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REMEMBER OUR MISSION:
Making Education and Schools Better for Students

THE 2009 YEARBOOK OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROFESSORS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

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In *The Cremation of Sam McGee* Robert Service wrote, "Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code." Indeed! A younger professor asked me a couple years ago if she should volunteer to edit the NCPEA Yearbook. "Of course," said I, "it will be good experience and great for your career." "Of course," said she, "but you've got to promise to help." ("The trail has its own stern code.")

I served as Associate Yearbook Editor (2008) to pay the debt. Alas, that was but a downpayment! The Associate Editor becomes Editor a year later. The Editor's reward is to select the Associate Editor. For those not into promises made and debts unpaid, to be forewarned is to be forearmed!

The 2009 editorial team worked diligently to produce this Yearbook, helped by Old Family Retainer, Ted Creighton, and FastTrack technology, which the Editor never unraveled. Beverly Irby was an extraordinary Associate: great editorial skill, understanding of Connexions/FastTrack, and patience with an Editor who read everything in hard copy. Given her department chair role, consulting opportunities, and research, her availability was astounding. Thank you, Beverly.

Knowing that the Editor had taken on too much work to devote as much time as the job could have required, last year's Editor helped me select two Assistant Editors, both of whom had editing experience. Betty Alford had worked with Rosemary Papa and J. Craig Coleman to produce a 20-year "Look Back" through NCPEA history and had worked on the 2008 Yearbook. George Perreault, a former NCPEA Yearbook editor (2002, with Fred Lunenburg) had a sabbatical for 2008–2009 and helped as a reviewer and provided useful ideas. This summary is part of the proverbial good news, which often accompanies the bad news.

In another role, the Editor has completed a fourth year as program "chief worrier" for the State and Regional Education Research Association (SRERA), a Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Most SRERA work has been on-line and highly detailed. Obviously, I needed lots of help. Many thanks to my wife, Karen, who did most of the SRERA work and helped mightily with the NCPEA 2008 and 2009 Yearbooks. Besides thanking Karen, my motive for this anecdote is to report that the quality of the annual "Distinguished Papers" at SRERA has been slipping. For 2009, several SRERA member organizations did not submit any outstanding paper, foreshadowing some bad news for the current NCPEA Yearbook.

I disseminated thoughts about the types of chapters that would be preferred for the 2009 Yearbook and directions for manuscript form and style. At NCPEA (2008) in San Diego, we distributed two editorials from the peer-reviewed journal, *Research in the Schools,* by its editors, Larry Daniel and Anthony (Tony) Onwuegbuzie. That small monograph described (a) common errors writers make in writing for publication and (b) how authors could use *APA* form and style effectively.

A few authors submitting chapters for the 2009 Yearbook clearly read the free advice and followed it well. Thank you. However, we also received manuscripts that included old data, poorly designed and conducted "studies," often based on "Friday-night special" (self- constructed) surveys, with little attention to validity, or computations of reliability estimates and effect sizes, or generally-accepted quantitative and qualitative methods. These manuscripts were rejected, unless they advanced theory or expressed cutting-edge ideas. Self-report surveys, the relating of perceptions, and opinions of administrators are usually not studies of administration. (Think of what the "A" in NCPEA stands for.) In spite of some low points, the generous help of reviewers, of the editorial team and of others, tempered my rants about the quality of research in education administration into a reasonable (I think) sense of balance. To the editors of the 2009 Yearbook a total of 32 papers were submitted for review, and 50% were accepted.

The writer and wine connoisseur, Alec Waugh (1971) said, "At the age of twenty I believed that the first duty of wine was to be red, the second that it should be Burgundy…. During 40 years, I have lost faith in much, but not in that …" (pp. 30, 115). Waugh and I share a couple faiths: red wine and Burgundy. The spirit of Waugh's

youth. I have lost faith in many things during my 40 or so years of attending NPCEA, but not in that goal. The NCPEA Yearbook should reflect annual growth in the scholarship, theories, and ideas of NCPEAers. Perhaps the 2009 Yearbook, *Remembering Our Mission*, shows that optimism. A big thanks to all who helped. May each reader find something of value in the present volume that will make schools better places for students. A perceptive reader knows why this introduction is a Sidebar rather than a Preface! Cheers and Pax.

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Chuck Achilles, *Seton Hall University*

INVITED CHAPTERS

President's Message: Remembering Our Mission

Sandra Harris

Diversity is reflected everywhere from the demographics of the workplace to the demographics of our schools. This has led to complex relationships among individuals of all ages in varying cultures within the United States and beyond. In fact, since Generation X (people in their 20s to early 40s) and the youth of today, multiculturalism and diversity are common. Yet, many teachers and administrators of today represent an older generation. Relationships between young and old, immigrants and native-born, and Hispanics and non-Hispanics are complicated . . ." (El Nasser & Grant, 2005a, p. 4A). For example, Non-Hispanic white Americans who are 65 and older comprise nearly 82% of the population, with only 6% of the population Hispanic and 12% representing other races. However, only 58.9% of Americans under 18 are white, while 19.2% are Hispanic and 22% comprise other minorities. In fact, Hispanics and Asians are growing more than 10 times the pace of whites who are not Hispanic (El Nasser & Grant, 2005b, p. 1A), while African American and Native American school-age populations are predicted to remain relatively stable (Carter, 2003). Despite this diversity of population, research has shown that black and Latino students have become more segregated than at any time in the last 38 years (Orfield, 2009).

Changes in family structure are occurring. According to CensusScope (2009) (http://www.censusscope.org), the tendency for people to marry at an older age and the number of married people getting divorced has contributed to an overall drop in married couples. Also, it appears to have become more culturally acceptable for people to not get married at all or to have non-traditional relationships. Additionally, 75% of mothers of school-age children today work outside the home (Cohany & Sok, 2007) as compared to only 40% in 1960 (Kreisher, 2001).

Poverty is another concern. According to the National Poverty Center (2008) located at the University of Michigan, children represent a disproportionate share of the poor in the United States. While children are 25% of the total population, they represent 35% of the poor population. In 2007, 13.3 million children, or 17.4%, were poor. The poverty rate of children also varies by race where almost 34% of children of poverty are Black and 29% are Hispanic.

Our cultural diversity extends from ethnicity, race, socio-economic status and age, to language, sexual preference, gender, religion, learning styles, and the list just keeps growing. This widespread cultural change in demographics in our communities often leads to conflict. Lencioni (2007) pointed out that conflict when managed properly aids school leaders in maintaining highly productive teams. Edmonson, Combs, and Harris (2008) suggested that school leaders who understand how to manage conflict wisely lead their campuses to greater growth.. To do this, we must all be aware of the importance of communicating in actions, not just words, and being sensitive to perceptions of others in the decision-making process.

While being able to resolve conflict with various skill behaviors is important, this generally only provides a band-aid. Even more important in this time of changing cultural diversity is a need for the discourse of recognition that values others. This is not always easy, because it

Sandra Harris, Lamar University

means that we must be able to openly dialogue about cultural issues such as race and ethnicity that are difficult to talk about within the school and in the larger community. Bingham (2001) wrote of this unique challenge to educators by noting that the most important question should be "How can human dignity be acknowledged again and again?" (p. 5). This has implications for educators and other adults in the community which must be addressed. After all, adults "mirror back" to the young an "affirming sense" of who they are through daily, moment-by-moment interactions (p. 34). It is for this reason that I often remind graduate students that school leaders must become comfortable being uncomfortable as we lead these difficult discussions.

Diller and Moule (2005) defined *identity* as the "stable inner sense of who a person is, which is formed by the successful integration of various experiences of the self into a coherent self-image" (p. 120). Understanding our own cultural consciousness plays a large part in the formation of the identity in all individuals. Culture is "like the air we breathe in, it is all around us" (Pang, 2005, p. 37). This invisible culture surrounds us and determines much of our identity, what we value and how we respond to others throughout our life experiences.

Eisner (2006) wrote, "how we teach is ultimately a reflection of why we teach" (p. 44). Eisner then described six "deep satisfactions" that teachers seek from the process of teaching:

1. introducing students to great ideas;
2. reaching out to students ensures our own immortality;
3. performing and improvising—how something is taught—affects how it is learned;
4. creating moments of artistry;
5. sharing a passion for education;
6. making a difference. (p. 45)

I believe these same six "deep satisfactions" apply to education leaders at any level of education, such as being a role-model for students, leading a team of teachers, leading a building-level campus or leading the district itself.

Most of us became educators with an idealized vision of improving the world through helping students. One of the first research projects that I undertook many years ago as an adjunct professor was to assign a reflective essay to under-graduate students and I asked them to write a paper explaining why they chose to teach. The number one reason these undergraduates chose to teach was because they felt a calling, a sense of mission that they could make the world a better place by helping young people. Unfortunately, too often we forget that original mission when we try to implement that vision on a daily basis in our schools. Our early idealism is often forgotten in the difficult reality of daily teaching and leading in our challenging schools of today.

Recently a principal of a middle school shared the following story. A 9th grade male on his campus was failing all of his classes; not attending school regularly, and was often in trouble with his peers. The principal and the boys' teachers were all frustrated. One late afternoon, when everyone had gone home and the school was quiet, the principal pulled the boy's file. He read that this young man through the 6th grade had been an "almost perfect" student who made good grades and never got in trouble. In the summer before beginning his 7th grade year, the boy's parents divorced and the father moved out of state. The boy had not seen his father in three years.

As the principal read the file, he reflected on his own middle school years as a student. Then he remembered that his original mission in becoming an educator had been to help students who were undergoing difficult times, just as this young man was. He began to see this

young man as a "real person" with challenges of his own that were far greater than the academic ones he was facing at school. The principal shared with me that in order to help this boy academically, he and the faculty had to help him in the larger scope of his life. The young principal recognized that the challenge was to help this young man as a person before he could be helped as a student. In other words, the principal realized that no one could TEACH this young man as a student until they could REACH him as a person. Because the principal had remembered why he became an educator in the first place, he began to see this student through a new lens. This was a student who needed help and to help people was why he had become an educator.

Our mission as university professors is to support practitioners in the field to help all students achieve academically despite the changing landscape of cultural diversity, poverty, identity issues, and other challenges. It is our responsibility to rekindle this memory of why we became educators and reignite that original mission for our students. With valuing and affirming recognition in mind, we enable education leaders to reawaken their educator conscience that extends to every level of the school community—administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the larger community. We do this in the midst of conflicts fueled by many challenges in a rapidly changing world.

As our 2009 conference is being held in San Antonio, the Alamo city, the call of long-ago, "Remember the Alamo", naturally will resonate. I am reminded that it is indeed our responsibility to remember. We too must draw that line in the sand and challenge educators to stand tall, to step across that line and commit to a renewed passion for education. It is our responsibility to remember our mission . . . to help students achieve. The 2009 NCPEA Yearbook is dedicated to remembering our mission to advocate for and support all students to achieve.

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Preparation and Opportunity

Marilyn L. Grady

Following is the text of the speech I delivered as the recipient of the 2008 Living Legends Award at the annual meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration in San Diego.

The truth is, I've acquired a certain taste for anonymity when I speak to groups. Unfortunately, in this room this evening, I may not have that luxury. I expect I will not be able to embellish as many details tonight.

I get to talk this evening because I have stood in the same spot long enough to have observed a few aspects of being a professor of educational administration. My focus tonight is on my preparation for the professoriate, the opportunities I have had, and the best aspects of my life as a professor.

MY PREPARATION

I believe my preparation to become a professor began in my childhood home. My Dad was 64 years old when I was born. He was a "self-taught" electrical engineer who was born in 1886. He was a contemporary of Thomas Edison who hailed from Milan, Ohio, just down the road from our home in Sheffield Lake, Ohio. I grew up watching my father read hefty tomes. He sat on the corner of the couch reading either huge biographies of individuals like Abraham Lincoln or reading a thick manual of electrical circuitry. My father was the fellow who held the wires together when Cleveland, Ohio, was first illuminated. The mayor stood on stage and flipped a dummy switch, and my Dad made the magic.

My Mom was 39 when I was born. She too was a bibliophile. Our house had books everywhere, and censorship was never considered. At age nine, I read one of A.J. Cronin's novels (1945, 1948). In it the main character was a university professor. The image of the professoriate I drew from Cronin's writing was a life of reading, writing, and teaching. From that book, I knew I wanted to be a professor. Little did I know what it would take to get there.

I had two older brothers who completed our family line-up. One brother was 20 years older than me and the other brother was 13 years older than me. They "set the bar" in my academic life. The older of my two brothers was a student at John Carroll University pursuing law. The other brother was a civil engineer who attended the University of Notre Dame.

My parents were people people. They had what I call the gift of gab. Words, ideas, laughter, and interpersonal relationships were hallmarks of my life in Sheffield Lake, Ohio.

They had many friends. They talked easily to people they would meet in all kinds of settings. They were helping people. They were the kind of people that others could "count on."

Marilyn L. Grady, University of Nebraska, Lincoln

I THINK THEIR WAY OF "BEING" IS THE ESSENTIAL IN WHO I AM

My favorite short story, and one I would readily commend to others, is called *Eleven*. When my son, Alex, was in the 11th grade, he came home from high school, and in the usual evening drill of doing homework, pulled out his literature book, brought the book to me, and asked me to read *Eleven*. He had read it that day and really liked it. I read it and have never forgotten it. The story is one of many written by Sandra Cisneros (1991). It is the tale of an 11 year old girl who says, "What they don't understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two and one" (p. 6). You are not supposed to be surprised if she, on some days, acts as a one, two, ten or nine-year-old since inside she is still that little girl at those ages. She may still feel like an eight-year-old and act like one. So, just because she is eleven today, does not mean she has left those other years and experiences behind her (Grady, 2002).

I want to assure you that I am much older than eleven, yet I have all those other years, experiences, and behaviors of my life with me today. And so, I have within me, my early years of growing up in Sheffield Lake, Ohio.

I am also particularly struck by *Eleven* because of the fact that it was my son Alex who brought the story to me. Alex was born in Moscow. When I went to bring him home, we spent a considerable amount of time visiting the sites of Moscow and Sergiyev Posad (Zagorsk). In Ismailova Park, there is a huge open air market or bazaar on the weekends. We went and milled through endless stalls and tables examining the crafts and art work displayed there. We looked at many displays of matryoshkas. I understood that the value of the matryoshkas was in the number of nested dolls each contained--the more dolls, the more valuable and prized the matryoshka. I, however, was not quite so enchanted with the number of dolls…I was more persuaded by the artistry of the design and the painting of the matryoshkas. So, I returned home with beautiful matryoshkas….not the matryoshkas with fifteen dolls nested inside. Today, I can tell you that I "get" the fifteen matryoshkas better than I did in 1993. Now I can see the relationship between Sandra Cisneros' *Eleven* and the matryoshkas….since I seem to be racking up a whole lot of years and experiences and certainly know that there are many "people and dolls" inside me.

UNDERGRADUATE

My path took me to Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. I attended Saint Mary's because the doors to Notre Dame were not open to women at that time. During my junior year of college, Notre Dame and Saint Mary's were "combined," but the good sisters withdrew from the arrangement to preserve the institution they had built.

The school had a strong thread of commitment to social justice issues. All education majors were required to give an evening of reading instruction each week to South Bend's needy kids. We were all bussed as a group to the AME church and spent our time on the reading initiative. We also were part of a voter registration initiative.

As an undergraduate, I was a history and English major. These subjects were fine training for the professoriate since they involved endless reading (sometimes of excessively boring books) and the writing of many manuscripts. I enjoyed those activities then and I enjoy them even more now.

THOSE EARLY TEACHING EXPERIENCES ARE STILL PART OF ME TODAY

I remember my student teaching experience quite well. I spent a semester at a South Bend high school during a time of great civil rights turmoil. With guards all over the school, it was certainly a great inspiration for students and teachers in training.

I prepared to teach at a time when the Method Du Jour in Social Studies was the Discovery Method. I can tell you that no matter how hard I tried, the Discovery Method was not going to get the tenth grade students to discover the Magna Carta. The students were certainly good sports about the whole process but we shared a common understanding—it was a pointless enterprise. My favorite memory of that experience was the class of boys who were enamored with Swisher Sweets.

My supervising teacher was Eldon Fretz. He was passionate about teaching social studies. He did not use the Discovery Method that was the college's contribution to my pedagogical repertoire. Mr. Fretz loved history—we were together on that page. His parting words to me in a letter I treasure from my student teaching experience mean something to me in 2008 that they did not mean to me at the time. He said that I should love my students. Needless to say, I thought he was daft but excused him for his enthusiasm.

I moved on to a series of positions that had me teaching in a Title program for behaviorally maladjusted junior high students. This meant fish hooks, fishing lines, matches, boats, and a school bus. Yes, it was off to the lake to teach kids outdoor recreation skills. I was solid on the fish hooks, fishing lines, matches, and boats. I did, however, lack the behavioral part of the preparation. What a great learning opportunity for me: How to remove hooks from many parts of the young adolescents' anatomy and how to "right" the boats.

Because I was such a star at the boats' part, I was allowed to spend some quality time in a classroom of special students. This classroom happened to be along the siding of the Illinois Central Railroad—an abandoned warehouse to be specific. That is where the consolidated school district chose to send its pregnant students for their comprehensive education. Each day I was there, I got to teach whoever came to class all of their subjects. The students were in grades 6–12. No student ever managed to show up two days in a row. The students who came cried most of the day and worked on jigsaw puzzles. I have never been good at jigsaw puzzles. My background in the Discovery Method was not very helpful either. I was much better with fish hooks.

While experiencing the drama of the real world, I finished a master's degree in history. Ah yes, Russian and German history in the twentieth century, I love the subject. I discovered a high school teaching position in history that became available in November. I rushed to the job in southern Ohio. I never considered why a history position would open in November. Surprise! The football coach's season was over, and teaching was not his thing. The students shared his point of view.

The year was unbelievable. I remained there for two more years experiencing the joys of teaching and administrative work. I was ecstatic to leave Appalachia and the coal and steel depression along the Ohio River.

I knew that life in the depression of Appalachia was not for me; and, I knew I needed a doctorate to teach at the university level. I also knew that although I love history, universities do not hire many historians.

I WAS ACCEPTED FOR DOCTORAL STUDY AT OHIO STATE

I was admitted to the program in educational administration. I had an assistantship in the College of Dentistry. In dentistry, I worked with faculty as an instructional designer and in test preparation. Another assistantship was with a Women's Educational Equity Act project. The assistantship provided travel around the U.S. and access to some great individuals. A required internship gave me an experience at Perry Middle School considered a lighthouse of the middle school concept. I learned the finer points of staff development while at that school.

My path took me to an elementary principalship as an intern for a year. I stayed an additional year since I enjoyed the work so much.

At the end of two years, I paused to finish writing my dissertation. From that point, I accepted a position at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Champaign-Urbana as Coordinator of Instructional Development. In that position, I learned much about testing and the professions. And, I learned the secret of medicine—"Wash Your Hands!"

Three years later, I accepted a faculty position at Washburn University in Topeka. Within weeks of arriving, I became the co-chair of the department because the department chair had left the university to avoid completing a National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) report. I learned much about NCATE and much about why Washburn probably should not be offering an educational administration program in the same town as Kansas University, Kansas State University, and Emporia State University.

I joined the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. My teaching assignment was organizational theory and internships. Internships were mine because of my work in the medical school and the dental school. Organizational theory was mine because of my studies at Ohio State and my dissertation which was a study in leadership.

I was an affirmative action hire. I was the first woman hired by the department. One of the challenges at the time I became a member of the department was the increasing number of women enrolling in the masters and doctoral programs.

AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY

Miles Bryant—was hired a year before me. Our department travels around the state of Nebraska every fall attending the annual district school board meetings. Miles and I drove to one of the meetings. During the ride, he told me that I was expected to do something about the women. I said "what?" He said he had no idea.

During my medical school tour, I had responsibility for the Continuing Medical Education courses offered by the College of Medicine. Conferences I could do. I planned a Women in Educational Leadership conference. I invited the few women administrators in Nebraska to offer sessions. I also invited some "out-of-town well-known women," and we had a conference. I rejoiced when it was a success (and it was over). I was encouraged to do it again….and again….and again. This fall, we will hold the 23rd conference on Women in Educational Leadership.

The conference started as an event for Nebraska students. It is still that. However, over the years, we have individuals who return every year, or every few years. We now have had attendees from all fifty states and a number of international countries.

Throughout these years, all of the department faculty have attended. Many of the faculty present with their students. Others encourage their students as presenters. Many of you

have attended, presented, and sent others to the conference. Because of this support, the conference continues to grow stronger each year.

The conference has been an opportunity for me that I did not know I needed. Although I was involved with the Women's Educational Equity Act project at Ohio State and had served on the State Equity Committee for the State of Kansas, by the time I got to Nebraska, I thought Title IX had been in place long enough and equity was no longer an issue. I was wrong.

I had not recognized equity issues as a barrier to my getting a faculty position in educational administration. However, at the time I became a faculty member at Nebraska, I knew almost every woman faculty member in educational administration in the U.S. When I was hired, only 2% of the educational administration faculty members in the U.S. were women.

What I Did Not Know—I did not see my work as a faculty member as being a Conference Planner. I saw my work as teaching, research, and service…the Land Grant Mission.

The Network—The conference has provided an incredible network for the conference attendees, for our students, and for me. Although I had been part of the Title IX Women's Educational Equity Act project, I never saw myself as a women's advocate or feminist.

MY GUIDE: DON UERLING

Nebraska had a mentoring program for new faculty when I joined the university. My mentor was Don Uerling. He was an excellent mentor. He had excellent technique. I was the first person in our department to be gifted with the mentoring program.

The tradition in our department when I joined the faculty was for our department chair to march down the length of the hall at noon each day to assemble "his" faculty for the daily march to the union cafeteria for lunch. I believe there was some military precision to this daily drill. I found the formation and pace a bit troubling as we stepped across campus. In the cafeteria, we would sit at our communal table and hear tales of prowess from my colleagues, tales of heroism, and so forth.

Each day as I would lift my fork or spoon to my mouth, all would fall silent as my Mentor would ask, "Well, have you published anything yet?" Amazing how effective that technique is. Not only does it bring out the scholarship in you, it also keeps the pounds off …. since daily you lost your appetite to the verbal challenge. *In hindsight, the mentoring technique was flawless. I would highly recommend it to others.* When our department chair stepped away from the chair role, and the union remodeled and eliminated the cafeteria, the strength of the mentoring experience was sadly diminished.

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

Eight years ago, a publisher approached me with an idea. He wanted to publish a journal on women and educational leadership. He asked if I would edit it. I said, "No, thank you." I suggested some of my colleagues as potential editors. They all said, "Thanks, make Marilyn do it." After several conversations, I relented.

I had no vision, desire, or ambition to edit a journal. I like to write. I edit my doctoral students' dissertations. I edit my colleagues' work when we write together …. but a journal looked like an enormous amount of work. It is.

The Journal of Women in Educational Leadership has been an opportunity that I didn't know I needed. I have learned much by reading the manuscripts. I have expanded my network of colleagues because of the work. I have learned much about the writing skills of my

colleagues; I've also learned how individuals view a journal on equity issues. I did not realize that I needed to learn these aspects of our profession.

WHAT EXPERIENCE TAUGHT ME—HOW EXPERIENCE AND OPPORTUNITY TRANSFORMED ME

The enduring aspect of the experiences I have had in my trek to and through the professoriate is that on the occasions when I have been inclined to say, "No," or "No, thanks," I was often wrong. The opportunities that I did not anticipate have provided incredible experiences for me. The work I do as a professor is not the work I imagined at the beginning of my quest to become a professor. Although I am engaged in the Research, Teaching, and Service Land Grant Mission, I am involved in many other initiatives that make the work interesting, challenging, and worthwhile. The annual Women in Educational Leadership Conference and BI are but two of the opportunities I did not anticipate; yet, they have been incredible experiences.

THE BEST PART OF MY WORK AND LIFE AS A PROFESSOR

I tell whoever asks, that there are two things that are most important to me—my kids and my doctoral students. My children are Mercedes, Alex, Natasha, Justin, and Elizabeth. All five have been regular attendees at the annual meetings of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration. Mercedes attended her first meeting of NCPEA in Fargo, North Dakota—back in the days when there was a program for the children of professors of educational administration. Alex and Natasha attended their first meeting of NCPEA in Indian Wells, California. Just days before the conference, Alex, Natasha, Mercedes, and I returned to the United States after meeting the new Grady kids (Alex and Natasha) in Moscow. Fair-skinned Natasha suffered horribly from the sun of sunny California at her first NCPEA event. Justin and Elizabeth attended their first meeting of NCPEA in Vail, Colorado. Elizabeth marked the event by being burned by the "baby sitter's curling iron" at that meeting.

My work as a professor has accommodated my role as a mother. My children have been welcomed by my faculty colleagues and by my doctoral students. The profession has been a fine match for my life with these wonderful children. Tonight, you'll see the Bambina Preciosa, Elizabeth, is here with me. You can see we saved the best for last in my sparkly-eyed Guatemalan daughter.

The children have taught me much that I did not know when I became a teacher and a school administrator earlier in my career. They have made me a better professor of educational administration because I now understand the struggles parents have with children and learning, children and truancy, children and motivation, children and illness. I now understand the dilemmas teachers and administrators face as they balance family and professional obligations (Grady, 2009).

When I consider the best aspects of my life as a professor, I want to say the chance to write …. and I have written many books and many, many journal articles and chapters. But, the best part of all has been advising doctoral students and working with doctoral students (Grady, 2000; Grady & Hoffman, 2007). My career has spanned all levels and ages of students. However, working with students who want to conduct research and write the results of their studies has been most satisfying of all. These individuals who complete their dissertations often go on to have incredibly productive professorial careers of their own. I am pleased to recognize so many of these individuals in this room this evening. The connections formed

with these fine students and graduates from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are the most rewarding part of the work I do on a daily basis.

Recently, I have been aware of the struggles some faculty have as they near retirement. One individual was challenged by a concern about the legacy he would leave following his retirement. I was very interested in this individual's dilemma because he had advised many students during his years in higher education. I was sad for him that he did not see his legacy in the students he had advised.

Our work with the students we advise creates a complex network of enduring relationships. I know that if I draw the genealogy of my path to the professoriate, beginning with my early experiences and branching to this stage in my work, the tree would have many branches. If we were to draw the branches of these relationships, we would each be able to see the legacy we leave through our work. The story, *Eleven*, and the value of matryoshkas with a greater number of nested dolls mean more to me as I consider the value of the doctoral students I have advised. I know that through our work with our students, we pass it on.

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Teaching and Assessing Dispositions in Principal-Preparation Programs: A Conundrum

Ronald Lindahl

I was extremely honored to be selected for the Cocking Lecture series. This article is a summary of my lecture at the 2008 annual conference of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA).

Walter Dewey Cocking, in whose honor this lecture series is offered, was a founder of NCPEA. In 1947, he planned the first ever meeting of what was to become NCPEA, hosting a two-hour session of 56 professors, all males, in Atlantic City, New Jersey. He went on to secure IBM's country club in upstate New York, at no cost, for a 10-day meeting of professors of education administration in August, 1947. This group of 72 professionals took the name, National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration (Campbell, 2007). In 1988, the name was changed from *Conference* to *Council* (Papa, 2007).

Cocking was born in Manchester, Iowa, on December 10, 1891 and later graduated from Columbia University. He became a pioneer of individualized instruction and specialized curricula, specialized classrooms, and language laboratories (Walter Cocking, 2008). After holding school administration positions in Iowa, Texas, and Missouri, he served five years as a professor of education administration at Peabody College for Teachers, in Nashville, Tennessee. He left Peabody to serve four years as Tennessee's Commissioner of Education (The Cocking Affair, 2008).

