

The Developmental Demands of Leadership:

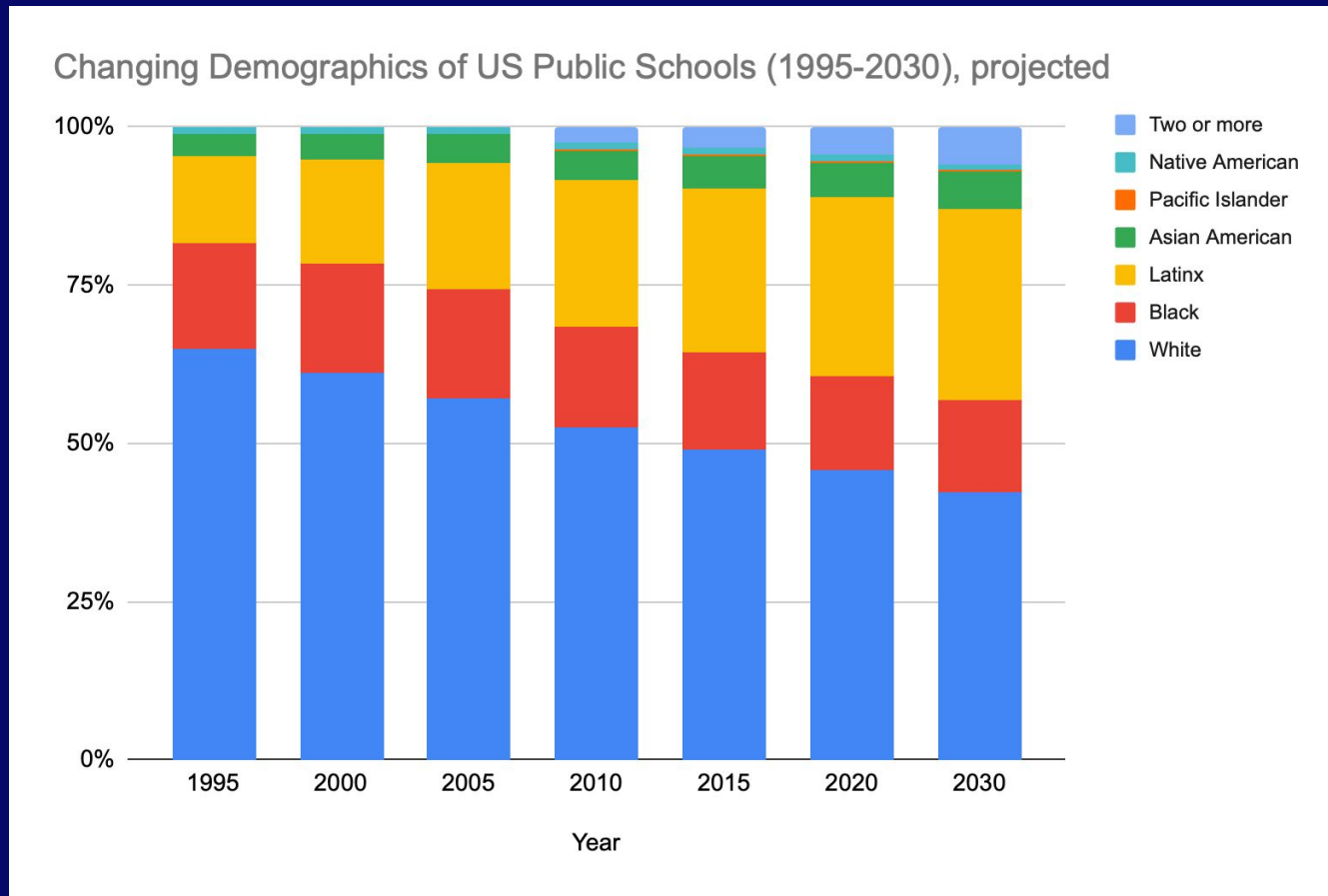
From State Standards to Leadership Preparation

James Noonan, Megin Charner-Laird, & Jacy Ippolito
UCEA Annual Convention | November 17, 2023

