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ABSTRACT

There are about 80,000 public school principals in the United States. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there will be a 10 percent increase in the employment of educational administrators of all types through 2006. The National Association of Elementary School Principals estimates that more than 40 percent of principals will retire or leave their positions during the next 10 years. As the need for principal leadership increases, the pool of qualified candidates is decreasing, particularly in urban districts. In an effort to uncover what effective leadership is all about, policymakers are seeking to answer three questions: (1) What kind of educational leaders do we need? (2) Where do we find them? and (3) How do we prepare principals to lead? This report considers solutions to these questions using the notion of shared leadership as a philosophical basis. These solutions would result in new standards of school organization, creating a shift in roles, responsibilities, and relationships between principals and teachers. The M.Ed. program at William Paterson University is designed to support such aspiring principals who will embrace collective leadership, diversity, equity, reflective inquiry, and ethical values that support relationships in caring, nurturing learning environments for all students. (Contains 27 references.) (Author/RT)

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Preparing Principals to Lead in the New Millennium: A Response to the Leadership Crisis in American Schools

A paper presented at the

14th International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement

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Preparing Principals to Lead in the New Millennium: A Response to the Leadership Crisis in American Schools

Abstract
Michael Chirichello, Ed.D.

There are about 80,000 public school principals in the United States. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there will be a 10 percent increase in the employment of educational administrators of all types through 2006. The National Association of Elementary School Principals estimates that more than 40 percent of principals will retire or leave their positions during the next ten years. As the need for principal leadership increases, the pool of qualified candidates is decreasing, particularly in urban districts. In an effort to uncover what effective leadership is all about, policy makers are seeking to answer three questions: (1) what kind of educational leaders do we need; (2) where do we find them; and (3) how do we prepare principals to lead?

What kind of educational leaders do we need? America's schools are looking for leaders. We need highly competent principals who promote success for all students by (1) facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community; (2) advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; (3) ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; (4) collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources; (5) acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and by (6) understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.[1] These standards will create a shift in roles, responsibilities, and relationships between teachers and principals. To meet these new expectations, we must re-imagine leadership. We must abandon the centrist, one-person taking charge tradition that prevails in our schools today. Our vision must focus on *we* rather than *me*. Principals must spin webs that are connected through *relationships* rather than *power*. For all this to happen, we need collective leadership- a leadership that supports relationships, causes chaos, and advances adaptability.

Where do we find our leaders? If opportunities emerge for leaders and followers to move away from individualism and isolationism, they will begin to embrace shared leadership. Leaders and followers will become supportive of one other and value collaboration. School cultures that value collective leadership will provide opportunities for teachers to become leaders.

How do we prepare principals to lead? Colleges that offer educational leadership programs must provide the knowledge and nurture the dispositions that will support collective leadership. William Paterson University's graduate M. Ed. program in educational leadership is designed for teachers and administrators who desire to take on these challenges and become principals in our schools. Our M. Ed. program is designed to support aspiring principals who have a vision that will lead them to become architects of continuous change and encourage them to be supportive, collaborative leaders. Our graduates will communicate meaning, value, and focus. They will embrace collective leadership, diversity, equity, reflective inquiry, and ethical values that support relationships in caring, nurturing learning environments for all students. We believe our graduates will lead far beyond the ordinary! This roundtable discussion will take an in-depth look at this new program.

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1 Council of Chief State School Officers, Standards for School Leaders [On-line]. Available: www.ccsso.org

"The search for a new principal is moving slowly," said William Cashill, the interim principal at a regional high school in New Jersey. "There's a scarcity of administrators out there. Of a dozen principal applicants who made it to the interview round, four have already dropped out of the running to accept other jobs" (Diamant, 2000, p. 49).

This scenario can easily be put into the context of dozens of school districts throughout the country. We are beginning to experience a shortage of principal applicants. We are beginning to struggle to replace principals who are retiring or leaving. At the same time, significant and continuing changes in our society have created a shift in roles, responsibilities, and relationships for principals in our schools. We have moved far beyond buses, budgets, and buildings. Today's principals must also be savvy with the external political forces that have us focused on standards and assessment rather than teaching and learning. They must be able to respond to the increasing demands that are made by unions, parents, the business community, and superintendents. To meet these new demands, we need principals who move beyond reforming and look toward transforming school organizations. We need principals who will be bold, risk taking leaders who can bury the relics of the Agrarian and Industrial Ages, and unleash the power of the Digital Revolution to create new paradigms that will transform schooling into a lifelong legacy of learning.

