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ABSTRACT

This publication presents findings of a study that explored the professional needs of principals at various stages in their careers. Data were collected from several sources: two focus groups of Texas principals; a regional survey of 97 principals; an analysis of the professional development plans of five Texas rural school principals and six headteachers of primary schools in London, England; interviews with six teachers in an alternative administration certification program at Texas A&M University; and individual interviews with five additional principals. The data identified three factors of principals' professional development needs--school context, length of tenure in the position, and previous experience in schools and other organizations. The paper describes modes of growth and adaptation that principals experience throughout their careers and lives. It reviews the National Policy Board for Educational Administration's (NPBEA's) 21 performance domains and describes principals' professional development needs at various points in their career. The following recommendations are offered: (1) comprehensive preservice preparation must be provided for the principal; (2) new principals must be given comprehensive support on the job; (3) collegial support networks and appropriate growth activities should be provided for all principals; (4) principals should engage in reflective practice throughout their careers; (5) principals must learn to be learners; (6) development and growth activities should be systematically provided for assistant principals; and (8) collaboration must be developed among the primary stakeholders in the preparation of principals. Contains 35 references. (LMI)

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FULFILLING THE LIFETIME PROFESSIONAL NEEDS OF PRINCIPALS

David A. Erlandson

NPBEA

NATIONAL POLICY BOARD FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Daresh and Playko (1992) have observed that the professional growth of principals and other school administrators extends from their preservice preparation, through their induction into the workplace and profession, and throughout the length of their careers. However, it appears that strategies to support principal growth at various career points have not emerged (Louis, 1993) nor have central needs at various stages yet been identified (Thomson, n.d.).

The purpose of this report is to explore the professional needs of principals at various stages in their careers. Professional needs, however, cannot be completely separated from personal needs; the two are inextricably intertwined. While the former needs constitute the primary motivation for this publication, they must be viewed as interactive with the personal development of the principal.

Consequently, any present consideration of the professional needs of principals is informed both by research that focuses on the points at which certain events occur in a principal's career (Daresh & Playko, 1992; Hart, 1991, 1993; NASSP, 1992) as well as by the work of those who view human developmental needs as derivatives of phases or stages through which individuals progress (Boyatzis & Kolb, 1992; Erikson, 1968; Gould, 1978; Kegan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1984; Levinson, 1978; Loevinger, 1976). The two methods of viewing the needs of principals are not in conflict with one another. Phase and stage theories assume interaction between individual growth and the environment and would recognize that a person's career is a significant piece of this environment. In parallel manner those writers who have focused on career points, while less likely to be explicit about such interaction, also tacitly recognize it. For instance, most writers in this latter group would expect significant differences in the manner in which a twenty-eight year old man with two small children and a forty-five year old woman with children close to adulthood would approach their first principalships, and in the developmental and skill needs of each.

Because of resource constraints this report is only an exploratory study. The data considered are too limited to warrant conclusive generalizations about the career needs of principals. The report, however, does attempt to sharpen focus on the major fundamentals that must be considered and the major questions that should to be raised in further investigations of the needs of principals at various points in their careers. This work should be followed by more comprehensive studies that verify, clarify, or disconfirm the postulates that derive from this study.

PREVIOUS THOUGHT AND RESEARCH

A number of previous works informed and shaped the direction of this study. Conceptual frameworks advanced and findings reported in these earlier studies led to the specific strategies and questions of this study. Since the sources of new data collected were limited in scope, they were used primarily to extend and reshape these previous contributions.

Notable among this earlier work were the contributions of Daresh and Playko (1992). They identify three components of professional development: academic preparation, field-based learning, and professional formation. Academic preparation

refers to traditional university courses that provide the knowledge base for the principalship and other positions in school administration. Field-based learning includes internships, planned field experiences, and practica. Professional formation consists of strategies (such as mentoring, reflection, platform development, styles analysis, and personal and professional action plans) that address the personal and professional ambiguities associated with school leadership.

They also identify three major phases of career development for the school administrator: preservice preparation, induction, and inservice education. Preservice preparation includes job related learning that takes place prior to initial job placement. Induction is that career period when the administrator assumes a new position and a new role definition in an organization and is directed toward attaining competency and stability in the new position. The period of induction may take one or more years, depending both upon the individual and upon the complexity of the new role. Inservice education includes learning that takes place while the administrator is in a position and may be directed to improved job performance, personal growth, or both.

According to Daresh and Playko, as the school administrator moves from one career phase to another, different emphasis is given to the three components of professional development. In the earlier portions of the administrator's professional development, academic preparation plays a major role because the knowledge base must be established. As the school administrator progresses through induction and inservice phases, greater reliance should be placed on field-based learning. However, field-based learning, such as "course-embedded exp nces"(p. 50), should be used in the preservice phase to increase linkage between academic preparation and the real world of schools. Personal and professional formation is a continuing concern for the aspiring administrator, the new inductee, and the veteran and should be addressed in each case by appropriate strategies.

Hart's (1993) comprehensive treatment of principal succession provides valuable background on the knowledge and skill needs of principals who are new in their positions. Her work demonstrates that all principals, regardless of previous experience in the principalship, have similar needs as they learn how to fit into the complex web of social interactions and relationships that exist in a new situation. Nor is "fitting in" sufficient. They must learn how to be an effective and somewhat independent force in that web so that a positive impact will be made on the educational program. This point was confirmed in the present study by many individuals in many contexts. Hart's work also provides useful direction for those who would facilitate the principal's job success in a new position.

Beginning Principals

Parkay, Currie, Rhodes, and Rao's (1992) study of 113 beginning high school principals led them to conclude that two salient challenges characterize the within-school life of the beginning principal: (1) dealing with multiple tasks and (2) communicating with various audiences. They also found that external issues facing the principal were less pressing on the principal than these internal issues. Among the external issues examined, the two most serious issues were: (1) creating a better image of the school and (2) working with parental problems. External issues likely were perceived as less pressing than internal issues because of the traditional reliance upon the school district as buffer to these external pressures. Also, despite current trends toward more

community involvement at the school, this traditional pattern has probably served to protect the image that many principals have of what Sarason (1982) calls the "encapsulated school."

Hall and Parkay (1992) provide four recommendations to the beginning principal who would establish a foundation for success:

1. Emphasize visibility and communication,
2. Develop the administrative team,
3. Organize administrative procedures and budgetary processes,
4. Study established policies and procedures.

Hall and Parkay (p. 352) have also postulated a five stage career development model:

1. Survival: Principal experiences "shock" of beginning leadership, concern with "sorting it out."

2. Control: Principal's primary concern is setting priorities and "getting on top" of the situation.

3. Stability: Principal's frustrations become routinized; management-related tasks are handled effectively and efficiently.

4. Educational Leadership: Principal's primary focus is on curriculum and instruction.

5. Professional Actualization: Principal's confirmation comes from within; focus is on attaining personal vision.

Parker, Currie, and Rhodes (1992) conducted a three year study and developed portraits of twelve first time high school principals. Of these twelve principals, five had reached Stage 4 (Educational Leadership) during the course of the study; two other principals had reached Stage 5.

For principals who have reached Stage 3 (Stability) Hall and Parkay (1992) provide a series of suggestions for moving forward as instructional leaders (i.e., leaders who initiate, promote high student achievement, build a supportive culture, empower others in the school, etc.). Their recommendations include:

1. Consider the content of your communications;
2. Consider carefully what is delegated;
3. Maintain an emphasis on data;
4. Strive to empower everyone.

Developing the Effective Principal

Rutherford (1985), after reviewing five years of research, identified five characteristics that distinguish effective elementary and secondary principals from less effective principals. These include:

1. A clear, informed vision of what they want their schools to become;

2. Effective translation of this vision into clear goals and expectations for students, teachers, and administrators;

3. Establishment of a school climate that supports the attainment of these goals and expectations;

4. Continued monitoring of progress toward fulfillment of the vision;

5. Intervention in a supportive and corrective fashion when this is necessary.

These qualities of the effective principal appear to flow in a sequential fashion. If the principal lacks a vision, there can be no effective translation of the vision into goals and expectations. If there are no goals and expectations, a supportive environment cannot nurture them and the principal cannot monitor them; interventions will have no direction. All these characteristics are important, but they all originate with a clear and informed vision of student and educational needs.

The title of Donaldson's (1991) book, Learning to Lead: The Dynamics of the High School Principalship, aptly describes his seven years as a high school principal. He makes it fairly clear that a principal recruited from outside the school cannot really take over an existing high school and begin to initiate a clear unequivocal direction. More than anything else, the principal needs to learn how to keep the school functioning while he learns how he can move the many stakeholders in the school toward complementary visions of success. The job is never finished and the principal is never completely successful; but somehow the principal must do the equivalent of adjusting the engine of a powerful racing car while it is circling the track at 200 miles per hour. He dare not overadjust, and the car must be kept on course. This makes imperative that the principal's learning be both effective and efficient.