In 1937, he was recruited as Dean of the University of Georgia's College of Education. Soon after his arrival, Georgia's Board of Regents directed him to study the status of higher education for Blacks in Georgia. Cocking found a great disparity between the postsecondary education available to Whites and that available to Blacks, a finding that was not warmly received by some White educators and politicians. A distorted version of his findings, alleging that Cocking supported social equality of the races and the integration of the public demonstration school in Athens, Georgia was sent to Governor Eugene Talmadge (Walter Cocking, 2008). Although Cocking did speak out strongly on the need for equity between Whites and Blacks, the charges were false. However, these false charges, and Cocking's occasionally abrasive personality, led Governor Talmadge to fire Cocking. The President of the University of Georgia threatened to resign if Cocking was not offered a fair hearing by the Board of Regents. Talmadge then launched newspaper attacks against Cocking, his racial views, and his association with the Rosenwald Fund, which Talmadge referred to as "Jew money for niggers." The Board of Regents voted 8 to 7 to re-instate Cocking as Dean. Talmadge then promptly removed three members of the Board and replaced them with loyal supporters. The Board held another vote and decided, 10 to 5, not to re-hire Cocking. This, in turn, led the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to remove the accreditation of the 10 White public colleges and universities in Georgia, on grounds of "gross political interference" (The

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Cocking Affair, 2008). Cocking had a highly productive career in education, including serving as editor of *The School Executive.* He passed away on January 14, 1964 (Walter Cocking, 2008).

The topic for this article stems from an exploratory study I conducted last year on the treatment of dispositions in principal-preparation programs. Results of that research were published in the NCPEA 2008 *Yearbook*; with the permission of the *Yearbook* editors, they are embedded in this afternoon's address.

My perspective comes, in part, from Walter Cocking's commitment to social justice. Few, if any, of us will champion social justice on a grand scale like Walter Cocking. However, in small but not totally insignificant ways, we can, and must, actively promote social justice daily in what we do at our colleges and universities. I view the role of dispositions in principal-preparation programs as an issue of social justice because dispositions are one criterion by which we decide who participates in those programs and by which we decide who is granted certification and access to school administration positions. One section of NCPEA's Mission Statement challenges us to: "Ensure access and inclusion of under-represented groups into the professorship and administration and promote social justice in education." The decisions we make concerning the role of dispositions in our programs must not be taken lightly.

THE TUMULT OVER DISPOSITIONS IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

As I looked into the role of dispositions in principal-preparation programs, I basically considered the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) dispositions to be as self-evident as "motherhood and apple pie." However, I was astounded to learn that the treatment of dispositions in schools and colleges of education has generated profound criticism and debate in recent years. On October 24, 2005, John Leo, a writer for *US News and World Report*, wrote: "The cultural left has a new tool for enforcing political conformity in schools of education. It is called dispositions theory." He cited William Damon, a professor at Stanford University, as stating that the education schools "have been given unbounded power over what candidates may think and do, what they may believe and value." In a separate article, Damon (2005) warned that "this is far from an ideal way to launch a career dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge, learning, thinking, and truth" (np).

Jacob Gershman of the *New York Sun* wrote a similar article (2005). Gershman described Brooklyn College's School of Education's move to base part of their teacher education candidates' evaluation on a commitment to social justice. Critics warned that such evaluations judge how closely the students' political views align with those of their instructor. Gershman cited a senior fellow at the Lexington Institute in Virginia, who wrote: "The tight link between the accreditors [National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)] and the multiculturalists indicates that social justice is being defined by those who despise the very ideal of an American common culture—considering it irredeemably racist, sexist, homophobic, etc." Gershman concluded his article by noting that Brooklyn College's School of Education was awarded accreditation.

In the January 16, 2006 edition of *Newsweek*, George Will wrote that the surest, quickest way to add quality to primary and secondary education would be to close all schools of education. He based this proposal on the assessment of student dispositions by these schools. He cited a report by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in which the University of Alabama was "committed to preparing individuals to promote social justice, to be change agents, and to recognize individual and institutionalized racism, sexism, homophobia, and classism, and to break silence about those things." He concluded, "The permeation of education by politics is a

consequence of the vacuity of their curricula." He cited Heather MacDonald of the Manhattan Institute, the author of *Why Johnny's Teacher Can't Teach*, as writing that the emphasis on dispositions is "just the latest version of education schools' immutable dogma—*Anything but Knowledge*."

These criticisms were leveled specifically at colleges of education, but even a cursory review of medical schools, law schools, and business schools revealed that dispositions are routinely considered among their admissions criteria. Stanford University's Graduate School of Business web page (2008) stated that admissions decisions can be based on qualitative aspects such as "creativity, imagination, perseverance, ability to provide deep insights and criticism, and (usually) a predisposition toward being independently motivated." Harvard University Business School's web page (2008) stated that it is looking for students "who exhibit the highest ethical standards and respect for others." The University of Texas' Law School web page (2008) stated that it seeks students with a "demonstrated commitment to public service" and invited students to submit statements regarding "personal experiences with discrimination, overcoming disability… diversity of experience and background." The University of Michigan's Medical School web page (2008) stated that its graduates "have a deep respect for patients and their care" and "hold ethics and integrity in the highest regard." East Carolina University's School of Medicine web page (2008) discussed the admission standards, which include "attitudinal and emotional characteristics" and "high ethical standards." Would MacDonald also characterize the educational offerings of these institutions as *Anything but Knowledge?*

I cited these critics because their publications reach, and influence, huge numbers of mainstream Americans. The role of dispositions in our programs is no longer an issue to be discussed only by faculty of colleges and schools of education and their professional and accreditation agencies; it is a highly visible issue that threatens our credibility.

WHAT ARE DISPOSITIONS?

The many definitions of the term *disposition*, range from generic dictionary versions to ones specifically targeted to the dispositions to be assessed in educators. For this article, the latter are more specific and therefore more relevant. Baksh (2004) traced the assessment of dispositions to Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Categories* and *Rhetoric*. Beginning in 1959, under the leadership of Combs (see Combs, Blume, Newman, & Wass, 1974), considerable work was done in the area of teachers' perceptual orientations; this work was the forerunner, and virtual equivalent, of what later became known as *dispositions* (Wasicsko, 2002).

The first major appearance of the term *dispositions* in education came in 1992, when the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) published the first draft of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium's (INTASC) *Ten Core Principles*, which called for the assessment of new or prospective teachers' knowledge, *dispositions*, and performances (INTASC, 1992). NCATE's (2002) definition of *dispositions*, from the glossary of *Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education* was:

> Dispositions. The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. For example, they

> might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment. (NCATE, 2002, p. 53)

Standards adopted by NCATE (2008) reduced the list of required dispositions to two and presented the definition of professional dispositions as:

> Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions that NCATE expects institutions to assess are *fairness* and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, professional education units can identify, define, and operationalize additional professional dispositions. (pp. 89–90)

BACKGROUND TO THE ISSUE

One primary mission of principal-preparation programs is to help students acquire the specific sets of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that professional administrative organizations have deemed as being the minimum set necessary for success as a school leader.

In 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) promulgated six *Standards for School Leaders.* The six ISLLC standards were very specific in identifying 43 individual, but often interrelated, dispositions that school leaders should consistently demonstrate. New ISLLC standards were approved on December 12, 2007 (CCSSO, 2008a). One main feature of the updated standards is that the language is "performance-based" (Sanders & Kearney, 2007, p. 7) and no mention is made of dispositions. However, there is clear evidence that the dispositions underlying the 1996 standards remain an implicit conceptual foundation.

Dispositions are not only an issue in professional and accreditation standards; they are commonly used as prime criteria for the selection of teachers and administrators for school districts. This was the next focus of my investigation, for it helped to establish the value that education administrators place on dispositions.

WHAT IS CURRENTLY KNOWN ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT OF THE DISPOSITIONS SELECTING EDUCATION LEADERS?

Abernathy (2002) found many dispositions and personal qualities to be considered in hiring Arkansas superintendents: *honesty, self-motivation, initiative, high moral standards, character, compassion, sincere caring, integrity, positive attitude, community-minded, decisive, intelligent, dedicated, trustworthy, hard worker, loves children,* and *open minded.*

Bearman (2002) found that the ISLLC Standards were very seldom mentioned by the responding superintendents (p. 112). However, in nine of the states and the District of Columbia, certification requirements included a passing score on a standardized examination built upon those Standards. Similarly, Baker's (2001) found that although Virginia superintendents had very little overt knowledge of ISLLC Standards, 48 of those Standards' 182 indicators were used by superintendents to select principals. Simon (2003) concluded that although

Pennsylvania superintendents generally reported being unaware of the ISLLC Standards, 58% of the qualities they sought in principals were congruent with those Standards.

Muhlenbruck (2001) found that Iowa elementary-school principals were selected based on their *value and respect for others* and *organizational fit.* Van de Water (1987) found that New York principals were selected on their *commitment to academic goals* and *comfort with people who represent diverse constituencies*. Other personality characteristics that interact closely with dispositions were also cited, including *listening, being open, honest, warm, caring, sociable, outgoing,* and *flexible.* Tesar (1994) found that *attitude toward others* was the primary consideration in selecting elementary-school principals in Ohio. Dillon (1995) found that Indiana superintendents cited *ability to work with a wide variety of people* as their primary dispositional concern in selecting principals. Ballard (2002) found very similar criteria employed to select principals in Texas. Highest among these were being *collaborative* and *ethical,* and such personality traits as *supportive, sensitive, perceptive, tactful, motivational,* and *understanding.* This disposition toward *collaboration with the community* ranked second among the criteria espoused by Rhode Island superintendents in selecting principals, followed closely by the dispositions to *maintain a safe school* and to *act fair and with integrity* (DiLullo, 2004, p. 85).

Doerge (1973) found that Louisiana principals sought teachers with a *cooperative attitude.* Kahl (1980) found that Wisconsin principals sought teachers with *cooperative attitudes* and complementary personality traits such as *enthusiasm, ability to benefit from advice, dependability,* and a *desire to work hard.* Similar attention to *cooperative attitudes* was given by Mueller (1993) and Vann (1994), with Vann also stressing the need for *flexibility* and the *ability to compromise and reach consensus.* Heitritter (2004) found that Iowa principals sought teachers who *work with peers, involve parents, respect their students, benefit from advice,* and *exhibit personal integrity.* The high congruence of dispositions across the many groups surveyed lends strength to their perceived content validity.

Clearly, dispositions occupy a key role in the lives of school administrators, However, relatively little has been done to examine how dispositions are treated in the university programs that prepare those administrators. Therefore, I conducted an exploratory, qualitative study to examine the use of dispositions in such programs.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

My purpose for the exploratory, qualitative study was to examine to what extent, and how, dispositions are taught and assessed in principal preparation. I sought to determine how the results of any such assessments were used in program decision-making.

METHODOLOGY

I e-mailed over 100 faculty members across the nation who were members of NCPEA. Of those contacted, 34 respondents, representing 33 programs, agreed to be interviewed and provided information regarding when they most typically would be in their office. An additional respondent was recommended by the President of NCPEA, based on that respondent's long-term involvement with, and commitment to, the teaching and assessment of dispositions in colleges of education. I recognize that those who agreed to participate may hold different perspectives about the role of dispositions in principal-preparation programs than do those who opted not to participate. That is a limitation of this study. Each telephone interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. Based on the responses of these 35 respondents, I became rea-

sonably confident that I had reached a point of data saturation (Creswell, 1998, pp. 56–57), so no additional respondents were sought.

INTERPRETATION OF THE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

The responses were classified into three primary themes: the importance of dispositions in their principal-preparation programs, the teaching of dispositions in those programs, and the assessment of their students' dispositions, including the use of those assessments for decision making. The richness of the responses lies in the variations that were evidenced within each theme.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DISPOSITIONS IN PRINCIPAL-PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Almost all respondents indicated that they considered dispositions to be a key element of principal preparation, in general, and of the specific program in which they served. However, as these respondents all volunteered to participate in the interviews, they may have had a positive bias toward dispositions and therefore may not be representative of the larger population of faculty in principal-preparation programs. Many respondents indicated that many of their colleagues did not give as much emphasis to dispositions as they did.

In almost all cases, the respondents referred specifically to the dispositions identified in the ISLLC standards and indicated strong familiarity with those dispositions. Most explained that each course syllabus linked the content and performance expectations of the course with specific dispositions (as well as with knowledge and skills). However, the ISLLC standards were not the only ones cited by respondents; in fact, one respondent referred to ISLLC standards as "minimums, not maximums." The respondent then reported that her program was built on the ISLLC standards, the 21 characteristics of effective leaders identified by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), the Critical Success Factors identified by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), state administrator standards, and the state's code of ethics for school administrators. One respondent, from a religiously-affiliated university that prepares both public and private school administrators, explained that in addition to ISLLC standards, the program's curriculum was based on dispositions inherent in Greenleaf's (1977) *servant leadership* model, as well as on Biblical dispositions. Another respondent cited the work of Combs (e.g., Combs, 1988; Combs, Blume, Newman, & Wass, 1974; Combs, Miser, & Whitaker, 1999) as the dispositional foundation of his program, in conjunction with the ISLLC standards. The respondent cited four primary dispositions as essential to the principal-preparation program: A *positive self-image*, based on the individual's ability to identify with diverse groups of people and diverse points of view (good assessment skills and high emotional intelligence); *high positive expectations* for teachers and students; a *focus on the larger view*, on the human element, on learning, growth and development; and a *people focus*, recognizing that people learn through cognitive, emotional ways.

One respondent who discussed ethics as a dispositional element at the heart of the preparation program explained that ethics are difficult to define and may have some contextual or situational variations. However, her program's goal is to develop student dispositions in favor of being: *inclusive, democratic, just, accessible to all, equitable*, and *valuing of diversity*, including doing what is right and getting the right people.

Another respondent identified four key dispositions that she focused on heavily in the first and in the final courses of the administrator preparation program. These were: *the cour-*

age to care, compassionate justice, understanding of self, and *only being human.* The respondent clarified that *only being human* refers to a benign approach to recognizing that when people do something unexpected or possibly ill-conceived, they are merely exhibiting the natural frailties of our species.

Other respondents cited the ELCC standards or state standards for principal-preparation programs that contained specific dispositions. Several respondents cited dispositions contained in their college or school's conceptual model, typically associated with the NCATE accreditation process. However, when all respondents discussed the specific dispositions in their state, college, or other models, there was considerable overlap and congruence with the dispositions identified in the ISLLC standards.

The emphasis given to dispositions seems to vary considerably across programs. One respondent from a large program stated that the curriculum was highly tied to ISLLC standards and noted that dispositions were mentioned in the program's mission statement: "attitudes for helping to build effective learning communities within a culturally diverse society." However, the respondent reflected that dispositions were not addressed in course syllabi, nor did they feature prominently in departmental discussions. Another respondent estimated that faculty devoted approximately 10% of its time to the teaching and assessment of dispositions; this extent of coverage seemed close to a norm among the respondents. However, one respondent asserted that dispositions carried equal weight (33%) to the skills and knowledge taught in the program. One respondent from a religiously-affiliated university estimated a relatively high percentage of time was devoted to dispositions, owing to the institution's mission and vision being so heavily rooted in Biblical dispositions. One program, heavily guided by a nationally-recognized author, researcher, and scholar on dispositions in teacher education, offers a course on *Becoming a Transforming Leader*, which focuses on preparing students with the theoretical background and instrumentation to assess and self-assess dispositions. The course culminates with each student developing a dispositional growth plan. The respondent estimated that between eight and ten other courses of the program also have strong emphases on helping the candidate be a "more effective person."

TEACHING DISPOSITIONS IN PRINCIPAL-PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Almost all respondents indicated that they, personally, taught dispositions as part of the principal preparation courses. Most respondents informed that the most significant means of teaching dispositions is through modeling them consistently in all interactions with students, including through professional writing and teaching. The respondent also noted that the field-based mentors of the program's extensive internship component are expected to model ISLLC dispositions. Several others described the use of scenarios or case studies as a primary means of teaching dispositions. One respondent informed that rather than teaching the dispositions, per se, he designed activities "to bring the dispositions out of the students." To foster the disposition of collaboration, another respondent discussed her requirement of team projects in a leadership course. Another respondent noted that dispositions can be taught, but only if the student has "a base willingness of spirit" to be open to new dispositions.

One respondent described a heavy focus on dispositions in the entry course of the preparation program by using a wide variety of activities to create trust and to build a sense of community among the students and with her. She used debate, consensus building, reflective writing and discussions, and the requirement of a single-page education platform focused on ISLLC standards as a means to promote student reflection on their own, unique sets of dispositions. As with the previously cited respondent, she clarified that she does not *teach* disposi-

tions, but rather *educates* (pulls from) students about them. Similarly, another respondent described the opening course in the preparation program as being heavily grounded in dispositions, estimating that over the past eight years, 15% to 20% of the students in that course failed or were counseled out of continuing in the program, largely on the basis of dispositions.

Although not a part of the formal study, Achilles (1970) recently shared with me a brief article describing a humanities "live-in seminar" that University of Tennessee personnel used to help teach dispositions, particularly liberalization, to their full-time students in advanced education administration programs. This intensive, four-week seminar included group travels to art galleries, the theatre, musical presentations. Family members were invited to participate and grades were "de-emphasized" (p. 7). The seminar involved students meeting with visiting professionals from such fields as history, literature, music, architecture, drama, philosophy, religion, and education. It also involved a heavy reading base for group discussions on such works as *Walden Two, Antigone, Lord of the Flies, Billy Budd, Death of a Salesman*, and Martin Luther King, Junior's *Letter from the Birmingham Jail*. Related programs were implemented at The University of Florida, The University of Miami, and the University of Rochester, to name a few (Farquhar, 1970). Among the benefits of such programs, Farquhar listed such issues as "increase moral wisdom and arouse the minds of people with the intellectual capacity to do something about the world's problems" and "They encourage tolerance in the beliefs of others" (p. 7). These are clearly outcomes closely related to some of the ISLLC dispositions.

The most frequently cited situation in which dispositions were addressed in the curriculum was in field-based internships. Most respondents indicated that the field-based mentors were expected to model ISLLC dispositions and to inform the university supervisor if the intern's actions during the internship violated these dispositions. Many respondents indicated that assessment rubrics for their internships were based on the ELCC or ISLLC standards, including dispositions. One respondent noted that during the internships dispositions were modeled by the field-based mentors, rather than taught; however, this occurs only *if* the mentor is competent. One respondent discussed a situation in which five students were suspended from participating in the internship on the grounds of failure to demonstrate the expected dispositions. Eventually, all were reinstated, although one subsequently chose to leave the field of school administration.

One theme that emerged from many of the interviews was that there exists a murky confusion between professional dispositions, e.g., ISLLC or ELCC, and dispositional expectations faculty hold for students, e.g., punctuality, attendance, preparation for class, and academic honesty. Quite a few respondents reported on situations in which students were disciplined, counseled, or removed from the program for failure to demonstrate these student dispositions; very few indicated such actions based on the professional dispositions. Interestingly, one respondent stated: "if the student doesn't exhibit professionalism and integrity in our program, how can we certify the student to become a school administrator?"

As mentioned in the previous section, one university instituted a course almost specifically devoted to teaching dispositions. However, most of the other participants' programs did not contain courses focused on dispositions. Generally, dispositions are integrated with the skills and knowledge related to each course's content focus. The general consensus was that if students entered the program with basic dispositions similar to those advocated in the ISLLC standards, or by the specific university, teaching dispositions in the program would help to make students better reflective practitioners concerning their dispositions. However, as one respondent noted, "it is not likely that graduate students will extinguish previous dispositions and gain new ones."

Several respondents discussed the situation that many of their graduates do not move into a school administration position upon graduation from the preparation program. They noted that, all too often, these graduates exited the program with an appropriate set of dispositions, only to be re-socialized into the culture of their school and/or district. This culture often did not coincide with the dispositions taught in the principal-preparation program.

ASSESSING DISPOSITIONS IN PRINCIPAL-PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Many respondents reported that they assessed dispositions for program admission, as part of course requirements, for exiting the program, or for some combination of these. The screening of applicants to principal-preparation programs based on dispositions varies greatly. One program gives such attention to dispositions that program admission requires letters of recommendation, a letter of intent, and interviews (based on questions aligned to ISLLC standards, including dispositions). All three sources of data are screened to assess the applicant's dispositions; some applicants have been denied admission based on disposition-related issues. Two respondents reported relying on *deferred admission* or *conditional admission* in those cases in which the applicant did not demonstrate that he or she clearly possesses the dispositions expected by the program. The student is admitted on probation; after 9 to 12 semester hours of coursework, a committee of program faculty convenes to decide on the student's admission to the program. One respondent reported having screened students out of the program at the end of the probationary period. The other program had only recently instituted this policy and had not yet been confronted with the need to recommend against offering full admission. Another respondent reported being sued by several students who had been denied admission; however, in all cases the judge ruled in favor of the institution on the grounds that the decision had been made by a group of faculty members who were appropriately trained in the assessment of dispositions and who were using a validated methodology.

In one program, an assessment center approach is used for admissions, conducted in conjunction with the many school districts it serves. Applicants respond to oral and written problem situations, in which dispositions figure heavily in the scoring rubric. Applicants have been denied admission based on dispositional issues illuminated by this admission process.

On the other hand, relatively few programs screen applicants for dispositions, including even some programs that require interviews for admission. As one respondent noted, "there is too much pressure for FTEs to screen out students." Others have dispositions as a criterion, but have not denied admission based on that criterion to date. Several programs have a mid-program review after a student completes 12 to 18 semester hours of coursework; however, although there are rubrics that include dispositions, no student has been removed to date from any of the reporting programs. In many programs, interviews are not conducted, although some rely on letters of recommendation to assess an applicant's dispositions. Many respondents indicated that they did not consider an applicant's dispositions in the admissions process because of fear of lawsuits from denied applicants. As one respondent noted, "Considering dispositions in the admissions process is a legal minefield. To reject an applicant would be saying that your program could not teach the desired dispositions to its students. You don't screen out applicants because they don't arrive in the program already having the knowledge and skills necessary to be a principal, do you?"

Several states are in the process of state-wide redesign of principal-preparation programs. In all cases, a much greater involvement of the local education agencies in the admission and selection of students is required. Respondents from these states universally anticipated that this would lead to a greater emphasis on dispositions in the admissions process.

The most common form of assessment of dispositions in coursework was through candidates' portfolios, which were generally portrayed as capstone assessment requirements. One respondent described his program's assessment of the portfolio as being based on the ELCC standards and reviewed by a committee comprised of three to four faculty members and one practicing administrator from the same grade level as the intern, i.e., elementary, middle, or high school. This committee also reviews the student's performance on the 58 "significant activities" designed by the program faculty to cover the full range of the ELCC standards. The student must present evidence of successful performance in at least 80% of these activities. However, although many other programs' portfolio processes are based on ISLLC standards, most give no explicit instructions to include reflections on dispositions.

When asked what would happen when a student does not display the desired dispositions, one respondent stated that program faculty would hold a student personnel session at a faculty meeting to discuss the problems noted. Then the student's professor or advisor would counsel and monitor the student; this might involve career counseling to discourage the student from pursuing a career in school administration.

In one program, preparation is offered for the *Praxis* exam, a certification requirement, as part of its curriculum. As the instructor for this preparation views many of the *Praxis* scenarios as disposition-oriented, the preparation activities help students to perceive their dispositions and to align them with the ISLLC standards. In some cases, students were required to reflect upon the ISLLC standards (including dispositions) and base their portfolio on them. Dispositions are also assessed as part of exit requirements. For example, one program requires its students to develop a personal code of ethics in the opening, required course; halfway through the program, the student supplements this with a personal philosophy of administration; the capstone requirement is the development of a personal platform of deep-seated beliefs. All three are dispositional in nature. In another program, a mandated exit question posed to students requires them to reflect upon "one dispositional theme that every student in our program leaves with." One respondent reported that a follow-up survey of employers provided the program with assessment information on the dispositions exhibited by graduates. Another respondent reported looking at the success of program graduates in administrative roles to determine the extent to which they display the needed dispositions.

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Perhaps the best summary of the findings of this study can be found in the words of one respondent: "We don't deal with them [dispositions] nearly as well as we should." Most, if not all, respondents concurred that their programs have identified key dispositions related to school administration and make at least some attempt to teach and evaluate student acquisition of these dispositions. However, one respondent's comment reflects inconsistencies reported across respondents' institutions: "In some classes, dispositions are taught better than others." Internships were generally viewed as the primary place where dispositions are taught (mostly through mentoring by the supervising principal) and assessed. Few programs used dispositions as criteria for admission decisions and little direct assessment of dispositions occurred until the internship or capstone portfolio. Very, very rarely did the absence of the desired dispositions result in students failing to graduate or to be certified. Programs would benefit greatly from a better understanding of the legal issues surrounding the use of dispositions as criteria for admission or dismissal from the program. In view of the importance respondents gave to legal concerns, I conducted some preliminary legal research to get an idea of how courts might address the use of dispositions in principal-preparation programs.

HOW MIGHT THE COURTS VIEW THE USE OF DISPOSITIONS IN PRINCIPAL-PREPARATION PROGRAMS?

The most common response as to why program faculty were not assessing dispositions more rigorously or utilizing the assessment results for programmatic purposes was a fear of legal reprisals. A search of legal databases revealed no major legal decisions on this specific topic; however, some indication of possible legal positions may be found in somewhat analogous situations. Although legal precedents in somewhat analogous situations give some grounds for estimating possible legal positions, the uniqueness of each case and the vagaries of the justice system preclude any conclusive prediction of the outcomes of future litigation. Reutter (1994) provided valuable discussion on many of the issues in this section.

Considerable case law exists relative to the selection of employees. Courts have established school boards' right to require more than the state certification requirements (*Montgomery County Board of Education* v. *Messer,* 1935). Boards may consider subjective factors, e.g., dispositions, in their hiring (*Shelton* v. *Tucker,* 1960). However, the board cannot use such subjective factors to make arbitrary decisions or decisions contrary to the law (*Arnim* v. *Shoreline School District, No. 412,* 1979; *Walter* v. *Independent School District, N* o. 457, *1982*). The motivation of the employer in choosing criteria for selection is not the relevant factor; the consequences must bear scrutiny (*Griggs* v. *Duke Power Company,* 1971).

Considering admission to a police training program, the court ruled that the institution is not required to prove the validity of its test (*Washington* v. *Davis,* 1976). Even though the Educational Testing Service could not demonstrate a strong relationship between academic proficiency, as measured by the National Teaching Examination, and effective teaching, the court upheld the use of the National Teaching Examination as a valid criterion for the teacher preparation program (*United States* v. S*tate of South Carolina*, 1977, 1978). It is the plaintiff's responsibility to demonstrate that the use of a specific criterion or criteria is a prima facie case of discrimination (*McDonnell Douglas Corporation* v. *Green*, 1973; *Texas Department of Community Affairs* v. *Burdine, 1981*).

In examining the extent to which a student's or prospective student's right to have his or her application evaluated according to some process reasonably related to the program's goals, the court recognized that the process need not be perfect and need not be perfectly followed. Such flaws may be morally innocent and not wrong. However, the criteria used must have a reasonable relationship to the goals of the selection process (Arneson, 2006).

Courts, themselves, use dispositions in their juror selection process, voir dire (Giewat, 2007), especially to detect bias or prejudice (see *Hyundai* v. *Vasquez,* 2005, 2006; *State of Utah* v. *King,* 2004; Suggs & Sales, 1980-1981) even though research (e.g., Balch, Griffiths, Hall, & Winfree, 1976; Giewat, 2007) has shown that voir dire does not do an effective job of identifying biased jurors. One reason for this is that high levels of evaluation pressure in voir dire leads to higher levels of dishonesty (Marshall & Smith, 1986), which may also be the case in the evaluation of dispositions in principal-preparation programs.