But where are these leaders? Qualified applicants for position of principal leadership in our public schools have declined over the past decade. School districts are experiencing rapid turnover in principalships. This turnover is counterproductive to building strong organizational cultures and healthy climates, and can have negative impacts upon any substantive and lasting change in schools. Many experienced principals are at the age for retirement, the position of principal is extremely complex, and, in some states, certification requirements tend to discourage out-of-state candidates from applying for the position.

There are about 80,000 public school principals in the United States. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there will be a 10 percent increase in the employment of educational administrators of all types through 2006. The National Association of

Elementary School Principals estimates that more than 40 percent of principals will retire or leave their positions during the next ten years. As the need for principal leadership increases, the pool of qualified candidates is decreasing, particularly in urban districts (Trotter, 1999).

Jaffe's (1998) article in the Star Ledger highlighted the lack of top candidates for the principalship in New Jersey. Officials from many districts say the hectic workday is one reason why fewer and fewer qualified candidates are seeking jobs as principals in the 3,000 public schools of New Jersey. A national survey showed that 55 percent of districts surveyed lacked qualified candidates for their vacant principal posts. New Jersey school officials blame the shrinking principal pool on four issues: (1) New Jersey's strict certification process; (2) the comforts of tenure; (3) the time commitment; and (4) the relatively small pay increase for taking on the responsibilities of a principal compared to that of ten-month teachers.

Despite the shortage of qualified candidates, public schools need highly competent principals with vision, courage, and leadership to undertake significant change that will improve student results. School restructuring is creating a new role for principals in post-bureaucratic organizations (Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins, and Dart, 1992). Significant and continuing changes in our society have created a shift in roles, responsibilities, and relationships in our schools. Principals must understand their new roles if school restructuring is to be successful (Bredeson, 1992). To meet the expectations for these new roles, responsibilities, and relationships, schools need leaders who move beyond reforming and look toward transforming school organizations (Goens and Clover, 1991).

In an effort to uncover what effective leadership is all about, policy makers are seeking to answer three questions: (1) what kind of educational leaders do we need; (2) where do we find them; and (3) how do we prepare principals to lead? If we respond correctly to each of these questions, this crisis can become an opportunity.

What Kind of Educational Leaders Do We Need?

America's schools are looking for leaders. We need highly competent principals who promote success for all students by (1) facilitating the development, articulation,

implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community; (2) advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; (3) ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; (4) collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources; (5) acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and by (6) understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). These national standards will create a shift in roles, responsibilities, and relationships for the principalship. To meet these new expectations, we must re-imagine leadership. We must abandon the centrist, one-person taking charge tradition that prevails in our schools today. Our vision must focus on *we* rather than *me.* Principals must spin webs that are connected through *relationships* rather than *power.* For all this to happen, we need collective leadership- a leadership that supports relationships, causes chaos, and advances adaptability.

Collective Leadership

The principal as teacher and collaborator becomes obvious within the framework of this vision. As teacher, the principal becomes collaborator in developing other leaders. Principal as teacher will nurture influencing relationships within school organizations that support flexibility in roles and enable followers to become leaders and leaders to become followers. Leaders will acquire power through relationships between themselves and followers. Followers must have opportunities to become leaders. The traditional hierarchical design must be abandoned. Mutuality and synergy must predominate over isolationism and individualism (Ah Nee-Benham and Cooper, 1998). If we accept these beliefs, the neat line and box graphic that is used frequently to explain the hierarchical structure of schools will begin to take on new shapes.

Today we are in a world that is rich in relationships, with patterns that connect rather than separate. Our quantum universe supports systems, interrelationships, chaos,

and adaptability. We cannot expect order and stability to lead us through this new millennium. Rather, we should re-imagine leadership and focus more on "we"- where new voices emerge, where principals begin to redesign roles, responsibilities, and relationships within the school's organization and create a web of relationships that are connected through the power of collective leadership. Collective leadership will support turbulence, inspire relationships, even cause chaos, and advance adaptability.

Balancing Leadership and Management

How do we achieve collective leadership when many principals continue to assume the dual roles of leader and manager? Frequently, principals are placed in an untenable position with overwhelming responsibilities in both roles. Principals must be knowledgeable about students, curriculum, teacher performance, and the community they serve. They are the individuals who are expected to maintain open climates and promote the values and beliefs that shape the school's culture. At the same time, principals are expected to manage day-to-day activities that include scheduling, building repairs, lunchrooms, and ordering. Often the management activities of principals take time away from their leadership role. There is little time left in the hectic day-to-day schedule for the principal to engage in reflective thinking and proactive planning.