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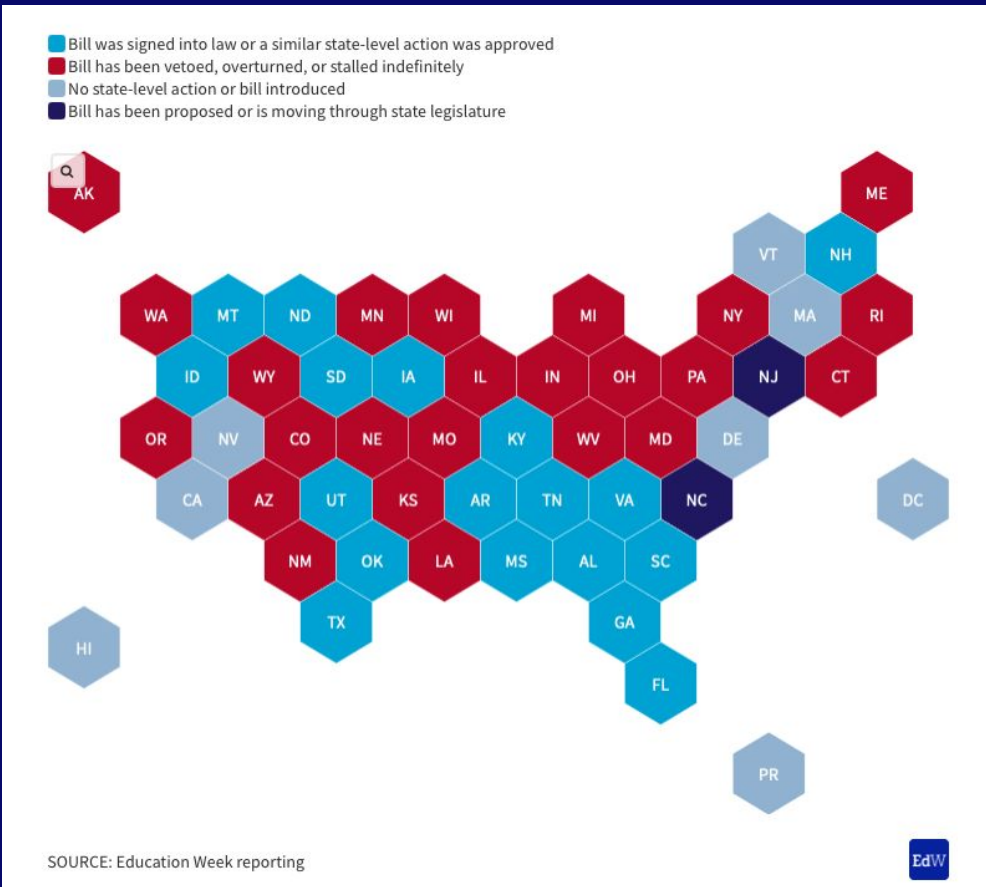