Courts generally recognize that school administrators and personnel are professionally trained, generally competent, and dedicated experts in their field. In the absence of a very clear abuse of power and authority, capriciousness, arbitrary behavior, or acts of bad faith, the court is reluctant to enter into education decisions (*Montalvo* v. *Mader*, 1971). As long as we select dispositions that have some relevance to the preparation of principals, even if they and our assessment processes are not perfect, and as long as we do not intentionally or inadvertently discriminate or act arbitrarily, it appears that teaching and assessing dispositions will

not be unfavorably viewed by the courts. However, as professionals, our decisions concerning the treatment of dispositions in our programs should be governed by moral concerns above the minimum threshold of being acceptable to the courts. Some of those concerns have been raised in the literature base, particularly in regard to teacher education programs.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CONCERNS REGARDING THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT OF DISPOSITIONS?

Although the knowledge base is surprisingly devoid of discussion relating to the role of dispositions in education administration preparation programs, it is a far more developed issue in regard to teacher education programs. Seminal thought in this area appeared in Maylone's (2002) paper presented at the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, which raised a number of critical questions regarding the assessment of dispositions:

1. Other than the accreditation demands, why should colleges of education be concerned with the assessment of dispositions?
2. Can teachers deliver quality instruction despite less-than-desirable dispositions?
3. Do the specified desirable dispositions refer to characteristics all teachers should have or to those of a model citizen?
4. Is it possible to effectively and thoroughly identify all the desirable and undesirable dispositions?
5. Might the identification of desirable dispositions be done at the expense of valuing diversity?
6. Is it possible to develop an effective rubric for assessing dispositions, or are there some idiosyncratic elements that might not conform well to even a well-thought-out rubric?
7. What levels of expectations ("dispositional tolerance") should be set and what levels define a passing score?
8. Instead of identifying desirable or required dispositions, might it be more appropriate to identify "disqualifying dispositions"?
9. How can evaluators prevent their personal biases in favor of or against specific dispositions from entering into their subjective judgment of candidates?
10. Are dispositions synergistic in nature, where the whole is greater than a sum of the parts?
11. Are there any teacher dispositions parallel with higher education faculty members' academic freedom?

Similar concerns were later voiced by Jensen (2004), whose review of the literature and of institutions' NCATE reports led her to conclude that there is a great deal of difficulty in defining *why* some student teachers will become strong practitioners, and even more difficulty in determining *how* to strengthen the critical dispositions in those student teachers who appear to have a weaker potential for success (p. 9). Jensen's concerns tie well into the findings of a previous study by Covert and Clifton (1983), whose quasi-experimental research, albeit on a small and questionable scale, found that dispositions could be altered by experiences in the teacher education program. This led Baksh (2004) to question when in a program dispositions should be assessed. If assessed as entry-level criteria, this precludes the development of the dispositions during the program. If assessed just prior to student teaching or licensure, this denies the prospective teacher insight and opportunity to develop the necessary dispositions. If assessed upon entry and prior to exiting the program, what happens to the candidate who

passed all dispositions upon entry but who was found lacking prior to exiting the program? Other permutations are equally problematic.

McKnight (2004) questioned the feasibility of teaching dispositions to adults. He concluded that it is "questionable to demand a teacher candidate shed certain dispositions and virtues for which they have been rewarded in their schooling in favor of ones that historically have not been privileged" (p. 214). Although recognizing some value in the NCATE dispositions, McKnight questioned their use as criteria in decision making regarding candidates. This caution was based on the recognition that their meaning is not universal, but situational: "There is nothing effective teacher research can do to prove a particular act of fairness, or the occasional necessity for unfairness, will correlate with an act of learning" (p. 227).

Richardson and Onwuegbuzie (2003) raised the point that it is difficult to assess dispositions without bias (p. 31). Ginsberg and Whaley (2003) investigated the legal implications of this for teacher education and administrative preparation programs.

Supporting these concerns, the findings of my exploratory study raised some key issues regarding the treatment of dispositions in principal-preparation programs. Together, these concerns represent a conundrum facing principal-preparation programs.

THE CONUNDRUM

In his defense of the 1996 ISLLC standards, Murphy (2003) discussed the criticism that has arisen concerning including non-research-based dispositions with the standards (English, 2001; Hess, 2003). He cited such foundational works on education administration as those of Culbertson (1964) and Foster (1984), who recognized that education administration is fundamentally a moral activity. Murphy cited Beck and Murphy's (1997) review as concluding that the "fight to create a scientifically anchored value-free profession had brought forth an ethically truncated if not morally bankrupt profession" (p. 33). This concern, Murphy stated, led ISLLC to acknowledge the importance of non-empirical materials [the dispositions] and to use this material to anchor and provide a values foundation for the standards (p. 25). Although this values foundation continues to exist in the 2008 ISLLC standards, it is now implicit rather than explicit, with all references to dispositions deleted.

The leadership theories taught in principal-preparation programs also often have a dispositional basis. This tradition began over five decades ago with trait theory (Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Stogdill, 1948, 1974), continued through the last few decades of the past century with servant leadership (Frick, 2004; Greenleaf, 1977), and is seen in some of the more modern thought on leadership, almost neo-trait theories, that focus on values and ethics (Beckner, 2004; Bolman & Deal, 1995; Fullan, 2003; Hoyle, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2006; Starratt, 2004). All of these theories stress integrity and ethics as essential qualities within the leader. Certainly, leadership can be taught without consideration of ethics. For example, few could deny that Adolf Hitler and Attila the Hun were effective leaders (Bob Beach, personal communication).

Although I cannot align myself with the previously cited reporters from *US News and World Reports*, the *New York Sun*, and *Newsweek* who view the teaching and assessment of dispositions as mind control or politically motivated, I do thank them for leading me to reflect more deeply on my own positions regarding dispositions. I cannot help but agree with Culbertson (1963), Foster (1984), Murphy (2003), and Starratt (2004), who recognized that education administration is a moral activity. If nothing else, we must convince our students and current education leaders that ours is certainly not an amoral profession and that they must have an ongoing commitment to critical reflection and action on their morals and dispositions.

However, to do this effectively, we must put considerably more effort into resolving the conundrum surrounding dispositions.

In considering the potential role of dispositions in principal-preparation programs, it is essential that we come to understand more fully the nature of dispositions. Murray (2007) used Underwood's (1957) hierarchy of levels of meaning of constructs to analyze the construct of dispositions. Murray concluded that dispositions in teacher education have almost no explanatory value and very little meaning. Part of this lack of explanatory value may stem from uncertainty if the dispositions are separate entities (Wasickso, 2007) or operate holistically (Diez, 2007). Similarly, debate exists as to the extent that they are relatively fixed entities (Wasickso, 2007) or are incremental, able to change and grow (Diez, 2007). If we view them as separate and relatively fixed entities, the primary role of the principal-preparation program would be to screen applicants to select those with the desired dispositions and to eliminate those without them. If we view them as holistic or incremental, the program's role would be to help to develop the desired dispositions. Oja and Reiman (2007) noted that such development is not automatic; rather, it occurs when there is an optimal interaction with the environment (p. 95). This corresponds well to the responses of those respondents who stated that they do not *teach* dispositions, but model them or help draw them out from their students. The other option is to accept Murray's assessment of the lack of utility of dispositions and to ignore them. These issues combine to form a considerable conundrum regarding the treatment of dispositions in principal preparation.

One important issue that also must be addressed is the validity of the dispositions to be taught in our programs. Although the 2008 ISLLC standards do not specify dispositions, as did their 1996 predecessor, at least a substantial portion of the original 43 *dispositions* can reasonably be inferred to serve as a foundation for the new standards. Joe Simpson, co-chair of the NPBEA Steering Committee responsible for the new standards, clarified: "We didn't re-write the standards, but we did make important adjustments to reflect the research findings and the experiences of leaders in the field" (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008b, p. 2). Proceeding with this assumption, a key question that arises is: To what extent are the identified dispositions truly associated with effective school administration? A second question that arises is: If they are positively associated with effective administration, under what conditions?

Researchers should look for various forms of validity from the standards. The two most apparent forms are *content* and *predictive validity*. Content validity is often assessed on the basis of *face validity*, meaning it appears to be correct. However, this must be followed by content validation, which is based on expert judgment. Predictive validity, or criterion-related validity (Babbie, 2001) refers to the extent to which if the dispositions are present, the education leader will be effective. This could/would/should be verified through extensive research studies linking principal performance to the various dispositions (see Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). It would be difficult to establish *construct validity*, which is based on the logical relationships among the variables (Babbie, 2001), because, as noted previously, the overarching construct of *dispositions* remains nebulous and difficult to define with precision. Similarly, it would be difficult to establish *concurrent validity*, which Gay et al. (2009) defined as the degree to which scores on one measure are related to scores on a previously validated and reliable measure. Simply, there are no previously validated and reliable measures of educational administration dispositions. Finally, researchers should examine the *consequential validity* (Messick, 1989) of dispositions. Messick defined this form of validity in terms of the actual and potential uses of the assessment of dispositions. In other words, the validity of dispositions is, in part, a function of the actions that are, or can be, taken once an individual's dispo-

sitions have been measured. To the extent that these actions may show bias, lack of fairness, or lack of distributive justice, the dispositions do not demonstrate sufficient *consequential validity*. This form of validity is especially problematical in regard to dispositions, as is discussed extensively in later sections of this paper.

Because the 1996 ISLLC standards were developed and verified by a substantial number of experienced practitioners, who can legitimately be considered *experts* in the field of education administration, the dispositions identified in those standards can be assumed to have some degree of both face and content validity. However, the question arises as to how, and to what extent, the following questions were addressed by formulators of the ISLLC standards:

- Can principals provide quality leadership despite less-than-desirable dispositions?
- Do the specified desirable dispositions refer to characteristics all principals must have or are they more akin to those of a model citizen?
- Is it possible to effectively and thoroughly identify all the desirable and undesirable dispositions?
- Might the identification of specific desirable dispositions be done at the expense of valuing diversity of dispositions?
- Instead of identifying desirable or required dispositions, is it more appropriate to identify "disqualifying dispositions"?

For example, if they were attempting to determine which dispositions might best characterize a model citizen, principal-preparation program faculty should not assume that some or all of the dispositions are indispensible. Likewise, if they did not consider the contextuality of dispositions, faculty must determine in what specific circumstances the dispositions are valid and in what circumstances they may not be. If a student does not possess a certain disposition that is not found to be essential in all circumstances, should any assessment be made of that disposition and, if so, how should the results of that assessment be used within the program? Because principal-preparation programs lead to administrative certification and licensure for public schools in each state; with reciprocity agreements, they could lead to such licensure nationwide. This, in part, defines the contextual milieu where our graduates are expected to be able to provide leadership. Even within the milieu of American public schools, are the dispositions needed to provide effective administration to a school on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico the same ones needed at a school for incarcerated youth in Montgomery, Alabama?

The contextuality of dispositions hardly seems debatable. Dewey (1916) discussed them as part of the very core existence of society:

> Society exists through a process of transmission quite as much as biological life. This transmission occurs by means of communication of habits of doing, thinking, and feeling from the older to the younger. Without this communication of ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, opinions, from those members of society who are passing out of the group life to those who are coming into it, social life could not survive. (Part 1, p. 4)

Dewey (1937) described the role of the school in communicating societal dispositions:

> In the broad and final sense all institutions are educational in the sense that they operate to form the attitudes, dispositions, abilities and disabilities that constitute a concrete personality. The principle applies with special force to the school. For it is the main business of the family and the school to influence directly the formation and growth of attitudes and dispositions, emotions, intellectual and moral. (n.p.)

Even with the cross-referencing of the new standards with the research base (NPBEA, 2008), it is evident that insufficient research has been conducted to assure predictive validity. Also, the fact that the cross-referencing with the research base was done retroactively, after the 1996 standards had been developed, and that dispositions were eliminated from the 2008 standards, some question arises as to the rigor of the research foundation for dispositions.

Now that the current ISLLC standards no longer specify dispositions that must be taught and assessed in our programs, the profession is challenged to determine which, if any, we choose to address. This is not an easy task. For example, NCATE mandates that all Colleges of Education seeking NCATE accreditation teach and assess *fairness.* On the surface, who could disagree? However, one aspect of the conundrum arises when one considers the question, "what constitutes fairness?" The best treatment of this I have found comes from Stone's (2001) discussion of equity. Stone illustrated eight equally plausible and valid operational definitions of equity in the distribution of pieces of chocolate cake in a graduate class setting. It quickly becomes obvious that equity is defined in the eyes of the beholder and that equality is not always perceived as equity by all stakeholders. With this complexity in mind, which of those eight operational definitions of fairness should we teach in principal-preparation programs? One obvious answer is to teach all of them. But, when it comes to assessment, which is the "correct answer"? If a student chooses a different one from the instructor as being most appropriate in a given circumstance, are we flexible and sophisticated enough to recognize the student's choice as being equally valid from some stakeholder's perspective? If a student chooses to value liberty over equity, a common paradoxical tradeoff, is that automatically "wrong"?

The teaching of dispositions represents another aspect of the conundrum. Teaching certain dispositions on the grounds that they generally result in greater administrative effectiveness is one thing; insisting that students acquire those dispositions is yet another level on the affective learning taxonomy (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1973). To what extent should the instructor impose dispositions on a student?

Another question is concerned with the reliability of principal-preparation programs' mechanisms for assessing dispositions. Researchers would calculate two primary forms of reliability: *stability* and *inter-rater* agreement. The first form addresses the extent to which the same mechanism, used at two or more different times, would yield the same results for the same respondent. The latter addresses the extent to which the various individuals who would be involved in the assessment would agree to a common rating of each respondent (see Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Based on the findings of this preliminary research study, most principal-preparation faculty have given little attention to either form of reliability. The most common form of assessment of dispositions was reported as being the comments of the field-based mentor of the students' internships. In most cases, these mentors had received no special training or preparation for such assessments. There were generally no rubrics to guide this assessment and only one respondent described a systematic research process to assure the reliability of a rubric or instrument.

In most of our principal-preparation programs, students are given "real world" scenarios and are asked how they think they would respond. Few school districts are willing to place our students in legitimate positions of responsibility, authority, and power during the preparation programs, including in our internships, for us to see how they actually would respond. How would actually being in the situation shape their true response? Would it be *fair,* as NCATE insists we must be, to grade a student or to withhold certification based on artificial circumstances? Might the student not quickly develop the very dispositions we prescribe after being immersed with "real world" responsibility, authority, and power? Who might we unwittingly screen out through assessing dispositions in classes or even in internships, rather than in actual administrative situations? Might it be students of different personal, social, or ethnic backgrounds whose dispositions were shaped by those backgrounds? Might we unconsciously limit the diversity of our pool of school administrators?

As we have witnessed in political debates and speeches, even Presidential candidates, despite their relative professional maturity, speechwriters, and careful mentoring and coaching, make dispositional statements that inflame stakeholder groups. Was the statement a poorly chosen expression or evidence of a deeply held disposition? Would they act on that disposition or would they subjugate their personal preferences to a collective will or good? We may think we know answers to these questions, but are we correct? Similarly, statements made by a student or prospective student may seem to reveal dispositions not aligned with those in professional standards, but should we deny admission or certification based on our estimates of how deeply these are held or what actions the person might actually take? What types of students are more likely to avoid such statements consciously, thereby masking dispositions? Which students are more likely to make them? Even if we could determine that a student's statements related to a specific disposition are sufficient evidence that he or she strongly holds that disposition, does that one "negative" disposition outweigh many other "positive" dispositions that a student may hold? If we mandate that students demonstrate certain dispositions to complete our programs successfully, are we assuming that students cannot learn new dispositions over time?

Several other questions arise concerning the reliability of our assessment practices:

- Is it possible to develop an effective process for assessing dispositions, or are there some idiosyncratic elements that might not conform well to even a well-thought-out process?
- What levels of expectations ("dispositional tolerance") should be set and what levels define a passing score? Who determines this, and how?
- How can evaluators prevent their personal biases in favor of or against specific dispositions from entering into their subjective judgment of candidates?
- Are dispositions synergistic in nature, where the whole is greater than a sum of the parts?

These, and other, questions must be answered if we are to serve our students justly.

CONCLUSIONS

With the shift in the 2008 ISLLC Standards away from a specification of required dispositions, and with the 2008 NCATE Standards reducing the list of required dispositions to two, *fairness* and the belief that all students can learn, principal-preparation faculty have leeway to

explore appropriate roles for dispositions. If a role is to be socially just and if dispositions are to have *consequential validity*, the questions posed must be addressed to the full ability of our institutions and of our profession. Do we believe that certain dispositions are essential for school administrators to be effective and socially just? If so, which dispositions and why? If so, can we teach these dispositions in our programs, or should we only admit candidates who possess them? Even if dispositions can be taught or learned in principal-preparation programs, do we have enough faith in the validity of specific dispositions to utilize precious class time to teach dispositions? Do we have valid and reliable assessment processes? Until we have more firm answers to these questions, answers in which we have great professional confidence, the role of dispositions in our programs remains in limbo.

If a specific disposition is important, but not critical, to all school principals, should we deny anyone entrance or exit from our programs for failing to demonstrate that disposition? If we do not have substantial research-based evidence that a specific disposition is critical to education administrators' effectiveness, should we select candidates or define our graduates based on that disposition? If we do not have valid and reliable mechanisms for rating dispositions, should we even attempt to do so? Should we ever consider using the results from assessments not shown to be valid and reliable for any purpose? Who do we screen out from becoming school administrators by considering these dispositions? Are we certain that screening on these dispositions is not, in actuality, a surrogate for screening on other social variables that would limit unnecessarily or unwisely the diversity among principals? I close without answers, but in hopes that I have highlighted the importance of further study and deliberation on the role of dispositions in our programs.

I believe that we *must* address dispositions in our programs, but we must do so in a way that allows us to further that portion of the NCPEA mission that challenges us to: "Ensure access and inclusion of under-represented groups into the professorship and administration and promote social justice in education." NCPEA had a Humanities and Values Interest Group (Chuck Achilles, personal communication, May, 2008) that was active from 1968 to 1990, and perhaps longer. In the interests of working as a democratic group attempting to formulate a fundamental set of universal values, it may be time to reconstitute such an interest group to give proper attention to the role of dispositions in our programs. I think that Walter Cocking would have approved!

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PREPARATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Los Principios y Los Lideres Escolares Del Cambio Democrático: The Principles and the Principals of Democratic Change for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

Betty Alford
Mary Catherine Niño

Some teacher preparation programs are reforming pedagogical and curricular practices to ensure that teacher candidates are adequately prepared to effectively meet the needs and abilities of English language learners (ELLs); however, the principal, as instructional leader on campus, is charged with the task of leading instructional reform to foster quality teaching for a student population that current teachers may or may not have been adequately prepared to teach (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). While an effort has been largely focused on revising pre-service teacher preparation curricula to prepare teachers for ELLs (Abbate-Vaughn, 2008; de Jong & Harper, 2008), systemic reform will not be accomplished unless a similar focus is applied to educational leadership preparation programs and professional development for in-service, mainstream teachers.

Identifying important roles of principals in working toward systemic reform to better serve English language learners can guide principal preparation and professional development. The purpose of this research was to illuminate successful principal roles aimed at enhancing academic excellence and social justice for English language learners within the context of the school-university partnership and to identify principles that served as a foundation for these roles.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A majority of teachers have not been adequately prepared to teach ELLs (Goodwin, 2002; Kindler, 2002; Menken & Antunez, 2001). Pedagogical practices have not changed as quickly as the rapidly changing demographics of an increasing population of English language learners (Murdock, White, Hoque, Pecotte, You, & Balkan, 2003). Therefore, many teachers in the field have not developed the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively and equitably instruct ELLs (Goodwin, 2002; Kindler, 2002; Menken & Antunez, 2001). Milner, Flowers, Moore, and Flowers (2003) concluded that the "low numbers of courses available" (p. 69) in multicultural education was an obvious barrier and shortcoming to effective instruction. While teacher preparation programs are redesigning curriculum to remedy the lack of pre-service teacher preparation to teach ELLs in some states (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008), principals are the catalyst for instructional change for in-service teachers (Bellamy, Fulmer, Murphy, & Muth, 2007).

The principal, as instructional leader, is charged with not only providing professional development to enhance teaching and learning for ELLs, but is also charged with changing the culture and climate that informs the pedagogical foundation upon which teachers design

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and implement instruction (Fullan, 2007a). In addition, the principal is charged with ensuring implementation of quality professional development (Elmore, 2004). As Eun and Hiening-Boynton (2007) pointed out, "Teachers need strong organizational support at the school level, in addition to strong efficacy beliefs, to effectively implement their knowledge and skills" (p. 43). As instructional leader in the school, the principal serves as a crucial component to effective professional development implementation (Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi, & Gallagher, 2007).

THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN FOSTERING INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

The principal must know what to look for in evaluating teachers and programs, and the principal must be able to foster teacher improvement based on the results of the evaluation (Prestine & Nelson, 2005). Eun and Heining-Boynton (2007) studied the impact of an English as a Second Language professional development program and determined that "organizational support at the school level makes a significant contribution to the prediction of level of professional development impact" (p. 41). The principal should serve as a co-learner in professional development (Guskey, 1999), and in effectively designing instruction for ELLs, principals and teachers must understand issues of language acquisition (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). For example, Callahan (2005) stressed,

> Essentially, English learners must be exposed to twice as much instruction as native English speakers in terms of both language and content. To provide effective instruction to English learners, educators will need to revisit allotments of time and course-taking patterns in an effort to integrate higher levels of language alongside academic content. (p. 324)

For effective instruction of the ELL, Callahan (2005) further argued that the emphasis must be on quality instruction.

Principals must also understand that the performance gap between ELL and non-ELL students may be attributed to the language used for test items. Abedi (2002) studied the reliability of standardized achievement test scores for ELLs and found "test item responses by ELL students, particularly ELL students at the lower end of the English proficiency spectrum, suffered from low reliability" (p. 231). His results suggested "ELL test performance may be explained partly by language factors" (p. 255). Callahan (2005) stressed,

> Currently, the deficit model dominates the discourse on English learners; that is, language is a liability. The terminology used to discuss English learners hinges on a shared understanding of the overarching importance of the English language and its acquisition. (p. 322)

In fostering quality instruction for ELLs, knowledge of the language acquisition process becomes essential and should be a component of professional learning opportunities that are provided for teachers and principals (de Jong & Harper, 2008).

Characteristics of High Performing Schools for ELLs

Reyes et al. (1999) studied nine high-performing South Texas schools with high Latino populations to determine four unique characteristics of the schools: collaborative school-

community relationships; collaborative school governance; authentic, caring relationships with students; and advocacy for students, especially in assessment practices and expectations for students. Jesse, Davis, and Pokorny (2004) studied high-achieving Texas middle schools for Latino students and found similar results. Each principal in their study communicated their vision "in their daily behavior, in their comments in faculty meetings, their statements in newsletters and other school documents, and their priorities for budget allocations, scheduling, and hiring decisions" (p. 33). Jesse, Davis, and Pokorny (2004) stated,

> We found that successful schools for Latino students are coherent institutions—schools in which strong, energetic principals and caring, capable teachers have helped students to coordinate and align their efforts around a few clearly articulated values that provide a pervasive motivating focus and overarching purpose. (p. 39)

Because of the principal's position of authority within the school, he or she has a unique opportunity to influence school culture to achieve a coherent school identity (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Jesse, Davis, and Pokorny (2004) also emphasized that principals in successful schools for ELLs were a "strong and visible presence in his or her school" (p. 33). Through communication, celebration, and collaboration with faculty members and other stakeholders concerning the values inherent in a school focused on meeting the needs of all students, the principal plays a key role in strengthening an overall culture that is characterized by equity and excellence (Scheurich & Skrla, 2003).

Jesse, Davis, and Pokorny (2004) found in their study of successful schools for Latino students, "strong unity of purpose, cohesive sense of school identity, and joint effort exhibited by educators and students" (p. 36). Cohesiveness occurs through the development of shared beliefs and values about the mission of the school (Sergiovanni, 2009). Jesse, Davis and Pokorny's (2004) noted in the successful school for Latino students, "Nearly every school was organized into core teams" and "shared a planning period" (p. 34) and further added,

> Professional development contributed to coherence if it was closely aligned to locally expressed goals and needs. The day-to-day interactions among and between staff—team meetings, grade level meetings, subject area meetings—added to coherence once central goals had been established. (p. 36).

Principals can encourage dialogue and professional development that can lead to a shared understanding, cultural change, and systemic reform (Fullan, 2007b).

Systemic Change

Enhancing educational excellence for culturally and linguistically diverse students must be approached as systemic reform (Berman et al., 1995; Berman et al., 2000; Coady et. al, 2003; Hamann, Zuliani, & Hudak, 2005). Learning together and learning from each other is vital to authentic, systemic reform (Duffy, 2003; 2004; 2006). In addition, the practice must meet the needs and abilities of the students who will be in the classrooms. Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) stated, "Schools of education and ongoing professional development opportunities must be calibrated not to current reality, but to the changing demographics of the coming years" (p. 22). Forward thinking, joint reform will be the key to successful instructional change (Fullan, 2007b).

METHODS

This qualitative case study is part of a larger, longitudinal case study of a school-university partnership of a regional university and two school districts that was designed as a five-year project to provide joint-professional development for current teachers, administrators, and professors of teacher education and educational leadership to better meet the academic needs of English language learners. In this portion of the study, the case was bounded by active principals of the project. Qualitative case study was chosen because the researchers sought to gain deep understanding of the specific context within which the partnership is taking place. Six exemplary principals were selected through purposeful sampling in order to attain an understanding of principals' roles in improving instruction for English language learners and of the principles that guided their actions. Six principals in the school-university partnership were identified as strong exemplars of quality leadership for meeting the needs of English language learners. The researchers studied the practice of the principals within the context of the case to describe key roles and principles for leading effective instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Specifically, the research questions were:

1. What roles do successful principals assume in providing instructional leadership to meet the needs of English language learners?
2. What are the guiding principles that served as a foundation for these principals' actions in increasing quality instruction for English language learners?

Data Sources

Purposeful sampling (Merriam, 1998) was used to identify principals who: (a) were active participants in teacher professional development; (b) integrated recommended, researched-based practices for culturally and linguistically diverse students into their expectations for curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and (c) were identified as instructional leaders by the teacher participants in the school-university partnership. Six principals were selected for the research participants. Two were elementary principals, two were middle school principals, and two were high school principals. Three were from one of the partner school districts, and three were from the other partner school district. They had participated in one year of the school-university partnership that was designed to increase knowledge, skills, and dispositions for more successfully meeting the needs of English language learners. One of the principals was Latino, one was African-American, and four were white.

In addition to the interviews with the principal participants, multiple artifacts were collected for analysis. Documents included teacher lesson plans, lesson plan review rubrics, student work samples, and other physical artifacts. Principal interviews were supplemented with teacher and central office administrator interviews. Observations included classroom instruction on principals' campuses, meetings with faculty members, and other site-based observations.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed in a three-stage process (Creswell, 1998). First, a general review of all information—observation notes, interview transcripts, physical artifacts—was conducted, followed by a review of researchers' reflective notes. Second, the researchers obtained feed-

back on transcriptions of the recorded interviews (Yin, 1989). This aided in member-checking as well as adding depth to the data. Third, data were coded, sorted, and connected. The researchers used ATLAS to store transcripts and artifacts and to manage coding. Trustworthiness of the data analysis was attained through member checks an audit trail. The co-researchers served as peer debriefers in order to ensure credibility of the themes that were identified.