Despite this apparent lack of time, principals are often told to transform schools by providing opportunities to develop, maintain, and strengthen collaborative and supportive behaviors that result in open and healthy school climates (Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp, 1991). This climate will emerge over time if we re-imagine school leadership and embrace collective leadership- a leadership that will encourage shared power and responsibility within a school's learning community. In communities that support collective leadership, collaboration is evident and professional talk focuses on teaching and learning. A culture that supports life-long learning will emerge. This belief will result in opportunities for meaningful, continuous staff development and professional autonomy for teachers who will take risks. Only then will teachers become more responsive to the rapid changes in our technologically connected world that are affecting our students.

Building Influencing Relationships

Collective leadership will give principals time to build influencing relationships between and among all members of the school community. The principal's focus will be on the staff and its capacity to nurture authentic learning communities. The principal will begin to look away from status, power, roles, and procedures and refocus on relationship, trust, and process.

In a culture that supports these values and beliefs, there will be opportunities for substantive change and continuous improvement. Opportunities will emerge for leaders and followers to work collegially and begin to transform learning experiences for students. Staffs will be inspired to move away from self-interests and toward a collective understanding of the school's purpose, mission, and vision.

From Individual to Collective Governance

As we re-imagine leadership in a collective context, new opportunities for school governance will begin to emerge in which followers will become empowered and committed to shared visions and values. This can only occur if teachers recognize that their roles, responsibilities, and relationships must also change. They must begin to move away from individualism and isolationism. They must believe in creating a culture in which accountability becomes a value. Teachers must be accountable for students, for themselves, and for each other.

At the same time, principals must be supportive and collaborative rather than restrictive or directive. They must know when to lead, when to follow, and when to get out of the way. The school will become a caring community in which relationship will be more than a set of specific behaviors (Ah Nee-Benham and Cooper, 1998; Noddings, 1992).

If we want to achieve relationship within the context of a caring community of life-long learners, principals must be willing to give up their positional power and control, and allow teachers to emerge as leaders. Teacher then becomes more than expert. Teacher begins to emerge as conductor, consultant, critical friend, facilitator, and coach.

In schools where teachers and the principal perceive the climate as open and

engaged because of supportive, collaborative decision-making, leadership will begin to focus more on "we" rather than "I". New voices will be heard and new choices will emerge that will create organizational structures that look more like intersecting circles rather than lines and boxes. This collective power will become the school's leadership. Principals must believe that, in giving up power, they will gain power. Power will come from the respect and trust of the staff.

In schools like these, the staff will begin to believe in a common mission. They will share in a culture that supports leadership as followership (Sergiovanni, 2000). Teachers and principal loose the sense of "them and us" because collective leadership leads to self-empowerment. Collective leadership will take us far beyond site-based management toward a new world of site-based, collective leadership.

Leadership as Small Combo Jazz

Collective leadership is small combo jazz. This metaphor began with Max DePree (1992) and recently became a focus of discussion in Smith and Ellett's (2000) work. Small combo jazz supports collective, non-centrist leadership. In the small combo jazz everyone follows a common melody. There is always room for risk taking and ways to improve the performance of individual members of the combo. The lead musician can change in the small combo jazz. In schools this metaphor creates opportunities for leaders (principals) to become followers and followers (teachers) to become leaders (Rost, 1991).

As we re-imagine leadership more as collective than centrist, we will value collaboration, diversity, equity, critical inquiry, continuous improvement, and reflective and ethical practice. In learning organizations that support these values and beliefs, leadership becomes more of an influencing relationship. This relationship develops between inspired, energetic leaders and followers who have a mutual commitment to a mission. That mission includes a belief in empowering the members of the organization to effect, through a collaborative responsibility and mutual accountability, lasting change or continuous improvement that will benefit students (Chirichello, 1997).

A New Vision for the Principalship

Principals must have a deep understanding about a school's culture. The values and beliefs that make up this culture must come from a mutual commitment to a vision that promotes collegiality, trust, personal and professional development, and staff empowerment. Culture then shapes the structure of the organization, including its governance design, and begins to determine the behaviors of the members of the organization (Cunningham and Gresso, 1993). Principals must have the capacity to "reculture" or radically redesign schools, a process that will result in the development of new values, beliefs, and norms. Principals must have the capacity to move beyond organizational or structural changes and move toward a change process that creates new values and beliefs (Fullan, 1996).