The Context of School Leadership



Source: U.S. Department of Education, NCES

The Context of School Leadership

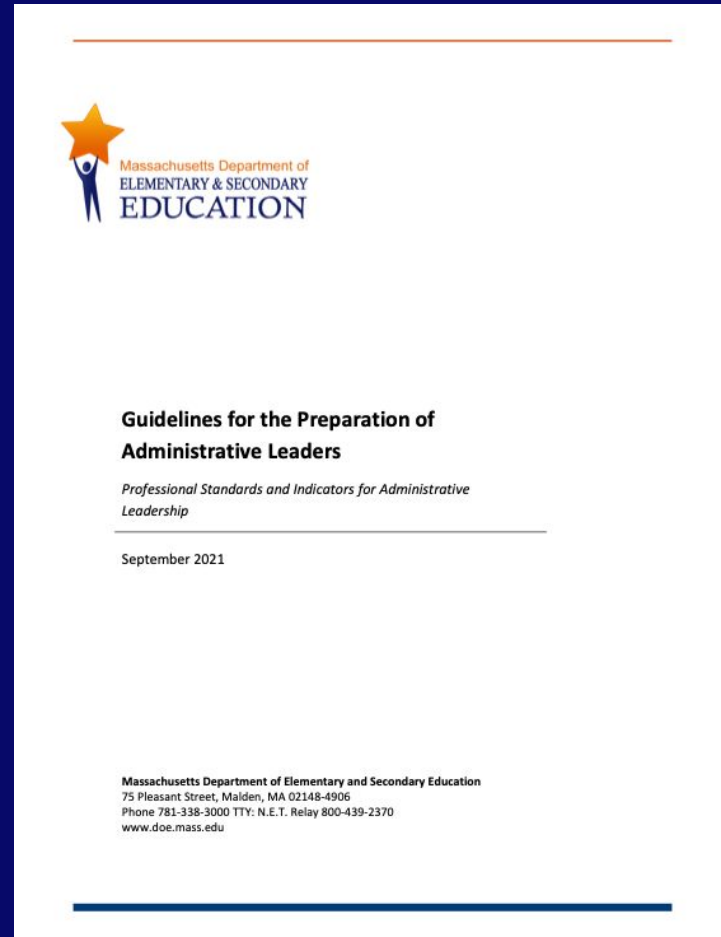


As of June 2023, 44 states have taken steps to limit how educators could discuss racism and LGBTQ+ rights, with bans passed in 18 states

School Leadership in MA

In 2021, Massachusetts revised its standards for school leadership to focus explicitly on preparing “anti-racist leaders who understand and embody anti-racist competencies, strategies, and mindsets” (MA DESE, 2021, p. 7)

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/leadership-guide.pdf>



Revised Leadership Standards

2011 Indicators	2021 Revised Indicators
<p>f. Data-Informed Decision Making. Uses multiple sources of evidence related to student learning, including state, district, and school assessment results and growth data, to inform school and district goals and improve organizational performance, educator effectiveness, and student learning.</p>	<p>E. Data-Informed Decision Making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Uses multiple sources of evidence, including but not limited to measures of student learning, student and family experiences, and school culture and climate, through close analysis of disaggregated data, to inform school and district goals, interrupt historically systemic racial inequities, and improve educator effectiveness and student learning.
<p>i. Managing Conflict. Employs strategies for responding to disagreement and dissent, constructively resolving conflict, and building consensus throughout a district/school community.</p>	<p>F. Managing Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employs strategies when responding to disagreement and dissent that constructively resolve conflict and build consensus throughout the district/school community, while maintaining a commitment to decisions that are in the best interest of promoting racial equity and advancing student well-being b. Consistently examines and mitigates power inequities rooted in race and identity that may affect both parties in professional conflict c. Develops and nurtures a culture in which staff members continuously reflect on how their identities, biases, and practices can impact peer interactions

Theoretical Framework

Kegan (1982, 1994) theorized that adult development is characterized by an increasing capacity to manage complexity and take perspective on oneself and one's environment

Drago-Severson (2004, 2009, 2023) has extensively documented these “ways of knowing” among educational leaders

