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ABSTRACT

This document seeks to define the kinds of administrators who will be needed to ensure first-rate elementary and middle schools in the next century. Underlying the report is the belief that present principal preparation programs are inadequate and require overhauling. Chapters 1 and 2 focus on demographic changes, effective schools, and the nature of effective school leadership. Guiding assumptions about the roles and responsibilities of tomorrow's principals and recommendations for principal preparation are offered in chapters 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 6 recommends that policymakers at the state and national levels fully support educational reform funding and school-based management initiatives, including but not limited to quality control for principal preparation and continuing professional development of principals. In conclusion, it is recommended that effective recruitment efforts be immediately launched to attract potential principals from the best and brightest teachers, that these aspiring administrators be enabled to develop proficiencies that will help them to deal with the pedagogical problems of the 1990s, and that programs be provided that allow practicing principals--those now in the schools--to refine existing proficiencies and develop new ones. Fundamental to these recommendations are the notions that principals should understand the nature of instruction within a particular environment and have substantive classroom experience. (JAM)

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Foreword

As Shakespeare pointed out in *The Tempest*, "The past is prologue." The events and challenges and trends bearing on the education of America's children today will do much to shape the nature of American elementary and middle schools in the century that lies ahead.

So while we are far from having completed the 20th century, NAESP felt it might be possible for some industrious researchers and knowledgeable thinkers to describe a principal preparation program adapted to the needs of the 21st. We were interested in what types of leaders tomorrow's K-8 principals will need to be, what particular skills they should possess, what kinds of issues they will need to be on top of—in general, what kind of preparation will be required to produce first-rate principals for the 21st century's elementary and middle schools.

Fortunately a group of industrious researchers and perceptive, knowledgeable thinkers was close at hand, in the form of NAESP's Organization of Professors of Elementary School Administration. Formed in 1985, OPESA's purposes include "the exchange of ideas, concepts, and concerns about the processes and practices by which the programs and administration of the elementary/middle school are enhanced and maintained" and to "encourage research, development, and dissemination" regarding K-8 programs and administration.

Out of the OPESA group's interest, industry, and expertise has come this analysis. It seeks to define—for planners, policymakers, and principals, and for everyone else who is concerned about the well-being of American children—the kinds of administrators who will be needed to assure first-rate elementary and middle schools in the 21st century.

NAESP is grateful to the members of OPESA who devoted so many hours to the numerous planning sessions and discussions and reviews that go into a project of this nature. Their names are listed on page 53. We applaud in particular the writing team that prepared the manuscript—Professors James L. Doud of the University of Northern Iowa and Donald K. Lemon of the University of North Dakota; the team's chairman, David C. Smith of the University of Florida; and OPESA officers —James Craigmile of the University of Missouri,

R. C. Bradley of the University of North Texas, and Bill Scofield of Emporia State University in Kansas.

Our gratitude extends also to the panel of expert reviewers who contributed their collective wisdom to improve the document, and to the NAESP Board of Directors for their comments and suggestions.

As this publication makes clear, the 21st century will bring unprecedented challenges to America's elementary and middle schools. Given the crucial, catalytic role the principal plays in every school's success, it is essential that 21st century preparation programs for school administrators address 21st century needs and problems and opportunities. We hope this publication will be a useful contribution to that end.

Samuel G. Sava
Executive Director
NAESP

Introduction

There is little question that widespread concern surrounds the quality of schooling and the preparation of school personnel in the United States. Informed persons recognize that in the process of improving American education, the leadership provided by elementary and middle school principals will be critical. Thus in recent years, preparation programs for these administrators have attracted growing concern on the part of educators and policymakers alike.

This document seeks to present a definitive statement about the preparation of elementary and middle school principals for the next century. Simultaneously, the writers have striven for a report that is sound, well reasoned, and responsible, without resorting to the faddish and superficial.

In developing this statement, the writers were informed by a variety of important documents. *Standards for Quality Elementary Schools: Kindergarten through Eighth Grade* (1984), *Proficiencies for Principals: Kindergarten through Eighth Grade* (1986), and *The K-8 Principal in 1988: A Ten-Year Study* (1989), of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) were of particular value. The writers were also especially sensitive to the changing demographic conditions in American society, to implications for principal preparation reflected in effective schools research, and to identified as well as projected concerns about current and future schooling.

The statement departs from the reports of other groups in several significant ways. In particular, special emphasis is placed on the proposition that principals must attain an extensive knowledge of instruction. Substantive experience in the elementary or middle school classroom is considered essential. Preparation programs should move beyond generic preparation to more specifically address identified needs and applications for elementary and middle school principals. Internships are not viewed as a universal panacea for the preparation of principals. Uniform, state-mandated reform measures for widely differing schools (often accompanied by inadequate funding) may be nonproductive or even counterproductive in spite of their positive intentions.

The reader will also find that the report has attempted to avoid a sense of the spectacular. For example, the writers do not believe that any bright, capable manager can manage a school any more than any bright, capable manager can manage a missile silo. The writers do not believe that current preparation programs are in a shambles, even though acknowledging that major surgery is in order in the preparation of educational administrators. Some will think that this report has gone too far, while others will think it has not gone far enough. If there is error, the writers hope it is in the direction of having reached beyond the grasp of simple remedies to complex issues. Institutions that are truly concerned with improving the preparation of school principals will find helpful direction for strategic planning that can lead to improved programs for the next generation of school leaders.

The issuance of this statement comes at a crucial time. Research data suggest that within the next dozen years nearly 60 percent of our current force of principals will be replaced. America desperately needs a new generation of bright, capable principals, well prepared to help the nation's elementary and middle schools meet the demands of the 21st century.

David C. Smith
OPESA

Chapter 1

The Context of Change

As we rush toward the dawn of the 21st century, our society and our system of education are engulfed by far-reaching change. Wrapped up in this wave of change is a collection of issues that must be addressed promptly and wisely if tomorrow's principals are to successfully confront the challenges of the next century.

Consider the impact of rapidly changing technology. In a nation where information has become instantaneous and virtually universally available, public education is challenged to shift from the top-down hierarchy that has traditionally characterized school organization to a more collegial, "flat" structure. The implications of this development relate to changes both in school curricula and in leadership.

Tomorrow's principals will need to possess an array of interpersonal skills as they work with the professional staff of their schools, with parents, and—increasingly—with "outside" forces and agencies. Successful applications of school-based leadership concepts indicate that tomorrow's principal will be the leader of a proactive faculty that will collaboratively design educational programs and yet maintain the school's unique identity.

Tomorrow's principals will need to possess an array of interpersonal skills as they work with the professional staff of their schools

With the American workplace undergoing far-reaching changes, schooling must be adjusted to respond to new circumstances and new challenges. If education is to prepare children for a world of instantaneous information and participative decision making, methods that served the needs of a smokestack society must be replaced with methods more in tune with the needs of a society whose primary product will be information. Thus, tomorrow's principal will be called upon to work with faculty in initiating and facilitating a restructuring of curricula and methodologies within the school. As a part of

that effort, principals will need to give teachers a greater role in participatory management and encourage them to employ cooperative learning procedures in the classroom.

The information explosion carries another heavy responsibility for the principal: the need to remain abreast of education's ever-growing body of research. In the past decade our knowledge base of what works and what doesn't—and why--has grown at an impressive rate. What educational leader can afford to miss the implications of such recent studies as Rowe's analyses of "wait" time (Rowe 1974b, pp. 197-203) or Rist's analyses of teacher expectancies? (Rist 1970, pp. 411-451) Even principals who know of such research findings and the need to address them, may not be aware of the most recent research on how effective leaders facilitate change in their schools (Hall and Hord 1988). The rapidly expanding base of research on effective schools means that tomorrow's principal must be a knowledgeable and reflective practitioner, constantly striving to go beyond daily routines. searching for information, conducting action research, listening to people who can help lead the school to a realization of its highest potential.

Principals are not the only educators whose training is undergoing major reconstruction. Teachers graduating from recently redesigned teacher education programs are entering the field with more understanding and knowledge than did teachers a mere decade ago. The relationship between the principal and the new teacher is consequently being transformed, with the new teacher bringing a set of skills and an enriched knowledge base from which other professionals in the school can learn. The implementation of new and more rigorous teacher preparation programs will place heavier demands on the principals to be knowledgeable about instruction.

Rapid increases both in the body of knowledge and its availability indicate that tomorrow's principal will function in a school characterized by new administrative structures, with new curricula and teaching methods and an imposing set of interpersonal dynamics. Those entering the principalship in the next decade will need to possess a willingness and capacity to find better ways of doing things—and then be able to effectively market them.