FINDINGS

The principal's role in influencing instructional improvement has been identified as second only to the teacher's role (Leithwood et al., 2004). The teacher is directly providing instruction in the classroom, but the principal primarily shapes the culture that supports learning (Lashway, 2006; Leithwood et al.2004; Sergiovanni, 2009). In serving as an instructional leader to meet needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, the effective principals in this study served as leaders of the school improvement process. These schools had experienced a change in student demographics with an increasing population of English language learners, and both principals and teachers recognized the need to increase knowledge and skills in meeting the needs of ELLs. A survey of teachers in the partner schools revealed that while their teacher preparation programs had emphasized the need for multicultural understanding and an appreciation of other cultures, the programs had not taught explicit strategies and skills for meeting the English language learner's needs (Niño, 2007). Professional development was needed that would strengthen teachers' understanding of the language acquisition process and strategies that could assist English-only teachers to effectively teach English language learners (Niño, 2007). Although within the schools, some teachers had demonstrated particular expertise in working with culturally and linguistically diverse students, a culture of academic excellence for the ELL students was not present in many of the schools of the school-university partnership.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: WHAT ROLES DO SUCCESSFUL PRINCIPALS ASSUME IN PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS*?*

From analysis of the data, three primary roles of the six principals who were influencing instructional improvement for ELLs emerged. These roles were: (a) developing a shared understanding of the need and a collective commitment to meeting the needs, (b) fostering acquisition of knowledge, skills, and dispositions to promote a culture of high expectations for ELLs, and (c) modeling a commitment to meeting the needs of all students (see Figure 1).

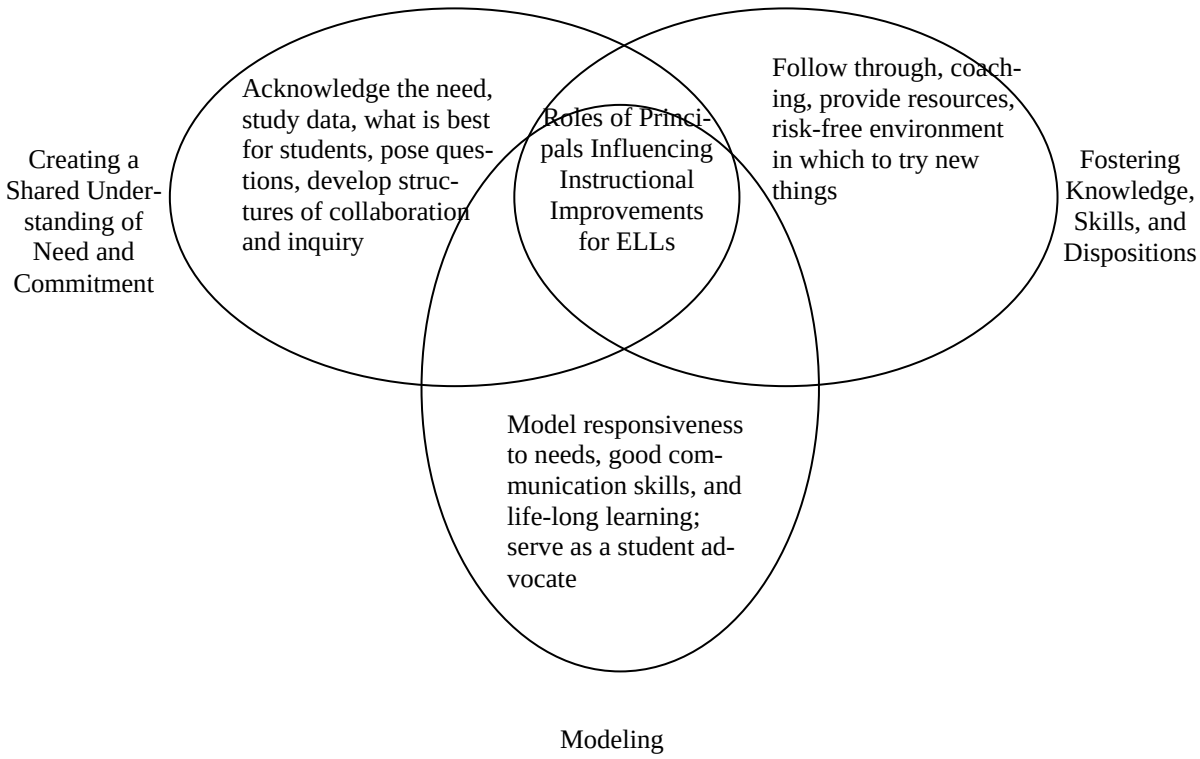

Figure 1. Roles of the principal influencing instructional improvement for ELLs.

DEVELOPING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED AND COMMITMENT TO MEETING THE NEEDS

The data supported these principals' roles as leaders of the school improvement process to more effectively meet the needs of English language learners. A primary role of the principals was building a shared understanding of the importance of meeting the needs of all learners and a commitment to meeting the needs. Integral in developing the shared understanding of the needs and commitment to meeting the needs was studying data, developing structures for collaboration, fostering dialogue, and building relationships.

Studying data. As a principal stressed, "We're going to look at our data, we're going to react to our data, and we're going to respond to our data." They encouraged discussion of benchmark testing of knowledge and skills and analysis of student performance data, but their primary focus was on promoting a shared commitment to fostering learning. As a principal emphasized, "I have our goals posted everywhere just so that we know where we are headed. . . . I expect everyone to treat every child like they are special, because they are." Another principal shared, "I take responsibilities with children very seriously. Their needs come first." Meeting students' needs was more important to these principals than scores on a standardized test. As a principal stressed,

> I really think that my mission is to do what's best for students. Accountability is very important. My job rides on that a lot of times. I really, truly, feel like, if

> we're using great instructional strategies, and we have wonderful relationships with our students, and we're constantly learning, we're looking at data, we're making a plan and then adjusting, then looking at that, making a plan, and adjusting with our English language learners, with our GT students, our homeless students—I mean all of our students, all of that accountability is going to fall in place. I am not a really big person on focusing on grades and focusing on TAKS [Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills]. I really have higher expectations than TAKS. You do what's best for students, and they're going to do well on that test.

Principals stressed the need to respond to student data rather than prepare students to become performance data. In other words, quality instruction for English language learners precedes teaching to the high-stakes assessment. Preparing students to take a test does not constitute fully meeting student needs; however, responding to achievement gaps highlighted by high-stakes testing in order to adapt instruction does.

Developing structures for collaboration. In this study, principals developed a shared understanding of the need through structures for collaboration that were established, such as curriculum meetings every other week and weekly team meetings. For example, a principal stressed,

> We have something called Teams Achieving Greatness (TAG), and one team will TAG another team, and they'll, on their own schedule, set a time to meet after school or on the weekend or whenever they are going to be here to share lessons. It's not just collaborating with your same assignment teacher, but collaborating with other teachers on the campus. Everyone has a leadership role.

In developing commitment to the need, shared ownership of plans of action were also acknowledged. For example, in one school, each science teacher assumed responsibility for monitoring 10 to 12 English language learners, checking on them, answering questions, and encouraging them. In another school, every teacher in math and language arts voluntarily gave up their conference period for a certain number of weeks to tutor students. In this school, faculty and administrators reached the decision that if the student could not come to tutoring before or after school, they would make the tutoring during the day. Collaborative planning characterized these principals' work. As one principal clarified, "I think building time into the day for teachers to talk with other professionals [is crucial]."

Fostering dialogue. The importance of fostering dialogue about important issues was stressed, and multiple avenues were designed for fostering the dialogue. For example, a principal provided an example of a topic in a recent faculty newsletter of "These students don't speak English. What do I do?" As a principal stressed,

> I just think you have to acknowledge the needs. You can't stick your head in the sand. . . . You can't blame anybody . . . .You just keep asking the right questions, and you don't give up. You don't give up on the students. You don't give up on the parents. There's not blame. It's no one's fault. You have to be able to lay your head down every night and say, 'I did the very best I could for every student that I knew needed help today.'

> The following is an example of an in-depth conversation at one principal's school. At the beginning of the year, we also talked about the development of language acquisition and the myth that this child is really shy. Understanding that silence is actually a stage of language acquisition [is important]. . . . . I open up our sessions with a question. We talk about high expectations. What do high expectations look like? Should we have the same expectations for all students? I think critical questions challenge the status quo.

Another principal added that she asks, "Are there some very smart students for whom language is a barrier?" She encourages teachers to see past the language issue and challenge the students. A central office administrator added,

> Be sure the needs of students are being met. Provide them with challenges during the day. You don't need to be doing, 'See Spot run.' You need to be doing the academic vocabulary. They're smart enough to handle that, and they need to be challenged.

These principals fostered dialogue with the faculty, parents, and the student body. As a principal emphasized,

> It's very important to look at your staff and be sure that every communication to the parent is made in a language they understand. Sometimes, you have to hire people with that in mind. It's just essential. The other thing is you need to be sure the communication with parents is there, that parents do feel free to contact you. You have to do this in a multitude of ways.

Communicating with students is also important. A principal described, "I go into the class and speak to our ESL students who speak Spanish. I enjoy talking to these students in spanish, especially the ones that I know feel lost."

Building relationships. In the conversations that were fostered by these principals, critical in this process of building commitment to meet the need was fostering relationships. A principal stressed that too many principals approach issues in an accusatory way. Instead, building relationships is important. The principal explained, "I do believe that caring passionately is a huge part of being an administrator. You can't expect your teachers to care passionately if you don't." A principal emphasized the importance of building relationships with all stakeholders stating, "Building relationships with key people in your community [is important]." The principals shared that building relationships takes time but is worth the time. A principal reinforced, "Any time you can spend on building relationships, involving stakeholders in the process, keeping them informed, and telling the truth [is worthwhile]."

FOSTERING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND DISPOSITIONS

The National Staff Development Council (2001) standards for professional development emphasize the importance of content-specific professional development that occurs over-time with coaching and follow-through and the use of a variety of job-embedded strategies for attaining professional growth, such as, book studies and action research. A principal shared,

"I've also surveyed the teachers to find out what professional development they've participated in and to assess their needs." In recognizing the need for content specific professional development, specific issues were added, such as the need for increasing the academic language of the ELL student. As a principal stated,

> This need extends beyond the ELL to low SES students. . . . I actually had a fifth grade student tell me, 'I was put back [retained] because I didn't talk like you do.' She didn't have the same speech, diction, vocabulary, and she thought that was why she was retained. . . .I think those dialogues [with teachers], those hard ones about race, about culture, about differences [are important].

Aware that people, not programs, accomplish change (Schlecty, 2005), a principal emphasized that they could not simply adopt a program as is and expect it to be effective in their context. As the principal explained, "The method has to be internalized, and we have to make it ours." In order for principals to take the step toward ownership, professional development needed to move beyond decontextualized workshops and become embedded in the school culture.

Principals embedding professional development. Too often meeting the needs of English language learners is described as "just good instructional strategies" (Medina, 2008; de Jong & Harper, 2008). While strategies, such as cooperative learning, tying content to previous knowledge, and illustrating and assessing content in multiple ways, are good instructional strategies for all learners, meeting the needs of ELLs extends beyond knowledge and implementation of good instructional strategies to knowledge of language development and an understanding and appreciation of culture (Abbate-Vaughn, 2008). A belief of the importance of high expectations for all learners with support to make rigorous course work accessible is also important (Reyes et al., 1999).

Principals providing structures and resources for embedding professional development. These effective principals fostered the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and dispositions to aid in improving instruction for ELLs. They provided opportunities for the faculty to attend professional development centered on meeting the needs of ELLs, and they also recognized the importance of follow-through and coaching to learning new skills. They attended the coaches' sessions on campus and at professional development institutes. They also brought resources to their campus. A principal emphasized that he views his role as support for the teachers in providing resources of time, materials, and professional development. These principals established structures for collaboration and ongoing dialogue and discussion. For example, a principal described the teaming process on campus by stating,

> All of our teachers are working in teams. A single grade level is not on the same hallway or conference period so I have been working really hard to bring them together as a unified team of five. One of the ways we do this is to bring them together on a special schedule on certain days.

They also established risk-free environments wherein teachers could feel that it is ok to fail as long as we are trying again. A principal explained, "By allowing teachers to experience [different professional development experiences], they come back with new ideas. . . . A principal needs to listen and encourage." Another principal stressed, "I want them to be risk-

takers." She further explained that if a strategy does not work in teaching a concept, she hopes that teachers will modify the strategy or try again.

Teachers must also understand the language process for ELLs (Doughty & Williams, 1998). For example, a principal described the first week of school this year:

> The first weeks [of having ELL students in their classrooms for the first time], they were screaming, 'They don't speak. They don't talk. They don't understand me.' So, we've done a lot of talking about what we should do and how to support them.

She also described a campus book study being conducted as an online discussion board. In addition, the principal emphasized the importance of being present in the professional development wherein teachers were learning strategies to more effectively meet the needs of English language learners. Another principal added, "If you didn't love teaching and love students, you're not going to make a good administrator in this world right now." In short, these principals recognized that knowledge, skills, and dispositions are all important, and their role is to serve as a catalyst to strengthen these on the campus.

MODELING A COMMITMENT TO MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

In improving schools, a relentless passion in meeting the needs of all students is noted as characteristic of the school leaders (Duffy, 2003). Foremost, the data suggested that these principals modeled a commitment to meeting the needs of all learners through their presence on campus, in classrooms, and in professional development activities. As a principal stated, "I want to model for them what I expect them to do for students." Modeling commitment through engaged presence and critical commitment is critical for principals who wish to merge theory and practice. As one principal stated,

> I think, number one, a principal has to be a practitioner themselves. In other words, they have to have a working knowledge about what it means to be that linguistically challenged student, the second language learner.

Another principal noted, "I attend the professional development with [teachers] because where I am and where I spend my time shows them this is of value to me." As a principal stressed, "I must be visible." Another principal added, "I think when you are visible, you go into the classrooms." Another principal shared,

> Be visible. Meet with all the students, not just those who were going to be valedictorians. That's the key. A lot of times, you go into schools, and the English language learners don't have a clue who the principal is. They don't have a single clue. The principals who are successful are the ones who are visible.

Engaged presence. However, the data supported that the principal's role extended beyond mere presence or laizzez faire leadership. These principals asked key questions regarding equity and excellence through an approach that was non-accusatory. As a principal explained, "I ask, 'What do we need to change?'" Another principal added, "As a principal, you're always asking questions, but you're not overwhelming. I ask, 'What are you doing for these students? How are we going to reach parents and give them the information they need to

make good decisions for their child?'" Still another principal stressed, "I do a lot of talking, a lot of communicating, a lot of listening." These principals model their commitment by being present in the ongoing conversations which must take place in order for quality change to occur on campuses.

In meeting the needs of students, a principal shared the importance of the impact of national issues on students:

> I think an important point is to realize that students bring issues outside of school to school. Another role of the principal may be to encourage teachers to consider this and even recognize that the role of the principal may be to reassure students that school is a safe place. Their job is to do their school work. For example, our ESL students are sometimes most affected by the economy. They know when mom and dad are worried. For example, when a local industry was in the news concerning immigration issues, some students had heard that a bus would just go to the industry and put all undocumented workers in a bus and drive them across the border. We had students who were worried and asked, 'Where will we live? If they take my parents while I am at school, how will I find my parents?' We reassured them and said, 'You are here to get an education. We're not asking any questions about your status. School is a safe place.' However, everything that happens in the world and community affects students.

Principals acknowledged the issues that affected their students and engaged students and teachers in addressing the issues.

Critical commitment. Principals examined policies, serving as a student advocate asking questions, such as, "Should you not have the expectation that they can compete with their peers, and if we don't, when will they learn?" A principal also shared,

> We are beginning to partner with the Advanced Placement teacher at the high school so that students can attain AP Spanish Literature credit in middle school. It's just another strategy to be able to say, 'You have two college credits and push them toward college' [as a next step after high school].

Another principal emphasized,

> When you think ESL [in our region], you think mainly Spanish. The students are coming from India, from Japan, and all over. I think the principal must understand that you must meet these students' needs just as you do special education students' needs." Sometimes advocacy involved tangible actions, such as hand scheduling ESL students to be sure they were with teachers who could support them. . . . You have to be sure that the needs of the ESL students are being met.

These principals raised questions and challenged the status quo. A principal shared, "I plant seeds with my grade level chairs, and they take the idea to their team members. They make revisions, and we adjust." Another principal added, "We have to constantly talk about things that are going to improve our campus and help us to meet our goals." These principals modeled their commitment by providing resources and hiring individuals who could best meet student needs. As a principal emphasized, "My job is to ask, 'What can I do to help?'" An-

other principal added that this includes ensuring that curriculum materials are provided that reflect diversity instead of only white, middle class students.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2; WHAT ARE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES THAT SERVED AS A FOUNDATION FOR THESE PRINCIPALS' ACTIONS IN INCREASING QUALITY TEACHING FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS?

The roles principals fill influencing instructional improvement and serving as leaders of the school improvement process are guided by critical beliefs which serve as the dispositions necessary for successful improvements. The principles shared by the principals in the study describe the dispositions that led them to choose and prioritize the roles and practices which influenced instructional improvement for ELLs. Principals in the study shared beliefs in: (a) the importance of basing decisions upon what's best for students, (b) the additive value of all students, (c) the importance of equity and excellence, (d) the importance of modeling an ethic of care and authenticity, (e) the benefits of collaboration and dialogue, (f) the value of quality professional development, and (g) the importance of continually questioning the status quo.

THE BELIEF IN WHAT'S BEST FOR STUDENTS

The belief in what's best for students predicated the principals' goals and decisions and created the central focus for all activities and actions. This student-centered vision was maintained by the principals in the study. One principal noted,

> You have to put the students first. Truly successful schools do that. They do that every day. Until you do that, and until you take responsibility for those children that you teach or the children that you supervise, you're not going to be successful with everyone.

While the principals in the study gave explicit attention to the linguistic and cultural needs of English language learners on their campuses, they also maintained that meeting the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students was part of the overarching belief that they meet the needs of *all* students. Meeting the needs of ELL students requires special roles and practices, especially related to imparting the needed knowledge, skills, and dispositions to the faculty in order to build capacity (Eun & Heining-Boynton, 2007). However, the principals of these schools saw meeting the needs of ELL students as an integral part of meeting *all* students' needs. This stems from the belief in the value of all students. The principals in the study exhibited dedication to ELL students, but not *only* to ELL students. The principals created a culture of equity and excellence which included all learners.

THE BELIEF IN THE ADDITIVE VALUE OF ALL STUDENTS

The principals in the study recognized the value of each student. This value was not *in spite of* their background, socioeconomic status, linguistic profile, or cultural experience. This value was founded in respect and understanding for each student and his or her experiences. The additive approach to all students is evident in the implicit value the principals believed ELL students have. This is contrary to a subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1999) approach which views students with linguistic difference at a deficit. In the subtractive belief system, linguistically diverse students are approached from a "treatment-based" perspective: a lack of

a prescribed level of English proficiency is treated as a deficiency and the student is "treated" with remedial interventions to bring him or her up to par.

The additive approach in the belief of the unique value of each student is apparent in the middle school's emphasis on gaining proficiency in Spanish. By emphasizing Spanish instruction for native speakers at the middle school level, the principal was sending the message that the students' first language was valued. The belief in the value of all students and an additive approach to difference was evident in the principal's practice of reaching out to the Spanish speaking community of parents by having a parent night conducted solely in Spanish. This places value on the Spanish language. It also shows respect for linguistic difference in an additive way because students and parents are not given the information in a summarized translation; rather, they are an integral part of the dialogue and activities of the parent's night. One principal attributed an increase in Hispanic achievement test scores to "more teachers understanding Hispanic kids." The principal facilitated this understanding by modeling building relationships with students and parents. This was accomplished by the principal's belief that all students have value and their differences add to the culture of the school. The principal also emphasized that each population of students was not homogenous; each population was diverse in its skills and needs. This principal described the multiplicity of diversity as "the layers of the petals of the bloom," emphasizing the beauty of the differences in her students. Cultural and linguistic diversity was valued in its multiplicity, placing the value on each student's unique characteristics.

THE BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

The principals' belief that each student is of value extended to the belief in the importance of equity and excellence. Each student's value and the belief in the additive nature of diversity provided a path for equity and excellence. One principal referred to a conversation she had with a team of teachers who used the "excuse" of students' lack of English proficiency for lower expectations. This principal's commitment to equity and excellence led her to challenge her teachers' belief systems, asking critical questions: "Should you not have the expectations that [English language learners] be able to compete with their same-aged peers? And if we don't do that, when will they ever get it?" The principals in the study emphasized the need for scaffolded instruction to provide ELL students with the skills to reach high expectations. One principal stated,

> I think one of the underlying principles for me, or beliefs, is we have got to get away from feeling like we're being fair or not fair. I try to use the word *equitable* a lot, which means some students are going to need more than other students.

The principals in the study exhibited strong commitment to caring and authenticity in order to realize equity and excellence.

THE BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF MODELING AN ETHIC OF CARE AND AUTHENTICITY

The principals emphasized the need to care for students academically, but also personally and socially. The principals shared a belief in the importance of modeling an ethic of care and authenticity. This authentic approach to the interlaced position of schooling and other factors outside the school building greatly impacted each school's culture of equity and excel-

lence. One principal noted, "I do believe that caring passionately is a huge part of being an administrator. You can't expect your teachers to care passionately if you don't." Part of caring authentically meant that the principals addressed community issues with students. An issue of major concern for the principals' students in the study was citizenship status. The principals exhibited the belief of the importance of an ethic of care and authenticity in the direct addressing of the issue:

> We reassured them, and said, 'You are here to get an education. We're not asking any questions about your status. School is a safe place.' However, everything that happens in the world and community affects students.

The principals' belief in the ethic of care (Noddings, 1992/2005) and authenticity (Starratt, 2004) was also exhibited in such moments of praxis (Freire, 1970). The principals described the need to care enough to act authentically, rather than "going through the motions." The principals in the study took significant actions to improve the schooling experience for ELL students. Care and authenticity were recognized as two "foundational ethics [for] educational leaders *when they attempt to lead*" (Starratt, 2004, p. 5) (author's italics). The principals believed that care and authenticity were important principles for beginning to create a campus culture of equity and excellence; however, the beliefs were critical to following through and making the culture a reality. The beliefs were embodied in their commitment to carry out the intended actions. The principals believed that by modeling these principles, teachers were inspired to follow with similar acts of care and authenticity.

THE BELIEF IN THE BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION AND DIALOGUE

These moments of praxis were the result of the belief in the benefits of collaboration and dialogue. The principal who questioned her teachers' lowered expectations for culturally and linguistically diverse students followed with dialogic steps (Shields, 2004) which facilitated a collaborative approach to realizing a moment of praxis. The principal challenged the idea of lowered expectations, guided a conversation which concluded in the understanding of the need for an expectation excellence for all students, and collaborated with the teachers to build their capacity to not only have high expectations for ELL students, but also to scaffold students to realize those expectations. The principals who believed in the principle of collaboration and dialogue saw results in the classroom. Teachers were more likely to follow through after a collaborative session than with mandated steps. One principal connected her belief in collaboration and dialogue with teachers to the teachers' beliefs in collaboration and dialogue with their students.

> It's very connected, because they are going to respond to their students how you respond to them—your environment and your culture on your campus—it really affects how your students or student are treated. How you take care of your teachers and how happy your teachers are, what kind of people they are, and what kind of learners they are really affects every single kid. If you have an unhappy teacher, who's finished learning, who doesn't want to do anything different, it's going to be hard for kids in that classroom to be treated with respect and to want to learn. Because, how can you make kids fall in love with learning if you are really tired of it yourself?

The principals recognized that creating democratic learning communities with teachers through dialogue and collaboration not only increased the likelihood that needed instructional reforms for ELL students would take place, it also increased the dialogue and collaboration in the classrooms.

THE BELIEF IN THE VALUE OF QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The principals similarly believed in the need for quality professional development in realizing moments of praxis. Quality professional development was a critical element in equipping the teachers with the professional tools to create a campus of equity and excellence. Providing the inspiration by modeling beliefs in equity and excellence, the value of all students, care and authenticity, and collaboration and dialogue was not enough if the principal did not pragmatically couple these with quality professional development which puts the tools for action in the teachers' hands. Principals in the study held that professional development was needed to build the capacity for educators to realize and actualize the beliefs they held. This belief was evident in the principals' use of needs assessments, from surveys to observations and dialogues, for the teachers' professional development needs. At the heart of what the principals believed was necessary for quality professional development was the creation of authentic, caring learning communities. These principals not only facilitated professional development for their faculty and staff, they also were an integral part of it. The principals noted that being an integral part of the professional development—from its design or delivery—created a "buzz." One principal noted that "As we continue to have dialogue about curriculum, about instruction, about strategies, I've started to hear the buzz in the lounge. That's how I know we're making some changes." Another principal noted "We are not talking about how so-and-so is not behaving in someone else's class, but we are talking about 'Oh, I did this really cool thing today!'" Quality professional development is deeply embedded in the other beliefs the principals held. Without the guiding principles, the professional development does not facilitate a learning community with targeted goals and actions (Sergiovanni, 2009).

THE BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUALLY QUESTIONING THE STATUS QUO

Inherent in the other principal beliefs is the importance of continually questioning the status quo. The principals indicated that they continually reflect upon the practices and beliefs in their schools to be in tune with the difference between doing what has been done and doing what is best for students. The principals brought this reflection to their teachers through critical dialogue and questioning. Had the principals not fostered a trusting, risk-free environment, the teachers would not have been open to engaging in critical discussions. Had the principals not been attuned to doing what is best for students, they would not have recognized the status quo was not working. The principals in this study were firm believers in reflective practice (Sergiovanni, 2009) designed to continually evaluate campus activities. What marked these principals was the belief that they were responsible for building the reflective capacity in their teachers—not only by modeling, but by engaging in critical conversations with their teachers. As principals build this capacity, teachers begin to continually reflect during planning, instruction, and assessment. Through this, student learning and achievement is impacted. The beliefs the principals in the study held formed a delicate web—enabling teachers to begin to understand the relatedness of issues with ELL students. The belief systems created a cohesive

culture of high expectations—for both students and teachers—followed with structures to achieve the expectations.

IMPLICATIONS

Principal preparation programs have been criticized nationally as not connecting theory and practice and not truly preparing principals who can serve as instructional leaders in schools (Gary, Fry, Bottoms, & O-Neill, 2007). The instructional leader that is proposed is one who (a) can serve as a facilitator of the school improvement process, (b) understands the importance of democratic practices, such as, shared decision making and a commitment to equity and excellence, and (c) will "center their practice on the values of democracy and the common good" (Kochan & Reed, 2005, p. 81).

Content in principal preparation programs that increases understanding of the language process relative to English language learners emerged as critically important. Principals need understanding of best practices for ELLs in order to evaluate teacher practice and to provide embedded, quality professional development based on needs of students and teachers. The knowledge and skills needed for teachers were also discussed as needs for development in principal preparation programs. In addition, specific knowledge for principals, such as legal requirements for students identified as limited English proficient (LEP), ESL and bilingual program choices, and effective evaluation of curriculum alignment in relation to ELL student needs are critical knowledge and skills for principals.

Although knowledge and skills are important, the principals also emphasized the importance of development of key dispositions and belief sets. However, a principal questioned whether the disposition of being personable can be taught. As he stressed,

> You can teach them all the curriculum, and the academic part of it. Some principals just don't have that personality that students can relate to. It's easier for me because growing up I didn't speak any English. . . . I know how some of these students feel, and I know how it felt as a third grader when I was told that because of my Spanish background, I was already behind. I can relate to how [ESL] students feel. I think that has helped me as a principal.

Another principal pointed out those good intentions cannot replace knowledge and sensitivity to needs. The principal cautioned,

> Sometimes, I've found that principals in their desire to do a good job for ELLs tend to isolate them in a group of like language learners. You've given them both a support and a crutch. I think you can isolate too long. I think a principal not only needs to know what strategies work best, he or she needs to be able to identify the strategies when he or she goes into the rooms.

The principals spoke to the need of a balanced principal preparation curriculum which develops not only an understanding of best practices and legal requirements for ELLs, but also develops understanding of cultural and linguistic needs of students.

A critical principle to impart in principal preparation programs is the additive value of student diversity. A side effect of demographic disaggregation is the subtractive treatment (Valenzuela, 1999) of ELL student groups experiencing achievement gaps. The additive value

of student diversity coupled with the belief in and value of equity and excellence for all students are critical precursors to positive change for ELL students. Principal programs should also equip principal candidates with the knowledge and skills to evaluate practice in schools, couple the evaluation with a belief in care and authenticity, and reflect upon status quo practice to begin to ask teachers critical questions about their practice.