There is a strong relationship between culture and climate. They are mutually reciprocal and one enhances the other. Therefore, today's principals must play a critical role in improving a school's climate (Taylor, 1989). To do this, principal leadership must nurture behaviors that will support open school climates where the staff is supportive, collegial, and intimate (Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp, 1991).

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) called for a new vision of the principalship:

> The vision relies on school leadership that understands why and how learning and teaching must and can improve. We look to you [principals] to help create a learning organization in your schools, to re-create the role of principal teacher, and to develop a range of leadership roles by creating new possibilities for shared work and learning among staff as well as parents. (p. 128)

The principal as teacher becomes obvious within the framework of this vision. This vision will nurture the influencing relationships within school organizations that support flexibility in roles enabling followers to become leaders and leaders to become followers (Rost, 1991).

Where Do We Find Our Leaders?

What we continue to overlook in our response to the question- *Where do we find our leaders?*- is the obvious. Our future leaders must emerge from teachers- teachers who will have a passion for leadership. Unfortunately, our current paradigm for school leadership discourages that passion. Leadership continues to be couched the context of the Industrial Revolution where the cult of efficiency and Taylorism prevailed. A strong dichotomy still exists between principals and teachers. We have done an outstanding job in perpetuating an educational Feudal Age. Just listen to the talk of teachers who often respond, "I am *still* a teacher" as if teachers should be doing something higher up on the educational career ladder. In frustrating times, principals can be heard saying, " I would like to *go back* to teaching once again" as if it is a step down on the career ladder. Teachers are not perceived as leaders. It is time to take down the rungs of the career ladder and abandon the industrial paradigm that emerged in the early 20th Century. If we want to attract teachers to the principalship, we must re-imagine leadership and create new choices- choices that value collective leadership- and that value will allow new voices to emerge.

If opportunities emerge for leaders and followers to move away from individualism and isolationism, they will begin to embrace collective leadership. Leaders and followers will become supportive of one other and value collaboration. School cultures that value collective leadership will inspire teachers to become principal leaders.

How Do We Prepare Principals to Lead?

Educational leadership programs must provide the knowledge and nurture the dispositions that will support collective leadership. They must be designed for teachers and administrators who desire to take on these challenges to become principals. Leadership programs must support aspiring principals who have a vision that will lead them to become architects of continuous change and encourage them to be supportive, collaborative leaders. Leaders must emerge who will communicate meaning, value, and focus. They will embrace

collective leadership, diversity, equity, reflective inquiry, and ethical values that support caring, nurturing learning environments for all students.

Re-imagining Leadership

As the need for more principals increases, and the principalship becomes more complex, we must create programs in our universities and colleges that are designed to develop school leaders who have the capacity to meet these challenges. There is no simple solution- but any solution must nurture and support effective leaders who have the capacity to build influencing relationships, encourage followership, initiate substantive and lasting change, and create a vision that will transform schooling. The university and college programs must nurture and sustain values, beliefs, and competencies for want-to-be principals. Graduate programs must begin to allow participants to re-imagine leadership and create new metaphors for the principalship. We must develop visionary leaders who focus on "we" and build successful teams; who understand how to create a culture of learning and leading, and who believe in collaborating with the staff to improve student results.

Haller, Brent, and McNamara (1997) suggested that collectively there was little evidence that graduate training increased the effectiveness of school administrators. The research of these authors challenges us to develop graduate programs that will take us down new paths and eventually present evidence that leadership programs increase the leadership capacity for want-to-be school leaders.

Powerful Possibilities

To increase the effectiveness of school leaders, graduate programs must be guided by the standards that framed the work of the Council of Chief State School Officers (1996). Programs must be closely aligned with school district partnerships so candidates can have an environment in which they will engage in reflective practice, action research, and problem-based learning. In the school environment, candidates must have the support of a principal as mentor throughout a graduate program. Candidates can begin to build professional relationships with a mentor that will be critical during their

early years as principals. We must move away from offering field-based experiences during a designated semester. Instead, we must provide experiences that require candidates to fulfill this requirement continuously within a school environment. For these reasons, candidates must have unqualified recommendations from principals, and practicing principals must be willing to invest time in a program with the candidates. Furthermore, universities must provide opportunities for practicing principals to become clinical faculty in graduate programs.

