Ready to Thrive

How can schools improve student outcomes? Principals agree that a key factor is making sure that students arrive at school ready to thrive. This means overcoming the various learning barriers that many students experience—from poverty and its effects on health and nourishment to student behavior and mental health issues. That is why school leaders increasingly are looking to integrated services to bring needed supports to students and families. Here are some strategies highlighted in this issue of Principal magazine:

**Wraparound services** refers to a comprehensive, systematic approach to delivering academic and student supports to improve learning outcomes. See “Geared Toward Support” to learn more about the Communities in Schools model (page 10), “Hungry for Knowledge” to learn more about Breakfast in the Classroom (page 16), “A Lifeline for At-Risk Children” to learn about how afterschool programs expand supports through community partnerships (page 26), and “Serving Those Who Serve” to learn about strategies to support military families (page 28).

High-quality early learning and a seamless experience from pre-K to grade 3 are proven to increase student achievement. Deborah Bergeron, director of the Office of Head Start, argues that a dual-generation strategy—targeting both children and their parents—can yield long-term success. Learn how principals can partner with local Head Start programs in “Engaging Families Early and Often” (page 32).

A trauma-informed learning approach can help mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences. Susan Cole, senior project director of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, offers principals five attributes of trauma-sensitive schools in “A Safe Haven” (page 20).

Orchestrating wraparound services requires a steady hand to lead collaboratively with multiple stakeholders across boundaries. I hope that this issue of Principal equips you with the strategies you need to integrate supports and close opportunity gaps for the students you serve. 📣

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**LEADING LESSONS**

Access the Leading Lessons staff guide on integrating wraparound services at www.naesp.org/leading-lessons.