The importance of strengthening student skills in collaborative planning and distributed leadership was also evident. Aspiring principals need skills in facilitating dialogue and crucial conversations, and in building relations, in short, as Leithwood (2004) proposed, in developing people. As a principal emphasized, "The day of just being a manager, that day is long passed." Principles that emerged from the data that principal preparation programs must foster include: (a) in-depth, authentic understanding of the additive value of student diversity, (b) the use of this understanding to guide decision making in the interest of students, (c) valuing and believing in the possibility of equity and excellence for all students, (d) modeling an ethic of care and authenticity for both students and teachers in order to create a learning community and to authentically challenge the status quo, (e) valuing the benefits of collaboration and dialogue in creating risk-free, trusting environments which foster democratic learning communities, and (f) understanding that quality professional development is inextricably linked to the creation of a democratic learning community.

The principals in the study reiterated their belief in the benefit of collaboration and dialogue over top-down mandates. The results of this study imply that principal programs should stress democratic leadership practice through collaboration and dialogue. While state and federal accountability measures have focused student success or failure on the principal, pre-service principals must be given the knowledge and skills to form dispositions founded upon the belief in the benefits of collaboration and dialogue with teachers, community, and students. Principals attributed much of the ELL student success on the campuses to engaging in conversation with students, being in their classrooms, and bringing them into the dialogue on the campus—both as participants and as foci of responsive curriculum and instruction.

CONCLUSIONS

Democratic learning communities are characterized by open dialogue and discussion of pertinent concerns (Sergiovanni, 2009). The principal listens as well as poses problems while engaging in learning with faculty members, and both equity and excellence are valued (Kochan & Reed, 2005). As Kochan and Reed (2005) explained, "Democratic leadership requires individuals to adopt a collaborative approach that includes building a sense of community with both internal and external stakeholders" (p. 68). When professional development fosters dialogue on critical questions and is designed to meet authentic needs, the democratic learning community is fostered. Analyzing data and challenging assumptions through dialogue is critical as a culturally responsive leader (Johnson & Bush, 2005). Johnson and Bush (2005) contend that "culturally proficient leaders must have the skills and knowledge to persuade and influence those that they lead to challenge their assumptions about current practices in schools" (p. 293). Critical reflection and dialogue are essential in fostering transformative learning (Brown, 2006). As Dantley (2005) recommended,

> Rather than filling current school leaders' heads with more technical knowledge, professional development opportunities might include times of reflection where leaders are compelled to deal with critical issues in a nonthreatening environment. . . . Moral leadership is not timid about asking the hard questions of the purpose

> of schools and who are most ably served by them. It is a daunting task to be a moral school leader, but one that must be embraced by more men and women in this 21st century. (pp. 45–46)

This case study challenges practicing administrators to improve not only their own practice, but also to foster effective instructional practice. In addition, this research illuminates important knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be fostered in pre-service principals and teachers being prepared in the partner university. The case study reinforced that the roles of principals are not mutually exclusive and are over-lapping and reinforcing. Fulfilling one role effectively enhances fulfillment of another role. Together, fulfilling these roles through tangible actions to enhance effective instruction for English language learners and to structure a culture of equity and excellence can yield powerful results. The case study is valuable in that the specific principles of effective instructional reform that the principals in this school-university partnership exhibited to foster teacher excellence and support student success for the English language learner serve as exemplars for educational leaders—at both the scholar and practitioner levels.

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Preparing Future School Leaders: How Can it be Accomplished Online?

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The idea that learning can take place even though the instructor and student are at different physical locations is not a new concept. It is the definition of distance learning, which has developed along with reliable long distance communication. Common practice in 18th and 19th century frontier, America saw professionals of all types prepared by a system of learning that was carried on through the mail, i.e., correspondence school. By the 20th century the reliance on correspondence schools began to diminish and distance education shifted to primarily a training source for individuals in remote areas, those involved in a vocational pursuits or as a supplement to traditional learning environments. Many factors contributed to the shift away from distance education, not the least of which was a drive to reform and upgrade the professions and the educational preparation professionals received (Bonner, 2002).

The advent of the Internet ushered in a renewed ascendance of distance learning. All manner of learning purposes are evidenced in this new medium from professional development to hobby interests to degree acquisition (Allen & Seaman, 2007). Nowhere is this move to distance learning more vigorously pursued than at degree-granting institutions. The National Center for Education Statistics (Parsad, & Lewis, 2008) reported the phenomenal growth:

- 4,200 two and four year degree granting Title IV institutions were surveyed
- 66% (2,772) reported offering distance education in some form
- 65% offered college credit through distance education
- 62% of institutions offering online courses did so totally online with no blended or hybrid courses
- 1.2 million students were enrolled in college credit distance education courses at the surveyed institutions of which 77% were online courses
- 32% of the college level programs (11,200) in the survey reported being totally online. Of these programs, 66 % offered college degrees, and 34% offered certificates totally through distance education
- Asynchronous instructional design was the overwhelming method used (75%)

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- Reasons for developing distance education programs included—student demand for flexible scheduling, affording access to more students, increasing enrollment, minimizing the use of existing college facilities
- 94% of institutions offering college credit courses developed the courses themselves.

This paper is a report on a study of one online program, a graduate-level school principal preparation program leading to a state license with an optional master's degree component. The evaluation was undertaken out of concern over the quality of the program and as part of routine ongoing program evaluations within the department and college. The authors detail the nature of the program, the evaluation methodology applied, findings and recommendations in this paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of preparing school leaders remains a focus of concern and controversy. Principals are recognized as central to school success (Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry & Hill, 2001) yet much controversy surrounds who is admitted to preparation programs and how effective such programs can be (Creighton & Jones, 2001). Hess and Kelly (2005) are harsh critics of past preparation practices and express little hope for improved results based on proposed reforms to state licensure programs. Interestingly, these criticisms emerged almost concurrently with the adoption of new standards for the preparation of school leaders designed to address the perceived failings of traditional pre-service programs (Wilmore, 2001; Southern Regional Education Board, 2006).

The trend toward more online learning has compounded the controversy and skepticism about the quality of online learning generally and newly prepared school leaders in particular, as educators, researchers and policy makers ponder the methods and outcomes of such preparation programs (Huss, 2007; Tallent-Runnels, Thomas, Lan, Cooper, Ahern & Shaw, 2006; Wiesenberg & Stacey, 2005; Roval, 2003; Law, Hawkes & Murphy, 2002; Lockee, Moore, & Burton, 2001; Gibson, 1998). Within this dialogue, issues emerged about who chooses online education and why. Of particular interest to this evaluation study is the research and commentary related to gender (Astleitner & Steinberg, 2005; McSporran & Young, 2001; Sullivan, 2001).

A strong theme of the research literature was the positive perceptions of students about distance education and online learning among those who have had experiences with this approach for learning. Convenience and flexible scheduling seemed to be key factors in student preferences for online delivery (Allen, Bourhis & Marbry, 2002). Concerns about the value of cohort models, the loss of the dynamics of the face-to-face classroom, and the value of collaborative learning, interactive learning, and constructed knowledge through group process are also discussed in the research literature (Engstrom, Santo & Yost, 2008; Potthoff, Fredrickson, Batenhorst, &Tracy, 2001; Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Teitel, 1997).

This literature review served to inform the evaluation team about issues and concerns found at the conjunction of principal preparation programs, collaborative learning, and online learning as a preservice delivery model. Questions, findings and methods of investigation from the research helped to shape this evaluation. Works cited in this section are offered as a representative sample of the extensive knowledge base in these areas.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STANDARDS

The Master's Degree in Education Leadership at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs requires 42 semester credits of prescribed courses. There are no electives. Students who want only a state license are obliged to take 33 credits. Courses for both the degree program and the licensure program are developed based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). The degree program is normally completed over five semesters, although students can accelerate their course taking and finish in three semesters. The program is completed totally online, and while rare, students may take some of their classes on campus. The online program mirrors the traditional on campus program in all respects: credit requirements, courses, course sequence, practicum, and a portfolio as a terminal assessment of the student's skill and knowledge. Students who seek the master's degree must also complete an evaluation project in lieu of a thesis requirement.

Admission criteria for the online program are identical to the criteria for the on campus program. There is a bachelor's degree requirement, a minimum grade point average, an application essay, recommendations from colleagues and supervisors, test scores from the Graduate Record Examination, and an interview by a faculty member. The online students are mainly interviewed by telephone with a few cases being accomplished via email. Most online students reside within the state. About half the students are from beyond reasonable commuting distance to the campus. A few enrollees each year reside out of state or in foreign countries. Most of these non-resident individuals plan to return or move to the state in the future to pursue positions in educational leadership.

Faculty for the online program parallels the on campus program. The same balance of tenured, tenure seeking, instructors and adjunct faculty is used. In most cases the same instructor who teaches online also teaches an on campus section of the same class. Course syllabi are almost identical for courses with the same number and title. Course expectations, objectives and assessment practices are also similar from on campus to online programs.

Students who seek a state license, either within the master's degree or as an end in itself, must complete a 300-clock hour practicum under the supervision of a practicing and licensed education administrator. During the practicum the student must have an opportunity to experience an extensive array of practical activities and assignments related to the principalship. Students who apply for the state license must successfully pass a state-sanctioned examination, administered by an independent testing company. This test is based on the skill and knowledge presented in the degree and licensure programs and reflects the ISLLC standards.

The on campus and online programs are accredited by the state and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). As a condition of such accreditation, the programs must be built around the accreditation standards of the sanctioning authority within NCATE (2002), in this case the Educational Leadership Constituency Council (ELCC), which uses the ISLCC standards as its basis. The programs' courses of study are developed around the standards. The practicum experience also addresses the six standards. The student portfolio, submitted upon completion of the program, requires students to explain through a narrative process, and provide evidence with artifacts, that they have acquired the skills and knowledge specified in the standards for a beginning principal. The six standards, listed in Table 1, are the core of both the on campus and online programs.

Table 1. Interstate School Leaders' Licensure Consortium: Standards for School Leaders.

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by …
Standard 1.0: facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.
Standard 2.0: promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.
Standard 3.0: managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
Standard 4.0: collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
Standard 5.0: acting with integrity, fairly, and in an ethical manner.
Standard 6.0: understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

The department faculty initiated the online program in 2000. Impetus for starting the online program emanated from the campus mission to serve remote parts of the state. The program was started as a pilot effort and was designed as a hybrid program in that students were required to come to campus for orientation workshops and their first course. Students returned to campus toward the end of the program for matters related to the internship and portfolio. The program at that time was limited to state residents in rural areas. Over time, the program transformed into a totally online offering, which allowed for students who could not reasonably travel to campus. By 2008, most students in the online program never set foot on the campus.

Both the on campus and online programs are cohort-based. A group of students would be admitted to the program and take the required sequence of courses as a group. Strict adherence to the cohort model has diminished so that in recent years students are allowed to enter either the on campus or online program during any semester. The consequence of this more open enrollment is that the cohort effect has been diluted, although most students complete the coursework as a group over five semesters.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation maintains an overarching focus on the quality of the online program. Historically, the campus-based program has successfully prepared students to assume school leadership roles throughout the state. The guiding questions for the study revolved around whether the online program was achieving the same results. Therefore, evaluation questions probed three areas: (1) comparability of the online program to the on campus program, particularly, with regard to inputs and outcomes; (2) the quality of students recruited and admitted to the online program compared to on campus students; and, (3) perceptions of students and faculty about the quality of the two programs. In consideration of these three areas of investigation, the evaluators sought to answer the following questions:

Program Inputs and Outcomes

- Do students in the online program achieve the same level of skills and knowledge, as defined in the six standards, as the on campus students?
- Are student assessment techniques comparable between programs?
- Are there differences in the quality of work products developed in courses from each program?
- Do online students successfully complete major program benchmarks such as internships, portfolios, and state license examinations at the same rate and grade as on campus students?

Student Comparisons

- How do the students in the online program compare with the on campus students from a demographic perspective, e.g., age, gender, level of professional experience?
- How do the students in the online program compare with the on campus students in regards to undergraduate GPA and other program admission criteria?
- Why do students select the online program or the campus program?
- Do online students have the same professional aspirations as on campus students?

Faculty and Student Perceptions of Program Quality

- How do students perceive the quality of courses in the respective programs, and how do these perceptions compare between programs?
- How does the faculty perceive the quality of courses in the respective programs?
- How satisfied are students with the level of preparation they receive in their respective program?
- How confident is the faculty in the level of preparation for online versus on campus students?

METHODOLOGY

Program evaluation is often a challenging endeavor with both good news and bad news scenarios with respect to potential sources of data. This study was no exception. A mixed methodology was used to collect information about the two programs, their students and faculty. Records review, surveys and interviews were undertaken. Analysis techniques were applied as dictated by the nature and amount of data collected.

A statistical analysis of extant data gathered from student academic records was conducted to compare the admission status of the two groups and progress toward program completion. The data were gathered from the various program outcome measures, such as: internship grades from the mentor administrator and the site professor; ratings of the student portfolios submitted at the end of the program as evidence of the student's accomplishment relative to the six program standards; and, scores from the state examination for school principal license.

An identical self-administered 37-item questionnaire was conducted online for students from both groups. Questions in the survey sought student opinions about the main points of

the overall evaluation, i.e., program quality and effectiveness. Special attention was paid in the survey to specifically reference the six ISLLC program standards.

Faculty members who teach in both programs were interviewed and asked about their perceptions of the online program's quality and effectiveness as compared to the on campus program. A structured interview was used. The interview consisted of seven direct questions and one open-ended question to solicit personal perceptions.

The online program has been underway since the year 2000; however, because of the changes that have taken place in the online program over time, this evaluation was delimited to the past three and a half academic years of 2005–2008. This decision was made because the online program has only stabilized recently from its design and development phases. As a result, data for on campus students was limited to this timeframe as well.

Concerns about reliability and validity in the study were addressed in several ways. The study centered on the ISLLC standards, which have been adopted by many states, in some cases for over a decade, as the basis for their licensure programs. Inclusion criteria for faculty interviewed for the study required that they teach in both programs. The self-administered questionnaire was identical for both groups. Technology concerns about the online questionnaire for the on campus group were not a factor since all students are required to demonstrate competence in the use of technology as a requirement of the program.

LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

The study was not a third party evaluation. All investigators are affiliated with the college in some manner. The lead author was a professor in both the on campus and online programs and the remaining evaluators were PhD students in the department, thus self reporting bias is a factor. In an effort to make comparisons between two stable programs, the decision was made to delimit the collection of data from the two programs to the past three to three and a half years. This decision reduced amounts of raw data and a limitation on some of the statistical calculations available to the evaluation team.

The sample in the evaluation was small. Initially 153 graduates were contacted; however, about 24 of these were from a third type of program delivery which was a school district-based cohort programs and were excluded from the study. This part of the sample was not included in this report since the faculty for the program did not serve as instructors for both the online and on campus groups. The total number of students included in the sample was 129, of which 53 were on campus students and 76 were online students. It should also be noted that the sample for the evaluation was purposeful in that it was based on convenience, and no attempt was made to randomize or stratify the sample. All students who were currently enrolled or had graduated, or otherwise completed the program during the past three and a half years were contacted. Results and conclusions drawn from the analysis reflect only a particular point in time and the particular groups investigated.

FINDINGS

The evaluation results presented a conflicting picture in that some outcome measures and faculty perceptions did not align. Student performance in the online program fell short of student performance in the traditional program in some areas. However, faculty perceptions about the viability of the online program were split between enthusiastic and doubtful. A detailed presentation of evaluation findings is presented below.

Structurally, the online program mirrored the traditional program in almost every way. The big difference, of course, was the lack of in-person interaction among students and between students and faculty in the online program. This lack of face to face interaction proved to be a significant factor for faculty. The course of study, course sequencing, degree and licensure requirements, and program standards were identical for each program.

Student undergraduate Grade Point Averages (GPA) did not vary to any degree of statistical significance. The online undergraduate average GPA was 3.24, and the campus undergraduate GPA was 3.11. Both programs were dominated by female students, 66% overall, with the online program having a slightly higher female enrollment of 69%. Overall, the program inputs were similar.

Objective outcome data showed little difference between groups. The average in program GPA for the online group equaled 3.90, while the on campus average GPA was 3.93. State licensure test data were limited for the online group as all had not tested, although pass rates seemed equivalent for both groups thus far.

For both the internship experience and the portfolio, faculty used rubrics that categorized student work into three areas: 0–1.6 = Basic; 1.7–2.4 = Proficient; 2.5–3.0 = Advanced. Both the internship experience and the portfolio were part of the assessment of students' skill and knowledge relative to the six standards. Average scores from the internship for the online group were 2.36, which falls within the "Proficient" range. The on campus group had an average score of 2.60, which placed them in the "Advanced" category overall. The site mentors, school administrators who supervised the internship, generated the internship scores. The reason for this difference between the groups was found in the range of scores within each group. Proportionally, more members of the online group scored at the Basic level, and more members of the on campus group scored at the Advanced level.

One difference between the two programs was that the on campus students received a visit during the internship from the university professor who oversaw all internships. Visits at the internship site served as a coaching session in which the professor and student reviewed the standards and strategies for successfully completing the internship. Online students were not visited by the university professor. A handful of the online students were not residing in the state, and some of were even in foreign countries. However, the professor was available to the online students to answer questions about the internship via telephone or email.

All portfolios were reviewed and rated by the same professor, which suggests consistency in scoring. The portfolios addressed the six program standards and were categorized within the same rubric as the internship: Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Both groups scored in the Advanced range for the portfolio: online = 2.78, on campus = 2.86.

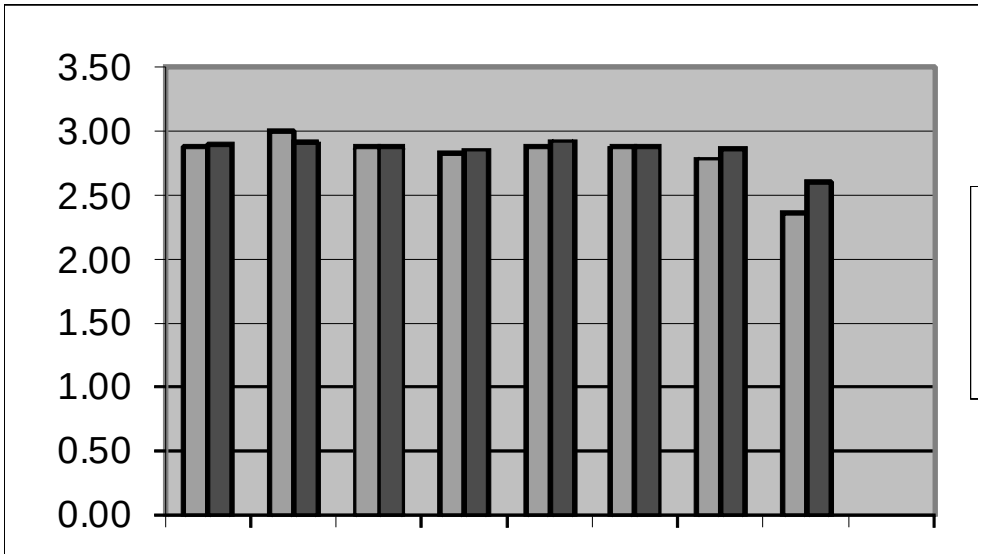

Figure 1. Internship and portfolio average scores by group.

The student survey produced the most data. Key findings from the survey are presented here in summary form. In the interest of minimizing redundancy, some responses will be combined, e.g., "well and extremely well." At the end of each summary statement, the percent answering is listed with the score from the on campus group first followed by the online group.

The on campus group returned 30 surveys for a 57% response rate and the online group returned 20 surveys for a 26% return rate. A total of 50 surveys were tabulated for a combined response rate of 39%. Margins of error were not calculated. The percentages reported below list the on campus group first followed by the percentages for the online group.

With regard to motivation for enrolling in their respective program, personal convenience ranked highest (40%–75%) among choices listed for the survey responders. The desire to enhance career options (83%–85%) along with the aim of becoming a school leader (57%–90%) received the most selections. Overwhelmingly, both programs consisted of teachers and other licensed personnel (93%–95%). Almost all students in both groups indicated that they plan to apply for the principal license upon program completion (93%–100%).

The students rated their perceptions of how well prepared they felt relative to the six program standards. Table 2 provides a breakdown of responses combining "well prepared and extremely well prepared"

Table 2. Student Survey Results Regarding Perceived Ability Relative to Program Standards.

% Response Campus—Online (well or extremely well)	Stem for the survey questions asked the respondent if, "You are able to…"
87%–95%	model and set high standards to ensure quality learning experiences that lead to success for all students?
96%–95%	lead and support a school community that is committed and focused on learning?
80%–55%	behave ethically and create an environment that encourages and develops responsibility, ethics and citizenship in self and others?
90%–85%	recognize, appreciate, and support ethnic, cultural, gender, economic, and human diversity throughout the school community while striving to provide fair and equitable treatment and consideration for all?
93%–90%	be a continuous learner who encourages and supports the personal and professional development of self and others?
86%–85%	Organize and manage human and financial resources to create a safe and effective working and learning environment?

Following the specific questions about standards, the students were asked a series of questions about the rigor of the program and how worthwhile they found the classes and course assignments. Regarding the overall value of classes, the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the classes "were of little value" (63%–55%). Class assignments were perceived to support learning (97%–95%), and the rigor of the program was deemed appropriate (77%–85%). Both groups indicated that the program helped them develop their leadership skills (84%–85%). Campus based students felt less sure about their preparation for the internship (44%–75%), although both groups (78%–75%) applied content knowledge gained in classes during their internship.

Faculty knowledge, support and accessibility were probed in another set of questions. By a rating of 97% to 95%, the teaching faculty members in both programs were perceived to be knowledgeable, current in their field (90%–90%), and able to relate course content to practice (86%–85%). The faculty was viewed as responsive and accessible by respondents from both programs (93%–90%) as well as providing meaningful feedback on assignments (83%–90%). Overall, student respondents felt that interaction with faculty in the learning environment was sufficient to meet their learning needs (86%–85%).

Most students found the program a worthwhile experience (84%–90%). Only a small percentage indicated they would consider a different program if they had to do it all over again (11%–25%). Students in both programs reported feeling a substantial connection to the university (72%–80%) although neither group is expected to join the alumni association in great numbers (11%–25%).

Seven faculty members who teach in both programs were interviewed for the study. Their responses and selected comments are displayed in the table below.

Table 3. Faculty Interview Results.

Question	Score	Comment Summary
Teach in both programs?	7 of 7	Support blended approaches for both programs.
Use same syllabus in both programs	5 of 7	Online is highly organized and well developed.
Think students achieve same skill level?	3.16*	On campus gives greater chance to observe students
Use same assessment techniques in online classes?	4.5*	Online does not allow for much of the less formal assessment practices.
Hold students to the same program standards?	4.5*	The relationship aspect of the online program is minimal.
Student work quality is comparable?	3.16*	It is hard for instructor to discern learning styles in the online class.
Do you achieve the same course results with online students	2.16*	The non-verbal communication is nonexistent
Online student attitudes, motivation and diligence in the course?	2.16*	How can I recommend a student for a principal job when we have never met in person?

*on a 5 pt. scale

The major theme from the faculty interviews was the lack of personal contact with their online students. This concern came from both enthusiastic supporters of the online program and the skeptics. Faculty members were concerned about the institution's "gatekeeper" responsibilities in regard to recommending individuals for school leadership positions and certifying competence to the state for licensure purposes. As one professor stated, "I don't know who is on the other end of the computer. For all I know my student's dog could be pawing the keyboard."

DISCUSSION

The Internet fueled a resurgence of distance education during the later part of the twentieth century and there seems to be no end in sight. Personnel in institutions of higher education are rushing to add new courses, programs and degrees to their online offerings. The incentives to move to this educational delivery method are tied to lucrative financial rewards, market share, and service to students. Yet, concerns abound about the quality of such programs compared to traditional methods. This concern is especially true when it comes to preparing individuals for work in the professions.

This evaluation addressed the viability of an online program designed to complete the entire educational process for the preparation of school leaders online. Despite limitations, the study provides information, which suggests that for the most part students completing the online program achieve a relatively equivalent level of skill and knowledge compared to students in the on campus program. However, differences between the program outcomes point to the need to persist in improving the online model.

More attention needs to be paid to the admission and screening process of the online program. Students enrolling in the online program overwhelmingly indicated that convenience was the main reason for applying to the program. This response tended to raise eyebrows among professors responsible for preparing future school leaders. The dilemma uncovered through the evaluation process turns on the intangibles that are part of the human interaction found in graduate study classrooms. Some professors are at a loss to fulfill their professional obligations of mentoring newly emerging school administrators through an electronic medium, endorsing individuals for state licenses for people they have never interacted with in a face to face situation, much less serving as a reference or writing a letter of recommendation.

Another important proposal is to pursue the continuing assessment of the online program with regard to available outcome measures. Limited outcome data, especially from the state licensure test, leave big questions about the effectiveness of the online program today. However, this will resolve as more online students complete their studies and take the state test. Most importantly, follow up studies of program graduates in leadership roles is essential in determining the true value of the preparation programs.

The fidelity of the online degree and licensure programs to the established model is commendable, and the results achieved thus far with the online program are promising. However, more needs to be done to strengthen the assessment of program benchmarks. Improved accountability components of the online program will serve to reassure those professors in providing follow-up after the student has completed the program.

Ironically, the solutions to these issues lie with the addition of more and better technology. The use of two-way, real-time audio and video should enhance the personal communication between professor and student. This technology will have immediate consequence when added to the interview part of the application process. Two-way audio and video technology will improve the internship experience as student, mentor and professor can virtually meet for review, discussion and problem solving. Adding such a technology to courses will provide an opportunity for real-time, spontaneous interaction, and give professors the opportunity to observe students in leadership situations. This technology will also add the possibility for less formal and more developmental assessments of student skills and knowledge.

Adding the live interaction to the program will reduce the convenience aspect of the program for students. Such technology will require classes or portions of classes and other components of the program to be designed as synchronous, i.e., at a specific time, as opposed to the predominant asynchronous approach that is used extensively in the program. In other words, the program may have to be less convenient to improve.

Clearly, this investigation verified that students are pleased with the education they are attaining, regardless of the delivery method. They are confident that the skills and knowledge base conveyed in the programs are preparing them well for the challenges of school leadership. However, student satisfaction, while important, is not enough. Highly effective educational institutions not only give their students what they want, they also understand and anticipate what they need.

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Front-Line Education Administration (EDAD) Requires Concepts of Schooling Outcomes Beyond Test Scores

C. M. Achilles

Between ages 5–18, children spend nearly 15% of their lives in school settings, a statistic suggesting that educators should attend carefully to school contexts. Haller and Knapp's 1985 discussion of the "commonplaces" of schools was repeated (2007) by Ball and Forzani. Both articles urged education researchers to focus studies on improvement of schooling and advancing educators' knowledge to reach new goals.

If researchers heed the advice in these articles, professors who prepare school administrators will need to know and use an evolving knowledge about education improvement. Currently (2009) researchers outside of Educational Administration (EdAd) (e.g., MDs, MPHs, economists, demographers, etc.) are using accumulating education databases and projecting how to improve such things as graduation rates, student health, and incomes.

After a brief review of recent (2007–2009) findings, expanded concepts of school outcomes, and directions for research (e.g. from articles like those referenced above), the presentation includes suggestions for changes in EdAd preparation.

SETTING THE STAGE

This paper includes assumptions about one role for Professors of EdAd and challenges the professoriate to change elements of its role to parallel *Scholarship Reconsidered*. Boyer (1990) noted that a professor's role in teaching, research, and service was rewarded more for research and less for service, with teaching—the hardest to evaluate objectively—in the middle. Boyer suggested equal value on four Scholarships: Discovery, Integration, Teaching, and Application.