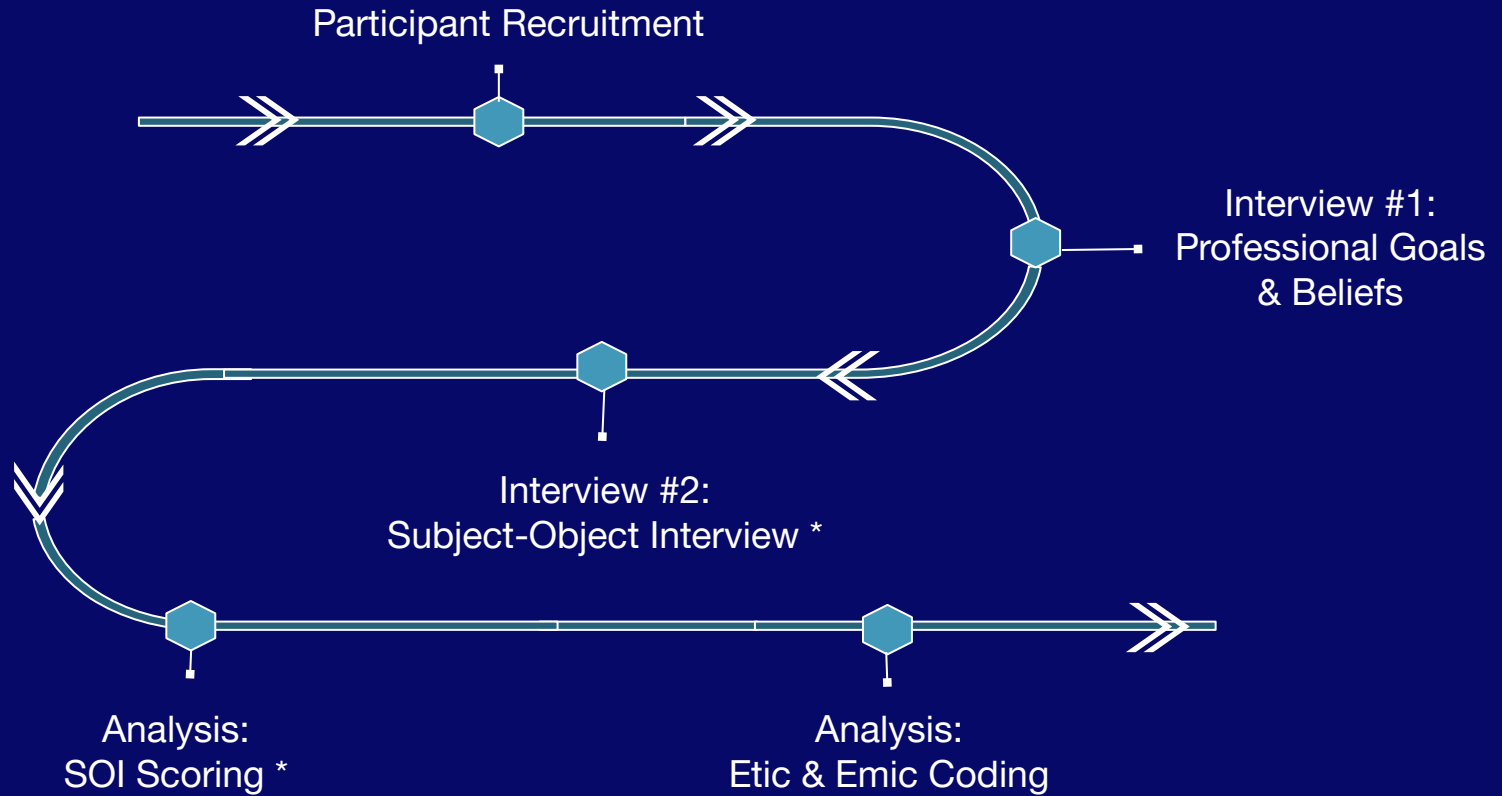


Constructive-Developmental Theory

	Sense of Self	Key Question	Relationships	Experiences of Support	Experiences of Challenge
Self-Transforming (5) ↑	Incompleteness, continuous learning	"How can you help me grow?"	Can consider one's goals in context of broader societal goals; sees across & integrates many belief systems	Appreciates opportunities to challenge oneself, wrestle with & synthesize multiple competing notions	Committed to continual growth and sees conflict/opposition as opportunities for evolution
Self-Authoring (4) ↑	Coherent value system	"Am I true to myself?"	Can consider other perspectives but still articulate one's own perspective and vision; Able to tolerate ambiguity	Appreciates chance to clarify and articulate own goals/vision, connect with others to clarify own goals	Feels discomfort when internal goals are challenged; competing commitments seen as challenging
Socializing (3) ↑	Valued others	"Will you still like me?"	Can collaborate with others, with awareness of own and others' needs; able to prioritize group needs	Appreciates chance to learn with/from others; may not know what's "right" w/out consulting others	Feels discomfort with conflicting viewpoints; critique perceived as a threat to identity
Instrumental (2) ↑	Adherence to rules, norms	"Is this right?"	Others are supports/obstacles to getting what one wants/needs. Tit-for-tat thinking.	Appreciates concrete feedback, clear directions or pathways for improvement	Feels discomfort when clear directions are not articulated by someone else

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Methods



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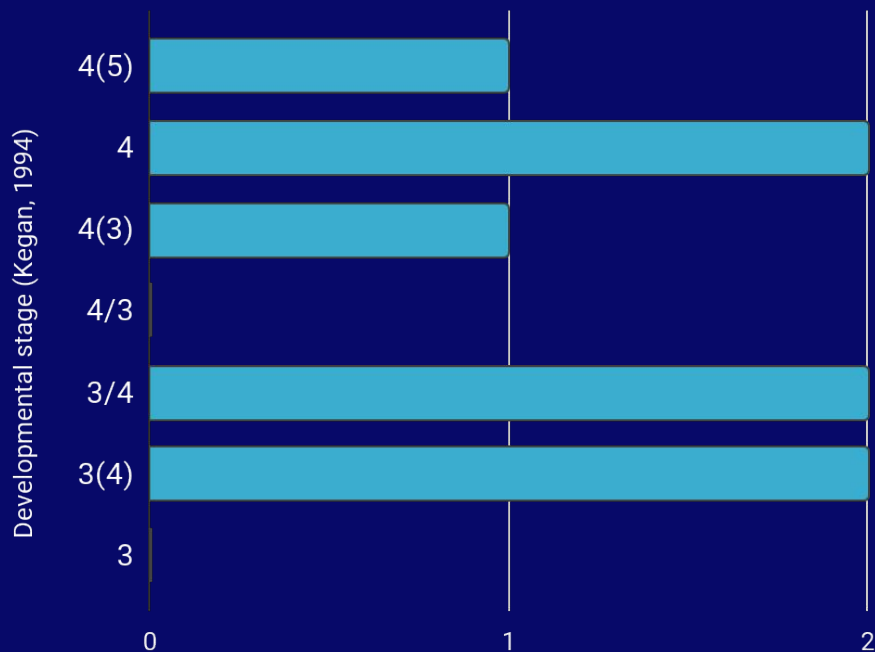