Our Changing Demography

Recent years have witnessed both rapid and remarkable changes in the American society, changes that will continue to have a heavy impact on America's public schools. As Hodgkinson (1985) notes:

> Change is reweaving the very fabric of our society. The past decade alone has seen chilling changes in the everyday realities of our nation's young. It is clear that what is coming to our schools is a cohort that will be poorer, more ethnically and linguistically diverse—and with more handicaps that will affect their learning (p. 12).

Another crucial change is the distressing fact that children have come to represent the American society's largest contingent of poor people. Poverty is perhaps the most powerful and devastating force our children face. Moreover, it is not simply a matter of poverty but also of the conditions often associated with it—child abuse, malnutrition, crime, drugs, and a lack of intellectual stimulation or encouragement for education. Research tells us that children of poverty enter school less ready to learn than their more affluent peers, and that they fall farther behind each year (Kaufman 1987, p. 151). While poverty is not a new problem for American society, the rising numbers of poor *children* place the problem in a new and discomfitting perspective. By the year 2000, 40 percent of the children living in New York City will live in poverty ("New York Ascendent," *Education Week*, August 4, 1987, p. 12).

Another major demographic change that will challenge tomorrow's schools lies in the evolving makeup of the school population. With legal immigrants representing one-fourth of America's annual population growth, projections indicate that the number of children with limited English proficiency will increase more than 40 percent in the next twenty years (Kaufman 1987, p. 146). This influx of immigrant children—most of whom find America's customs, language, and schools as strange as we would those of Aymara Indians of the Andean Altiplano—cast demanding challenges upon an already struggling public school system. Beset by an array of challenges and inadequate budgets, schools also must somehow accommodate to a host of immigrant children whose education is inordinately expensive—calling for ESL instruction, multilingual-multicultural curricula, and principals and teachers who are sensitive to their widely divergent attitudes about learning.

The situation is not, however, totally negative. A school with children of differing nationalities, languages, and cultures offers the perceptive principal a rich resource with which to enhance the vision and understanding of tomorrow's global citizens. The 21st century principal must be prepared to meet the challenges and capitalize on the potential of the most heterogeneous group of children ever to have presented themselves at a schoolhouse door. The effective principal will see this diversity as an asset rather than a liability and will use it to the advantage of all children.

Another major challenge facing future principals is the large number of so-called "latchkey" children in our nation. At the end of the school day, more and more children either remain at school in extended day programs or return to empty homes. The U.S. Census Bureau (1984) estimates that there are now more than two million latchkey children in America. As more and more families require two incomes to make ends meet, and as more and more children live with only one parent, demands are increasingly placed upon the schools to provide activities that will coincide with parent work schedules. Will schools merely offer custodial services, or will they turn this demand to advantage by providing more instruction and learning opportunities? What schools do about latchkey children will necessarily involve a communitywide decision-making process in which principals must be active, informed participants.

While policymakers continue to debate such matters as how best to grapple with the latchkey children situation, working parents of preschool-age children are presenting the elementary school with another set of problems—a severe readiness gap between kindergartners who come to school with some form of preschool learning experience and those who do not. The gap in school readiness among children is increasing, and it is doing so along clear-cut lines of social and economic backgrounds. Pendleton (1987) speaks about several of these issues, noting, "As socioeconomic status rises, so does the likelihood that a child will be enrolled in preschool and that the preschool will be a private school" (p. 122). While the federal Head Start program continues to be available and successful, only one of every six children eligible for the program actively participates (p. 132). Hundreds of thousands of children are on Head Start waiting lists. Also, most at-risk youngsters, it would appear, are the children of the Hispanic poor, for these children are "only half as likely to be enrolled in preschool as are white and black three-year-olds" (p. 30). Thus, while one group of children enters kindergarten having already mastered many of the skills that have traditionally been taught at that level, another group—comprised predominantly of black and Hispanic children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds—is entering without the benefit of that kind of preparation. This disturbing situation is compounded by the fact that the children entering with no preschool experience are frequently those beset by such other at-risk factors as inadequate language development and poor diets. America's elementary schools are increasingly being called upon to meet the needs of two very distinct groups of kindergarten students. Unless teachers become more proficient at raising the performance of those who enter with the greatest disadvantages, the chances are very high that this nation will be confronted by a large and permanent underclass (p. 132).

Although pregnancy among public school students is, of course, much more of a problem in senior high schools than in elementary and middle schools, its results have dramatic consequences for the lower grades. For one thing, teenage mothers tend to give birth prematurely; and because of poorly developed immune systems, prematurely born babies are vulnerable to an array of major health problems. That being so, premature birth is considered a reliable predictor of learning problems. The implications for K-8 schooling are great indeed, for the number of children who are born prematurely is rising dramatically. The statistics point to a situation of crisis proportions. Every day in the United States, 40 teenage girls give birth to their third child. In 1983, over one million teens became pregnant; 500,000 gave birth. An additional 200,000 premature babies were born to women twenty years and older. Thus, each year, our elementary schools must be prepared for "about 700,000 babies of the annual cohort of around 3.3 million births who are almost assured of being either educationally retarded or difficult to teach" (Hodgkinson 1985, p. 5).

Meanwhile, drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions, even among the very young. Children as young as eight are being arrested as drug dealers. Schools must strive to become drug free and offer drug education programs that are effective. A society that stands by while its children die in the grip of drugs is a society rushing headlong toward self-destruction.

Child abuse is another societal aberration with which schools must contend. CNN News (1987) reported that the New York State Child Abuse Hot Line received 25 percent more calls in 1987 that it had in 1986. While it is not possible to measure the precise number of children who suffer from child abuse, current figures verify that it is on the increase. The schools must find ways of dealing with this social cancer, if for no other reason than because of its impact on the learning abilities of students. Moreover, every principal must devise sound strategies for assuring that child abuse does not take place within the school walls and for handling any complaints of in-school child abuse.

At the same time, we must pay greater attention to the needs of handicapped youngsters. Less than half of handicapped children between the ages of three and five currently receive preschool assistance. Currently, 27 states have no legislation mandating educational services for handicapped children under the age of five. However, federal law requires that by 1992 these services be provided to all children ages three to five.

In the face of such enormous challenges as these, the role of the principal is being transformed, and the preparation of a new generation of elementary and middle school administrators requires significant changes in traditional principal preparation programs. Tomorrow's principal must be of a decidedly different cloth in order to function effectively in a rapidly changing society and an age of high technology and burgeoning information. Fortunately, research of the past years has given us a promising body of literature on successful learning. Today, more than at any other time in the history of education, we have at hand an invaluable body of knowledge about the characteristics of effective schools—and of effective school leaders.

Chapter 2

Effective Schools and the Nature of Their Leadership

Although there is no one formula for creating effective schools or effective leaders (Hallinger and Murphy 1986, p. 159), study after study has identified specific skills, values, and areas of knowledge and understanding that seem to distinguish principals of effective schools. It is reasonable to assume that to a large degree, such knowledge, understanding, skills, and values can be passed along in principal preparation programs.

Of these characteristics, the most important may very well be the ability of effective leaders to create and maintain a warm and positive climate for learning. Effective principals nurture positive relationships—with parents, faculty, students, power groups in the community, and district and school staff. They are "secure; they project a positive attitude and enjoy an attractive image; they inspire confidence, trust, and respect" (NAESP 1986, p. 6). The quality of human relationships established and maintained by the principal has been identified as a key factor in student achievement. A three-year study of principals reported by Andrews and Soder (1986) found a significant correlation between teachers' favorable perceptions of the quality of human relationships in the school and an incremental growth pattern in student achievement (p. 9). Effective principals know how to nurture a caring, trusting, and collegial environment.

The most important trait for effective elementary/middle school principals may be the ability to create a warm, positive climate for learning.

Having nurtured this environment, effective principals know how to project it as the image of the school. It should be noted in this connection that the self-image a principal projects, in turn shapes the perception of the school itself (NAESP 1986, p. 7). The effective principal understands and harnesses the power that flows from a positive self-image, and in relations with the public recognizes and celebrates those accomplishments that enhance the school's image.

The best principals are actively involved in all aspects of the life of the school. In fact, in a three-year study of schools in Washington state, Andrews and Soder found that "being a visible presence in the school" is the effective principal's most important characteristic (p. 6). Other studies say much the same thing, noting that effective principals are those who studiously monitor such matters as student progress, the appropriateness of tasks assigned to students, and the amount of time students spend on learning tasks (U.S. Department of Education 1987, p. 10). Similarly, effective principals make it a point to visit classrooms frequently (Hallinger and Murphy 1986, p. 156) and take an active interest in the quality of instruction that occurs in the school.