Graduate programs must have rigorous admissions standards and prospective candidates must have successful teaching experiences. They should be required to present a portfolio for admissions that demonstrates their capacity to teach effectively, write clearly, and develop deep understandings through analytical and evaluative skills. Portfolios must confirm the prospective candidates' successful leadership roles in their schools or communities. Candidates must demonstrate a capacity for teacher-as-leader within the context of five or more years of successful school experiences.

Cohort programs offer participants the opportunity to become communities of learners and leaders. Cohorts encourage collegial, collaborative learning environments. The cohort model will also enable a university's faculty to deliver a coherent, integrated curriculum. In her research on cohort programs, Hersko (1998) found "The cohort concept is viewed as improving the overall quality of educational administration programs... Networking, continuation of student relationships, and enhanced student-professor relationships are some of the carry-over experiences that students can expect" (p. 95). This study found that students and faculty rate these programs as excellent or good.

Graduate leadership programs must value democratic collaboration, diversity, equity, theory, critical inquiry, reflective practice, continuous improvement, student success, and ethical norms. These values will build upon the beliefs that emanate from a culture that supports idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Bass, 1998). Candidates must embrace a personal vision that will encourage supportive, collaborative behaviors

within their school organizations that will enable them to become architects of continuous change (see Figure 1).

Graduate programs must strike a balance between the competing tensions of management and leadership. Courses must focus on the development of skills that will create savvy principals who understand how one manages schools. At the same time, these programs must focus on nurturing a deep commitment to leadership that will promote influencing relationships between the leaders and followers. These relationships will inspire, challenge, and look at schools as communities of inquiring learners and leaders where individuals become " . . . bonded together by natural will and who are together bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals" (Sergiovanni, 1996, p.48).

Graduate programs must promote reflective inquiry and personal growth throughout the experience. Individualized Leadership Plans and learning journals are two ways to achieve this goal. An ILP consists of both long and short range career goals, a personal analysis of leadership style, and an analysis of the candidates strengths and areas needing improvement that are necessary for successful organizational management of and leadership in schools. The ILP will become an ongoing agenda for both individual and collective topics of discussion, action research, and field-based experiences by the members of the cohort.

The learning journal is a written collection of field-based experiences that focuses on understanding the culture and climate of school organizations. The journal will give candidates the opportunity to examine their beliefs and to develop understandings about the relationships among their beliefs and behaviors. The reflective journal can become an integral part of the conversation between the candidates and the faculty during each of the courses of study.

Graduate programs must provide opportunities for candidates to construct meaning and knowledge collaboratively (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner, and Slack, 1995). In each course, candidates should move from the macro-group to micro-groups that will vary according to needs and interests. These micro-groups can meet throughout each course to focus on specific questions related to the topic of study. Candidates should be given opportunities to become facilitators in

each group and lead the other participants in reflective inquiry and problem-based learning activities. This model will necessarily restructure course time and develop a value for life-long learning outside the context of classrooms. Candidates will meet for longer and less frequent time periods in the macro-group. Micro-groups will meet throughout the semester in between scheduled class meetings. Quality and depth will become more important than quantity and coverage (Figure 2).

Graduate programs must provide opportunities for candidates to become proficient in technology. Technology competencies should be included in each course. Candidates should be required to maintain active e-mail accounts and have access to the Internet. There must be opportunities for instructors to use the Internet and engage in synchronous and asynchronous communication with candidates. Chat rooms and threaded discussions, as well as video conferencing and other technologies, should become integral teaching strategies. Specific technology competencies can be team taught by technology experts. This approach will offer candidates opportunities to apply technology skills to authentic, problem-based learning (Tomei, 1999).

If we believe in alternative and authentic assessments, then we should use portfolio assessments to evaluate the competence of each candidate. These portfolios will contain work that demonstrates an understanding of each course's objectives, including the related NCATE Standards (1999), Standards for School Leadership from the Council of Chief State School Officers (1996), and the technology competencies.

Clinical faculty with specific expertise should become part of a graduate program. For example, a course on curriculum leadership may include a neuroscientist from the College of Arts and Sciences. A psychologist could teach a course on group process and organizational design. Full-time faculty will team-teach with clinical faculty.

In order to broaden the perspectives of future school leaders, intra-university collaboration must be encouraged. Courses could be designed that would give opportunities to graduate students in other departments to join with the candidates in an educational leadership program. Master's candidates from business, psychology, counseling, sociology, and special education could be invited to participate in courses with candidates from educational leadership programs.