To improve "research" records, professors often count articles that were "service to the field" as research. This distorted education's base which English (2006) argued should not be called a base as that was static, but a Knowledge Dynamic (KD) to reflect the "growing and vibrant fields" (p. 470) of research, theories and practices. Culbertson (1988, 1990) noted that education's knowledge was static and suspect:

> First, borrowed concepts tend to enter textbooks before they are adequately tested in school systems. The result is that such concepts may be used indefinitely in training programs even though their actual relations to school management and leadership practices remain unknown. (1990, pp. 102–103)

Achilles (1990, 2004) argued that the KB (or KD) was not well established in research, theory, and evaluations or even used in exemplary practice. If it were, where is the *Handbook of Exemplary Practice in EdAd* to accompany the many handbooks or encyclopedias of research in education?

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I rely primarily on research, theory, and exemplary practice with which I have worked closely since 1982: class size and effective schooling. In citing my work, I am humbled by Glickman, who is reported to have claimed, "It is the height of impoverishment to cite one's own work". I do so as I know more about that than about other work.

To honor "transparency", Tables 1–2 explain my criteria or standards for accepting (or rejecting) work quality. I admit a bias for good schooling, a dreadful distaste for NCLB akin to Berliner's (2008), and acceptance of Republicanism except for four elements—EEEW (Education, Economy, Environment, and War). I have little patience with professors, practitioners, and policy persons who do not understand, keep up with, or do robust research, theory development, and exemplary practice.

Table 1. General Criteria for Judging a Study's Worth.

1. EVIDENCE: Does the researcher pose a question? Does the study provide empirical evidence regarding the answer to that question?

2. OBJECTIVITY: Does the researcher, author, or publisher have a recognizable stake in the outcomes of the study?

3. COMPARISONS: Were two (or more) groups created for the study, at least one of those given a "treatment", and the outcomes for the treated group(s) compared to those of the untreated group(s)?

4. EQUIVALENCE: Were the treated and untreated groups equivalent before the study began? That is, were groups randomized or at least matched on relevant attributes? Were the outcome measures appropriate for both treated and untreated groups?

5. PERSISTENCE: Can you tell from the study whether the treatment's effects will last long enough to be of practical value? Do effects end when treatment ends?

6. REALISM: Was the treatment carried out under realistic conditions similar to those that exist in your school?

7. APPLICABILITY: Were the study's subjects and conditions (pupils, classrooms, schools, etc.) similar enough to yours to permit you to apply its findings to your situation?

8. REPLICABILITY: Is the study described so it may be replicated? Have similar studies produced similar results?

Table 2. Goal and Minimum Criteria.

Goal: purposes for schooling are more than test scores: they include making schools student friendly and helping students achieve in the ABCDE's, or ABECEDARIAN compact (similar to J. Comer, MD). Outcomes should be measured (Quantity) and judged (Quality) in reportable forms.

Focus (the ABCED's)	Examples of indicators
• Academics, such as shown by test scores.	Breadth and depth of knowledge: More subjects, higher scores.
• Behavior and discipline; ("Deportment"); In and outside of school.	Records of attendance, tardies, truancy, discipline referral records. (Quantity and severity of offenses.)
• Citizenship and participation. (Engagement). PSOC.*	School activities, clubs, sports; Community work, church, clubs.
• Development: self concept, Normal growth.	Portfolios, Informed Professional Judgments (IPJ). Inventories.
• Economic sufficiency; Earnings potential.	Work experience, co-op programs; Advanced schooling, Jobs, Full employment.

*Psychological Sense of Community

Minimum Criteria

Should education policy be built on less than this?

Can you provide two (or more) good quality, replicable, independent, empirical, rigorous, objective, systemat dies on positive effects of (fill in the blank): _____on short-term and especially on long-term student c comes as usually measured?

INTRODUCTION

Class size has been studied in the United States (US) since about 1900, yet was still misunderstood and improperly used in the late 1980s, 1990s and even in 2009. An early econometric study (Summers & Wolfe, 1975) showed that small classes were the most important organization variable for improved student outcomes. Mosteller, Light and Sachs (1996) found only two topics for their discussion of "Sustained Inquiry in Education": skill grouping

and class size. They sought empirical evidence about a) education outcomes from heterogeneous or b) skill-grouped classes and c) about the "impact of class size on student learning" (p. 797, Emphases added). They found "a few well designed studies" on benefits of skill grouping but "results were equivocal" (p. 797). They then described the Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) randomized, large-scale class-size experiment (1984-1990) that "demonstrates convincingly that student achievement is better supported in smaller classes in grades K-3, and that this enhanced achievement continues when the students move to regular-size classes in the fourth grade and beyond" (p. 797). Two U.S. Court of Appeals cases (Hobson v. Hansen, 1967 and Smuck v. Hobson, 1969) found one skill-grouping variant (tracking) unconstitutional.

Common sense plus the substantial research findings of Mosteller et al., (1996) should make a person wonder about an odd but common phenomenon: Educators often do tracking but still argue about class size. Probably because they regularly disregard the robust class-size findings (or do not understand the research), by 2009 many educators do not know how to implement class-size reduction (CSR). Biddle and Berliner (2002) analyzed California's (1996–2002) extensive and expensive CSR and concluded: "In many ways, the California initiative has provided a near-textbook case of how a state should not reduce class size" (p. 15). Why do educators not know the results of at least the Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) long-term, longitudinal, randomized experiment (1985–1990 with researcher still following students into adulthood)? Cawelti (2003) judged STAR as one of 11 studies in the past 50 years which have "changed education". Class-size research was judged among the top 5 areas of work by 8 of 15 well-known educators in a Spencer Foundation (2008) inquiry about "Influential Research". STAR and related studies have provided a foundation for fast-growing US and international studies on class-size issues. The class-size activity is greatest in nations whose student test results quite consistently beat those in the USA, and provide education critics with fodder for education bashing.

While educators, particularly EdAd professors and administrators dilly-dally and dither, grasping each highly advertised program, project, or "silver bullet" (curriculum for professors; evidence of "doing something" for administrators) U.S. education stays a static bullseye for critics. The preceding is some of the "bad news"; the next section is either more bad news, or some good news.

The purpose for education is not just test scores, so whenever a new cure-all for education is introduced I apply the ABCDE concept (see Table 2) as "minimum" criteria for education policy or practice. I keep a "score sheet" to check the efficacy of the project or program to increase positive outcomes of education or decrease the negatives, ala the advice of the old song, to "accentuate the positive and negate the negative".

In one undertaking, sponsored partially by the Schott Foundation, four respected scholars sought to determine "The Costs and Benefits of an Excellent Education for All of America's Children" (Levin, Belfield, Muennig, & Rouse, 2007). The authors adopted as a minimum criterion for an excellent education in 2007 graduation from high school as that "captures both the cognitive and non-cognitive attributes that are important for success in adulthood" (p. 2). The researchers used high quality research whose long-term outcomes included graduation from high school. Three of the five elements that the researchers found (Perry Preschool, Chicago Child-Parent Centers), and small classes, K-3 were early-education based.

Krueger and Whitmore (2001, 2002) demonstrated how small classes, K-3, reduced achievement gaps and increased African-American students' college-entrance test-taking, reducing the Black-White college-entrance test-taking gap by 54%. Finn et al. (2005, 2006, 2007) found results similar to Krueger and Whitmore's.

Two MDs (both with MPH degrees) combined STAR databases with large medical databases to seek ways to improve health and incomes as part of long-term schooling outcomes. The emphasis on incomes (economic growth and decline in health, prison, and other expenses) offers educators an area for collaboration, as do the early (Summers & Wolfe, 1975) and late (Finn, Suriani, & Achilles, 2007) Federal Reserve Bank interests in small classes, K-3. Would anyone expect "The Fed" to be interested in schooling outcomes if bank officials saw little or no benefits of early-grades small classes?

HOW MIGHT EDAD PERSONS USE THESE NEW TRENDS?

The dynamics discussed here lead to ideas that EdAd professors and administrators might advance:

1. Professors might learn and teach the research on class size, (or other important issues, such as technology, homework, professional development, teacher aides…) including considering where more research is warranted.
2. Administrators might implement small classes so professors and graduate students could conduct research and evaluation work, especially on diversity, English language learner (ELL), special education, and long-term benefits. Research to date has shown one correct approach to class-size change (CSR) (See Appendix A).
3. Although much is known about small classes/CSR in early grades (e.g., K-3), much less is known about:
   a. how small classes help in middle schools, often the breeding grounds for poor behavior, poor schooling habits and dropping out of school. Tienken and Achilles (2006) have begun some studies in grades 6–8.
   b. how small classes influence teacher instruction practices.
   c. residual small-class benefits other than those found by Levin et al., by Muennig and Woolf, and in other studies presented at a Federal Reserve Bank and University of Minnesota conference (2007).
   d. small classes in other cultures, such as Sweden, Hong Kong, United Kingdom (UK) and the Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) large-scale studies (e.g., Blatchford et al., 2002).
   e. how small classes engage and build upon well-accepted theories that influence learning: time-on-task, PSOC, Opportunity to Learn, participation and engagement, mixed-ability classes (e.g., Mosteller et al., 1996 and "Accelerated Schools" work of Levin). Appendix B provides one (expanding) list of research and theories to support education improvements obtained from small classes, K-3.
   f. professors must seek independent research and evaluation outcomes before they include new projects, programs, and materials in their preparation programs; administrators should not purchase materials that have not been carefully assessed (see Table 3). The fad mentality has driven education too long. Compare the Culbertson (1990) earlier quote to

McElhinney's (1976) concern:

> At present, when new educational materials are obtained, they are bought because the sales men are persuasive or the arguments presented seem attractive to the purchaser,

> not because the producer has evidence that the experiences of students with those particular materials will produce any predictable series of outcomes. (p. 6)

TWO EXAMPLES OF SMALL-CLASS OUTCOMES AND STUDIES USED TO TEST THEORIES OR EXPLAIN PHENOMENA

Two relatively small studies (dissertations) are used here as examples of EdAd studies that built upon ideas and theories and produced results that could and should become policy. Clarke (2008) wondered if theories derived from class-size research would help solve the "Head Start Fade." Since 1970, the "Fade Effect" has puzzled educators. Theory often drives best practice until empirical evidence demonstrates the theory's validity. Research and theory have coalesced on how and why small classes improve K-3 processes and outcomes, especially for children in poverty. How might this knowledge mitigate "The Fade"?

Researchers synthesized requirements for Pre-K evidence-based outcomes paired with early elementary long-term, small-class outcomes, generated theory to explain The Fade, and then tested the theory: "The Fade will decrease if conditions for long-term, small-class results are applied to Head Start through grade four." Treatment conditions were: (a) *early intervention* (Pre-K or K), (b) *duration* (three or more years in reduced class size), and (c) *intensity* (same teachers for academic subjects all day at each grade level), and (d) heterogeneity. Researchers conducted a pilot test using retrospective (Pre-K, Head Start, and small-class grades K-3) data to track students 2001–2006 to provide empirical evidence that students meeting the theoretic conditions had diminished Fade when compared to (a) state grade-four proficiency levels and (b) peers not meeting theoretic conditions.

A second study built upon the conclusions and recommendations of Prout's (2000) study of Indoor Air Quality as reported in Achilles, Finn, Prout and Bobbett (2004–2005). Prout concluded that poor IAQ, especially Carbon Dioxide or CO_2 might negatively influence student test outcomes. Appendix C includes a summary of the Prout (2000) findings as reported in Achilles et al. (2004–2005).

In a small experiment, (4 classes, 86 students, and 2 classroom conditions all in the same building) Hreha (2007) varied the ft^3 per student for 2 classes and kept the ft^3 per student the same for 2 classes at post-test, after testing all 4 classes, one class at a time, at pretest in a computer room with 11,750 ft^3. The CO_2 levels for 4 classes at pretest and two classes at post-test in the 11,750 ft^3 room did not vary statistically, but CO_2 levels were (statistically) higher than CO_2 levels for the 2 classes randomly selected for post-testing in a room of 70,000 ft^3 (Library).

Although student post-test scores were higher than at pretest, the post-test scores for two classes tested in the larger room were statistically significantly higher than the post-test scores for classes tested in the smaller room. Time of day, persons in the room, air circulation, etc. and students were held constant pre-to-post. To the degree possible in a small, action-research study, one variable was manipulated: ft^3 per student. Hreha's observations corroborated Prout's (2000): listless, restless, disengaged students in high CO_2 low ft^3, low test-results rooms. Poor IAQ influences student test and behavior outcomes negatively.

In an age of reliance on test outcomes for class assignments, graduation, college admissions, etc., larger and better designed research on the effects of CO_2, a variable at least partially influenced by class size, is warranted. By combining Hreha's and Prout's results, reasonable conclusions would be (a) test early in the day in a large, airy room before room CO_2 increases, and (b) use small groups of students for better test (and behavior) outcomes.

A CONCLUDING THOUGHT OR TWO

As a precursor to any serious discussions of research, theory, or dissemination (service to the profession) and considerations of robust empirical, methodological, and organizational knowledge to guide change and future directions, I posit that the absence of "Aha" moments in education reflects a considerable history of lethargy. The field is vibrant, the sixth circuit U.S. Court of Appeals' repudiation of NCLB (1/7/08), the rise of anti-traditional EdAd preparation initiatives (with untested suggestions for change), and other issues offer an array of exciting opportunities. Will the EdAd field respond to these challenges and assaults from outside the mainstream with the same lack of energy as the field responded to challenges proposed by colleagues friendly to the establishment (e.g., Boyer, 1990; Griffiths, Stout & Forsyth; 1988). Well, probably only Humpty Dumpty really knows why the Cheshire Cat is smiling (Carroll), but insularity of knowledge and lack of consensus on procedures are not the marks of a growing profession. One way to repair NCLB damage and respond to EdAd critics is to use the outstanding research, theory, and practice that have been rapidly growing in education since 1980.

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APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASS-SIZE CHANGE

Educators have much information available to implement appropriate-sized classes in America's public schools. From years of studying and observing small classes, researchers and practitioners have compiled a research base, theories, and exemplary practices of outstanding teachers to guide effective small-class implementations. Informed Professional Judgement or IPJ is at the heart of class-size changes. SMALL CLASSES ARE NOT SIMPLY HIRING TEACHERS AND DOING BUSINESS AS USUAL**.** A class-size initiative should incorporate what long-term class-size research has determined are important steps for obtaining successful schooling outcomes.

1. EARLY INTERVENTION. Start when the pupil enters "schooling" in K or even pre-K.
2. SUFFICIENT DURATION. Maintain the small-class environment for at least 3, preferably 4, years for enduring effects. Encourage parent involvement in schooling.
3. INTENSE TREATMENT. The pupil spends all day, every day in the small class. Avoid Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) events, such as "pull-out" projects or team teaching. Develop a psychological sense of community (PSOC), close student-teacher relations, and coherence. Although teacher aides may assist in the building, there is scant evidence that they influence student outcomes positively; except as required by law, reduce aides by attrition.
4. USE RANDOM ASSIGNMENT in early grades to facilitate peer tutoring, problem-solving groups, student-to-student cooperation, and active participation and engagement. (STAR).
5. EMPLOY A COHORT MODEL for several years so students develop a sense of family or community (PSOC). STAR results show the power of both random assignment and a cohort model. "Looping" adds teacher continuity to the cohort, and may be a useful strategy for added benefits. (More research is needed here).
6. EVALUATE process and outcomes carefully, and share results. Appropriate-sized classes in elementary grades will take policy and perhaps even legislation change. (Transparency).

The difference between the PTR and actual class size in U.S. elementary schools (about n = 10) provides flexibility. If the site has a PTR of 12:1, that suggests enough staff to work toward class sizes of 15 or so, K-3, and still have personnel for special assignments.

Adding endless "projects" ala Title I and continually disrupting the teacher's and students' day and continuity (e.g., coherence and stability) are not what the class-size research has shown. To avoid needless costs and confusion, start in K and 1, add a grade per year through third grade. Reduce "specials" as small-class benefits will allow and re-allocate personnel to teach small classes.

THEORY IN LEADERSHIP

A Comprehensive Theory and Practice of Constructivist Leadership

Arthur Shapiro

It is because modern education is so seldom inspired by a great hope that it so seldom achieves a great result.
Bertrand Russell, *Why Men Fight*, 1917

Constructivism has become the reigning paradigm in teacher education in America today.
S. Hausfather, *Educational Horizons*, 2001, Fall

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The rationale for developing a comprehensive theory and practice of constructivist leadership lies in recognizing that constructivism has become an emerging movement in instructional theory and practice in education. However, constructivist leadership, constructivism's potentially supportive counterpart, has not yet made it onto education's stage. This article synthesizes the major constructs comprising a comprehensive theory and practice of constructivist leadership.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CONSTRUCTIVIST LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL

Some Major Theories of Leadership

Westerners have developed a love-hate relationship with the idea and practice of leadership for over 3,000 years, at least from Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to the present. Although books on leadership fill rooms, fewer than a dozen major leadership theories have been created, all but two in the last century. Several approaches to classifying these have developed, such as 'Great Man' and trait theories. I, however, mention several major theories published by various scholars, such as Taylor's Scientific Management (1911), which focused on making workers bees' actions more efficient; Mayo's (1933) counter to that thrust with Human Relations Theory; and Lewin, Lippitt, and White's (1939) democratic, authoritarian, and laissez faire styles of leadership.

Hemphill and Coons (1950) developed the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire's (LBDQ) dimensions of Initiating Structure and Consideration. McGregor produced Theory X and Y (1960), with Ouchi adding Theory Z (1981). Reddin created contingency and situational theories in 1971 and Blake and Mouton (1978) developed the Managerial Grid, followed by Burns' (1978) transactional and transformational leadership theories.

In 1969, the Tri-Partite Theory of Institutional Change and Succession (Shapiro, 2000; Wilson, Byar, Shapiro, & Schell, 1969) pointed to organizations careening through three phases in their careers, with a leadership style dominant in each phase. The first phase is Per-

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son-oriented, headed by a charismatic leader who attracts people with his or her dynamism. Once the charismatic leaves, the second phase begins headed by a planner, the Plan-oriented phase in the organization's career. Last, when the plan begins to disappear and the organization loses its vigor, the bureaucrat heads the organization, a Position-oriented phase. Once in a blue moon, an organization is fortunate enough to find or develop a fourth leader, who is a combination charismatic leader and planner, a synergist.

The third from the last theory to be mentioned is Greenleaf's (1977) somewhat ill-defined servant leadership. The first theory in the 21st Century was Irby, Brown, Duffy, and Trautman's postmodernist Synergistic Leadership Theory (2002), which provided a feminine voice as one pillar of its four theoretical bases. The last was constructivist leadership theory, the focus of this paper, commencing with Lambert et al. (1995, 1997, 2002), followed by Shapiro (2000, 2003, 2008) and Isaacson (2004).

Build a Constructivist Philosophy—Chester Barnard

If teachers develop a constructivist philosophy (if the principal and leadership team also hold it aloft as a prism to focus all actions), the process is really half over, because they can then concentrate on adjusting practice to match philosophy and beliefs.
This fits squarely into Barnard's (1938) seminal thinking, where he focused questions concerning leadership's purpose into looking at its three major functions.

- The administrator/leader must facilitate developing a *purpose* to which all members of the organization can subscribe in their actions.
- The first interlocking mechanism for accomplishing any purpose is that the leader must establish a direct *system of communication*, so that everyone has a direct line of communication.
- The second interlocking mechanism with the system of communication is that *a system of cooperation* must be developed to achieve the common purpose.

Thus, a key to following Barnard's fundamental insights is to develop a constructivist philosophy. If a constructivist philosophy is generated that virtually everyone believes in and practices, a common purpose can be readily developed.

Developing Reciprocal Relationships to Construct Shared Meanings—Lambert et al.

The next necessary ingredient to develop constructivist leadership is to establish positive relationships among all members of the social system, precisely what Lambert et al.'s (1995, 1996, 2002) pioneer contributions to constructivist leadership thought emphasizes. They pointed to the teacher as the focus to reform American schools. Lambert et al.'s first book (1995) emphasized "Reciprocal relationships, the meanings of which must be discussed and commonly construed in schools, are the basis through which we make sense of our world, continually define ourselves, and 'coevolve', or grow together" (p. 36).

Lambert et al. (1995) postulated constructivist leadership as "adults in a community can work together to construct meaning and knowledge." (p. 32). Thus, leadership is essentially enabling the development of reciprocal processes and positive relationships to construct common meanings. Lambert et al. cited Poplin and Weeres (1993) who indicated that the

most important factor in schools is *relationships*. Isaacson's findings, discussed in detail later, supported this generalization.

Developing common meanings among people leads to establishing a common subculture. As people interact and develop common meanings, they create shared norms and customs, shared meanings and shared expectations, processes which people develop in social living (Linton, 1955). These processes describe how people create social systems (any two or more people engaged in meaningful interaction) and a culture.

Therefore, the dynamics of schools, such as positions, roles, role expectations, norms, working with social systems, and deliberately developing the organization's culture, are essential in order to understand the processes involved in creating constructivist leader behavior (Shapiro, 2008). If people in leadership positions do not understand how schools and social systems work, and how to make them work, they are going to be successful only if they are exceedingly lucky, but often may generate huge problems (usually highly negative) in accomplishing any goals.

More on Underpinnings of Positive Relationships: Trust and Authenticity

For constructivist leadership to prosper, relationships must be based on trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), which is developed by people increasingly becoming more open to each other. The key mechanism, which may be hard for some, is self-disclosure, which makes it safer for others to self-disclose. Hills (1975), a highly reputable Canadian professor who took a year off to become a principal, reflected on his experience and success. He noted that people believed his relationships were open and authentic. Note how Maslow's (1954) issues of safety undergird developing trust. Hills' insights translate behaviorally to establishing such norms as no destructive criticism and respecting all opinions to become widely accepted and honored so that the organization's inhabitants can feel comfortable that they will not be attacked or criticized.

Bryk and Schneider (2002) studied 400 Chicago elementary schools for almost a decade and concluded that relational trust provides an absolutely crucial role in building effective educational communities. Relational trust, grounded in social respect and personal regard, positively influenced schools' academic productivity. The two researchers discovered that schools with a high level of trust had a 50% chance of improving reading and math achievement in comparison with schools with lower levels of trust which only had a one in seven chance. Relational trust was most likely to develop in small schools with a stable community – another rationale for decentralizing.

Support for the necessity of authenticity in relationships was provided by Poplin and Weeres (1993) cited by Lambert et al. (1996), who noted that "… there is a deep absence of authentic relationships in schools. Often school community members do not feel 'trusted, given responsibility, spoken to honestly and warmly, and treated with dignity and respect'" (p. 28), thus destroying morale and leadership.

School Size, an Essential Element: Harry Potter and Small Learning Communities (SLC): The Benefits of Decentralizing

By using the example of Hogwarts, Harry Potter's school (Rowling, 1997), many can relate to the SLC model, also called a house plan, a small school model, a hall plan, or a school-within-a-school. Harry's school was divided into several houses, his house being Gryffindor, another was Slitherin'. This model served to organize Hogwarts, particularly its intra-

murals and awards (which facilitated developing a strong sense of identity in faculty and students), but not academic classes. The United States has not experienced a small schools movement until recently (Sullivan & Glanz, 2006).

Premier education consultant, Leggett, noted that it is possible to develop a good large school, but it is much harder to do so than with small schools (S. Leggett, personal communication, May 18, 1987). Decentralization becomes a major tool in developing quality schools and organizations in large schools (Shapiro, 2009). In education, decentralization creates structures and situations where it is easier to establish positive relationships with other professionals and with students. In a large, inner-city high school where I worked, after less than a semester as an SLC, the ninth grade assistant principal reported major declines in referrals and increases in attendance.

The value of small schools is seen in Barnard's formulation:

- Developing a shared purpose is much easier to accomplish in a smaller body, since people feel that they belong. Small organizations can become a folk culture where people can see each other and can communicate face-to-face daily.
- Cooperation flows much easier in small enterprises because people know each other.
- Communication? Much simpler and faster since it often is face-to-face.
- Climate and culture? People feel part of the operation; *social distance* usually is not generated.
- Small schools or SLCs avoid developing destructive student sub-cultures (Oxley, 1989, p. 28).

Shapiro, Benjamin, and Hunt (1995) pointed out the possibility of developing a strong, shared sense of community, avoiding creating alienated students who become "outsiders" from those who are marginal. Developing positive social controls becomes much easier since everyone knows everyone, in contrast to huge schools where one can be and is anonymous, such as the student in a high school who successfully avoided attending classes for an entire year (French, 1993). The nature of authority changes significantly in comparing large and small schools, from formal to informal. Fortunately, the literature on small learning communities is now expanding with such studies as Overbay (2003), Hyldon (2005), and Feldman (2006) who pointed to the advantages of small size in designing the internal structures of schools, influencing achievement and behavior positively.

Developing SLCs is emerging as a genuine movement with mentoring, supporting, and nurturing relationships being created in a small body of people who can learn to work together (French, Atkinson, & Rugen, 2007; Sullivan & Glanz, 2006). Isaacson's study of moving the school into a constructivist model further led to developing PLCs (Clouset, 2008; Sammon, 2008), in which faculty developed processes to support each other strongly.

At the beginning of my role as a consultant working with Dr. Isaacson's elementary school, no one mentioned supporting each other nor, particularly, new teachers. Instead, many focused on day-to-day survival skills and strategies, as is increasingly normal, especially when the socio-economic classes of students and teachers vary. The goal of mentoring new faculty members became a major priority over time, carried out by developing internal supportive culture and structures (such as supporting them in learning constructivist teaching approaches, new teachers meeting every other Friday morning, ensuring that the new faculty had a mentor) to help them become successful and to retain them in education.

Decentralizing led to greater participation in decision-making and problem solving, honing these skills for faculty, leadership, and students to assume leadership roles, thus increasing the number of people with leadership responsibilities. In this process, students learned to take responsibility. Indeed, if a goal is to teach responsibility, people must have opportunities to practice responsibility.

Deliberately Created a Supportive Culture and Climate

Most people, as they behave in their organizations (including families), are unaware that they participate in creating the norms, the roles, and the resulting sub-cultures in the social systems in which they work (Napier & Gershenfeld, 1999; Shapiro, 1996). Some time ago, I examined my own functioning in classes and in schools where I taught and administered and wrote an article focusing on developing the processes of creating cultural components in a constructivist classroom (1996), later refined (Shapiro, 2000). In it, I laid out strategies for applying Maslow (1954), Lewin (1952), Thelen (1949), and others to construct the culture of classrooms and, by implication, of schools to become constructivist. It worked well. Others who tried the processes developed constructivist practices in their teaching and leadership, to their considerable satisfaction. Nordgren (2003) also noted such personal satisfaction in analyzing his personal journey in becoming a constructivist teacher.

Constructivist Leadership Abhorrs Hierarchy—Rather, Partnerships

Organizations tend to generate hierarchical relationships as positions and roles develop, generating spatial and social distance, enemies of constructivist relationships (Lambert et al., 1995). However, constructivist leadership flourishes in an environment of partnerships in the form of teams, and closer, supportive relationships—without status differences (Lambert et al.). To this date, constructivist and Irby et al.'s synergistic leadership (2002) appear to be the only forms of leadership which are not hierarchical. Even servant leadership, although poorly defined (Greenleaf, 1977), exists in a hierarchical setting since leaders' roles focus on understanding and then determining the directions the organization has to take.

