have some flexibility with goals in their evaluation to reflect the CA model.

## 8. SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Most interviewees felt there was a need for, and a significant value in, networking. In fact, they believe that the benefits of networking can be greatly enhanced if designed for “role alike” forums that are focused on topics of common interest and need. The other valuable support noted in multiple interviews was regular Ford NGL coach visits and check-in opportunities.

In addition to role-alike networking opportunities among career academy communities, interview responses suggested a wide variety of support and resource needs. Many are addressed by courses, forums, and tool kits currently available through Ford NGL U. All feedback will be reviewed and considered as future training and communication opportunities are planned and developed. The following list highlights the suggestions gathered in the interview process.

- » A method to help develop and maintain business partnerships.
- » The district needs to provide training specific to principals on their roles and responsibilities in a CA model.
- » Ongoing monitoring, assessment, encouragement, and advising on a regular basis by Ford NGL coaches is important.
- » Developing role-alike circles and opportunities to collaborate with like roles in other communities.
- » A short-form (one or two-page) summary of the master plan with talking points.
- » Having benchmarks to know who is responsible and if things are happening on time.
- » How to take plans and condense them into specific, achievable results.
- » A clear view of suggested course sequencing, hard and soft requirements, and what is in each course and the capstone.
- » Help getting the district to see everything through the lens of a career academy.
- » Providing In-house sessions on marketing and scheduling.
- » How to “push down” so pre/middle schools and courses are connected to academies.
- » We need help communicating and educating others on the why, how and end results of career academies.
- » How to make community connections and make them feel a valued part of the transformation.
- » We need a method to collaborate with other communities regarding how to coordinate curriculum through a pathway lens.
- » How can we share policies, structures, methods and the like that other communities have found successful?
- » The best ways to gather the right data and get it in front of the right people.
- » How do we build multiple tier support systems for students?
- » We need more work on master scheduling and cohort scheduling.
- » More parents need to be engaged in the process and finding ways to achieve this is important.
- » A document that defines the roles of central office versus building principal in a career academy environment.
- » A place to look at all the schools, pathways, and partnerships.

## 9. OTHER RESPONSES AND OBSERVATIONS

**The interviews provided a number of additional responses and observations that are valuable to better understanding the changing roles, responsibilities, and challenges of executive principals and principals. Each represents a significant issue and opportunity for a creative solution to be shared or developed with others working to achieve similar goals and objectives. If you have implemented a successful solution to one of the issues listed below, please share your experience by contacting us at [TheU@fordngl.com](mailto:TheU@fordngl.com).**

- » It’s a challenge to deliver a 21st century approach in buildings and facilities designed and built decades ago.
- » How do we deal with changes in leadership personnel and still stay on track?
- » More needs to be done to develop the necessary systems and structures.
- » While not involved in the planning, we are responsible for implementation.
- » The student points of view have not been adequately tapped.
- » We need to help kids know themselves better.
- » How do we recruit more girls into the academies?
- » More needs to be done to address the social/emotional issues our children face.
- » Not enough has been done from kindergarten on to support this transformational approach to education.
- » Parents sometimes feel their child doesn’t know what they want to be, and we are forcing them into one, limiting choice.
- » Action plans need to be developed for our students.
- » We need to engage parents.
- » There are still some staff that look for ways not to be successful in our transformation.
- » Some teachers are still not buying in.





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