* Lahey, L., Souvaine, E., Kegan, R., Goodman, R., & Felix, S. (2011). *A guide to the subject-object interview: Its administration and interpretation*. Minds at Work

Findings

A Range of Development (a first look at recent grads)

Distribution of adult developmental stage (n=8)



Candidates' developmental capacities spanned Kegan's ways of knowing

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Findings

Making Meaning of Race Talk

Candidate A Stage 3/4

“I felt like I knew what I wanted to say, but could never output it. I also felt I shouldn't—it wasn't my experience, so **I shouldn't be using my voice**.... I really feel like [the instructor, a person of color] gave us the tools to be better allies. I don't know, if I didn't have that course, I wouldn't be able to have a lot of the professional and personal conversations that I can hold.”

Candidate B Stage 4(5)

“I remember some people in the room being very uncomfortable, and I was uncomfortable myself because **I know that I am not doing enough**. You know what? It was okay. I loved that about [the program].”

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Findings

Leadership and Decision Making

Candidate C Stage 3(4)

“[L]eadership has too much on their plate. They are in the public eye, which we all knew... I feel very empathetic about [the] lack of time. I feel empathetic about the fact that **they are graded on the performance of students** without really recognizing how that student body has shifted and changed.”

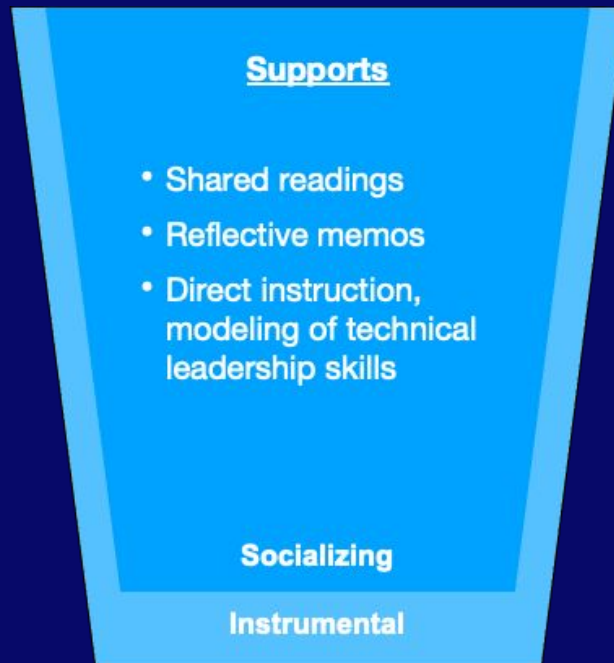
Candidate D Stage 4

“I look forward to tapping into what's already there. Having teachers lead meetings, that when they see a problem instead of me coming up with a way to fix it, let them figure out, and then come to me with ideas rather than me dictate, ‘Oh, this is the way that we're gonna fix it,’ **because they really have the expertise**. Tapping on teachers to help with the work.”

Implications for Practice

Supports and Nudges

“What causes people to develop? I would say, at a practical level, it is the experience of optimal conflict in the context of optimal support” (Kegan, 2003, p. 44)



Implications for Communities

Training Individuals, Nested in Communities

Newton school principals receive racist messages over student discussions of Rittenhouse and Arbery cases

By [Travis Andersen](#) Globe Staff, Updated December 10, 2021, 1:18 p.m.