The principal must foster the skill of learning, both for his own development as he responds to new challenges and changing situations and as the leader of a learning organization, according to Donaldson. He must continue to learn, and he must enable others to learn so that the school can move forward. "Information-gathering and informed decision-making, ultimately, are cooperative ventures. The principal simply cannot do much alone" (p. 94).

Near the beginning of his seven year tenure at Ellsworth High School, Donaldson found that the facile prescriptions he had received in graduate school and much of the literature on the principalship could not really be applied to the real life high school to which he came. Though the newest member of the school he needed to respond, often authoritatively to a diverse, yet interrelated set of full blown issues. To provide coherence to the complicated, shifting contexts in which high school principals work, Donaldson considers the essential work of the principal in terms of three functions: (1) committing time, energy, and attention to activities that advance the education of children; (2) identifying the appropriate people to involve in essential activities and providing for their success; and (3) understanding and developing proper relationships to maximize the success of these people and the school.

Following seven years at Ellsworth High School, Donaldson solicited staff feedback on his performance for the three functions. The diverse, yet generally supportive data reflected and reinforced the mixed feelings he had at various stages of his tenure. Donaldson asked straightforward questions, received straightforward answers, and analyzed the responses in a straightforward manner, enabling him to understand much of what had happened in seven years on the job. His analysis enabled him to construct theory that provided a foundation for future learning.

Duke (1992) has suggested that while knowledge derived from research and theory may be of great value to the experienced principal, it does not meet the immediate practical needs of the prospective principal and perhaps should be delayed until the principal has been on the job. This sentiment received endorsement from a number of the principals who provided information for this current study. Several groups and individual principals complained about "empty" theory that was divorced from the practicalities of the job.

The low status awarded to theory by principals however, may reflect more the way theory is typically taught in preservice programs than the value of theory itself. Theory represents a way of organizing and analyzing data that can be constructed to meet the needs of the principal as a learner; it is not merely something to be borrowed and applied. Donaldson's (1991) use of feedback from staff on his performance as a high school principal demonstrates a set of powerful tools for learning that could be adapted for use by any principal to better understand and respond to his or her school situation. Similar tools could also be used by administrators in training and by school district officials in easing the transition from principal to principal in a school. Questions about perceived success of the principal in various areas, and the interpersonal style of the principal can yield a variety of context-bound data that, when analyzed carefully, can provide a helpful theory base and fertile direction for the operation of the school.

Ann Hart (1991) in reviewing research on leader succession and socialization, examined the problems and possibilities associated with alternative induction strategies including the mentoring of new principals. She noted that principal socialization tends to be overwhelmingly individual and poorly planned; little attention is given to the succession of leaders in the principalship. She also described the trade-offs between the collective and individual socialization of new leaders. Collective socialization produces greater quality control and less role conflict and ambiguity, but it also tends to inhibit innovation. Mentoring, as a specific socialization tactic, follows the same general pattern identified for other induction activities. Mentoring relations may be highly formal or quite informal. Hart noted that formal mentoring programs tend to produce a custodial orientation, reproducing past practice.

A considerable amount has been written in recent years about "reflective practice" as a vehicle for the personal and professional development of principals and other professionals (Dana & Pitts, 1993; Hart, 1993; International Network of Principals' Centers, 1993; Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993; Schon, 1983, 1987; Short & Rinehart, 1993). Evidence suggests that reflection is not only a powerful strategy in its own right but is also a useful and flexible supplement to other strategies throughout the principal's career. Reflective practice should be an integral part of preparation programs and should commence when the principal begins the job and develop through successive career stages. Although practicing principals, as busy professionals, may be initially

inclined to reject reflective practice as a professional development strategy because of claims on their limited time, they will likely find that it more than repays the investment made. Once professionals get "hooked" on reflection they are eager to continue it (Simpson, 1993). Osterman and Kottkamp note that "...reflective practice seems to stimulate a change process that, once begun, doesn't end. By helping people to develop skills of critical analysis that they can apply to their own practice, it changes professional development from an impersonal process that takes place during a restricted period of time in a classroom to an ongoing process that becomes integrated into one's professional life" (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993, pp.138-139).

In Performance-Based Preparation of Principals: A Framework for Improvement (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1985), the University Consortium for Performance-Based Preparation of Principals made the case for extensive and varied field experiences in preparation programs for principals. This monograph also went on to describe different techniques, including various simulation strategies, that can be used by preparation programs to "bridge the gap" between the academic classroom and the field.

A survey of Texas principals (Witters-Churchill, 1990) demonstrated, however, that most preparation programs for principals rely almost entirely upon "lecture and discussion" for the delivery of instruction, even though principals overwhelmingly express their preference for field based instruction. Follow-up surveys in Michigan and New York (Voit & Witters-Churchill, 1990) showed the same pattern; principals believe in the efficacy of field based instruction but their preservice programs depend almost entirely upon classroom lecture and discussion.

The University Consortium's second monograph, Developing School Leaders: A Call for Collaboration (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1992), proposed collegial arrangements for serving the professional needs of principals throughout their careers. Professional development for principals was seen as a seamless garment, extending from preservice preparation through induction, career changes, and retirement. Only by focusing the services of state departments of education, local school districts, professional associations, universities, and other organizations in a coordinated plan, can the career needs of principals truly be satisfied.

CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

First, an assessment was made of the research and current efforts available on the needs of principals at various points in their careers. Lacking the time or resources to conduct a major independent study (such as a national survey or case studies of effective strategies for meeting the needs of principals at various career stages), data collection efforts were examined in which the principal investigator was currently involved, directly or peripherally to add a fresh touch with the real world. This examination included a focus group of principals independently initiated through the Texas A&M University Principals' Center, a survey conducted earlier for an educational service center, professional development efforts being conducted with Texas principals and London headteachers, and an alternative administrator certification program piloted by Texas A&M University. To these ongoing efforts were added two other initiatives specifically designed for this study: (1) formation and use of two focus groups of principals and (2) a series of individual interviews with principals.

Since this exploratory study will need to be followed by more comprehensive work, the problem was approached primarily in terms of the career stage distinction. In other words, persons included in the study were identified primarily by where they were in their careers (preservice, new principals, experienced principals) rather than by their age, gender, or life circumstances. At the same time, questions and other ventures to gather data sought responses that could also be analyzed in terms of phases and stages of personal development. This was done to facilitate further study along these dimensions, if such study was shown to be warranted. Although the persons who were included in this study cannot be assumed to be representative of any identified population of principals, care was taken to include variety in terms of school size, location (urban, suburban, rural), and level (elementary, middle, secondary).

Data for this study were collected from these sources:

(1) Focus groups of principals

(a) Region 13 (Texas) principals

(b) Congress of Principals, Texas A&M University Principals' Center

(2) Region 13 Survey of Principal Professional Development Priorities

(3) An analysis of the professional development plans of five rural school principals in Texas and six headteachers of primary schools in London, England

(4) Six teachers in an alternative administration certification program at Texas A&M University

(5) Individual principal interviews

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data obtained from the Region XIII focus groups were analyzed by Dr. David Erlandson and Ms. Eileen Reed, Director of Alternative Certification for the Region XIII Education Service Center.

The data obtained from the Congress of Principals focus group were analyzed by Dr. Erlandson. They were reviewed by Dr. David Hinojosa, Professor of Educational Administration at Texas A&M University and former Director of the Texas A&M Principals' Center, and by Dr. Maynard J. Bratlein, Associate Professor of Educational Administration at Texas A&M University.

Information from the Region XIII Survey of Professional Development Priorities was analyzed by Dr. Erlandson and reviewed by Ms. Reed.

The information gathered from the London headteachers and rural Texas principals in the Texas/London study was analyzed by Dr. David Erlandson and reviewed by Dr. Elaine Wilmore.

Information obtained in the collaborative alternative administrative certification program was analyzed by Dr. Erlandson and reviewed by Ms. Maryanne McNamara, Coordinator of the Texas A&M College of Education/Bryan ISD Collaborative.

Information gathered from individual principal interviews was analyzed by Dr. Erlandson and reviewed by each of the principals interviewed.

The entire draft of the final report was reviewed by Ms. Maryanne McNamara, Ms. Eileen Reed, and Dr. Elaine Wilmore.

FINDINGS

1. Focus Group Sessions

(a) Region 13 Focus Groups

In collaboration with the Education Service Center, Region XIII (Austin, Texas), two focus groups of principals were identified. One of these groups was composed of new principals (first or second year on the job) and the other of experienced principals (five or more years on the job). These sessions were tape recorded to facilitate analysis.

The discussion of the new principals was generated from these basic questions:

What knowledge and skills are most needed to perform your job?

What parts of your preservice program proved to be most useful to you on the job?

What elements of your preservice program added nothing to your ability to perform your job as principal? What elements were at best of minor value?

(To urban principals) What is required on your job that is not required by the principal in a rural setting (To rural principals) Do you agree?

(To rural principals) What is required on your job that is not required by the principal in an urban setting? (To urban principals) Do you agree?

What are your greatest personal and professional needs now?