Successful principals can effectively implement innovations. They frequently intervene in the change process, and constantly oversee progress (Hall and Hord 1988, p. 249). Leadership and change often prove to have a symbiotic relationship. Effective instructional leadership, moving the group or an individual from what was to what will be, is possible only to the degree that the principal understands how to facilitate the complex change process. Stated another way, the success or failure of any educational innovation is directly proportional to the level of the principal's concern and the intervening actions the principal employs or takes. Principals who initiate, as opposed to those who simply manage or respond, are the principals who are succeeding today and who will succeed in the schools of the 21st century (pp. 230-243).

The literature strongly indicates that the effective principal knows how to help teachers plan and implement strategies that match the curriculum to the learning needs of the student. The most effective principals tend to be those who were effective teachers (NAESP 1986, p. 11). They understand, through experience, the demands and intricacies of the classroom.

Effective school leaders establish a vision for the school and lead the school community toward that vision. Shoemaker and Fraser (1981) reported that the most consistent finding in their studies of school effectiveness is the connection between expectation and achievement. Study after study, they noted, "reinforces the fact that students and teachers live up to our expectations of them" (p. 181). Effective principals believe in the ability of their students and teachers to achieve high standards of performance (Clark and Lotto 1982, p. 22).

Finally, when "it comes to high expectations, [principals] begin with themselves" (U.S. Department of Education, 1987, p. 10). Effective principals are lifelong learners, striving to continually add to their knowledge, understanding, and skills. One reliable indicator of a qual-

ity school is that the personnel are never satisfied that all is well; they continually seek to improve (NAESP 1984). The same is true for principals who are instructional leaders. As Johnson and Johnson (1989) state, "Expertise is not something that is gained and then enjoyed forever. It is a process" (p. 7).

Important as such knowledge about effective schools is, tomorrow's effective school leader must also possess specific personal qualities. Studies of leadership have established the proposition that while there is no one set of traits that guarantees effective leadership, certain characteristics are at least desirable and often crucial. In a paper prepared for The Study Commission on Global Education, Harlan Cleveland (1986) identified qualities of a "generalist mind-set" that he held to be essential for leaders of the future. Although he was describing governmental leaders, Cleveland's list appears equally applicable to elementary and middle school principals. Slightly paraphrased, these mind-sets are:

1. A lively, intellectual curiosity; an interest in everything that happens
2. A genuine concern for what other people think, and how they think, and (especially) why they think that way
3. An attitude that risks are there not be avoided but to be taken
4. A feeling that crises are normal, tensions can be promising, and complexity is fun
5. The realization that paranoia and self-pity are reserved for persons who *don't* want to be leaders
6. The quality . . . (of perhaps) unwarranted optimism . . . the conviction that there must be some more upbeat outcome than would result from adding up the available expert advice
7. A personal sense of citizen responsibility for the outcomes of the school's efforts (p. 26).

Cleveland's list offers a thoughtful perspective on the traits desirable in K-8 principals. Long-time principals would add such qualities as sensitivity, trust, caring, compassion, and good character. Principals also need to know *themselves*—their own strengths and their own weaknesses. And they must be able to lead their schools into the future as the result of a clearly developed vision of what their schools can and should become.

Principals are today an aging cohort. Moreover, the evidence suggests that they plan earlier retirement than did their predecessors. Data from *The K-8 Principal in 1988* (Doud 1989, pp. 11-12) show that 29.8 percent of the principals currently serving schools expect

to retire by 1992, 46.6 percent by 1995, 56.0 percent by 1998, and 65.2 percent by 2000. Further, 37.6 percent of K-8 principals now on the job foresee retiring by age 55 and another 35.7 percent by age 60. Thus, a total of 73.3 percent of the nation's currently employed elementary and middle school principals plan to retire by age 60. True, some of these people, particularly the younger ones, may change their minds. Even so, it appears that more than half of today's elementary and middle school principals will have retired by the turn of the century.

These dramatic data suggest a window of opportunity in the preparation of school administrators unlike any in the history of the principalship. The data also raise many concerns, paramount among them being the question of whether American institutions of higher education can adequately prepare the number of new principals who will be needed—more particularly, principals who possess the kinds of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will be required for successful administration of 21st century schools.

Chapter 3

Guiding Assumptions

Several basic assumptions have guided the development of this analysis. These assumptions are based on careful consideration of the effective schools literature and of various NAESP commentaries, including *The K-8 Principal in 1988: A Ten-Year Study* (Doud 1989). In addition, judgments have been sought from practitioners in the schools and from those involved in the preparation of principals.

Assumption 1

The Principal Will Be a Leader of Leaders

Historically, the principal has been perceived as the school's one and only leader. A recent trend in American society (particularly evident in business and industry) has been toward greater decision-making involvement on the part of those whom the decisions will affect. This development is increasingly evident in education. In elementary and middle schools, for instance, growing involvement is apparent in the use of assistants, grade-level or team chairpersons, and ad hoc task forces in dealing with administrative decisions once handled exclusively by the principal.

21st Century principals will be challenged to enlist teachers and other staff members as co-leaders in entering into basic decisions.

The 21st century is expected to see continuing expansion of collegial involvement and a more "flattened" organizational structure for decision making in the schools. In their role as leader of leaders, principals will need new skills in order to more effectively facilitate and empower teachers and other members of the school community. They will need to be able to help shape and nurture the leadership capabilities of everyone involved in the school's work—specifically, teachers, parents, secretaries, custodians, students, and volunteers. The

concept of empowerment has a synergistic impact within the school. Appropriately handled by the principal, it tends to produce more, rather than less, decision-making power.

A synopsis of the research on effective schools as presented in *Standards for Quality Elementary Schools: Kindergarten through Eighth Grade* (NAESP 1984) concludes that the instructional leadership of the principal is "basic to the development of high expectations for student achievement and staff effectiveness, to the building of consensus concerning the school's mission, and to stimulating superior work by staff and superior attainment by students" (p. 15). To fulfill this role, the principal must be available at all times to monitor the school's teaching/learning activities and maintain constant access to the people within the school. It is thus crucially important that the principal be available full-time within every school.

As the effective schools literature of the 1970s and 1980s clearly establishes, the principal is the school's single most important figure. It is incidentally worth noting that the studies which identified the principal as the key component in quality schools were not designed to study the principalship but to determine the extent to which schools could successfully affect improved levels of student achievement. The discoveries about the importance of the principal were both unanimous and serendipitous, thus adding to their credibility.

Although such groups as the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (1986) have advanced the theory that the position of principal might advantageously be replaced by some type of governance by committee, most informed observers suggest that this notion is at best impractical. Just as a corporation's performance is inexorably dependent on the leadership of a chief executive officer, a school cannot perform successfully without the leadership of an administrator qualified to make immediate decisions. Someone must provide leadership to preserve the integrity and coherence of the educational program while assuring that the best interests of the children and their parents remain the highest priority. There must be someone to take the initiative in forging a consensus on the goals and beliefs that direct the school's educational program, and to articulate and interpret those goals to all members of the school community. The leadership provided by the principal is essential for the development and maintenance of a school organization and climate that is consistently conducive to quality education.

Assumption 2

Expectations for Higher Performing Schools Will Continue to Rise

The level of performance of American schoolchildren, particularly when compared with that of children in other countries, has become a major concern in recent years. Nearly all of the spate of educational reform reports have called for raising student performance levels (particularly test scores), *presumably to better prepare them to be jobholders and to enable our country to compete more effectively in the global marketplace.* The call for school improvement has struck a responsive chord, and the pressures on the nation's principals to respond with measurable results will increase rather than decrease in the coming years.

The effective principal of the 21st century must understand the role of the individual school within the larger contexts of schooling in general and of society. In helping others to understand this role, the effective principal will see to it that the school's program focuses not only on student achievement but also on the development of ethical and moral responsibility.

Assumption 3

The Elementary and Middle School Principalship Will Become a More Specialized Career Opportunity

Historically, the elementary school principalship has been viewed as a stepping-stone that might lead to higher (e.g., central office) positions. Today, however, nearly 46 percent of those presently in the elementary or middle school principalship perceive this position as their final career goal (Doud 1989, p. 24), and it seems likely that in the 21st century the elementary or middle school principalship will find increasing acceptance as a career in and of itself.

Meanwhile the changing context in which schools will operate during the 21st century will place an even greater obligation on the principal to possess broader knowledge about teaching, learning, and curriculum. There will be room for a new breed of principals—dedicated professionals who view the K-8 principalship as an ever-growing, ever-challenging frontier.

Viewing the elementary or middle school principalship as an ultimate career position clearly implies the need to refine principal preparation programs and develop more specific programmatic offerings focused on the understandings and proficiencies needed by principals serving prekindergarten through preadolescent learners.

Assumption 4

The Principal's Role as Instructional Leader Will Continue to Grow

As noted in *Standards for Quality Elementary Schools: Kindergarten through Eighth Grade* (NAESP 1984, p. 7), the effective principal "places highest priority on instructional leadership, creatively organizing the human and material resources necessary to provide an outstanding school program and inspire in students a lasting interest in learning."