School superintendent in Everett, Massachusetts, alleges discrimination, retaliation in federal suit

WBUR | By [Max Larkin](#)
Published March 22, 2023 at 10:33 AM EDT

'This has been devastating': Wayland is divided over racism allegations after Black superintendent is placed on leave

By [Naomi Martin](#) and [James Vaznis](#) Globe Staff, Updated March 31, 2023, 3:17 p.m.



How one Mass. school board got caught in the culture wars

March 21, 2022 | By [Wilder Fleming](#) and [Bob Oakes](#)

Right-leaning groups opposed to diversity efforts find unlikely allies in Newton parents

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The foyer to Newton North High School.
[Phillip Martin](#) / GBH News



By [Meo Woolhouse](#) and [Phillip Martin](#)
October 30, 2023 | Updated October 30, 2023

NEWS

Sandwich school officials accused of ignoring, being blind to racism and racist acts



[Rachael Devaney](#)
Cape Cod Times

Published 4:47 a.m. ET April 12, 2022 | Updated 5:32 p.m. ET Feb. 15, 2023

Racist abuse in Concord just latest in wave at Massachusetts schools

By [Christopher Huffaker](#) and [Niki Griswold](#) Globe Staff, Updated October 13, 2023, 5:58 p.m.



Ongoing Research

**Before
Program**



Interview 1:
Beliefs and
Motivation
s

SOI 1

Summer 2022

**Mid-
Program**

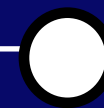


Interview 2:
Beliefs and Learning
Experiences

SOI 2

Summer 2023

**End of
Program**



Interview 3:
Beliefs and
Debrief

SOI 3

Summer 2024

Thank you

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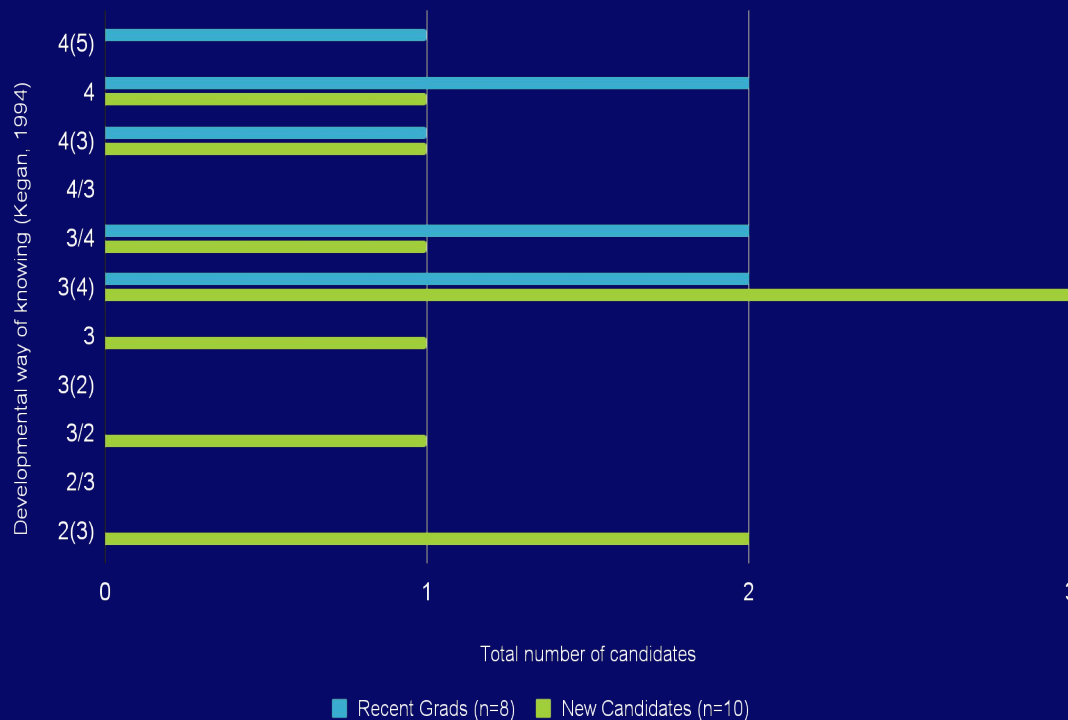
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Findings

Comparing recent graduates with new candidates

Comparing developmental capacity of recent grads and new candidates



Developmental capacity of recent grads seems higher, on average, than new candidates, suggesting the possibility of growth within the program.