The discussion of the experienced principals was generated from these basic questions:

What knowledge and skills are most needed to perform your job?

How does this compare with the knowledge and skills that you needed when you first became a principal?

What elements of your preservice program were most useful when you first became a principal?

Are there elements of your preservice program that are more useful now than they were when you first became a principal? What are they?

Are there any elements of your preservice program that you wish you had encountered after you were a principal rather than before you started? What are they?

What are your greatest personal and professional needs now?

(For principals in this group within ten years of retirement)

How did you receive the knowledge and skill that enabled you to function as a principal? In retrospect, would there have been a better way?

What are your personal and professional goals in the final years of your career?

Findings from the new principals:

Ten principals, with experience ranging from 1 - 2 years, participated in the Region 13 focus group of new principals. The mean level of principalship experience was 1.5 years. In addition, these principals had served as assistant principals for periods ranging from 1 - 22 years, with a mean level of assistant principalship experience of 6.6 years. Their total years of professional experience in the public schools ranged from 11 - 29 years, with a mean level of 19.0 years.

When asked the knowledge and skills most needed to perform their jobs, new principals primarily identified skills associated with initiating and overseeing the changes required in their schools. They need facilitative leadership skills; skills required for building a culture and a climate that support learning. They also need to be aware of best current practice and of ways to stay current with educational changes. In addition, they must have information about district policies and regulations.

In reviewing their preparation programs, these new principals gave special commendation to activities that brought them into contact with real field situations. In this regard, one principal mentioned the district's full-time internship program. The group was unanimous and positive about the benefit of preservice sessions presented by practicing principals. They also found specific training beneficial; preparation in discipline and guidance procedures and experience in building a master schedule. Knowledge of school law, particularly as it relates to due process, good faith, and enrollment issues, was considered to be an essential component of the preservice program.

When asked to identify the elements of their preservice programs that added nothing to their performance as principals, they identified classes repetitious of teacher preparation programs (e.g., psychology of learning) and classes that were poorly organized. Preparation in the areas of transportation and special programs were considered to be of minor value. In addition, they made the following statements:

"It was hard to bring together the concepts without the experience."

"Needed more opportunity to practice."

"A one semester internship was not enough. It should be at least a year."

"Needed more information on how to deal with your district."

New urban principals believed that their jobs placed certain requirements that were not shared by principals in rural settings. They identified the following:

"Dealing with diverse issues and diverse people."

"More social problems."

"Dealing with unstable populations that impact the whole district."

"Staff/personnel changes."

"Diversity among schools."

"Knowledge and skills on how to access resources in a big system."

The rural principals in the group generally agreed with this list. They acknowledged a lesser problem of the community trying to "second guess" the school.

New rural principals believe their unique requirements derive from the greater variety of roles and responsibilities they are required to assume, and from the isolation of their local communities. The urban principals, however, maintained that these characteristics were also true for some urban schools which may really be like secluded, rural campuses.

The new principals identified the following as their greatest current personal and professional needs:

"SBI (site-based initiative) and consensus methods."

"Conflict resolution skills."

"Building a team to work toward a common goal."

"Help in clarifying our values...what we can and can't do."

"Creating a vision and getting 'buy-in'."

"Contacts/networking to get school resources."

"Support group."

"Skills for negotiating with parents who are violent or on drugs."

"Dealing with kids who seem to be in such hopeless situations...how to save them?"

"Working with social agencies."

Findings from the experienced principals:

Nine principals, with principalship experience ranging from 6 - 20 years, participated in the Region 13 focus group of experienced principals. The mean level of principalship experience was 10.1 years. In addition, these principals had experience as assistant principals ranging from 0 -7 years, with a mean level of assistant principalship

experience of 2.0 years. Their total years of professional experience in the public schools ranged from 14 - 35 years, with a mean level of 25.6 years. All these principals, except one, were considering retirement within a period of 10 years.

When asked what knowledge and skills are required to do their jobs, the experienced principals more readily identified skills rather than knowledge. They were unanimous in identifying the need for interpersonal communication skills, which they categorized and described in numerous ways. They stressed the need to be able to articulate, persuade, and motivate in a variety of different situations (e.g., conflict resolution, supervision of staff, motivating staff, articulating the goals of the school) with a variety of audiences (e.g., teachers, students, parents, community). Also emphasized was the need for different skills with various groups and in different contexts. There was general agreement that each new school setting presents unique communication challenges because of its unique organizational dynamics. Moreover, they agreed that listening was also an important communication skill that helps avoid organizational difficulties. Principals who genuinely listen to their constituents are likely to be more effective as communicators than those who initiate all communications. Many teachers and other constituents will solve their own problems if they believe the principal is listening to them, according to this group.

These principals also identified a range of additional skills, some of which clearly include a knowledge base as well. One high school principal emphasized the importance of hiring skills for assembling good staff. He indicated that time and energy put into recruiting the best teachers and other personnel was well invested, requiring less close supervision and remediation at a later point. Other principals spoke to the importance of curriculum and instruction skills. One noted that a knowledge of instruction and the ability to communicate that knowledge to teachers was the single most important skill at both the secondary and elementary levels, a competence that could get the principal through many difficult situations. The principals also noted the need for skills related to staff development, community relationships, and time management. Several described their experiences in learning the important skill of delegation, a skill that plays out differently in each school situation depending upon the people in that situation. One principal, in particular, emphasized the need to know the people in the school and know what they expect of the principal. There was also a general recognition of the need for assessment, analysis, and decision-making skills. In the same vein two principals spoke of the need for information processing skills. As one principal put it: "You have to be able to prioritize and know what's important." Another noted that the principals must be able to access and analyze data and then put it to use.

When pressed specifically about knowledge needed on their jobs (in contrast to skills) the principals responded with knowledge areas that are closely related to specific job performance and are highly dependent upon related skills, notably budgeting, scheduling, and plant maintenance. Because of their close relationship to specific job performance, the principals agreed that these knowledges and their related skills could only be introduced in a rudimentary way in pre-service programs and must be learned on the job -- and, to a certain extent, relearned in each new school.

As these principals reflected on their preparation programs, they emphasized the value of courses that directly support performance during early days on the job. They

spoke of the value of courses on supervision and evaluation of instruction. As one principal said: "It takes some skill to go in there and be able to identify those things that lead to good instruction and those that don't." They also emphasized the importance of a thorough knowledge of curriculum and educational program.

These experienced principals believe that some portions of their preservice programs, notably organizational theory and philosophy, could have waited until they were on the job and had gained experience. One high school principal who did not complete a preparation program before he became a principal, spoke of the value of certain courses completed after he became a principal, notably one having to do with the various federal programs that reciprocally reinforced his job requirements. The same principal, who had previously received instruction on scheduling in a university course, noted how much more valuable that instruction would have been in the job environment.

Preservice courses were found to be most valuable when performance based. These principals noted that leadership and decision-making skills had been effectively developed in university instruction through appropriate simulation activities. One principal noted, in particular, that learning how to interview via role playing activities was extremely valuable. A clear consensus emerged in the group that one of the most valuable portions of their preservice courses had been the inclusion of presentations by exemplary principals. They believe that the craft knowledge of practitioners introduced a wholistic learning that brought together the otherwise fragmented portions of their preservice programs and helped close the credibility gap between courses and their own practical needs. In addition, the principals believe that field based activities in preservice programs, whether through internships or other coursework, were extremely valuable in bridging what they perceived as the "very wide gap" between theory and practice.

The group also went on to identify a series of key attributes that successful principals must possess, traits that are difficult to teach either in coursework or on the job, and consequently must be identified when principals are recruited and appointed. These key attributes include the qualities of being reasonable, being caring, and having good judgment and common sense. Values are also important, and although it's probably too late to develop core values in principals, they can be taught how to articulate their values as a part of preparation and ongoing professional development programs.

This group of experienced principals also identified the need for continuing to support principals during their early years on the job. Too often new principals are thrown unready into troubled, intense situations. Support should be given during this crucial period. Similarly, since not all principalships are equally complex, difficult, and intense, school districts should give thought to planning the careers of their new principals, starting them in relatively easy situations and gradually preparing them for more difficult principalship assignments.

A first year principal needs a mentor who should be a peer rather than a superordinate. One principal noted that when first in the workplace, one of his greatest needs was to know people whom he could trust and on whom he could call for information and assistance. Mentors who can supply such help should be identified so that new principals can call upon them for various types of job related expertise.

When the group was asked whether or not any of the principals had been assisted by mentors in their early years, only one indicated "Yes." Upon receiving appointment to her first principalship, she identified a single mentor whom she believed was creative and had the other skills needed in her assignment in a new alternative school. Meeting with her mentor a weekly was an invaluable experience. This mentoring experience developed because she took the initiative to arrange it, however.

Several of these experienced principals kept logs during their careers. Although the logs did a good job of documenting even beyond their own immediate awareness, the complexity and intensity of their jobs, most reported that keeping the log had not been particularly valuable to helping them on the job. None of these principals used the log as a tool for reflection with another person.