Isaacson's Study: Teachers' Perceptions of Themes and Indicators Underlay an Entire School Becoming Constructivist

Isaacson and I (as the consultant) used constructivist leadership change strategies illustrated by *The Analysis of Dynamics of Organizational Change* (Shapiro, 2000, 2003) as a reform tool to generate organizational change to develop constructivist teaching practices in a 960 student elementary school, Southwood Elementary School, in Orlando, FL. In the case study, Isaacson focused on teachers' perceptions of using constructivism as an education organizational reform model. Isaacson used five data sources (a) minutes of the Planning Task Force which developed and implemented the change strategy for over a year and a half; (b) seven years of her journaling; (c) teachers' written perceptions in the form of reflections partly based on guided questions over two years; (d) focus groups; and (e) structured interviews in her analysis.

Planning Task Force minutes comprised a huge data source, since over 80 issues and concerns were raised as a first step in the change strategy during several weeks of half-day meetings. The minutes were summarized next, followed by analyzing themes underlying the issues and concerns. This took time and considerable discussion. This was followed by devel-

oping a series of potential lines of action to deal with the issues. These lines of action were then analyzed for their underlying theoretical rationales. Last, outcomes were implemented and evaluated for their effectiveness.

Isaacson focused on teachers' perceptions of the process of creating a constructivist school, which resulted in five *themes*, parts of the first four being supported in leadership literature. The five themes were: a constructivist philosophy, change, leadership, teachers as leaders, and affect, each with sub-themes or factors and *indicators*.

The themes of constructivist philosophy, leadership, and teachers as leaders comprised fundamental underlying elements essential to creating a constructivist organization. The indicators were keys to recognizing a constructivist school in addition to developing positive, reciprocal, authentic relationships which develop shared meanings, trust, and decentralizing to reduce size.

Building a constructivist philosophy followed Barnard's injunction to develop a common purpose, which included a risk-free environment as one indicator. The leadership theme had three sub-themes: supporting teachers, feeling appreciated, and providing a professional work environment, which spoke to such indicators as a non-threatening, highly supportive environment, empowering, support with ideas, suggestions, and help with students. The third theme, providing a professional environment, exuded indicators exemplifying the interpersonal dimension (a) provides materials and supplies because teachers need them, (b) values input into what teachers want, (c) provides time to work with team-mates, (d) feel comfortable, and (e) feel safe.

Since Southwood decentralized into SLCs, this resulted in teachers becoming leaders (the teachers-as-leaders theme noted above) and in increasing the school's leadership density. Interpersonal indicators are indispensable to becoming a team. Indicators under each subtopic included: I like my team, like working with my pod members, work well together, know value of communication, became a team. The Teachers-as-Leaders theme also focused on such organizational indicators as collaboration, planning together as a group, taking on leadership roles, being a mentor, working on committees as member or chair.

The unanticipated fifth theme, affect, provided identifying indicators of such feeling words as happy, love, excited, family. Teachers not only liked being there, they were excited about working there with their peers; they even felt that they had constructed their family, and wanted to return when they left for personal convenience to work in another school.

Limitations

It should be noted that Isaacson's case study was the only one used in this discussion. In addition, I discussed a school reform model I developed, although it has been used at other schools with the same degree of success. Perhaps other reform strategies might lead to different themes and indicators. Isaacson created the categories of themes, sub-themes, and indicators in this study which was the basis for her doctoral dissertation. I, as major professor, confirmed them.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Involving People in the Process Counts: Buy-In Crucial

Clearly, a significant conclusion is that the constructivist reform theory and practice I constructed met deeply felt needs not usually satisfied in a school, let alone by any organiza-

tion. One implication is that if Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs is used, the middle three needs are not only met, but seem to be satisfied in one's professional life. As for Self-Actualization, reaching that is difficult to ascertain, as Maslow indicated.

Role of principal crucial. The principal's role was pivotal since she must believe in and model the constructivist philosophy and practices. Isaacson's commitment to such a philosophy and practice was evidenced in her using a constructivist change strategy to change the school.

Isaacson's (2004) implications are grist for administrators and teachers:

- Constructivism can be used as a change model to reform an entire school and to implement a constructivist philosophy and practices.
- A fundamental underpinning of such a change strategy required developing and implementing a school-wide constructivist philosophy and practice.
- Teachers believed that standardized test scores can increase from teaching constructivistically. School scores on yearly state tests for two years bore that out.
  Scores in math, well below state averages, met state averages by the second year of this study. Reading and writing scores, also below state averages at first, exceeded them by the third year.
- To avoid the deadly effects of entropy, a plan to re-plan every two to three years continued the process (Shapiro, 2003; Brown, 2006). If such a process were not implemented, the school possibly would lose its constructivist model.

Teachers felt empowered. Teachers felt that they were valued as follows:

- Teachers' perceptions were recognized as helpful in creating an organizational culture with constructivist educational practices.
- Affect emerged as an important factor in the faculty's feelings of success. Teachers felt appreciated valued and recognized—an affect dimension.
- The principal believed in and modeled constructivism. Principals are more than managers of things and people; they are managers of thinking.
- In short, a shared, common purpose and a culture were developed because the principal facilitated constructing shared images and metaphors to build these shared values, goals, and mission.
- Teachers unanimously reported feeling and being empowered.

An organizational renewal plan and structure. The Tri-Partite Theory of Organizational Change and Succession (Wilson, Byar, Shapiro, & Schell, 1969; Shapiro, 2000) predicted that organizations lose their purposes relatively rapidly. One problem organizations face is how to deal with the virtually inevitable process of entropy, where, within a relatively short time, the organization loses its purpose and drifts mindlessly and endlessly in the third phase of an organization's life termed Position-Orientation in the terms of the Tri-Partite Theory. The key is to develop internal planning structures and processes that lead to revitalizing the organization as a routine, such as a curriculum structure developed to generate curriculum proposals throughout the year, or re-planning every two to three years (Shapiro, 2003). The curriculum structure has functioned for three decades in one school system, generating cur-

riculum as a routine, thereby keeping the school in one of its two productive phases, the Charismatic Person-oriented or the Planning Phase.

Developing professional learning communities (PLCs). Other internal structures can be designed to keep the organization in the first two productive phases of its career (either person- or plan-oriented), as was done in Southwood. Brown's study (2006) pointed to the SLC's and, especially, the PLCs as vehicles.

Another implication points to developing the internal structures such as the PLCs, the curriculum structures, and the Planning Task Force no less than every two or three years as important to maintain constructivism's philosophic and practice bases. If not done, the plan and the program may become lost to the forces of organizational entropy and may slide into the Bureaucratic phase.

Process counts. In changing any organization from a class to a school, from a hospital to a corporation, organizational and group processes are key. If process is not a major focus, people will not become involved and will not support changes. Staff involvement is important, which studies such as Lewin's (1952) epochal studies support. Heavy involvement avoided top-down decision-making common now in establishing and in imposing state testing and standards. Involvement is the key to buy-in to avoid resistance.

SUMMARY

I focused on describing major elements in implementing the philosophy and practice of constructivist leader behavior and constructivism in schools. Barnard's three indispensable and interlocking functions of the executive (establishing a common purpose, a system of communication, and a system of cooperation) were stated as basic principles in forming any organization, and particularly that establishing a constructivist philosophy underpinning the mission of the school is key in developing constructivist leadership and a constructivist school.

Lambert et al.'s (1995, 1996, 2002) focus on building positive reciprocal relationships comprised one of the most important factors in developing constructivist leadership. The contribution of relational trust and authenticity in relationships were pointed out as underpinnings of positive interpersonal interactions. Research on decentralization supported why the emphasis on developing SLCs, PLCs, and small schools which generate a supportive culture, fit into constructivist thinking. Partnerships, usually in the form of teams, replaced the hierarchical organizational structures found in most organizations.

The author, as consultant, and the principal's transformation of an entire school into a constructivist model with its underpinning constructivist philosophy provided a case study exemplifying the value of constructivist change strategies as an organizational change model. A constructivist philosophy, change, three dimensions of leadership and six of teachers as leaders, and affect emerged as major underlying themes with accompanying identifying indicators in teachers' perceptions. Such themes and indicators help a person recognize a constructivist school and leadership. The process met deeply felt human needs portrayed by Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs (1954).

Teachers clearly recognized that they developed a constructivist philosophy from the heavy involvement processes that resulted in constructivist teaching practices, and which increased their students' standardized scores without focusing on tests. Other implications consisted of (a) the affect dimension, (b) that teachers wanted to and did feel appreciated, valued

and recognized, and (c) the pivotal role of the principal in believing in and modeling constructivism and empowering teachers.

The role of the principal as a change agent emerged, in that her role was considerably more than a manager of people and things. Principals can become leaders in developing thinking about self, school, students, and the school as an organization. In that process constructivist processes were used successfully as an organizational change model, a key strategy that maximized teacher involvement.

THE ROLE OF FOUR INTERNAL CHANGE STRUCTURES

Brown's (2006) study supported the role of four internal change structures, such as the decentralized SLCs, PLCs, and a curriculum-generating structure, all to counteract the destructive impact of organizational entropy. The roles of a curriculum structure and a replanning structure of a Planning Task Force and process comprised other internal change structures that generated change as a routine and kept the organization in a productive phase of its career—in short, an organizational renewal planning process.

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The Synergistic Leadership Theory: A 21st Century Leadership Theory

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New leadership concepts and/or leadership organizational theories have emerged since the early 1990's which describe leadership approaches or philosophies that differ from traditional leadership models and theories developed and cultivated through the early 1980's. Following a comprehensive study of 450 studies and books on leadership, Rost (1991) determined that leadership definitions through the 1980's were (a) structural functionalist in a hierarchical linear mode, (b) management oriented considering leadership and management equivalent, (c) personalistic in focusing only on the leader while paying no attention to the follower, (d) goal-achievement-dominated, (e) self-interested and individualistic in outlook, (f) male-oriented, (g) utilitarian and materialistic in ethical perspective, and (h) rationalistic, technocratic, linear, quantitative, and scientific in language and methodology. In contrast to these older leadership definitions and theories which are guided by outdated recipes, contemporary leadership concepts, styles, and philosophies include (a) interactive leadership (Rosener, 1990), (b) caring leadership (Grogan, 1998, 2005), (c) relational leadership (Reagan & Brooks, 1995), (d) power-shared leadership (Brunner, 1999), (e) learning-focused leadership (Beck & Murphy, 1996), (f) social justice leadership (Theoharis, 2004), and (g) authentic, moral, servant, or value-added leadership (Sergiovanni, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1994). Although the aforementioned concepts, styles, and philosophies have provided valid considerations for leaders over the past 20 years, only two leadership theories in the 21st century have emerged: (a) constructivist leadership (Lambert et al., 2002; Shapiro, 2002, 2003, 2008) and (b) the synergistic leadership theory ([SLT], Irby, Brown, Duffy, & Trautman, 2002). In this chapter, we discuss the SLT as a 21st century theory along with the validation studies related to the theory.

THE SYNERGISTIC LEADERSHIP THEORY

The SLT reflects 21st century views including gender inclusivity, cultural relevance, situational, contextual, and changing dynamics, holistic and systemic frameworks, transformative reflection, collaborative interdependence, and socially-just underpinnings. The SLT adds to existing leadership theories by (a) including female leaders and their experiences (Irby et al., 2002), (b) recognizing that culture is an external force that significantly impacts leadership and organizations (Irby et al.; Schlosberg, 2003), (c) considering contextual and situational dynamics, (d) describing the systemic relationship and the interconnectedness of leadership behavior, organizational structure, external forces, and attitudes, beliefs, and values, (e) promoting reflection related to self, others, and situations, (f) offering a nonlinear framework

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for describing collaborative interdependence, (Irby et al.), and (g) promoting equity and social justice (Brown & Irby, 2006). Thus, as 21st century leadership theory, the SLT encompasses the holistic nature of leadership and interactions inside and outside of an organization.

The SLT is based on the following major assumptions: (a) leadership is the interaction among four factors of attitudes, beliefs, and values; leadership behavior; external forces; and organizational structure, (b) an alignment of all four factors leads to harmony, with the leader being perceived as effective or successful, while a misalignment among the four factors results in tension or disharmony that negatively impacts the perceived effectiveness of the leader (Irby et al., 2002), and (c) reflection and location of self in relation to all factors is critical to attaining the desired alignment.

A tetrahedral model (see Figure 1) depicts the SLT's four equal and interactive factors which are identified by four stellar points with six interaction pairs. This model can be rotated on any apex and still maintain its shape, thereby indicating no structural hierarchy or linear connotation, rather, suggesting that each factor equally affects the success of the leader in context, as well as the organization (Irby et al.). Following is a discussion of each factor.

Factor 1: Leadership Behavior

Leadership has been defined in terms of style (Kowalski, 1999). According to Kowalski, leadership style includes (a) how a leader handles specific aspects of his or her job, (b) a leader's personal philosophy, professional knowledge, and experience, and (c) variables related to the leader's situation. Ten leadership styles may include, but not limited to: (a) bureaucratic leadership, (b) humanistic leadership, (c) instructional leadership, (d) transformational leadership, (e) "power to" leadership, (f) value-added leadership, (g) caring leadership, (h) principle-centered leadership, (i) feminist leadership, and (j) servant leadership. We consider such leadership styles to be descriptive and conceptual, however, in the SLT; it is specific behaviors or actions of the leader in relation to other factors that result in perceived success or failure.

Leadership behaviors have been defined by Dunlop and Goldman (1990) as the authoritative characteristics that an administrator exhibits on a daily basis. Literature revealed that specific leadership behaviors can be more masculine or more feminine (Avila, 1993; Chaffins, Forbes, Fuqua, & Cangemi, 1995; Grogan, 1996, 1998; Helgeson, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1986, 1989). For example, leadership behaviors that are traditionally associated with male leaders are self-assertion, separation, supervision, being task oriented, independence, control, and competition (Brunner, 1999; Deal & Peterson, 1990; Marshall, 1993). Behaviors that are ascribed to female leaders are interdependence, cooperation, receptivity, merging, acceptance, being aware of patterns, wholes, and context (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Brunner, 1999; Funk, 1998; Gilligan, 1982; Grogan, 1998; Irby, et al., 2002; Matusak, 2001; Regan & Brooks, 1995; Rosener, 1990).

In the SLT, the leadership behavior factor refers to a wide range of leadership behaviors ranging from autocratic to nurturer and including behaviors that have been ascribed to both female and male leaders (Irby et al., 2002). The SLT does not endorse a particular leadership behavior as a determinant or indicator for success or failure (Schlosberg, 2003); rather, for 21st century leaders, behaviors are wide ranging as indicated within the SLT. For example, leadership behaviors exhibited in the 21st century are those needed to be not only decisive, but also insightful related to the school team and/or organization. Additionally, leaders today find

themselves frequently challenging educational traditions within ethical boundaries, and this calls for the behavior of adaptability. Though education is one institution that habitually has changed at a snail's pace, today, just as in the business world, education finds itself in the

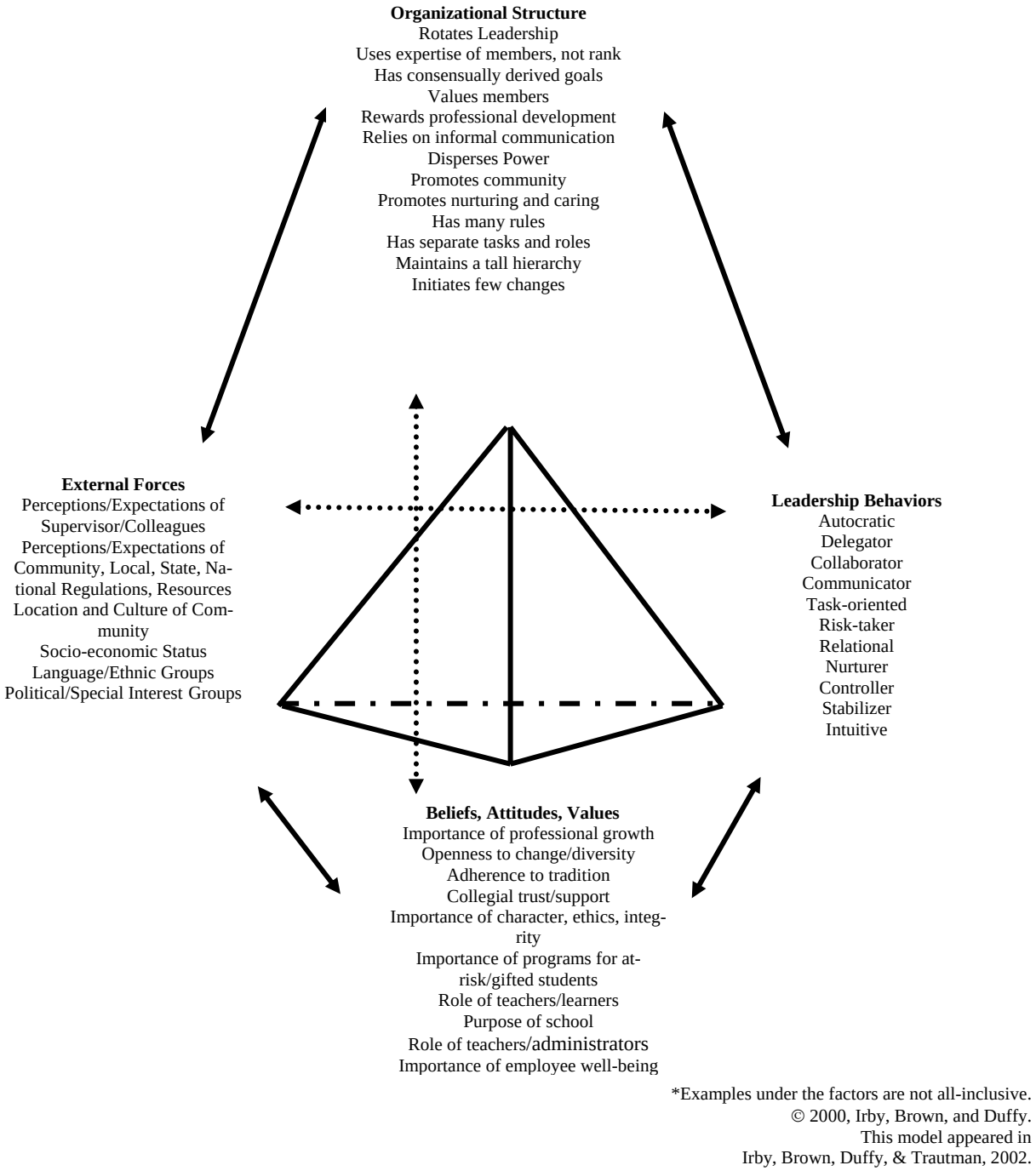

*Figure 1. Tetrahedral model for the synergistic leadership theory**.

situation in which change, rather than being the exception, is the norm. The SLT includes leadership behaviors that support changing organizations such as decisiveness, facilitation,

visioning, team building, capacity building, community building, ongoing reflection, and conflict management.

Factor 2: Organizational Structure

Organizational structure involves the characteristics of the organization and how the organization operates. The structure of the organization influences behaviors, the flow and type of communication, and the relationships among its members. Bjork (2001) noted the interplay of structures and people as structures shape people's practices, but people's practices also constitute structure. Further, organizational structures and belief systems are interrelated. As organizations evolve over time, structures, practices, norms and beliefs are institutionalized and mutually reinforced.

Bureaucratic, closed organizations include rules, division of labor, hierarchy of authority, impersonality, and competence (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). Conversely, 21st century organizational structures are those that include practices such as collaborative decision making, systems of rotating leadership, power sharing, and promotion of community and cooperation (Irby et al., 2002). Bennis and Nanus (1997) described open, transformational organizations which attach importance to meeting the needs of organizational members. The SLT encompasses organizational structures ranging from rigid bureaucratic structures to open, flexible, and malleable ones. According to the SLT, organizational structures interact with the other factors, and the structure can be altered to bring harmony among all four factors.

Factor 3: External Forces

Merron (1995) described external forces as *waves* which affect all organizations in both the public and private sectors in today's postindustrial society. These forces include: (a) movement from goods to services, (b) increasing global completion, (c) population growth and dwindling resources, (d) shift from financial capital to human and information capital, (e) changing organizational models, (f) diversification within the workforce, (g) increased customer expectations, and (h) rapidly changing technology. Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, and Sybouts (1996) included "parents, taxpayers, business, professional community, and so on" (p. 339) as external influencers. In the educational setting, external influencers or forces derive from state laws and regulations, federal mandates, the call for decentralized school management, demands for greater accountability, the school choice movement, changing demographics, competing community needs, limited resources, legal challenges, partisan politics, and shortages of human resources (Usdan, McCloud, Podmostko, & Cuban, 2001).

In the SLT, external forces are those influencers outside the organization over which the leader has no control, but which the leader must attend to with vigilance in the constantly changing educational environment of the 21st century. Contextual examples of significant external forces are local, state, and national and international community and conditions, governmental regulations, laws, demographics, cultural climate, technological advances, economic situations, geography, political climate, and family conditions (Irby et al., 2002). In the SLT, sources of external forces range from the global or national to the local community level. External influencers, according to the SLT, are considered for their impact on an organization's practices, decisions and decision-making processes, leadership, structure, and attitudes of and towards employees (Irby et al.).

Factor 4: Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values

Attitudes, beliefs, and values form the foundation for principles that surface in the form of values, norms, ideas, and teachings (Irby et al., 2002). Attitudes and values remain constant, but beliefs may change as new information is processed. Daresh (2001) described attitudes as "clusters of individual beliefs that survive the immediate moment" (p. 31). Irby et al. (2002) emphasized that values are "the permanent realization of beliefs and attitudes" (p. 314). Different people see the world differently, and how they see the world is based on their attitudes, assumptions, values, and beliefs. These attitudes, beliefs, and values directly impact the choices and the decisions made by the individual person, community, and organization. Daresh (2001) recognized the interconnectedness of attitudes, values, and beliefs with the leader and the organization.

In the SLT, attitudes, beliefs, and values are described as dichotomous, as individual or groups would either adhere or not adhere to specific attitudes, beliefs, or values at a given time. Examples of the dichotomous manifestations of attitudes, beliefs, and values included in the SLT are: openness to change or diversity, importance of professional growth, adherence to tradition, role of teachers/administration, and the purpose of school (Irby et al., 2002).The SLT posits that the interactions between the manifestations of attitudes, beliefs, and values will become tensional if they are not congruent with the other three factors of the theory (Irby et al.). For 21st century leaders, understanding the attitudes, values, and beliefs of themselves and of the individuals they lead is critical to moving the vision for the organization forward.

VALIDATION STUDIES

The SLT was initiated both quantitatively and qualitatively as theory building is typically conducted. Irby, Brown, and Duffy (1999) utilized data gathered from (a) an exhaustive review of the literature, (b) surveys of 30 women leaders in education and business, (c) open-ended interviews of 10 female school executives and 10 scholars in leadership preparation programs, and (d) feedback from scholars at numerous research conferences. Additionally, the SLT was accompanied by the Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (OLEI), a 96-item instrument designed to measure agreement or disagreement with particular indicator of each of the four factors of the SLT (Irby, Brown, & Duffy, 2000). Since its development, the SLT has been validated for both males and females and at various educational management levels across American ethnic cultural and geographic locations in the United States and in international settings (Ardovini, Trautman, Brown, & Irby, 2006; Bamburg, 2004; Glenn, 2008; Hernandez, 2004; Holtkamp, 2001; Holtkamp, Irby, Brown, & Yang, 2007; Justice, 2007; Kaspar, 2006; Schlosberg, 2003; Trautman, 2000; Truslow, 2004; Yang, Irby, & Brown; 2008).

Trautman Study

Trautman (2000) conducted a mixed method study to validate the SLT nationally with male and female superintendents, assistant superintendents, and secondary (grade 6–12) and elementary principals (grades K-5). For the quantitative study, a total sample of 800 was randomly selected from four levels of management; at each level of management 100 females and 100 males were chosen. The qualitative sample was composed of 34 participants, including seven superintendents, four assistant superintendents, four secondary principals, and seven elementary principals. Trautman's quantitative study, applying the OLEI, found that males

and females acknowledge use of a wide range of male and female leadership behaviors. With the researcher-developed open-ended interview data, Trautman's qualitative findings revealed that although males and females saw the four factors of the SLT interacting in different ways, they acknowledged that all four factors of the SLT are interactive.

Holtkamp Study

Holtkamp (2001) examined the psychometric properties of the OLEI as a valid measure of the SLT. Utilizing data collected from 374 participants, randomly selected public male and female school leaders, including 90 superintendents, 102 assistant superintendents, 76 secondary principals, and 94 elementary principals, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted with varimax rotation with a four-factor solution to verify whether the items of the OLEI aligned with the four constructs presented in the SLT model. The results of this quantitative study evidenced the OLEI as a statistically valid measure of the SLT with the four constructs of the SLT equating to four factors with one factor, leadership behaviors, containing two subfactors related to leadership and management issues (Holtkamp, Irby, Brown, & Yang, 2007). Additionally, because the OLEI data aligned with the four constructs of the SLT, the OLEI and the theory can be applied to male and female leaders from the four management levels, as well as leaders from different ethnic groups.

Schlosberg Study

Schlosberg (2003) employed the SLT as a theoretical framework to examine the extent of applicability of the SLT to selected educational leaders in a Mexican non-profit school setting. The researcher collected multiple sources of data, utilizing semi-structured open-ended interview and focus group questions and various kinds of techniques, including face-to-face individual interviews, focus group, and the researcher's observation and reflection, among a purposeful sample of 56 participants. The 56 participants were: two school cofounders (one female, one male), five instructional coordinators (four females, one male), 21 school teachers (16 females, five males), six high school student leaders (five females, one male), six community educational leaders (five females, one male), 15 parents (13 females, two males), and one male university professor. The qualitative case study revealed that each of the four factors of the SLT had cross-cultural applicability to the selected Mexican leaders and that the SLT is a helpful tool for understanding leadership in another culture.

Bamberg Study

Bamberg (2004) examined and analyzed the leadership experiences of five female superintendents leading five successful school districts nationwide through the lens of the SLT. The leadership experiences of each superintendent were investigated by interviewing 15 participants (i.e., five superintendents, five administrative team members, and five school board members), with semi-structured, open-ended interview questions created through reviewing the OLEI. The 15 participants were purposefully chosen and represented five school districts in five different states (i.e., Texas, Minnesota, Rhode Island, California, and Maryland). To collect additional data, a follow-up survey study was conducted using a revised OLEI (Irby, Brown, & Holtkamp, 2001; Hernandez, 2004). The qualitative case studies found three of the five superintendents had aligned the SLT factors in their districts. Two superintendents did not have alignment with their external forces; however, one used Bamberg's leadership be-

haviors to marginalize the impact of the misalignment, while the other did not take corrective actions. This particular district leader continued to experience problems and eventually left the district.

Hernandez Study

Hernandez' (2004) study was designed to revalidate the revised OLEI (Brown, Irby, & Hernandez, 2004) as a measure of the SLT and to examine the perceptions of superintendents and school boards with regard to the four factors of the SLT. The sample of the study consisted of a national, stratified random sample of 2,000 public school superintendents and their respective school board presidents. The total 423 returned instruments represented 260 superintendents (118 female and 142 male) and 163 school board presidents (79 for female superintendents and 84 for male superintendents). The analyses revealed that (a) the revised OLEI is a measure of the four factors of the SLT, (b) the perceptions of superintendents and school boards were congruent with regard to the four factors of the SLT, and (c) the SLT is a gender-inclusive theory applicable to female and male leaders as the superintendents of both genders indicated similar perceptions with regard to the four factors.

Truslow Study

Truslow's (2004) study, involving a mixed method design, identified the differences in conflict management modes of male and female public school superintendents in relation to the SLT. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the Thomas-Killmann Inventory (TKI) (Thomas & Killmann, 1977), an open-ended interview protocol, and the OLEI among a stratified random sample of 500 female and 500 male superintendents. The data analysis resulted in the conclusion that male and female superintendents have significantly different conflict management modes. Additionally, a relationship was identified between the four factors of the SLT and each of five conflict management modes. There was no difference between males and females and the SLT within each conflict management mode.