The concept of the principal as instructional leader has received substantial reinforcement in recent years, and demographic trends suggest that it will receive considerably more in the years ahead. Public schools will continue to enroll increasing numbers of students who have traditionally been identified as being "at risk" (handicapped, bilingual, minorities, and economically disadvantaged). These students will be joined by large numbers of children from newly emergent combinations of such at-risk categories as prematurely born children, children of teenage parents, abused or neglected children, children living in single family households, latchkey children, children of divorce, children of drug- or alcohol-dependent parents, and children with AIDS or with one or more parents with AIDS. This at-risk cohort calls for a cadre of principals who will be able to develop and implement comprehensive, individualized curricula. Elementary and middle schools must have instructional leaders who can help teachers diagnose the learning needs of students and deploy effective instructional strategies to meet those needs.

The need for principals who are strong instructional leaders is also reinforced by changes being implemented in recent years by several states in the preparation of teachers. It is increasingly clear that teacher education in the United States is on the threshold of a period of far-reaching change. Extended teacher preparation programs of various designs are already being tested, some of them incorporating the finding of rich new research into teaching and learning. At the same time, alternative certification programs have emerged (for those who already hold a bachelor's degree) that encourage the sac-

rifice of pedagogical information in favor of a more intensive subject matter background for teachers.

While it is impossible to ascertain the impact of these reform efforts, indications are that teachers are likely to enter the field with substantially more academic preparation than has been the case in previous years. The trade-off, however, may very well be the induction of some teachers with less than the needed knowledge and understanding of children's developmental and learning needs. At any rate, principals of the 21st century will need to be well versed in the teaching and learning processes, in child growth and development, and in validated instructional techniques and strategies, so that they can provide the wide range of pedagogical assistance teachers need.

Assumption 5

School-Based Decision Making and Accountability Will Increase

The effective schools research consistently points to the importance of the individual school as the focus for change and improvement. The literature also demonstrates that the best environment for improvement is one in which the principal and staff are free to make decisions and implement programs on their own. Because these two factors appear to have such a direct relationship to a school's quality, principal preparation programs will increasingly need to provide experiences that inculcate the proficiencies necessary for effective school-based decision making. A useful discussion of the concepts involved is provided in *School-Based Management: A Strategy For Better Learning* (1988), jointly published by NAESP, the American Association of School Administrators, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Although much of the current literature on school administration refers to the desirability of transferring certain administrative decisions to the school site, that practice is by no means widespread. For example, 72 percent of the principals who participated in NAESP's *The K-8 Principal in 1988* (Doud 1989) said they have discretionary control over less than 20 percent of their budgets. Twenty percent reported having no discretionary control over their school's budget whatsoever (p. 106). Further, while nearly 96 percent of principals have primary authority for *supervision* of their teachers, only about 37 percent have primary authority for selecting them (pp. 107-108). Obviously, practice is lagging far behind theory on this aspect of school improvement.

Still, 51 percent of principals reported that their building-level authority and responsibility has increased during the past five years (Doud 1989, p. 125). With much of the current literature focusing on the advantages of school-based leadership, there is good reason to believe that the responsibilities of the 21st century principals will include involving and empowering the staff in developing solutions to the school's problems.

A critical aspect of the transition to school-based decision making is the concomitant increase in the principal's accountability for the school's quality. During the transition to school-based management, many principals may be asked to assume responsibilities for which they are unprepared or for which their preparation has become dated. Policymakers must realize that professional development opportunities must be provided for these principals. While principals must accept accountability for school-based decisions, it is unfair for them to be held personally accountable for decisions over which they had little or no control or for which developmental opportunities were not provided.

Assumption 6

Collaborative Relationships Must Be Developed Which Support Principal Preparation Programs

One of the anomalies that principals most frequently point to is the lack of relevance between principal preparation programs and the realities of the schools. Only 36 percent of current elementary and middle school principals feel their graduate school program was of "much value" (Doud 1989, pp. 41-42). The message from the field is clear: Major overhaul of principal preparation programs is perceived as necessary. While there are many similarities in America's public schools, it is also true that these schools are as different from one another as are the communities they serve. What is considered effective leadership in one school may be much less effective in another. Universities thus face the dilemma of how to provide principal preparation experiences that will directly relate to any, let alone all, of the communities in which aspiring principals may work.

Graduate schools of education must join with local school districts and NAESP and other professional organizations to assure that graduates in elementary and middle school administration have been trained in such a manner as to effectively cope with the demands and challenges of the 21st century. These relationships might among other things focus on such matters as the early identification of aspiring principals, collegial curriculum planning to ensure that prep-

aration programs remain current, and the improvement of certification standards. Such relationships can provide the profession with much needed partnerships in the provision and supervision of practical field experiences, plus an invaluable bond of support for the continuing professional development of principals once they are in the field.

Assumption 7

The Need for Continuous Professional Development Will Grow

Futurists predict that, due to the rapid changes in technology and the ever-increasing availability of information, 21st century Americans can expect to be retrained as many as four times during their careers (Cetron 1985, p. 14). In *Megatrends*, John Naisbitt (1982) notes:

> Scientific and technical information now increases 13 percent per year, which means it doubles every 5.5 years. But the rate will soon jump to perhaps 40 percent per year. . . . That means that data will double every 20 months (p. 24).

The principalship will inevitably be affected by these sweeping changes. It will not be possible to see the completion of an established preparation program, or even the acquisition of a doctoral degree, as the end of one's professional development. Just as quality schools must never cease to seek improvement, principals who do not work to increase their expertise are destined to lose it (Johnson and Johnson 1989). University programs must emphasize the importance of continuing to engage in such professional development activities as professional reading, research into practices employed in the school, reflection on the findings, and active participation in the many professional development opportunities provided through the school and through professional associations at local, state, and national levels.

In this age of rapid change, the principal who rests on today's laurels rides an express train to professional obsolescence.

Assumption 8

The Demand for Interpersonal Proficiences Will Increase

The ability to work cooperatively with others, to collaborate, has always been a key to successful leadership, and the interpersonal

skills involved will doubtless be of even greater importance in the next century as we experience three of Naisbitt's "megatrends" (1982):

1) The move from centralization to decentralization
2) The move from representative democracy to participatory democracy
3) The move from hierarchies to networking. (pp. 1-2)

These shifting currents require that the principal possess the ability "to create receptivity to change among the pupils and staff and the community, and to smoothly manage the change process" (NAESP 1986, p. 5).

Mastery of the various tools of communication—both verbal and nonverbal, and from a one-to-one level to a large-group level—is an absolute requirement for anyone who hopes to succeed as a school leader in the 21st century. The nature of the principal's interpersonal interactions will to a large extent determine the degree to which desired outcomes are achieved.

Assumption 9

The Requirements of Adult Learners Must Be Understood and Addressed

Some of the learning patterns of mature adults are different from those of younger people. But good teaching is the most critical element for all learners. To fulfill the responsibility of leader of leaders, the principal needs to understand and respond to the learning needs of each faculty member.

Understanding of the learning differences of mature adults—they include a reduced need for socialization, a lack of confidence about information learned long ago, a high level of motivation stimulated by clear goals, and a rich background of experience—can provide invaluable direction to the principal in the design of professional development activities.

Understanding the differences in learning of mature adults will allow the principal to more appropriately exercise situational leadership, resulting both in greater achievement on the part of the individual staff members and greater success in attaining organizational goals.

Chapter 4

Recommendations for Preparation Programs for Elementary and Middle School Principals

Clearly, preparation programs for 21st century elementary and middle school principals must accommodate the needs and demands of a rapidly changing society. Beyond adding renewed vigor and direction to the best of the existing approaches and practices, such accommodation requires designing and developing new programs, and altering them as new knowledge and new needs may suggest.

Recommendation 1

Strengthen Prerequisites for Entry into Principal Preparation Programs

Several groups (including the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, in which NAESP holds membership) are working toward the inclusion of various requirements for acceptance into particular segments of the profession. However, exactly what those requirements should be remains an issue—particularly for those concerned with equality of opportunity for all persons. Clearly, every effort should be made to attract highly talented and capable persons into preparation programs. Those who emerge from these programs will need more than basic knowledge. They must demonstrate "proficiency"—that is, "advancement toward the attainment of a high degree of knowledge or skill" in educational leadership and management (NAESP 1986, p. 1).

Offered herewith are five suggestions for attuning principal preparation to the needs and demands of the new millennium.