The group also recognized the importance of the assistant principal's position as a training ground for the principalship. Not all assistant principalships are equally useful in this regard, however, since many are circumscribed by a narrow range of specific duties. These experienced principals believe that there is a need for a good professional development program for assistant principals to prepare them appropriately for the principalship.

Their greatest current needs come from the plethora of new governmental laws and mandates, and the many additional responsibilities that the principal's role has assumed in recent years. They would like to find ways to reduce the personal stresses caused by these additional demands and to act in the midst of these demands to bring effective and creative change to their schools. It is the number as well as the specificity and rigidity of the demands that produces stressful situations. As one principal put it: "How do you maintain your humanity when you're being evaluated in a very limited way?" Principals need help in learning to respond to these many pressures accruing to the position in recent years. Especially important is the need to find ways of keeping effective principals and teachers at the most troubled, difficult schools.

(b) Congress of Principals, Texas A&M University Principals' Center

During a meeting of the Congress of Principals, the governing body of the Texas A&M University Principals' Center, eight experienced principals with exemplary records who are Congress members engaged in a discussion with six Texas A&M University professors. The conversation was guided by two questions:

1) What are the components of campus leadership?

2) What can the university do to help develop this leadership?

Throughout the tape recorded discussion, Congress members emphasized the importance of skills in contrast to specific knowledges. They identified skills that cut across the entire range identified in the National Policy Board for Educational Administration's functional and interpersonal domains. Until asked directly by one of the professors in the group, no explicit mention was made of a knowledge base. When asked directly, the principals agreed that there is indeed a knowledge base that underlies effective practice of the skills. However, they believe that universities in the past have emphasized the knowledge base almost exclusively, and that this imbalance needs to be

corrected. Furthermore, skills are primary and the most difficult to learn. They should be initially developed in the university's preparation programs and then continue to be enriched throughout the career of the principal.

Analysis, critical thinking, evaluation, and planning skills are especially essential. Several of the Congress members emphasized that principals need to know how to analyze situations and to map strategies accordingly. They agreed that principals need to learn how to think through things. One said that principals need a course on thinking; a course that would teach problem solving, decision-making, and risk-taking skills. Evaluation skills are important. With a large variety of instructional programs in the school aimed at various target populations, the principal desperately needs to know how o assess the individual and combined effects of these programs. This evaluation is often omitted. Organizational skills are paramount, as well. Principals must learn how to plan strategically as well as operationally. Several principals emphasized the need to prioritize for long-range, medium-range, and short-range objectives and to learn how to harness the school's resources to achieve those objectives.

The principals also unanimously endorsed the need for communication and other social interaction skills since they wear many hats and touch many people including parents, students, teachers, and others calling for attention and support. Principals should possess skills to resolve conflict, facilitate communication, and develop positive attitudes among staff, students and parents. Principals must be able to develop trust relationships with people and enlist them in support of the school. The principal as the "vision keeper" for the school must keep people functioning within the parameters of a shared vision. The principal also is the "internal PR guy," as well. Time-management techniques designed for business often have limited direct application for the principal, though principals can certainly use these to develop strategies for optimally using this precious resource. In planning for the professional growth of personnel, the principal must not forget to plan for his or her own needs and professional development.

In the same vein, principals must know how to incorporate the thinking of other people into the design and implementation of a vision for their campuses. Teachers, parents, and the entire community need to know that the school is listening to them and is concerned with their ambitions, dreams, and worries. Empowerment of these groups is imperative because once people are empowered to participate in the school vision, they begin to autonomously contribute to the realization and expansion of the vision.

The principal's own values are important to success in the role. Because of a multitude of pressures from many different individuals and groups, the principal must have an inner commitment to touch people's lives in a significant way. The skill and knowledge of a principal are of little benefit unless they are guided by a dedication to helping the many people whose lives the principal touches. Furthermore, without this inner drive the principal will find it difficult over the years to endure, much less maximize, the ten and twelve hour days packed intensely with social interaction that constitute the life of the principal.

How and when should the candidate gain the skill and knowledge to be a principal? As one principal pointed out: "You don't learn to be a principal until you are one." The development of the principal, therefore, should include a continued focus on the generic skills required by the position, extending beyond the preservice days to throughout the

principal's career. One of the Congress members indicated that it was important to recruit the best people and then provide them with opportunity and training throughout their careers. Another principal noted that some leaders may be born, but regardless of their natural gifts they can be developed into much better principals than they would be without inservice work.

How should principals be developed? From their preservice days, into their first positions as principals and throughout their careers, they should be taught in field settings and through other clinical strategies that "bridge the gap" between the classroom and the field. (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1985). Simulations, case studies, and presentations by knowledgeable practitioners should constitute major portions of university courses. Carefully structured and monitored field experiences (such as the internship) are essential. Reality based training should continue throughout principals' careers. Modeling and mentoring are extremely important, as well. While perhaps most crucial during the principal's early days as a principal, mentoring can be a powerful strategy at every stage of the principal's career. Even the most seasoned principal can gain through the perspective and support provided by a mentor.

2. Region 13 Survey of Principal Professional Development Priorities

The Survey

In June, 1993, Macy Research Associates from Wills Point, Texas, conducted a survey of the professional development needs of the campus level administrators in the geographical area served by the Region XIII Education Service Center. This survey asked 97 school administrators in this service area to select professional development priorities from each group of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration's 21 performance domains (Thomson, 1993). Specifically, these administrators were asked to select from each of the four major groups of domains (functional, programmatic, interpersonal, and contextual), those domains they considered to be priorities among school administrators in their own districts. Links between identified domain priorities and level of school (elementary, middle, secondary), location of school (rural, suburban, urban), ethnicity, and years of administrative experience were also reported. reported.

These school administrators were also asked to respond to two open ended questions:

(a) What is your major concern or priority for your personal professional development this year?

(b) What suggestions or ideas do you have that will help us improve support for professional development?

Of greatest value to the present study were the responses of 71 administrators who responded to the first open ended question. Particular attention was given to common responses generated by administrators with similar amounts of experience; these responses were consolidated according to their various amounts of administrative experience. Experience levels ranged from 1 to 30 years.

The Analysis

One difficulty in interpreting data from the priority designations and from the open ended questions arose from these campus administrators responding to their aggregate administrative experience, not simply to their years as principals. Nevertheless, this information about overall experience is probably somewhat parallel to the principalship. With this caution in mind, the following tentative analysis is offered.

Few clear relationships between experience and professional development priorities emerged. This may be caused by principals being asked to identify priorities for all administrators in their respective districts, rather than referencing to their own individual needs. For instance, in the functional domains, more than 50% of the principals with 10 or fewer years of experience placed priority on the organizational oversight domain, while only 13% in the 11 - 15 year range of experience group identified a similar priority. Does this represent a necessary period for learning the school's structure and mastering organizational procedures? If so, it seems to represent an inordinately long time for this process to take place, since 53% of the principals with less than 7 years of experience considered this domain a priority while 32% of the principals with more than 15 years experience rated organizational oversight as a priority. Among the programmatic domains, 74% of the principals with less than 7 years experience identified curriculum design as a priority. This percentage gradually decreased as experience increased, however, to only 55% of the principals with more than 15 years experience recognizing it as such. No clear distinctions among experience levels were evident in the interpersonal domains. In the contextual domains, two interesting patterns were evident. While only about 40% of principals with less than 16 years experience identified the domain of philosophical values as a priority, 64% of the principals with 16 or more years of experience identified this area as a priority. On the other hand, while nearly half of all principals with ten years or less of experience placed a priority on the domain of legal and regulatory applications, only one third of those with 11-15 years experience recognized this as a priority, and only about a quarter of principals with more than 15 years gave it precedence.

Some domains apparently are recognized as priorities across experience levels. One of these was the leadership domain (a functional domain), considered a priority by a majority of the principals at every experience level. The instruction and learning environment domain (a programmatic domain) was considered a priority by more than 60% of the principals at each experience level. Two interpersonal domains given very high priority ratings by principals at all levels were "motivating others" and "interpersonal sensitivity." Relatively low percentages of principals at all experience levels considered the interpersonal domains of written and oral communication to be priorities for professional development.

The responses by the 71 principals to the first open ended question, "What is your major concern or priority for your personal professional development this year?," yielded some interesting responses.

Relatively large numbers of responses were directed toward instructional leadership (N=13), student achievement (N=11), management of change (N=10), and site-based management (N=10). Additional comments were directed to the areas of

curriculum, time management, total quality management, computer-technology, staff/ interpersonal relations, cultural differences, public relations/parent involvement, finance/ budget, legal/compliance, and assessment. These general areas were identified by administrators with all levels of experience and background.