Faculty should offer opportunities to the graduates of these programs to become involved in continuous professional development through supportive synchronous and asynchronous networks. There should be opportunities for on-going communication and institutes that will support new leaders during their critical initial years in positions of leadership.

A University's Response- Preparing School Leaders for the New Millenium

William Paterson University of New Jersey has initiated a program that conforms to these criteria. The first cohort began in June 2000 with twenty-three candidates. Currently, there are twenty-two candidates in the program as they prepare to begin third semester in January 2001. The College of Education and its Department of Educational Leadership are committed to enhance the effectiveness of school leaders for the Twenty-first Century. This program will aspire to:

1. Attract a diverse pool of highly able educators who aspire to leadership positions in education
2. Nurture highly competent educators to develop a personal vision and capacity to lead
3. Build understandings about initiating and sustaining substantive and lasting change within complex organizational structures
4. Prepare and assist candidates to acquire leadership positions
5. Create a graduate program in which aspiring principals and teacher leaders work together effectively to understand their roles, responsibilities, and relationships in educational organizations
6. Provide support for graduates who acquire principalships through continued collegiality and professional development.

"Tomorrow's educational leaders must be able to work with diverse groups and to integrate ideas to solve a continuous flow of problems. They must study their craft as they practice their craft, reflecting and then applying what they have learned to people

and institutions and the achievement of tasks" (NCATE, 1999, p. 197). The program at William Paterson University plans to meet this objective. Our program hopes to support the knowledge and skill domains within each of the NCATE standards through performances and applications in strategic, organizational, instructional, and political and community leadership, as well as through a continuous internship.

As William Paterson University's Department of Educational Leadership embarks upon this journey to prepare school leaders for the new millennium, we hope to re-imagine leadership and create new metaphors for the principalship that will nurture and sustain visionary leaders for schools of the Twenty-first Century.

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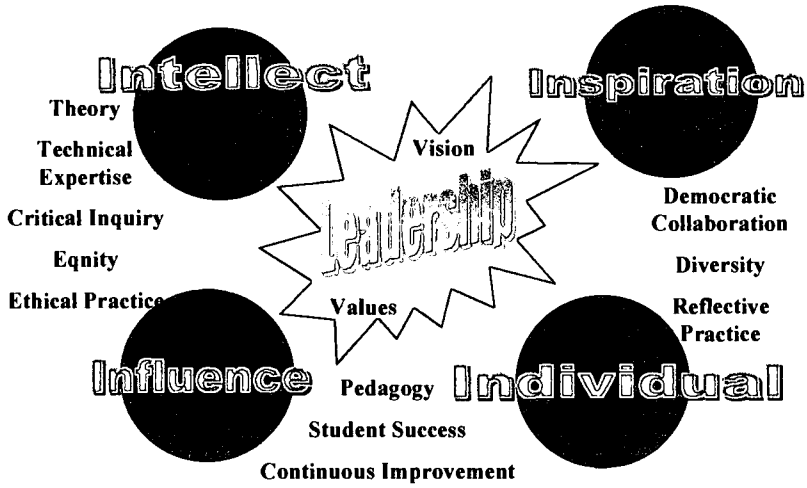

Figure 1

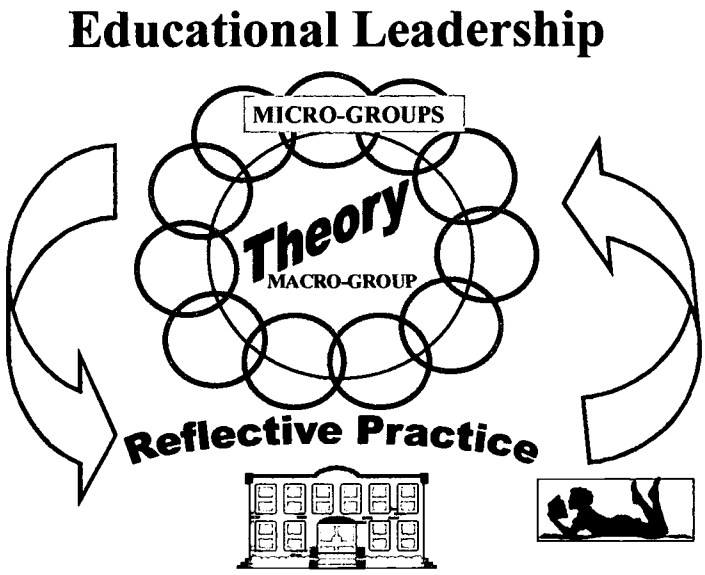

Figure 2

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