Four characteristics considered basic to success as an elementary or middle school principal have been identified in *Proficiences for Principals* (NAESP 1986, pp. 3-4). Three are a direct result of teacher education programs: a sound liberal arts background, a solid back-

ground in the teaching and learning processes, and a thorough understanding of child growth and development. Much of the school reform literature of recent years supports the contention by NAESP and others that these three elements must be strengthened. Each of these areas is embedded to some extent in existing graduate school programs for elementary and middle school teachers and principals. It is important, however, that each be given substantially more attention by the planners of tomorrow's preparation programs. The fourth fundamental quality is a strong sense of caring—a deep and genuine commitment to the welfare of children.

As for professional background, there does not appear to be any alternative to successful teaching as a prerequisite for becoming a successful principal. Data from *The K-8 Principal in 1988* provide strong evidence to support that proposition. More than 83 percent of principals say that teaching experience had "much value" in preparing them to become principals (Doud 1989, p. 41).

Recommendation 2

Strengthen Collaboration Among Colleges and Universities, Local School Districts, Professional Administrator Associations, and State Education Agencies

Far too much misunderstanding exists between building principals and professors of educational administration. Principals assert that professors cannot speak with authority because they are theory-bound and isolated from the realities of the trenches. Professors assert that practitioners do not fully understand the complexities and turmoil involved in school leadership and suggest that practitioners are too craft-oriented. It is time to move beyond such idle bickering.

The historical function of institutions of higher education has been to design and conduct preservice preparation programs. Meanwhile it has become evident that local school districts, individual practitioners, professional associations, and state education agencies also are legitimate stakeholders in the process.

Recommendation 3

Leadership Talent Must Be Identified Early and Its Development Nurtured

In addition to foreseeing a turnover by the year 2000 of more than 50 percent of today's elementary and middle school principals, *The*

K-8 Principal in 1988 also highlights the need for the profession to significantly increase the number of minority-background administrators. Approximately 90 percent of all principals were reported to be Caucasian (Doud 1989, p. 8). With rapidly increasing minority populations projected for the foreseeable future, it is essential that every possible attempt be made to identify qualified minority candidates for the principalship and to facilitate their preparation.

We can no longer afford to rely on the passive practice of simply trusting to fate in the hope that the needed kinds of people will somehow decide to become principals. We need a system of reaching out to teachers who show promise as leaders and encouraging them to pursue careers in administration.

This system should be a collaborative effort by colleges and universities, local school districts, and professional associations of school administrators. Further, it should be structured in such a way as to provide equal access to individuals from all protected classes. Particular emphasis must be placed on early identification, so these individuals can receive special encouragement and support in their professional development.

A promising approach that should be explored as part of this selection process is the assessment center or some similar comprehensive administrative skill assessment process. Assessment programs provide candidates equal opportunities to demonstrate their abilities and their potential, and data generated through the assessment approach provide an objective basis for planning the individual's professional development.

Another promising area of shared responsibility lies in the induction process itself. The neophyte principal should be assisted by a support system that includes the university, the school district, and a professional association. This approach would involve the availability of mentors to work with beginning principals, and the provision of direct services from the university to former students. In the area of mentor preparation, the school district could identify those principals it would like the newcomers to emulate. The university could help those models develop special processes and skills to use in their mentoring relationships. University personnel could help identify deficiencies in performance and develop remedial inservice education experiences. Local, state, and national professional associations offer additional possibilities for supportive networks and inservice opportunities during the induction process.

Recommendation 4

Generic Preparation Programs Should Be Modified to Provide Greater Specialization Opportunities for Elementary and Middle School Principals

Over the years the academic tracks for the preparation of principals and superintendents have differed only slightly, if at all. In this sense, school administrator preparation programs might well be characterized as generic. Many of the administrative skills essential for success are, in fact, generic to preparation for the elementary principal, the secondary principal, and the superintendent. Such skills should be consistently taught and reinforced in administrator preparation programs. However, the day-to-day activities of each of these leaders vary significantly. It is thus equally apparent that preparation programs for elementary and middle school principals should be redesigned so as to be much more position-specific. This is not to suggest that such preparation programs need to consist of mutually exclusive components but rather that the elements of commonality should be substantially reduced.

The following diagrams represent the administrative emphasis areas common to most administrative preparation programs (i.e., elementary, secondary, superintendent). Diagram 1 suggests the current extensive overlap of the three emphasis areas; Diagram 2 represents the reduced overlap envisioned in this discussion.

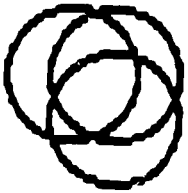

Diagram 1

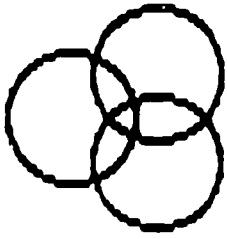

Diagram 2

NAESP neither envisions nor supports a completely isolated program for school-based managers.

Recommendation 5

Require Institutions to Make Significant Levels of Commitment to the Preparation of Principals

Institutions of higher education involved in the preparation of elementary and middle school principals should be called upon to commit a significant level of resources to that undertaking. One measure of such commitment is the number of faculty serving school administrator preparation programs. McCarthy et al. (1988) asked:

> Can educational administration faculty continue to perform at previous levels of quality in every area with fewer than five faculty, on the average, to cover program maintenance tasks (e.g., recruitment of students, alumni relationships, student advisement), field services, teaching, research, institutional governance, and professional association commitments? (p. 163)

Because the preparation program envisioned here would require greater diversity of offerings and more extensive practical components, no approved preparation program should have less than five full-time, tenure-track faculty in educational administration. These faculty members must be effective teachers who can communicate the necessary knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, values, and proficiencies to the aspiring principals in preservice programs and to the practicing principals in professional development programs. Furthermore, these educational administration professors must invest adequate time in the study of the principalship and the elements of schooling for which the principal has responsibility. This study should frequently be scholarly (i.e., of a research nature). These activities may be carried out jointly with practitioners or alone, but the findings should be shared through an appropriate medium (presentation/publication) as a means of informing the profession.

Those institutions with fewer than five full-time, tenure-track faculty should explore a joint program with another institution. If—through the sharing of faculty, library resources, and other supporting elements—such cooperation would lead to appropriate levels of scholarship and intensity among students and appropriate division of labor among faculty, then these programs should continue to provide services in areas where faculty possess genuine expertise.

Our nation needs better, stronger principal preparation programs that enjoy adequate institutional support and commitment.

Chapter 5

Recommended Building Blocks for Principal Preparation Programs

The four problems most frequently cited by today's K-8 principals are, in rank order, 1) providing programs for underachievers; 2) coping with state regulations and initiatives; 3) effectively meshing instruction with special academic programs; and 4) the low level of parent involvement (Doud 1989, pp. 130-132). Some of these problems are quite different from those faced by principals when the current preparation programs were originally formulated and clearly suggest a need for major redesign.

Principals report that the three activities on which they spend most of their time are "the assessment of teaching and teachers; evaluation and design of the curriculum; and management of student conduct" (Doud 1989, p. 91). Obviously, it is crucially important that preparation programs for K-8 principals reflect a clear instructional orientation which provides tomorrow's principals with the information and techniques required to function effectively in these areas.

Acknowledging the priority of instructional leadership, it is recommended that the following building blocks become major elements of all K-8 principal preparation programs.

Building Block 1

Knowledge of Effective Instructional Practices

Toward addressing principals' four toughest problems.

Practicing K-8 principals are firm in stating that experience as a teacher is of great value to success as an administrator (Doud 1989, p. 41). Classroom experience provides administrators with valuable insights for anticipating the impact of their decisions on classroom practice. Furthermore, it is obvious that if elementary principals are

to be effective instructional leaders, they must possess expert knowledge of instructional practices.

One useful step in that direction would be to require that aspiring elementary and middle school administrators obtain a master's degree in instruction as a prerequisite to preparation for the principalship—a degree focused on classroom instruction and effective classroom practice. Great progress has been made during the past ten years in understanding what makes instruction effective. The principal needs not only to apply the body of knowledge dealing with process-product research—including the relationship of teacher behavior to student performance—but also to deal with such reflective questions as these: What knowledge does the teacher possess about what he/she proposes to do? For what purpose? For what students? In what context? Principals must learn to identify both the instructional styles of teachers and the learning styles of children if they are to significantly increase the effectiveness of classroom instruction and learning.

What is involved here is more than the acquisition of recent research. It is an attitude of not only becoming expertly informed but of remaining informed and of preserving a habit of inquiry and reflection about the teaching and learning processes. Further, principals need to be able to instill this posture in teachers and thus improve instruction.

Building Block 2

Establishing Effective Leadership Skills

Effective principals display values, beliefs, and attitudes that inspire others to achieve the school's goals (NAESP 1986, p. 6).

Leadership is central to the existence of quality elementary and middle schools. The importance of the principal's leadership role has been consistently demonstrated in recent research on effective schools.