Most interesting were the diverse ways in which various principals phrased their responses. Differences in experience were reflected not so much in the areas addressed by these respondents but in the way in which they addressed them. New principals, particularly, demonstrated specific needs related to their new positions. Their priorities tended to be driven by what they saw as the performance requirements for survival on their jobs:

> "The skills I require include leadership. Moreover, curriculum and instruction restructuring will be a major responsibility in this position."
>
> "Assist teachers in accelerating learning for young students who appear to have not had the preparation to begin school successfully, while maintaining the correct focus on developmental and cultural needs."
>
> "Gain more knowledge in curriculum areas (math, language arts, science, social studies)."

The comments of experienced principals did not generally reflect the same urgency. Rather, they seemed directed toward longer range goals and priorities:

> "Provide instructional leadership to promote real and lasting change in school's educational program."
>
> "Inspire teachers and students to higher kinds of teaching and learning."
>
> "Facilitate change, team building, building campus self-esteem."
>
> "Develop a database for use in school decision making."

There were, however, a few experienced principals who did express their priorities in immediate terms, apparently reflecting new responsibilities and pressures recently emerging:

> "Be better able to deal with the increase of high at-risk students on campus."
>
> "Time management and volume of changes in education."

3. London Primary Heads and Texas Rural Principals

As part of a year long study of patterns of professional development that began in the summer of 1993, five principals of small rural schools in Texas and six headteachers of primary schools in London were engaged in a professional development process sponsored by the Texas A&M University Principals' Center. The developmental work of the Texas principals was coordinated by Dr. Elaine Wilmore, a professor of education at the University of Texas - Arlington; the work of the London headteachers was coordinated Dr. David Erlandson, Director of the Principals' Center at Texas A&M

University. A professional development plan was established for each principal and headteacher at the beginning of the study. During the year each principal and headteacher maintained a log and stayed in regular communication with Dr. Wilmore or Dr. Erlandson. The professional development plans identified areas of need recognized by each of the principals as developmental priorities. These plans were analyzed as part of this present study.

Both London primary school headteachers and rural Texas principals had begun an individualized professional development process through an integrated appraisal measure administered on a one-to-one basis by Dr. Erlandson (for the London headteachers) or by Dr. Wilmore (for the rural Texas principals). In this process they analyzed what was most important for them to do at the present time to increase their effectiveness on the job and then to map out strategies and identified skills needed to accomplish their goals.

One Texas participant was a new principal. The other four were all veterans with considerable experience. The new principal's priorities focussed on obtaining appropriate staff development for her teachers. More specifically, her initial needs were to find out what resources for staff development existed and to energize the faculty to make use of those resources. No judgments or plans were made for specific types of staff development needed to attain the goals of the school. The plans of the four experienced principals were much more precisely targeted to specific needs identified in their schools. One of these, a middle school principal, said with tears in his eyes that he didn't want any more of "my kids to die in my arms" (in reference to a fatal shooting that had occurred on his campus). His solutions included developing a comprehensive program for instilling values into the life of his school and developing closer ties with the community. To accomplish these goals he would learn about values education programs in other settings and then enhance his consensus building and group motivation skills to bring them about. The principal of an early childhood campus wanted to enhance her already excellent school program by obtaining more positive parent/community involvement and higher expectations and cohesiveness among her staff. To do this she realized that she would need to sharpen her skills as a motivator and consensus builder. This same principal also recognized that, in an era of rapidly changing legal practices and policies, she would need to find better ways to stay abreast of new policies and regulations as they were issued. A high school principal's primary goals were to increase the technological literacy of teachers and to facilitate the use of technology in the various aspects of the school's curriculum. An elementary principal, approaching retirement, saw a need to expand his own horizons and get a more comprehensive understanding of the school in society, with a particular emphasis on future trends and their likely impact on education.

The six London headteachers of primary schools had varying amounts of experience as headteachers. They all had one thing in common, however; all were in their first years of functioning under LMS (Local Management of Schools), the British version of American site-based management that has given great autonomy and responsibility to the headteachers and their local boards of governors. As a result, these headteachers found themselves functioning not only as the counterparts of American principals, but in many respects as the counterparts of American superintendents as well. Consequently, most of the strategies described in their professional development plans stressed the need for planning and implementation skills. These headteachers

needed to know about delegation (particularly difficult since they did not have large staffs to whom they could delegate), shared decision making skills, and time management. Because of their limited human resources they hoped to learn how to empower their staffs so that all professionals would be actively involved in the implementation and monitoring of the school's educational program. Their direct contact with the community and its power structure called for conflict resolution skills and for fuller understanding of the social issues of the community. Several of the headteachers expressed a need to get a better understanding of larger policy issues in education and to develop their strategic planning skills.

The needs recognized by this group of primary school headteachers parallel those identified by the new secondary school heads surveyed by Weindling (1992), but they also contrast markedly in the emphasis placed on external issues. During the early 1980's the secondary school heads surveyed gave much less emphasis to external issues than to internal issues. In his 1988 follow-up study, as LMS was being introduced, Weindling found a greater concern with external issues. By 1993 LMS had advanced to the point where external considerations had become the chief concern of some of the primary heads in this study and were at least on a par with internal concerns for the others.

As Weindling notes, the "magnitude and speed of central government initiatives" has indeed been "unprecedented" (p. 346). The power and funding of LEA's has been reduced dramatically; they find themselves now in the position of selling their services to the individual schools. The results seem to have been both positive and negative. The clearest benefit of LMS has been the greater autonomy given to the heads and their local governors, according to the six heads in the current study. At the same time the buffer from the community that had been substantially provided by the LEA has now all but disappeared. This change has caused some hardship and, as noted above, the need of heads for new kinds of learning. Most of the heads in this study, though, saw this as a challenge which they were more than willing to accept in return for the increased autonomy that LMS had provided.

4. Six Teachers in an Alternative Administrative Certification Program

In January 1993 six teachers from the Bryan (Texas) Independent School District began an alternative administrative certification program at Texas A&M University. These teachers had been selected by the District on the basis of their potential as building level administrators. Two teachers in the group had already taken on quasi-administrative duties. One was a learning specialist to assist the other teachers in the school while the other was a coordinator of special education teachers for five schools (a task she performed in addition to her regular special education duties at one of the schools). Although not all six teachers viewed the principalship as a career goal, most anticipated that this would be one position they would occupy in their careers. During the first weeks of the program they were given considerable time for diagnosing professional needs and for planning their programs, within very flexible guidelines. This initial planning time provided an excellent opportunity to identify the skills and knowledge to be developed during the pre-service program, both as they began their administrative careers and to provide a strong base for their subsequent professional development.

The Bryan/Texas A&M candidates identified both knowledges and skills they would like to acquire before entering the principalship or other administrative positions.

Paramount were those skills related to conflict resolution, consensus building, and problem solving. These teachers recognized that as new administrators they would be required to demonstrate levels of judgment, communication, and organizational ability far beyond those required previously. They fully recognized that they would not be able to perform the principal's job single-handedly, but must learn to motivate and work through other people, to delegate effectively. Several of these aspiring administrators also articulated the need for interviewing, stress reduction, action research, and public relations skills. All expressed an expectation that the alternative certification program would give them a foundation in these important skills.

Critical knowledge areas identified by this group were primarily related to budgetary and fiscal considerations, to the legal and policy parameters within which they would be required to operate, and to the provision and maintenance of facilities. Most of these aspiring administrators failed to mention the importance of knowledge about curriculum and instruction. Perhaps this is because these areas have been central to them as teachers, and at this early point in their programs they were more anxious about the totally unknown. These candidates were as yet unaware of the importance of enriching their knowledge in the familiar but critical realms of curriculum and instruction. Interesting to note is that the group member who served as a coordinator across several schools most clearly recognized the need to extend her base of curriculum knowledge.

These aspiring administrators also identified important areas best represented as a combination of knowledge and skills. These include technology proficiency, staff development, and scheduling. Measurement and evaluation was another important combined skill and knowledge identified by these teachers in the alternative certification program. They recognized that competence in this area was based on the skills of measurement and evaluation but was also built on a thorough knowledge of student, teacher, and community populations that would guide the application of appropriate assessment skills and strategies.

Although the members of this group were not yet principals, they recognized the importance of being able to build a shared vision for the school and to involve all stakeholders in the development, communication, and implementation of this vision. One of the group expressed it in these terms:

> I will need to be able to create an atmosphere in which the teachers, parents, and students feel that quality education is taking place. I know I will need to be able to organize the staff in such a way that their strengths will be most utilized and their weaknesses will be strengthened. I must constantly seek after that vision that I feel is best for all concerned and be able to mobilize the teachers, students, and parents to move toward that vision....I will need to empower the staff so that they feel ownership in the school, which will release energy to accomplish the goals that we have set forth.

5. Individual Principal Interviews

In addition to the principals included in (1), (2), and (3) above, individual interviews were conducted with five principals, both within and outside of Texas. From these, the interviews of two principals were selected for inclusion here. They are very

different people, both in background and current job situation. Their respective career stages serve to frame the information provided by others in this study. One principal, Jackie Kowalski, recently received a doctorate in Educational Administration and was serving the first year of her principalship in a small rural Texas town. The other principal, Robert Enos, recently retired from the Austin Independent School District in Texas, where he had served 17 years as a principal at two high schools and one junior high school. These interviews focused on questions similar to those asked of the focus groups (i.e., "What knowledge and skills are needed to perform your job?," "How did the elements of your preservice program contribute to your ability to perform your job?," "How did you obtain the knowledge and skills needed to perform your job?," etc.) Each of the interviews, or "guided conversations," lasted approximately two hours.

A new elementary principal

Jackie Kowalski was interviewed in the third month of her principalship at Milano Elementary School, in a small central Texas town. The conversation focused on the relationship between her preparation at the university and job requirements, including her current greatest needs.

Her most valuable university courses were those that most directly served the demands of the new job. These included coursework and other preservice experiences in supervision of instruction and school law. She made particular reference to the importance of the training given in administering the state mandated system for teacher evaluation. (This particular training was provided by a regional service center and was not part of her university coursework.) Legal areas of greatest value to her included provisions and regulations directly related to the daily running of the school, particularly those pertaining to special programs and attendance. Much of this information was supplied on the job. Of less immediate value were case law and law related to large policy issues.

She considered the least valuable university courses to be those emphasizing theory not grounded in experience and with little job application. Dr. Kowalski emphasized, however, that she does not minimize the value of theory per se and pointed to a number of situations where theory has given her a more fertile understanding of the school situation and the perspective to act. She agreed that many fellow principals do not have this appreciation of theory. Her three years in Ph.D. residency at Texas A&M University probably gave her the opportunity and ability to think theoretically and appreciate theory as an active tool for understanding the school.

Several other elements of her university program were particularly valuable. Dr. Kowalski stated that one of the most valuable components had been a research course enabling her to distinguish between "good" research and "bad" research. She believes that learning to recognize valid research has not only made her a better consumer of research but has added to her power to discriminate and, therefore, lead as a principal. Kowalski also feels that the opportunities she had to organize and make presentations during her residency at the university were of particular value since she is naturally shy and doesn't like to speak before groups. As a principal this skill is required frequently to make presentations to various school and community groups.

Dr. Kowalski wishes she had more training in counseling, since much of her job requires counseling of students and adults, both parents and teachers.

As the only new person at school, Dr. Kowalski is having a hard time breaking into the inner circles. In this small rural, fairly homogeneous community she will be the "outsider" for a while. Apparently well liked by everyone and is treated well, there are still barriers which require time to remove.

A retired secondary principal

Bob Enos is a recently retired professional educator of 34 years in Austin, Texas; six as a teacher, eleven as an assistant principal, and seventeen as a principal in both schools. In conversation, Enos related the events of his career in response to the question: "Over the years was there a shift in your professional needs as a principal?"

Throughout his career Enos had always been a learner, had always looked for professional growth, and had always sought to gain proficiency in areas in which he had no previous experience. He wanted to be a complete professional -- whether as a teacher or as an administrator.

During his first assistant principalship, he found that university preparation to be virtually useless. Being in charge of discipline, he believed it would have been very useful to be taught about systems for discipline, especially the ways students can be taught to be more responsible for their own behavior. From his principal he learned much about cooperative group interaction, a skill that served him well in future assignments.

Enos' second assistant principalship was also at a junior high school, this time in a in a dominantly Mexican-American area of Austin. Although the Mexican-American community believed that the position should have been given to a Mexican-American, Bob was retained and learned what is required of an administrator in a predominantly minority school.

Upon becoming an assistant principal at a high school, he needed to learn about computer scheduling on the job. University coursework had not helped much here, either. During this assignment he also had considerable contact with the regional Education Service Center, learning about meaningful staff development activities.

A first principalship was at the largest junior high school Austin. As an assistant principal he had never been directly involved in teacher evaluation or in budgeting so his early days as a principal were devoted to gaining competence in these critical areas. Together with his previous experience in staff development, these areas provided the foundation upon which he was able to build other skills as a principal.

Next, as principal of Crockett High School, located in the most rapidly growing part of Austin, he learned what it was like to be principal of an overcrowded school. He also learned about the complexities of interscholastic competition (including speech, drama, athletics, etc.) at the high school level. Because of the increased complexity of hig schools he learned about managing assistant principals and the broad delegation of tasks necessary in a large high school. He also learned about community involvement; obtaining input without losing control to parent booster clubs or other groups who would like to shape the school program for their own purposes.

For the last seven years of his career, Enos was the principal of Austin High School, the "flagship" school, located in a politically powerful and socially prominent neighborhood. One early confrontation with the community and the superintendent concerning suspension of students who had been drinking forced him to take a stand, rough at the time but enabling him to establish a position for the remainder of his tenure. This expression of values provided the foundation for a very productive working relationship with the school community. Then, site-based management was mandated and Austin High School became a pilot site for its implementation. Bob and his faculty again learned on the job.

Enos also spoke to the skills required in the principal's job, including immediate needs required to keep the educational enterprise afloat such as necessary budget skills; how can instructional funds be allocated for greatest effectiveness and efficiency? Perhaps this could be learned in part at the university with the balance learned from principals as colleagues. Another set of survival skills for the principal relate to quality staff development and the effective use of people on the school staff.

Longer range skills are crucial for principals who want to maximize their potential as an educational leader. These include planning and organizing the educational program, and providing for an appropriate curriculum. The principal also needs skill in analysis, assessment, crisis management and the decision-making process. Finally the principal must know how to collect and interpret data, how to handle communication networks, how to set priorities, and how to make timely decisions.

ANALYSIS

The various data sources suggest a fairly comprehensive and coherent message. Principals at different points in their careers recognize distinct professional needs that can be demonstrably related to their current job requirements. This does not mean, however, that a single set of needs for all principals can be identified at particular career stages. Rather, a host of factors interact with the specific knowledge and skill needs identified to perform adequately any specific job. Three factors emerge as dominant:

(a) particular context of the school;

(b) length of tenure in the position;

(c) previous experience in schools and other organizations.

These three factors emerged in this study and are evident in the works of Hall and Parkay (1992), Hart (1992), and Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes (1992). They were vividly portrayed in the interview with Bob Enos. Each new principalship presents new challenges for the person that must be met. Then, as mastery is attained in each position, expanded possibilities for new leadership open. Skills learned in each position broaden the base for mastery in subsequent positions.

Other elements that generally affect principals' job performances include previous academic studies and other experiences, current family situation, and age of the principal. Interestingly, the differences in the needs of elementary and secondary principals appear to be distinct only in regard to the performance level of specific tasks,

such as scheduling or athletics. The more intense issues, such as those related to interpersonal communication, apparently are not distinguished by school level.

While the three factors stood out in our work with the various participants in the study, there were other determinents as great in total number as the participants. For this reason, the Boyatzis and Kolb (1992) growth and adaptation model was found to be particularly useful for analyzing the data collected. Boyatzis and Kolb postulate three modes of growth and adaptation throughout career and life: the *performance mode*, the *learning mode*, and the *development mode*. Their model is a recursive one. Based upon life and career circumstances, individuals may re-enter modes which they previously left without the onus of implying that they are regressing to an earlier, less mature stage. This quality distinguishes the Boyatzis-Kolb model from most other models that define stages and phases of adult development (e.g., Erikson, 1968; Gould, 1978; Kegan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1984; Levinson, 1978; Loevinger, 1976). For the purposes of this publication, which seeks to understand the interaction between personal growth needs and career requirements, a recursive model seems to be especially useful.

(1) Modes of Growth and Adaptation throughout Career and Life

According to Boyatzis and Kolb, the person in the **performance mode** "is occupied with success and their intent is mastery" (p. 5). The key abilities associated with success in the performance mode are specific behavioral skills related to job and organizational demands. The needs associated with this mode are typically those identified by new principals and by principals who have recently assumed a new position.

The **learning mode** is characterized by the pursuit of novelty and variety as the individual seeks self-improvement, the application of existing skills to new settings, and extension of knowledge and skills from the current situation to "new, different, and possibly future ones" (p. 8). A principal in the learning mode might suitably be involved in adapting new curricula to the goals of the school, experimenting with structural changes in the school day, or establishing new cooperative relationships with the community.

According to Boyatzis and Kolb, a person in the **development mode** "is preoccupied with perpetual human and social dilemmas" (i.e., developing a wholistic sense of self, seeking wisdom in the context of values and/or a vision for the future, seeking connectedness in a global fashion, or making selfless contributions) (p.10). The individual in this mode is less likely than those in other modes to be pressured by requirements of urgency and expediency. A principal in the development mode may be rereading the works of John Dewey or other philosophers, may become a spokesman for equity in state funding of schools, or may serve as a valued counselor to the superintendent and other central office personnel.

It must be remembered that the model is recursive and not uniform. A principal who has been in the learning mode or development mode may find himself again working in the performance mode when assuming the principalship of a high school that is larger and more urbanized than the previous one. And while the development mode is more likely to characterize an older principal, a person like Bob Enos, this is not necessarily the case.