An essential ingredient in successful interpersonal relations is the possession of appropriate attitudes. Truly effective leaders have a positive, wholesome self-concept that enables them to develop the potential of others without fear and without concern for personal benefit. As Cleveland (1986) has observed, effective leaders in the future will "have to exercise their leadership in ways that are more complicated, more persuasive, and more consensual than threatening or browbeating . . . people that don't agree with them" (p. 25).

He goes on to note that "for the generalist leader in any organization, the steepest part of the learning curve is not *skills* but *attitudes*" (p. 25).

Leadership styles described in the situational leadership model are useful when the leadership situation is correctly diagnosed. Toward that end it is essential that aspiring principals identify their dominant and backup leadership styles and then have the opportunity to practice using these styles in various challenging situations. They need to have the opportunity to develop leadership styles that are not now a part of their repertoire, perhaps through role playing and simulations. In whatever circumstance where practice is provided, coaching and feedback form an important part of the growth experience.

What has become increasingly evident over the past decade is that although effective leadership can take many forms, it is the participatory leadership styles (focusing on persuasion, bargaining, and compromise) that are most conducive to creating an effective elementary and middle school. Participatory leadership brings out the best in others while at the same time opening the door for the next generation of leaders.

Building Block 3

Leading and Motivating Leaders

Future teachers are likely to be more adequately prepared than those today in both pedagogy and content. Future principals will expend great energy on finding ways to facilitate, support, and assist them. The role of the principal will in most instances be more that of colleague than boss.

Effective leadership of other leaders constitutes one of the most important challenges confronting elementary and middle school principals. Fulfilling this responsibility demands more than knowledge of instructional methods. It requires different kinds and levels of skills useful with neophyte, mid-career, and veteran teachers. Principals must be highly skilled in the application of clinical supervision techniques to assist reflective teachers in more carefully examining their practice. They must be able to coach teachers who need that kind of support system. Effective principals of the future will also know how to develop support teams among groups of teachers and to encourage collaboration for the improvement of instruction.

There are certain to be some who enter the teaching profession who do not belong there and others who will burn out or stagnate. The

principal will maintain responsibility for identifying people who do not belong with children and assist them in finding alternative employment. The truly professional teacher associations will assist in this process.

Building Block 4

Curriculum Development: Scope, Sequence, Evaluation

The design and development of the curriculum represents another of the principal's most important responsibilities, assuming ever-greater magnitude as responsibility for site-level leadership increases. The principal, more than any other individual in the school, must have a clear understanding of the function, scope, and interrelationship of the various areas of the curriculum, and a vision of the ultimate goal.

It is imperative that the K-8 principal possess a thorough grasp of the content of the curriculum and of the necessary sequences of the various subjects and their relationship to the developmental levels of the students. The principal must assure that the school's curriculum provides the child with a comprehensive set of experiences that includes essential academic content, the aesthetic, cultural pluralism, and significant opportunities to develop and practice interpersonal skills.

The principal must also be able to evaluate the various curricular programs within the school, using such techniques as curriculum mapping, if a viable set of priorities is to be established and maintained. The successful principal must understand the use and limitations of various evaluation tools, and how to appropriately interpret the resulting data. Rapid advances in technology are making the monitoring functions of both individual students and the general school population less difficult, and principals must acquire skill in the administrative uses of such technology as a part of their preparation program.

Building Block 5

Knowledge of Child Growth and Development, Including Children under the Age of Five

Knowledge of child growth and development is central to good instructional practice and to the development of curricula appropriate

to elementary and middle school students. This information must be applied to all decisions relating to the curriculum's design or revision. A special role of the principal is to provide balance among the various areas of the curriculum while making its content appropriate to the pupils' developmental levels.

It appears increasingly clear that programs for children under the age of five will be incorporated into the mainstream of America's elementary schools. The effectiveness of early intervention programs has been demonstrated and their adoption—especially for children identified as being educationally at risk—is a matter of increasing interest. These programs may constitute a major asset in resisting forces that are propelling us toward a two-tier society. The principals of such elementary schools will of course be called upon to understand the nature and special needs of young children, and to possess the skills that go into designing, implementing, evaluating, supervising, and defending developmentally appropriate programs for these youngsters.

In short, a solid grounding in child growth and development, including knowledge about the learning and emotional needs of children under five years of age, must become a key ingredient in the preparation of elementary school principals. Similarly, middle school principals must have a solid grounding in the learning and emotional needs of youngsters undergoing the onset of adolescence. This preparation should include observation and direct experiences in a variety of settings and be central to a wide range of activities the principal must supervise, including the establishment of sensitive and effective programs of school discipline.

Building Block 6

Establishing Effective Communication

The ability to communicate effectively is important for anyone in an executive position and essential for elementary and middle school principals. "The image principals project, both verbally and nonverbally, tends to form the perception of the school itself, not only by the pupils and the staff but by the community" (NAESP 1986, p. 7). Effective lines of communication are at the heart of every school's capacity to relate to its community.

Principal preparation programs need to place greater emphasis on writing and speaking skills. Practice in writing should focus on process, with aspiring principals benefiting from the feedback of others and from serving as a critic and coach for others. Meaningful practice

in written communication should be provided through such activities as "in-basket" exercises, simulation experiences, and the use of testing procedures that require the aspiring principal to express reflective responses to schooling and administration issues. Oral communication skills should be emphasized and practiced frequently, with expectations for high performance. Aspiring principals should be required to develop and express clear and precise statements of the values they would stress in the schools they will eventually lead, and the missions they would pursue. It is important also that they be challenged with simulations and other situations that require them to respond extemporaneously to typical school management situations, and then to provide a rationale for their response. The use of standard English—rather than jargon—should be emphasized, practiced, and reinforced in all oral and written communication activities.

Aspiring principals should also become sophisticated in nonverbal communication. Communication is enhanced or hindered through the manner in which people deliberately or unwittingly use body language, and how they listen and respond. The impact of personal appearance and mannerisms at an initial meeting leaves a lasting impression. Aspiring principals need to learn how to "read" the nonverbal communication of others, be aware of their own nonverbals, and understand how to make such communication work effectively.

Building Block 7

Effective Interpersonal Attitudes and Skills

Principals must develop skills in effective interpersonal relationships. They must have the ability to work effectively with individuals and with small and large groups—both within the school and outside the school, and in diverse and demanding settings. Constructive interaction with others is especially difficult in times of stress, when effective interpersonal skills may be most crucial.

Much has been learned during the past decade about the interpersonal techniques that characterize skillful leadership styles. It is crucial that this knowledge be integrated into preparation programs for administrators. Principals must learn to assess the psychological climate in a variety of settings and to function effectively in them. They also need to learn techniques that can be applied in team building, creating consensus, conflict management, and interaction management. And they need opportunities to practice applying these techniques in controlled situations where they receive constructive

feedback and coaching. Programs originally designed for business leaders, such as Development Dimensions International's *Interaction Management*, provide structure for the development of powerful interpersonal skills. The principal who possesses such skills will be more effective in the initiation and management of school improvement.

Building Block 8

Acquisition of Planning and Implementation Skills

Sound planning and effective implementation of the results are central to the development of improved educational programs for elementary and middle schools. Indeed, principals participating in *The K-8 Principal in 1988* survey cited these two areas as being among their chief professional development needs (Doud 1989, pp. 44-45).

There are a number of rather universally accepted planning activities usually taught as a sequence of steps. They include 1) diagnosis; 2) explanation and justification; 3) setting objectives; 4) action planning; 5) implementation; 6) evaluation; and 7) feedback. Principal preparation programs must include an understanding of these planning steps and an opportunity to develop and hone planning skills.

Building level principals may use a number of planning strategies to coordinate the various services available to the students and faculty, for it is essential that these resources be managed carefully and their benefits maximized. Routines of the school also are improved by regular planning, evaluation, and revision.

The techniques involved in planning constitute more than thoughtful consideration of a problem to be solved or the application of the scientific method. Also available are sophisticated quantitative methods. In recent years, elementary and middle school principals and other administrators have come to appreciate and apply strategic planning techniques. Both long-term and short-range planning tools should be available to the principals of the 21st century. However, as Naisbitt (1982) observes, "Strategic planning is worthless unless there is a strategic vision" (p. 94).

A planned activity does not just spring into being. Those responsible must carry out their assigned tasks wisely and effectively. Further, there must be ongoing evaluation to determine whether the completed activities are leading toward the identified objectives and purposes. If they are not, midcourse corrections must be made; the

plan must be altered or modified. Planning permits the institution to be proactive in setting directions for the future.

Building Block 9

Understanding Societal Change

Knowledge and understanding of changing social conditions are essential if principals are to respond effectively and sensitively to our nation's never-ending evolution. Thus successful principals acquire an understanding of, for example, the impact of poverty on children and the factors that place them educationally at risk. Principals need more than a knowledge of current social conditions; they need to reflect upon that information and apply it to analyzing the challenges involved and how the school should meet those challenges. As Bennis (1985) writes, "There is a lot to learn about the future from looking all around you at what is happening right now" (p. 98).

The knowledge principals need to acquire can be drawn from such related social sciences as rural and urban sociology, cultural anthropology, social psychology, and study of the family. A knowledge of changing societal conditions, and an opportunity to discuss the implications of these changes, will do much to help tomorrow's principals develop the understanding and analytic skills required to deal effectively with the changes bearing down on 21st century schools.

Just as principals must understand the community of which their schools are a part, so must they develop an understanding and appreciation of the global community of which our nation is a part. Such understanding is essential to becoming a mature citizen and an educational leader in 21st century America.

Building Block 10

Knowledge of Practices in Effective Schools

The literature on effective schools abounds with information that no principal should be without. Major areas of this body of research are addressed elsewhere in this document and in such NAESP publications as *Proficiencies for Principals* and *Standards for Quality Elementary Schools*. Principals have a profound obligation to become thoroughly versed in this large and growing corpus of information.

It deals among other things with the issues bearing directly on school improvement. Key among them are such matters as the role of the

principal in instructional leadership, how to plan for and manage the change process, the importance of being well informed about adult learning, and the skills that go into the development of human resources within a school.

Principals must also realize that as schools continue to evolve, new characteristics of the most successful schools also are likely to evolve. This continuing process of change requires that preparation programs instill in aspiring principals the attitudes necessary to lead action research within the schools and to become reflective practitioners. The effective principal of the future will understand how to use today's knowledge in forging an appropriate set of characteristics for the schools of tomorrow.

Building Block 11

Knowledge of Technological Applications to Management and Instruction

Technology is playing an increasingly prominent role in education. It is apparent that microcomputers, videodisk technology, and cable television have applications in both instruction and school management. Knowledge of the application of technology to the educational setting should be required in principal preparation programs, particularly toward using this technology to forge closer links between the school and the home.

Principals must become more than computer literate. They must develop skills in using standard administrative applications (viz., the word processor, data base, and spreadsheet) to improve the quality, speed, and power of office production work. The various possibilities range from quick retrieval of data to facilitate decision making, to generating a newsletter using a desktop publishing program. It is important that aspiring principals have opportunities to investigate the enormous quantity of software available to assist in the management tasks associated with operating a school.

Principals must also become knowledgeable about the use of the computer as a teaching tool, both in support of individualized instruction and as a diagnostic and management instrument for assessing and improving the curriculum. While the management/diagnostic function is an administrative use of the computer usually handled by the teacher, the principal should understand how it can help track student performance and provide pre-identified suggestions for the instruction of a particular child, based on data recorded in that child's file.

There are literally thousands of software programs available to support instruction. Principals thus need to become skillful in determining what particular instructional software is best for their goals and circumstances. This sifting and winnowing process requires knowledge of good instruction, of how the computer works, and mastery of the computer's instructional capabilities.

In addition to the computer, there are other technologies about which the principal of the 21st century must become knowledgeable. Both interactive video and robotics technologies are coming onto the education scene and hold great promise for instruction. These and other as yet unknown technologies are likely to become commonplace in tomorrow's schools. Principals must become able to sort out which are useful and relevant. Tomorrow's principal must provide leadership in implementing new technological advancements that can strengthen that school's instructional program as well as the school's management.

Building Block 12

Knowledge of and Ability to Effectively Use the Political Process

Proficiences for Principals notes that the arena in which the principal must function extends well beyond the boundaries of the individual school and its particular community (NAESP 1986, p. 15). That tenet would seem in particular to apply to dealing effectively with the multitude of political pressures and considerations that bear on the operation of public schools. Thus, in *The K-8 Principal in 1988*, today's principals rank learning to cope with "political forces impacting the school" (Doud 1989, pp. 44-45) among their top professional development priorities.

In addition to the ability to deal effectively with the ever-present political forces, principals of the 21st century must also be more effective in analyzing community values, priorities, and attitudes; the distribution of power within both the school and the community; and how decisions that impact on the school are actually made. As principals gain increased understanding of political decision-making processes, preparation programs should also provide them with practical experiences in these processes. Such experiences are essential if principals are to exert influence and generate public support.

Building Block 13

Knowledge and Experience with a Wide Range of Site-Based Management Skills

As the individual school site becomes the focus for school improvement efforts, the building-level principal will have greater autonomy in making decisions that have immediate impact on the school. This shift in the focus of control will require that many management skills previously seen as unnecessary for building administrators will become standard elements of principal preparation programs. Examples of these school-based skills include development and management of the school budget, personnel employment, management functions, and developing and monitoring the curriculum. K-8 principals will also need to have an essential understanding of due process—knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of children, teachers, and others, including themselves—and the tort liabilities associated with school management. The NAESP *Proficiencies for Principals* (1986) provides a list of proficiencies which can be used to assure the presence of such skills in the preparation program.

Although persons entering principal preparation programs in the future can be expected to have a master's degree (or equivalent fifth-year preparation) in teaching/instruction, the 30 to 36 semester hours of coursework and practica currently assigned for a master's degree are insufficient to provide opportunities for the development of these additional skills and knowledges. The resolution of this situation would seem to lie in expanding principal preparation programs to include 45 to 60 semester hours of preparation, inclusive of field experiences, and tailored to individualized developmental needs.

Building Block 14

Parents as Partners

Parents are powerful agents in shaping the direction of education within a school community and represent a resource that the 21st century principal will need to mobilize as an integral part of school improvement efforts.

Parent power is not so much attached to socioeconomic status as some would have us believe. It is true that students whose parents have substantial financial means frequently are more high achieving

than children in general. It is also true that children of parents with severely limited financial means frequently are more low achieving than children in general. These facts can lead to all sorts of conclusions (e.g., the haves get more while the have-nots get less, high and low achievement are functions of economic circumstances, etc). Yet a large number of immigrant children from Southeast Asia (Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, and others) who have entered the United States speaking a different language, who are schooled in a very different cultural tradition, and who often live in dire poverty, frequently are exceptionally high achievers. Examination of such circumstances clearly demonstrates the result of the power of parents as partners with the school.

It is essential that principals understand how to lead the school faculty in mobilizing this resource. Principals need to exert participatory management skills that encourage parents to expect the best from their children (without causing undue pressures on them), and that provide parents with greater access to the school's resources.

Building Block 15

Getting Appropriate Data for Decision Making

A clear distinction in the ability to gather appropriate data for decision making exists between principals who are effective and those who are not. Much of the difference between the two results from the failure of less effective principals to move beyond current assumptions and explore each situation as though it were occurring for the first time. Thus, professional judgement gets flawed, because of an incomplete or erroneous data base.

To develop proficiency in data gathering, preparation programs need to help principals consider such matters as what information is already available, what information is needed, where this information can be found, and how the principal can isolate the critical information from all that is available. There needs to be understanding of the importance of structuring programs so that a wide variety of insights into potential information sources may be developed. Involving aspiring principals in discussion and simulation activities focused on school problem situations can provide new insights and perspectives arising from the different experiences each person brings to such problems. Such efforts can yield an expanding knowledge base for those entering the principalship, help aspiring principals open their thinking and seek solutions beyond what might be perceived as "obvious," and serve

as a powerful motivator for involving others in the decision-making process.

Building Block 16

Attending to the Culture and Climate of the School

The culture and climate of the school are two of the most powerful forces with which the principal must cope. Terrence Deal (1987) describes culture as "a powerful force behind the scenes in modern organizations . . . a primordial place of myths, fairy tales, ceremonies, heroes and demons . . . the primitive world that modern ways left behind" (p. 4). Deal and Kennedy (1982) have further described six "forms" that are part of the culture in which people operate. These are: 1) shared values; 2) heroes; 3) rituals; 4) ceremonies; 5) stories; and 6) cultural network (p. 6).

Principals must understand the importance of, and clearly establish within the school, *shared values* with which every employee identifies and to which they are committed as they carry out their daily activities. The principal should systematically identify *heroes/heroines* whose actions reinforce the shared values and be an active participant in the development of rituals, ceremonies, *and* stories (both formal and informal) which support these values. The principal must also understand the existence of a cultural network—the priest/priestesses, the gossips, spies, and counterspies who protect the shared values—and use this network to advantage in improving the schools,

The principal needs to understand that these cultural forces are constantly at work within the school. Because they develop out of past practices, these forces often are powerful impediments to change. Effectively managed, however, they can be used to enhance the change process and become influential tools for the building administrator. It is this potential that makes cultural awareness an essential ingredient of preparation for school administrators.