The features of the Boyatzis-Kolb model might at first glance seem to make it more difficult to predict the needs of principals at various points in their careers. Perhaps, however, it facilitates such predictions since although we cannot plan a uniform sequence of knowledge and skills for principals to follow over their separate careers, the interaction of job requirements, previous experience, and personal elements can probably enable educators to plan knowledge and skill requirements projected from a consideration of these first two factors (i.e., job requirements and experience). With sufficient breadth in the availability of strategies and contexts for growth and adaptation, the needs of most principals can probably be met.

For instance, we know that all principals should have strong backgrounds in curriculum and instruction. For the new principal, most likely still in the *performance mode*, training and preparation should involve cognitive learning, practice, and opportunity for specific application. This holds true whether the vehicles for growth are academic course work, clinical experience, or an internship. Similar strategies might be used for the experienced principal weak in curriculum and instructional skills or who moves to a new arena where present skills are inadequate. On the other hand, an established principal in the *learning mode* may wish to extend his mastery of curriculum and instruction by obtaining a broader, deeper understanding of the interaction that curriculum and instruction have with one another, with adolescent growth, and with the purposes of the school. This principal should be given an opportunity to pursue applications in new arenas and to integrate old learnings with new situations. The principal in the *development mode* may have the need to expand his learning in curriculum and instruction, and apply that knowledge to the various human and social dilemmas operating within the context of larger purposes.

If Boyatzis and Kolb are correct in their description of growth and adaptation by recursive progress through the performance, learning, and development modes, this has clear implications for meeting the career needs of principals. A principal in the learning mode or the development mode does not simply need "more" or "deeper" knowledge than the person in the performance mode; the model is not hierarchical. His needs are unique, what he is seeking is different, and any attempt to force him into the procedures appropriate for a different mode will probably be counterproductive. The principal in the performance mode is likely to find activities directed at a different mode "irrelevant" (Boyatzis & Kolb, 1992, p. 16). The principal in the learning mode is likely to see activities directed at different modes as "boring" (p. 18). The principal in the development mode will consider activities directed at other modes as "trivial pursuits" (p. 20).

The interaction between career stages and previous experience in defining the principal's growth and adaptation mode, observed in this study, is consistent with the findings of Allison and Allison (1993). Their study of principals, including "aspirants" and "rookies" as well as "seasoned" and "veteran" principals (p. 302) found, as could be anticipated, that expertise was dependent on experience, "but the effect of experience was more complex than may often be assumed." (p. 317) For instance, they found that experience as a principal by itself did not produce a significant difference in problem solving expertise, but that experience working in schools did. Evidently experienced teachers aspiring to the principalship could not really be considered as novices in their understanding of school administration. They also found considerable disparity in the

problem solving expertise of rookie principals.

The five stage career development model proposed by Hall and Parkay (1992), though not explicitly recursive enables an equivalent analysis, at least for beginning principals. As Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes (1992) note, not all beginning principals start at the same stage of development. Previous experience, together with interpersonal knowledge and skill interact with the context of the school to determine the stage at which a beginning principal enters the model. Data provided by the interview with Enos and by the focus group of Region 13 experienced principals suggest that the requirements of any new position may require a successful experienced principal to return to an earlier developmental stage, though probably not to the "survival" or "control" stage. Forward progress through the five stage model is dependent on previous experiences. Perhaps most important of all are successful experiences in previous principalships. However, the five stage career model of Hall and Parkay is essentially a linear model and does not deal explicitly with the case of a principal operating at the educational leadership stage who must refocus on stability in a new principalship. The Boyatzis and Kolb model enables the consideration of a successful principal's return to the performance mode as not necessarily a sign of developmental regression.

(2) NPBEA's 21 Performance Domains

The training needs of principals may be considered with reference to the 21 Performance Domains identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (Thomson, 1993). A review of the 21 domains, along with the needs identified by principals in the study, suggests the following:

Functional Domains

The functional domains, identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, include the following:

Leadership
Information Collection
Problem Analysis
Judgment
Organizational Oversight
Implementation
Delegation

It seems that practical exercise should be used throughout the preservice program and at every possible stage. "Practical exercise" includes both actual field experiences and what NASSP's University Consortium for Performance-Based Preparation of Principals (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1985) has labeled "bridging procedures" (a term that includes a variety of simulations, group processes, and other strategies that require specific job related performance by the learner). The generic skills identified by these seven functional domains can be assessed and built. Practical opportunities to develop them in a variety of areas are available, even at the undergraduate level. Advanced seminars and workshops for their development could be made available to principals throughout their careers

Programmatic Domains

The programmatic domains, identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, include the following:

Instruction and the Learning Environment
Curriculum Design
Student Guidance and Development
Staff Development
Measurement and Evaluation
Resource Allocation

Prospective principals should be given substantial background in these 6 domains in their preparation programs. Alternative programs should ensure that prospective principals have previously acquired the necessary knowledge and skill to support performance in these domains or are provided with them in the alternative program. Particularly critical are the knowledge and skill related to the Instruction and the Learning Environment domain and the Curriculum Design domain. These represent the core technology of education and provide direction for performance in all the other domains. As with the functional domains, continued instruction in the programmatic domains, at increasingly sophisticated levels, should be made available to principals throughout their careers.

Interpersonal Domains

The interpersonal domains, identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, include the following:

Motivating Others
Interpersonal Sensitivity
Oral and Nonverbal Expression
Written Expression

A need similar to that of the functional domains can be made for the interpersonal domains. They should be developed in practical exercises, and a variety of developmental opportunities should be offered at increasingly sophisticated levels, beginning in the preparation program and lasting throughout the principal's career.

Although practicing principals may not place immediate priority on oral and written communication skills, as evidenced by the Macy survey in Texas, it is hard to accept this perception as a true indicator of principals' career needs. Principals in this study (including those in the Macy survey), as well as nearly all other needs studies, indicate the importance of being a master of communication and interpersonal processes, such as "leadership" or "conflict resolution," that are highly dependent upon oral and written skills.

Contextual Domains

The contextual domains, identified by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, include the following:

Philosophical and Cultural Values
Legal and Regulatory Applications
Policy and Political Influences
Public Relations

The contextual domains also need to be developed throughout the principal's career. However, the levels of sophistication and involvement will perhaps be different at various career points, compared to the other domain groups. At the preservice stage, the prospective principal learns about the impact of alternative value and cultural systems and various policy initiatives. In the early years on the job, the principal should be actively considering implications of such alternatives for the overall operation of a particular school. An effective, seasoned principal might be developing broad views of philosophy and policy. Similar statements could be made for the other contextual domains.

The contextual domains contain the knowledge and skills that allow the principal to break out of the conceptual box imposed by the "encapsulated school" syndrome that imprisons the thinking of professional educators. An adequate conceptualization of the vital links between schools and their sustaining communities enables the principal to construct a vision for student growth and performance founded upon the present and future needs of students and society, together.

(3) Needs at Various Points in the Principal's Career

Recognizing the dangers, previously noted, of equating learning needs with either the principal's age or tenure as a principal, it nevertheless appears useful to identify needs that can be connected with key stages of the principal's career. This framework is probably most easily applied to the beginning principal.

The Beginning Principal

Based on the data collected in this study the following capacities are posited as absolutely necessary for any new principal.

(1) Mastery of all the functional and interpersonal skills to a degree that enables the principal to understand and lead a human organization. These include skills in:

(a) communication;
(b) conflict resolution;
(c) consensus building;
(d) delegation;
(e) culture and climate building.

(2) Comprehensive understanding of (a) curriculum and curriculum alternatives and (b) instruction and learning theory

As stated earlier, the above two domains are the core technology of the education professions. For the same reason that many future managers in the manufacturing industry earn engineering degrees prior to the MBA, it is imperative that the educational leader have a broad understanding of these

technologies because they define what the educational enterprise is all about. Since there is general agreement that the principal should be the instructional leader of the school, it is difficult to see how this status can be attained without expertise in these two domains.

(3) Sufficient skills in the collection and analysis of data and in measurement and evaluation, to enable the necessary epistemological functions that underlie improvement through data based decisions.

(4) Specific skills of organizational oversight related to moving a school efficiently toward the achievement of its mission.

(5) Ability to conceptualize and coordinate available resources of time, space, materials, personnel, and money in support of the school's mission.

(6) Comprehensive understanding of legal doctrines and principles that relate to personnel; particularly teachers and students.

These skills do not define an outstanding principal, or even necessarily an effective one. They are merely the prerequisites for an individual to become an acceptable journeyman principal within a reasonable amount of time.

Early Days in the Principalship

At the first principalship it can probably be assumed that the new principal is in the *performance mode*. Building on this background of abilities, he will need access to information about district and state rules and regulations, including budgeting procedures, special program administration, and particular laws and regulations that must be implemented. It should be the duty of the local district (since they have the most inclusive knowledge of the various sources of federal, state, and local regulations) to ensure that a new principal is made aware of and enjoys ready access to these various sets of knowledge. State offices and intermediate units (e.g., regional service centers) may help in this regard.