School climate is defined as "those qualities of a school that affect the attitudes, behavior, and achievement of the people involved in its operation—students, staff, parents, and members of the community" (NAESP 1984, p. 18). Indicators of favorable climate are clearly recognizable within a school: staff and students care, respect, and trust one another, resulting in high morale and continuous social and academic growth for all. The principal must be made aware of the

importance of each of these areas of school climate so that effective modeling and leadership may be provided. The indicators identified in the *Standards for Quality Elementary Schools: Kindergarten through Eighth Grade*, (NAESP 1984, p. 19) provide a ready reference for both practitioner and professor concerned with improvement of climate within the school.

The Role of the Clinical Experience

A major concern in improving the quality of principals for the 21st century lies in finding more effective ways to transfer knowledge into school practice. Simply knowing how things should be done is insufficient; principals must become proficient in applying knowledge in ways that enhance the development of every person in the school. Clinical experiences, generously and thoughtfully interspersed throughout principal preparation programs, provide a promising methodology to accomplish this goal.

As viewed here, clinical experience includes a wide array of events and activities ranging from internships, practica, case study techniques, and simulations to role-playing, direct (classroom) instruction provided by practitioners, and school visits. Field experience is much more narrowly defined and includes only those school-based activities that occur under the tutelage of a practicing principal and a university supervisor (typically identified as an internship or practicum). Field experiences have gained credibility because they are based in an applied setting, with the objective of offering aspiring principals an opportunity to apply acquired knowledge to a practical situation.

Field experiences, particularly internships, are prominent in the recommendations of all groups searching for improved preparation of school principals. However, NAESP reported in *The K-8 Principal in 1988* (Doud, 1989) that nearly 47 percent of the respondents who report experiencing an internship as part of their preparation considered it to be of "little value" and 29.9 percent saw it as having only "some value" (pp. 42-43). From the point of view of practicing principals, internships—as currently structured—are not a highly valued aspect of principal preparation. Yet, respondents to this same study report "much value" gained from such on-the-job experiences as service as a principal, assistant principal, or teacher (pp. 41-42). It is possible, even likely, that the data really mean that too many field experiences are poorly conceived, planned, and supervised.

Principal preparation programs for the next century must be redesigned to include more extensive clinical experiences, thus providing

a focused way of translating models and concepts into applicable skills. Such simulation experiences as "in-basket" exercises, videotapes, classroom scripting, and recorded logs of all events within a school are promising ways to provide opportunities for practice and reflection. Many other approaches also appear to have potential for developing the aspiring principal, including role-playing in supervisory situations, assessing the leadership strengths/needs of a group through simulations so that programs might appropriately focus on identified needs, and developing teacher evaluation and diagnostic instructional skills through classroom observations and following conferences. Outstanding practitioners should be enlisted as visiting or adjunct professors to share part of the instruction for preservice administrators. In any case, the structure and contribution of clinical experiences should be studied further with the goal of providing richer practical components in programs for aspiring principals and for extending skills of practicing administrators.

Preparation programs for principals require a broad base of professional knowledge. Thoughtfully designed professional preparations programs will provide both the acquisition of necessary knowledge and opportunities to apply that knowledge effectively. In true collegial partnership, universities must work closely with school districts and practitioners to study the design and duration of both field and clinical experiences, and to explore ways in which such practice might equate more readily with experience.

Chapter 6

Recommendations to Policymakers

The higher education community faces a considerable challenge in improving the preparation of elementary and middle school principals for the 21st century. The challenge extends also to policymakers at the state and national level.

State Reform Legislation

Reforms enacted by legislative bodies have always been a powerful instrument for educational change. The importance of legislated reform in school life has been demonstrated in recent years by the flurry of state legislation that followed the 1983 publication of *A Nation At Risk*. More than half of the principals participating in NAESP's survey of *The K-8 Principal in 1988* identified state initiatives as the major source of innovations in their schools (Doud 1989, pp. 46-47). Such legislation has resulted in a wide assortment of mandates aimed in almost every case at increasing student productivity, particularly as measured by performance on tests.

However, legislative actions have unintended as well as intended outcomes. Moreover, those responsible for implementing those actions may unintentionally distort their intent. It is worth the attention of policymakers at every level that K-8 principals cite "coping with state regulations or initiatives" as one of their most pressing concerns (Doud 1989, pp. 130-131). It appears that many K-8 principals get the feeling that some of the legislative solutions have become part of the problem. The need is for support and encouragement from legislatures, they say, rather than mandates for specific actions.

Five basic points that education policymakers would advisedly ponder as they weigh decisions intended to renew and strengthen the schools.

Those experienced in the management of change are well aware that change is a process, not an event. Furthermore, research clearly

indicates that if an innovation is going to unravel, it will most likely do so about midway through the third year of implementation. Legislators must come to understand that it is unrealistic to begin new legislative initiatives year after year and expect each of them to precipitate meaningful educational improvement.

Recommendation

NAESP and its Organization of Professors of Elementary School Administration (OPESA) recommend restraint in the enactment of major educational reform legislation by state legislatures so as to provide time to implement and assess the implications of already-enacted legislation before initiating new measures. It is further recommended that state legislatures establish oversight mechanisms to assure that reform measures do not have unintended negative consequences (such as increasing the dropout rate or imposing unnecessary and burdensome paperwork).

Initiatives without Funding

Educators in the public sector—those in elementary and secondary education and those in higher education alike—have been called upon to deliver additional programs and services with shrinking resources. Perhaps because public education already constitutes a major component in state budgets—in many states it is the single largest item—new initiatives tend to get shortchanged.

There is widespread acknowledgment that our educational system may be the most vital link to America's social and economic future. However, in education no less than in business, plans for improvement that are not given adequate funding are not likely to produce meaningful results.

Recommendation

NAESP and OPESA recommend that the Congress and state legislatures fully fund legislation requiring schools to provide new or expanded services.

School-Based Management

Research into the change process has demonstrated that the individual school is the most appropriate and promising unit for implementing educational innovation and improvement—that in fact, the individual

school may be the highest level at which meaningful change is feasible. Even then, it is imperative that there be central office support for the change. Initiatives need to be developed in such a manner that desirable change is promoted with central office support but without inhibiting the individual school's integrity. Legislation and policy must become responsive to the unit in which change can best occur—the individual school.

Recommendation

NAESP and OPESA recommend that local and state policymakers for education focus any new initiatives or policies in such a way that school district offices are encouraged to promote changes that place special emphasis on the individual school site.

Quality Control for Principal Preparation

This is the age of accountability in education. Teachers and principals are subject to a process of certification and contract renewal that has been established for only one purpose—to protect the public's interest in quality schools.

A parallel expectation is appropriate for preparation programs for elementary and middle school principals. At this time the best form of such accountability exists in a requirement of program accreditation by a recognized national accrediting agency that is nongovernmental, voluntary, and recognized by the National Council for Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). Accreditation by an agency functioning in the area of professional education and approved by COPA would protect the public interest by assuring that rigorous program standards and practices have been met.

Recommendation

NAESP and OPESA recommend that state legislatures and state educational agencies require that programs for the preparation of elementary and middle school principals be accredited by a nongovernmental, voluntary accrediting agency recognized by the Council of Postsecondary Accreditation.

Continuing Professional Development of Principals

Public schools are called upon to deal with an array of complex and sometimes conflicting issues and conditions: an expectation of higher

achievement amid a background of rising dropout rates, increasing numbers of children living in poverty, and drug and alcohol abuse of nearly epidemic proportions. No principal preparation program can anticipate and accommodate all of the problems that principals will encounter in the tumultuous decades ahead. It is essential, therefore, that continuing professional development be made available to principals through a variety of options: sabbatical leaves; principal academies or centers; and professional association workshops, conferences, and conventions.

Recommendation

NAESP and OPESA recommend that school boards and state legislatures support and fund programs that provide for the continuing professional development of principals.

Conclusion

The future of American education can be no brighter than the future of the elementary and middle school principalship. As America moves into the 21st century, the principals and those who staff the nation's K-8 schools will be caught up in a period of exceptional change.

It is imperative that effective recruitment efforts be launched immediately to attract potential principals from the ranks of the best and brightest teachers. These aspiring administrators must be provided with the opportunities to develop the proficiencies needed to successfully deal with the special challenges that lie ahead. It is equally important that programs be provided that allow practicing principals—those now in the schools—to refine existing proficiencies and develop new ones. These crucially important goals can be achieved only through creating improved principal preparation programs—collaborative endeavors that respond to the array of social, pedagogical, and technological developments that will accompany the dawn of a new century.

Assuring America the best possible K-8 principals requires affording them the best possible preparation.

An investment in the elementary and middle school principals of this nation is an investment in the future not only of American public education but in the quality of the work force and the capacity of the American citizenry to govern themselves wisely. Schools must have principals whose priority is the best possible education for all children. To accomplish this end, America must insist on the best possible education for the leaders of those schools.

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