When an experienced principal moves to a different school, he is also likely to be in the performance mode and will have similar needs, though usually not of the same intensity. The early days and months in any new position are crucial for the success and growth of the principal in that context.

Mentoring can be a useful strategy to enhance the likelihood of success for the new principal. A group of 216 New York City principals in the New Principals Program sponsored by the Bank Street College of Education (n.d.), identified a wide range of skills and processes learned from their mentors and advisors. These included

- strategies to help with making decisions;
- ideas to develop communication and a trustful relationship with staff, for example the set up of small group meetings to get input;
- recognizing that change takes time;
- accepting that the principal's job is often reactive rather than proactive;
- advising on observation reports;
- resolving school needs such as security, overcrowding and equipment needs;

- crisis management;
- legal requirements;
- ideas about activities and programs;
- alternative programming strategies;
- ways to delegate tasks;
- scheduling;
- providing a strong network of colleagues;
- information on whole language;
- in-depth information on daily operating procedures not in manuals or regulations;
- direction, comfort, and focus;
- ways to be assertive and humanistic;
- practical tips on organizing;
- help in time management;
- interpreting the contract;
- goal setting and school mission;
- ideas for establishing new curriculum;
- ways to enjoy and rise above the challenges of the job.

This list reveals a desire for growth activities in the performance mode similar to that observed in new Texas principals and is also embedded in critical issues as identified by Parkay, Currie, Rhodes, & Rao (1992).

Continued Growth of the Principal

As principals move ahead in their careers, professional growth needs will become more diversified. In addition to differences in modes of adaptation and growth, principals will enter their careers with diverse backgrounds and will develop at different rates and in different directions. Although the "absolute need" for certain abilities by new principals is well established now, in fact these skills are not developed for all principals. Undoubtedly it will take some time before that goal is achieved. School contexts will continue to change, and as they do, the specific skills and knowledge required by principals will change as well. Experienced principals in the *learning mode* should be ready for these extensions of skill and knowledge, as well as for making discoveries about new arenas of application. Training and development, through whatever channels provided, should be adaptive to meet the needs of these principals.

The principal in the learning mode no longer feels the need to demonstrate basic mastery of the job. He has an understanding of what works and what doesn't work and is ready to consider and evaluate programmatic alternatives. This principal does not need to incorporate a reading program that works: he already has one. What he is ready to do is broaden perspective of what a "reading program" includes, to extend the impact of the school by focussing on the lifelong reading habits of students, their families, and of the faculty members. He is less concerned with overcoming community opposition than with making the school a proactive force for community development. Discipline management is no longer a central school concern, but is now replaced by building permanent habits of social responsibility.

Probably principals in the learning mode can best benefit from an exposure to alternative strategies or models to advance the school's focus in curriculum and

instruction, school based budgeting, student development, community relations, etc. These alternative approaches can be learned at professional association meetings, by visits to schools with exemplary programs, and through networks with principals who have similar professional growth needs. At the same time it is important to remember that while outside agencies such as professional associations, universities, school districts, or principal centers may be active in identifying and providing access to an examination of alternative programmatic models, the principal himself is the key decision maker in determining what he needs and how he will integrate this with the ongoing program of the school.

School districts can play a crucial role in supporting the growth of principals who are in the learning mode. Perhaps better than any other agency, the district can encourage and give the principal freedom to extend skills to new areas, to expand programmatic thrusts, and to experiment with new procedures.

The principalship has not historically lent itself to professionals entering the *development mode*. While many principals have entered this mode the evolution has been primarily through personal alertness and initiative. Bob Mastruzzi (Lightfoot, 1983) clearly moved into this mode at John F. Kennedy High School. Many other principals emulate him in their own schools. Nevertheless, the profession of school administration is not characteristically structured to encourage this growth. Individuals who wish to focus on perpetual human and social dilemmas are often encouraged to become professors or superintendents. In some ways, this is unfortunate. Those principals closely identified with the educational values of their communities are often recognized as leaders by these communities and are excellent candidates to be respected policy advisors as principals.

The needs of principals in the development mode are likely to be quite compatible with the goals of the institutions and agencies with whom they are working. This experienced professional is ready to give of himself for the benefit of the school, the larger community, and the society. He is likely an ideal mentor for new principals or other school professionals, a role as important for his own sustained professional growth as it is for a junior colleague. The principal in the development mode is often an extremely valuable advisor on state, regional, and district committees. This principal is also ready to participate with university colleagues, not simply as a part-time professor to teach courses, but as full intellectual equal in helping the university relate its work to the realities of the school workplace.

We should not forget, however, that even the most experienced and successful principal will probably return to the performance mode in response to new mandates from the state or district, the requirements of a new principalship, or significant changes in the demography, mission, or structure of his current school. For this reason, institutes and other training structures similar to those provided for new principals, should continually be available to experienced principals who need to augment their personal skill and knowledge bases.

Karen Seashore Louis (1993), in a critique of educational leadership development in Minnesota, decries the fact that "there are no strategies for development that adequately take into account the needs of educational leaders at different stages of their careers." Although opportunities exist for an introduction to new ideas and skills, few

opportunities are provided for practicing or enhancing them. In addition, from our perspective, little help is given to experienced principals at various career stages to match growth opportunities with their needs. The Learning Skills Profile of Boyatzis and Kolb (1991), and its earlier version, the Executive Skills Profile, have been used in management development programs in a variety of professions in several settings. Perhaps this procedure should be explored for the ongoing professional development of principals. Additional strategies for matching principal needs with available growth opportunities should be developed.

Attention to the continuing growth of principals is particularly urgent at this point in the nation's schools because of the radical changes in operating contexts and expectations occurring through succeeding waves of reform. The reforms call for major shifts in the patterns of time, space, and personnel in schools. These, in turn have required new knowledge and skill from principals and, consequently, generated new requirements for professional growth opportunities targeted to particular principal needs. Yet, as Louis (1993) has noted, there is no systematic effort "to engage administrators in regularly updating their skills and knowledge to deal with critical changes in their settings."

RECOMMENDATIONS

A synthesis and analysis of the data developed by this study may be summarized in the following eight recommendations:

(1) Comprehensive preservice preparation must be provided for the principal.

(a) The prospective principal must be given a comprehensive background in curriculum and instruction, measurement and evaluation, allocation of resources, and legal doctrines and principles, particularly those relating to teachers and student personnel matters.

(b) The prospective principal should also acquire a broad understanding of student guidance and development, staff development, and alternative philosophical and cultural systems.

(c) The prospective principal needs to develop skills in the functional and interpersonal domains through simulations and other activities that require specific job related performance.

(d) The prospective principal's abilities should be assessed by behavioral performance in simulations and practical field activities.

(2) New principals must be given comprehensive support on the job.

New principals should be developed through a comprehensive mentoring system that carefully matches new principals with mentors, monitors mentor relationships, and makes available activities to support the ongoing growth and adaptation of the new principals. The case for non-abandonment of first year principals is presented poignantly in Roberts' (1992) portrait of "Mary," a first year principal.

(3) Collegial support networks should be provided for all principals.

Experienced principals as well as beginning principals need support. The principalship is a lonely position. Within schools, the principal has no peers, and often communication lines with other principals and with other sources of collegial support are minimal or non-existent. The system often puts principals in competition with one another and makes many principals reticent about sharing their craft knowledge with other principals. Principals themselves need to work on developing these collegial relations.

(4) Principals should engage in reflective practice throughout their careers.

Principals should be expected to engage in reflective practice during their preparation programs and should be encouraged and provided opportunity to continue this practice throughout their careers.

(5) **Principals must learn to be learners.**

Career-long learning needs to be emphasized in preparation programs and throughout the principal's professional life. Not only must the principal be an active learner to respond productively to the dynamics of the school context (Donaldson, 1991) but he must provide a model for the school as a learning organization.

(6) **Appropriate growth activities should be provided for principals throughout their careers.**

Professional growth activities should be offered to principals throughout their careers by universities, professional associations, school districts, and other agencies. Particular needs of principals should be identified and appropriate growth activities made available. Skills and knowledge critical to specific job demands must be provided through alternative strategies for new principals and other principals in the *performance mode*. Opportunity to expand, experiment, and extend previous knowledge and skill must be available for experienced principals in the *learning mode*. Principals in the *development mode* should also be provided avenues for growth and adaptation. In particular, opportunities should be sought for them to give their perspective and acquired knowledge to guide newer principals, their school districts, universities, and the education community generally.

(7) **Development and growth activities should be systematically provided for assistant principals.**

Special attention should be given to providing a comprehensive range of responsibilities and opportunities for assistant principals so that this position can be systematically used to prepare highly qualified principals.

(8) **Collaboration must be developed among the primary stakeholders in the preparation of principals.**

Continuing attention, such as that provided by Louis (1993) or NASSP's University Consortium for the Performance-Based Preparation of Principals (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1992), should be given to collaborative generation of policy and program definitions by universities, state departments of education, professional associations, local school districts, and other agencies that serve as stakeholders in the professional growth of principals.

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