Kasper Study

Kasper (2006) utilized a phenomenological case study method to examine the relationship of the SLT to the experiences of four elementary principals leading exemplary, low socio-economic schools. The four campuses were purposefully selected from 80 exemplary elementary campuses in Texas, based upon the criteria of greater than 50% of their students identified as economically disadvantaged. A total of 20 participants were involved in the study, including four principals, their four direct supervisors, eight campus staff members (two per campus), and four parents (one from each campus). The data were gathered through participants' completing face-to-face interviews and the OLEI. The qualitative case study found that the principals in the study acted purposefully and proactively through the use of their leadership behaviors to positively impact the organizational structures, external forces, and attitudes, values and beliefs of their organization to produce exemplary student achievement. The study verified that it is critical to leaders on successful campuses that all four factors of the SLT are in alignment.

Justice Study

The purpose of Justice's (2007) study was to determine whether there existed significant differences between the perceptions of male and female secondary school principals in relation to the four factors of SLT. The target population consisted of 36 principals of public schools in Western North Carolina counties; twenty 20 (12 males and 8 females) participated. Utilizing the OLEI, with an added socio-demographic component designed to collect principal and school demographic data, the researcher examined these principals' leadership behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and values, how their leadership is impacted by external forces and organizational structure, and their perceptions of how the four factors of the SLT interact. The study concluded that there were no significant differences in male and female secondary school principals' perceptions of the interactions of the SLT factors of leadership behavior, external forces, organizational structure, and attitudes, beliefs, and values. Both male and female secondary school leaders shared congruent perceptions with regard to four factors of the SLT; thus, implying that the SLT was equally applicable to both males and females.

Glenn Study

Glenn (2008) employed a mixed method design to examine superintendent search consultants' perceptions of school boards' expectations of superintendent candidates in relation to the SLT. Data for the Glenn study were collected among a snowballing sample of 108 superintendent search consultants in Texas, utilizing the OLEI as the quantitative instrument and the open-ended questions as the qualitative instrument. Data analyses revealed the OLEI, based on the SLT, was a valid instrument in determining search consultants' perceptions of school boards' expectations.

Yang, Irby, and Brown Study

Yang, Irby, and Brown (2008) conducted a theoretical analysis of the applicability and transcendence of the SLT to leaders in East Asian cultures. By examining and comparing the SLT and East Asian cultural values and traditions that impact leadership practices in East Asian cultures, Yang et al. found some linkages and congruence between the Western-developed SLT and Confucian Asian values and traditions. Specifically, the linkages and congruence deal with ethics of care and transformational nature of the SLT. Because of the congruence, the study confirmed the possibility of the transcendence of the SLT to leaders in East Asian cultures.

SUMMARY OF VALIDATION STUDIES

All the validation studies indicated the SLT is a useful theory for understanding leadership in context because, foundationally, the SLT

1. is gender-inclusive (Irby et al., 2002; Schlosberg, 2003; Trautman, 2000);
2. is contextual and situational (Bamberg, 2004; Irby et al., 2002; Kasper, 2006; Trautman, 2000; Truslow, 2004; Holtkamp, 2001);
3. is systemic, holistic and interactive (Bamberg, 2004; Kasper, 2006);
4. possesses explanatory power across a range of leadership positions (Ardovinni et al., 2006) and by gender (Justice, 2007; Ardovinni et al., 2006), and
5. is culturally transcendent (Irby et al., 2002; Schlosberg, 2003, Yang, Irby & Brown, 2008).

Each of the findings from the validation studies are discussed in the following sections.

Gender-Inclusive Leadership Consideration

The SLT is the first gender-inclusive leadership theory deliberately addressing the female perspective and including attributes, experiences, and abilities inherent in both male and female leaders (Irby, Brown, & Duffy, 1999). Focusing on gender inclusivity and seeking gender equity, the SLT included female leaders in theory development. By acknowledging a range of behaviors and organizational structures inclusive of those considered feminine, it reflects females' leadership experiences (Brown & Irby, 2006). The theory avers that female leaders may be impacted by external forces, organizational structures, beliefs, attitudes, and values in different ways from male leaders. As a result, female leadership behaviors may interact with the factors of the theory in ways unlike the leadership behavior of males (Brown & Irby). The SLT reflects 21st century thought regarding inclusivity and equitable considerations of gender.

Contextual and Situational Leadership Consideration

Leadership is not a *one size fits all* pursuit. Contextual leadership emphasizes that within different settings and context, a leader frequently must adapt to a variety of situations by applying different strategies. Situational leadership assumes that leadership behaviors depend on a range of situational factors, including the structures and culture of a group (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982; Yukl, 1989); thus, situational leadership theory implies transcendence across contexts and cultures. It requires the leader to determine and adopt the appropriate leadership behavior in a given situation taking many situational (including cultural) factors into consideration. The SLT is contextual and situational (Bamberg, 2004; Irby et al., 2002; Schlosberg, 2003; Trautman, 2000; Holtkamp, 2001), incorporates the characteristics of situational leadership, and furthers the concept of contextual and situational leadership by acknowledging multiple vantage points and taking into account multiple perspectives and values of the leader, those led, and the organization.

Systemic, Holistic, and Interactive Consideration

The SLT was developed based upon a systems theory approach and the SLT's model portraits a complex, interrelational system. The basis of the model of the theory is the work of Fuller (1979) who employed synergy to describe interactions of systems. Irby et al. (2002) described the SLT as "relational and interactive, rather than linear, with four factors interacting in substantial ways" (p. 312). The SLT calls for attention to a number of interconnected leadership behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, values, external forces, and organizational structures (Irby et al.) and stresses the dynamic interactions of the four factors. The SLT emphasizes the importance of the alignment and harmony among four factors, implying that "no matter what values, beliefs, attitudes, leadership behaviors, organizational structures, and external forces, the leader and organization can be perceived as effective if there is an alignment among the four factors" (Yang, Irby, & Brown, 2008, p. 18). Additionally, the SLT takes a macro perspective of interactions among values, beliefs, external forces, people, and organizations and requires that the leader practice reflection related to self and others in context. In this way, the SLT provides complete and holistic pictures or realities of leadership for today's dynamic leader and organizations.

Explanatory Power Consideration

Explanatory power is the capacity to account for events and phenomena. According to Schmalleger (2007), a theory's explanatory power results from consistency and its ability to accurately portray authenticity or reality. The SLT's explanatory power is reflected in its broad applicability in explaining a range of related or unrelated phenomena. For example, Trautman (2000) employed the SLT as a theoretical framework in her quantitative study to explain the interacting of the four factors. Her findings validated the SLT as an interactive theory for both male and female leaders at four levels of school management: elementary principals, secondary principals, central office administrators, and superintendents. Further, studies conducted by Bamberg (2004), Hernandez (2004), Holtkamp (2001), Truslow (2004), and Kaspar (2006) demonstrated the explanatory power of the SLT through the alignment or misalignment of the four factors as the interaction impacted the perceived effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the leader and the organization. Their findings also indicated explanatory power across different levels of management, including principals, superintendents, and school boards and by gender.

Cultural Leadership Consideration

Culture is defined as "The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought" (American Heritage Dictionary, 2006, p. 442). These patterns, traits, attitudes, beliefs, and values are expressions of a particular period, class, community, or society. Culture (e.g., organizational culture and societal culture) plays a strong role in the content of leadership prototypes (Lord & Maher, 1991). According to the project GLOBE (House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002), both organizational culture and societal culture affect what leaders do. Specifically, societal culture becomes an important concept in the development of theory and practice within a globalizing context (Dimmock, 2000). According to Dimmock (2000), societal culture is the enduring set of beliefs, values, and practices that differentiate one group of people from another. Societal culture serves as a filter of ideas and practices from across the globe, resulting in adoption, adaptation and rejection of these ideas. For example, when evaluating leadership behavior, followers use implicit prototypes that are heavily influenced by national culture (Lord & Maher). This implies that an individual will rate the leader's effectiveness based on a match with his own cultural prototype (Nye & Forsyth, 1991). The SLT considers culture as one of the external forces that has important impact on leadership. The SLT's close attention to the role of culture has significant implications that in a cross-cultural context, the leaders' personal awareness of cultural values and the need for adaptation to cultural contexts are necessary for alignment of the factors and, thus, for the effectiveness of the leader and growth of the organization.

CONCLUSION

The SLT as the first gender-inclusive leadership theory has been validated as cross-cultural, situational and contextual, holistic and systemic, and socially just over the past seven years. As a 21st century leadership theory, the SLT has reflected a postmodern view of leadership situated among followers, within the organization, and in context of external forces. The SLT has significant implications for leaders to build global and reflective capacities and for educational leadership preparation programs to prepare leaders to accommodate change. The

SLT includes democratic, adaptive, collaborative, nurturing, and people-oriented leadership behaviors consistent with the global trends necessary for leadership in the 21st century. Further, the SLT emphasizes culture as an external force that future leaders should reflect upon related to their own leadership experiences to enhance their own cultural awareness, sensitivity, and ability to interact effectively with others. Because the SLT focuses on philosophical beliefs and values which guide leaders' behaviors, leaders are prompted to share their own beliefs and values with others, as well as encouraging others to do the same. Leaders can apply the SLT to their own contexts, taking into account the interactive and dynamic relationships among their own leadership behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, values (theirs and their followers), external forces, and organizational structures.

In summary, the SLT reflects 21st century views including gender inclusivity, cultural relevance, situational, contextual, and changing dynamics, holistic and systemic frameworks, transformative reflection, collaborative interdependence, and socially-just underpinnings. The SLT, the first published leadership theory in the 21st century, adds to existing leadership theories by (a) including female leaders and their experiences, (Irby et al., 2002), (b) recognizing that culture is an external force that significantly impacts leadership and organizations (Irby et al., 2002; Schlosberg, 2003), (c) considering contextual and situational dynamics, (d) describing the systemic relationship and the interconnectedness of leadership behavior, organizational structure, external forces, and attitudes, beliefs, and values, (e) promoting reflection related to self, others, and situations, (f) offering a framework for describing collaborative interdependence, (Irby et al., 2002), and (g) promoting equity and social justice (Brown & Irby, 2006). Thus, the SLT, as 21st century leadership theory, encompasses the holistic nature of leadership and interactions within the organization and the broader environment.

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PART 4

DIVERSITY ISSUES IN LEADERSHIP

Fostering Resiliency: Making Schools a Better Place for Students with Dyslexia

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Individuals with dyslexia, regardless of their age, suffer immense emotional struggles that can impact not only their performance as students but also their attitudes towards the future. Shaywitz (2003) suggested that students with dyslexia need to understand that despite this difficult learning disability, they can learn strategies that will help them overcome the problems related to dyslexia and still select any career for their future.

Although there is not much research specifically addressing the emotional needs of students with dyslexia, results from studies show some students with reading disabilities, in general, experience severe side effects such as migraines and stomach aches as a secondary condition (Riddick, 1996). Riddick continued by stating, “There appears to be little systematic research on the social and emotional consequences of dyslexia despite the indications from personal accounts that some children and adults with dyslexia do experience such difficulties” (p. 51). However, there is an increased number of studies conducted on the social aspects of those students identified with special needs or disabilities other than dyslexia (Riddick).

The purpose of this study was to analyze the perceptions of successful secondary high school students with dyslexia and perceptions of their parents related to the students' emotional experiences before, during, and after a reading intervention. A second purpose of this study was to compare the responses to themes of resilience.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Our study was couched in the research regarding resilience theory (Harvey, 2007; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003; Luthar & Zigler, 1991; Luthar, 2003; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Resilience theory focuses on characteristics of someone who, despite having risk factors in his or her life, can still overcome challenges and leads a successful life with a positive attitude (Beach Center on Disability, n.d.).

To apply the term *resilient* to an individual appropriately, that person must meet two basic criteria: (a) they must currently feel they live a productive life, and (b) they must have overcome an adversity in their past (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). The research involving resilience does not focus on one type of adversity, nor does it define a happy or successful life; instead, it encompasses a variety of possible adversities and leaves the determination of success or happiness to the individual (Luthar, 1993).

The ability to experience a successful life despite adverse situations is described as resilience (Harvey, 2007; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003; Luthar, 2003). Resilience is the difference in attitude that promotes success in an individual who has experienced stressful events that lead to

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trauma in other individuals. However, despite these hardships, those with resilient strength are able to accept the hardships and continue pursuing a successful future (Luthar & Zigler, 1991).

Describing individuals as resilient would be appropriate when an obstacle is present and the individual succeeds despite the difficulty. According to the Beach Center on Disabilities (n.d.), in order to access a resilient attitude and exhibit its success, the following are often present: (a) supporters and mentors, (b) a strong internal locus of control, (c) problem solving skills, and (d) spiritual beliefs.

As described by Pianta and Walsch (1998), resilience is not isolated during one particular time in life; rather, it is a constant combination of difficult situations that are accepted and resolved which leads to a positive outcome. A theory of resilience defines the negative experiences as risk factors, and the personal attributes and experiences that rise above the difficulty are referred to as protective factors (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005).

For students whose adversity is a learning disability such as dyslexia, their school environment is unfortunately filled with negative experiences; thus, they tend to have a lower self-esteem and overall low feeling of self worth (Mather & Ofiesh, 2005). Family members, such as the parents of children with disabilities, can be a resource that plays an important role in their confidence, which, in turn, can build the child's resilience (Sandler, 2001).

METHOD

Because the scope of this study provides information pertaining to the emotional issues students with dyslexia experience, a qualitative narrative inquiry was conducted consisting of five student participants and their parents (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). When deciding on the number of participants in the narrative inquiry, Creswell (1998) stated that the decision should be based on the depth and complexity of the issue and desired results. He continued by stating that typically, researchers include four participants.

The participants were selected from current secondary students identified with dyslexia who were attending high schools in one large suburban school district. These participants were students who were (a) identified with dyslexia during their elementary school years in that district, (b) received their intervention as students in that district, and (c) were currently successful high school students within this same large district. They were not served through special education for dyslexia; however, they were identified, served, and monitored per the guidelines stated in the Texas Education Agency Dyslexia Handbook (2007). In addition to these five high school students, a parent of each student participant in the sample was also included.

Four of the student participants were male tenth graders, and one was a female ninth grader. One father participated in the study, and the remaining four parent participants were mothers. All participants were from White middle to upper class families who attended the same school district since their diagnosis of dyslexia. One of the participants was identified with dyslexia in second grade, two of them were identified in the third grade, and the other two were identified during their fourth grade year in elementary school.

The data for our study were collected through multiple personal interviews with each of the five student participants and their parents. Each session was conducted individually and took place in a location most convenient for the participant.

Each of the five student participants was asked to participate in a pre-interview conference, three interview sessions, and one post-interview conference. The parents of these students were asked to participate in a pre-interview conference, one interview session, and one post-interview

conference. Each participant signed a consent form for all interviews. To maintain ethical standards for this type of research, the participants were informed that their identity would remain anonymous. In addition, they were notified that they could choose not to participate at any time without penalty. In collecting and analyzing the data, the following strategies for validity were used: (a) trustworthiness with participants, (b) reflexivity of the researchers, (c) triangulation of the data, and (d) member checking. Likewise, an audit trail was created to increase this study's reliability (Merriam & Associates, 2002). As Merriam and Associates discussed, an audit trail requires the researcher to describe how the data were collected, how categories were determined, and how conclusions were created.

FINDINGS

Although participants were not asked interview questions directly related to resilience, several characteristics of resilience emerged through their responses. From these data, five specific themes related to resilience emerged, one being a risk factor while the remaining four are protective factors. Frustration was the repetitive risk factor and advocacy for support, acceptance, attitude, and determination were the emerging protective factors.

Risk Factors

As stated by Gardynik and McDonald (2005), a theory of resilience defines negative experiences and characteristics as risk factors. Various risk factors include experiences that may be related to biological, psychological, cognitive, or environmental experiences (Dole, 2000). Dyslexia is considered a cognitive risk factor that students who have this disability must overcome. In addition to the learning disability as a risk factor, all of the students who were participants in this study experienced frustration, an important negative risk factor related to this specific reading disability.

Frustration. Students remember feeling frustrated with learning the process of reading; they also remember feeling that their parents were frustrated with them as they were learning how to read. Not only did the students report remembering being frustrated with reading, but also with spelling and homework.

Parents remember their children being frustrated with learning to read as well. In addition, they remember feeling frustrated because they did not understand why their children were struggling in this area. They also remember their children being frustrated with them because parents were constantly requiring them to read and do homework that was difficult for them. Parents were frustrated with their children's difficulty in school. They observed their children suffer when trying to learn to read. In addition, they were frustrated, at times, with inadequate help from school staff. During this time of frustration, parents revealed that their children expressed low self-esteem and made comments about being stupid. One parent vividly remembered her child asking, "Why did God make somebody like me?"

Although not specifically stated, some parents were frustrated with an uncooperative school system. Many of the parents reported addressing their concerns with teachers and administrators only to be denied any assessment for disabilities. They remember approaching the school multiple times in the early elementary grades asking for assessment and assistance and being rejected until a few years later. The frustration level increased in both children and parents

during this important opportunity of time. One parent remembered it was her child's increased frustration level that initiated a conference with the school counselor.

Severe frustration was experienced by both the student and parent participants. Regardless, parents observed their children persevering through the frustration. As one mother stated, her child was "not frustrated enough to give up." Frustration is part of understanding and accepting the difficulties associated with dyslexia. Knowing areas of strength as well as identifying areas of concern help students realize that although they have significant weaknesses, they also have areas of strength that bring them success.

Protective Factors

In resilience theory, positive attributes and successes are labeled as protective factors (Dole, 2000). Protective factors involved with the resilience theory include a positive attitude, connection with others, high expectations, intelligence, and a sense of determination (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003). Protective factors include a variety of intrinsic and extrinsic resources. These resources can be categorized as internal protective factors, such as, characteristics of individuals or external protective factors including support from family, school, and community members (Cosden, 2001; Kitano & Lewis, 2005; Murray, 2003; Rockwell, 2006).

When analyzing the data collected from the multiple interviews, several patterns related to the resilience theory surfaced throughout the student and parent data. Not only did the students remark on these aspects repetitively, but the parents did as well. Collectively, students and parents shared similar information concerning (a) advocacy for support, (b) acceptance, (c) attitude, and (d) a sense of determination. These themes are consistent with those explained with a theory of resilience.

External protective factor: Advocacy for support. One of the protective factors the participants experienced was support from others (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003; Murray 2003; Rockwell, 2006; Santa, 2006). Both students and parents reflected on various types of support that have been helpful over the years. Family members, teachers, academic accommodations, friends, and the reading intervention class provided the most remembered and helpful support.

Students appreciated support they received throughout this frustrating time of their lives. They remember supportive parents who never gave up on them. Parents reading homework aloud, helping them study, being patient and determined, and providing private tutoring were ways the students remember their parents supporting them. Student participants with siblings who also have dyslexia found support and a special bond between them. It was also helpful to know that other family members, parents, or cousins also have dyslexia.

In addition to receiving support from parents and other family members, students recalled teachers being supportive throughout the years. Parents reflected on memories of teachers providing nurturing and encouraging environments for their child. Both the student and parent participants also found the accommodations provided in the classroom to be supportive. Common accommodations that were most helpful to the students were oral administration of tests, extra time to complete assignments and tests, and receiving a hard copy of class notes.

Having other friends who had also been diagnosed with dyslexia was described as helpful and supportive. Developing these friendships may have been a result of being in the same

dyslexia intervention class together over multiple years, or the friendship may have developed from having a common trait. Regardless of how or why the friendship developed, both students and parents found the relationship to be supportive.

Participating in the dyslexia intervention class was remembered as a helpful tool throughout school. Although students and parents shared that attending the class and missing exciting lessons in the classroom or physical education was not enjoyable, the overall result of the class was viewed as a positive experience. Students remember feeling more successful once they started attending the class and receiving specific reading intervention. One student participant shared that "school was less of a struggle." The support received from the intervention class was remembered as "helpful…and very worth it."

Students exited the class feeling more confident about themselves. Reading is still not an activity any of these students do voluntarily for pleasure, but they do view themselves as successful readers if they are interested in the topic. Many of them have read lengthy books successfully on their own despite their reading disability. Although many times these books were assignments for a class, a few have read some books by choice.

When looking towards the future, the student and parent participants shared their intention to look for similar support while attending a college or university. The students all anticipated seeking assistance as a college student and hope to mirror similar accommodations received currently as a high school student. In addition, parents hope to find a smaller university setting that may be able to provide more assistance to students with disabilities.

Internal protective factor: Acceptance. Acceptance is identified protective factor in resilience (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003; Murray 2003; Rockwell, 2006; Santa, 2006). The student participants remember feeling a sense of relief when they were told about their reading disability. One stated he was not really surprised; he always knew that there was something giving him trouble. To him, accepting the diagnosis and realizing that he would be getting help to overcome the struggle was a relief. Others shared experiencing a sense of relief as well. Many were thankful to know they were intelligent regardless of the opinions they were starting to think about themselves. Knowing that there was a reason for their struggle and that they would be taught strategies to help them learn to read was appreciated.

Accepting the diagnosis of dyslexia was a two-fold process for the parents. Parents remember blaming themselves and questioning if there was something they could have done to prevent the disability. In addition to blame, parents felt sorry for their children realizing the struggles they would encounter on a daily basis. However, once the parents learned more about the disability and the assistance their children would receive, they, too, accepted the diagnosis and were relieved.

In addition to looking beyond their difficulties, the participants acknowledged that they will struggle in some areas and experience success in other areas. Accepting the weaknesses but being able to move beyond them is part of their resilience.

Internal protective factor: Attitude. Having a positive attitude is also identified as another important protective factor in resilience (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003; Murray 2003; Rockwell, 2006; Santa, 2006). After the diagnosis of dyslexia was accepted and understood, student and parent participants exhibited a positive attitude. Despite the diagnosis of this learning disability, participants did not believe this would prevent their children from achieving a successful future. The parents did not feel they were unable to set high expectations

for their children's education. The students are determined to challenge themselves and accept no limitations due to their disability. For most of the participants, engineering, science, or math-related fields were the planned fields of study. One participant, in particular, planned to be a second grade teacher but hoped to only teach math and not reading. All of them planned to choose a field that requires as little reading and writing as possible. Still, participants were able to maintain a positive attitude despite the difficulties related to dyslexia.

Internal protective factor: Determination. Being determined is categorized as an individual characteristic protective factor of resilience (Gardynik & McDonald, 2005; Janas, 2002; Jones, 2003; Murray 2003; Rockwell, 2006; Santa, 2006). A sense of determination repeated throughout the student and parent interviews. Parents reflected how determined their children were when they were first learning how to read. Students shared that their parents were determined to help them during those frustrating early years of elementary school.

Once dyslexia was diagnosed, students and parents alike remembered that they were determined to overcome the difficulties of dyslexia. Students remember accepting the strategies introduced through the intervention classes and applying them to reading because they were determined to be successful. They also remember persevering through difficult homework, and parents remember providing outside tutoring and assistance to promote their children's success. As high school students no longer in the intervention class, they felt a sense of pride for their hard work, and they were determined to continue their education after graduating from high school. Parents acknowledged that higher education will not be easy for their children; however, due to the determination and hard work they have observed their children exhibit throughout the past, they anticipate their success will continue.

Once provided appropriate instruction and accommodations, students were determined to experience academic success. Parents bragged on their children's determination that guided these students through difficult school years. The determination the students exhibited throughout varying activities in their lives allowed them to persevere and either conquer their difficulties or find different solutions. Resilience pushed them to look past the challenges and focus on their strengths.

IMPLICATIONS

This study supports prior research that students with dyslexia can receive intervention after the disability is identified, be supported with accommodations and assistance when necessary as a student, and become resilient, confident, successful individuals (Hudson, High, & Otaiba, 2007; Shaywitz, 2003). Thus, these findings lead to important implications for schools and students.

Implications for School Personnel

Both student and parent participants expressed frustration before the identification of dyslexia. The students were frustrated with reading, spelling, and homework. Parents were frustrated with their children's slow progress in academics as well. However, when parents shared their concerns with teachers, the frustration and concern was not mutual. Teachers indicated that the students would continue to improve and that there was not a reason to worry.

Even though this particular study did not include school staff participants, the parent and student participants spoke about school staff members repeatedly. Parents mentioned addressing the struggles their children were experiencing in reading with teachers and administrators. Having to conference with school personnel multiple times in order to schedule dyslexia assessment was discussed frequently.

In addition to teachers reassuring the parents that their children would make successful strides in reading eventually, school administrators also ignored pleas from the parents. This implies that neither teachers nor school administrators were properly trained to recognize early symptoms of dyslexia. They did not adequately observe signs of frustration from the students in class.

Not only were teachers and school administrators unaware of early signs of dyslexia, as reported by the parents, these school personnel also did not actively pursue the process to identify students with dyslexia as soon as possible. School staff members did not recognize or adhere to the importance of early identification of this learning disability. It is possible that the staff was unaware of the process of evaluation for dyslexia within the school system. In addition, the importance of implementing intervention as early as possible may have been unknown by the school staff.

However, once the students were identified and provided with direct instruction through a reading intervention program, students experienced more academic success. Both student and parent participants implied that this improvement in school was due to the assistance provided through this intervention. Therefore, the school district did recognize the importance of direct instruction and provided appropriate staff and resources to meet the academic needs of the students.

Several participants shared that accommodations were not accessible at all times. Due to the success attributed to these available accommodations, it is necessary for teachers to understand the accommodations and provide them consistently.

School staff members also need to be aware of the resilience required for students to be successful in spite of a disability. Some students may already have a sense of resilience that will promote success; however, others may need assistance in building this strong sense of resilience. Administrators, school counselors, and teachers should be aware of the characteristics of resilience and how to encourage growth in this area. Providing students with dyslexia with reading intervention as early as possible in conjunction with helping them become more resilient will foster strong potential for future success.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PARENTS

Parents of children with dyslexia play an important role in the success of their children. It is vital for parents to be advocates for their children's education. When they notice their children are struggling with basic reading skills, parents need to feel confident when addressing school personnel. Parents need to be aware of the early signs of dyslexia and request assessment through the school system as early as possible.

After a child is diagnosed with dyslexia, parents will be able to provide support throughout childhood after the disability is understood. Accessing additional support will assist the parent as well as the child. Being understanding yet still holding high expectations for the child will foster success despite the diagnosis.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA

Students diagnosed with a learning disability, such as, dyslexia need a strong sense of resilience (Brooks, 2001). They need to accept the disability and the struggles associated with it as well as be prepared to be successful despite their shortcomings. Realizing that dyslexia does not have to prevent students from becoming successful adults is an important component of resilience (Brooks).

Students suffering with a disability such as dyslexia also have to know when to ask for assistance and to do so immediately. Being aware of the problems as well as knowing how to handle them will allow for the assistance needed from the beginning. The student participants in this study were aware of their weaknesses related to dyslexia and were usually comfortable asking for help when necessary.

Students diagnosed with learning disabilities need to be aware of accommodations that they can receive in the classroom. The participants of this study shared that receiving extra time, oral administration of exams, and a hard copy of notes were the most beneficial accommodations. In their opinion, these accommodations limited the hardship of dyslexia. Students with learning disabilities need to understand the purpose of these accommodations and be encouraged to advocate for themselves.

THE MISSION FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

It has been discovered that dyslexia not only affects the reading ability, but also the emotional aspect of that person as well (Long, MacBlain, & MacBlain, 2007). Many individuals identified with dyslexia have a low sense of self esteem. They also experience frustration in academics as well as other parts of their life (Shaywitz, 2003). However, despite the hardship of the disability, many people with dyslexia are able to overcome their difficulties and lead successful, productive lives (Shaywitz). They are capable of counteracting their individual negative risk factors with more positive protective factors (Murray, 2003). School administrators are encouraged to create a positive academic environment that cares for the child holistically (Brooks, 2001). As indicated in Figure 1, successful students with dyslexia exhibit resilient characteristics that assist them in overcoming the obstacles associated with dyslexia (Brooks).

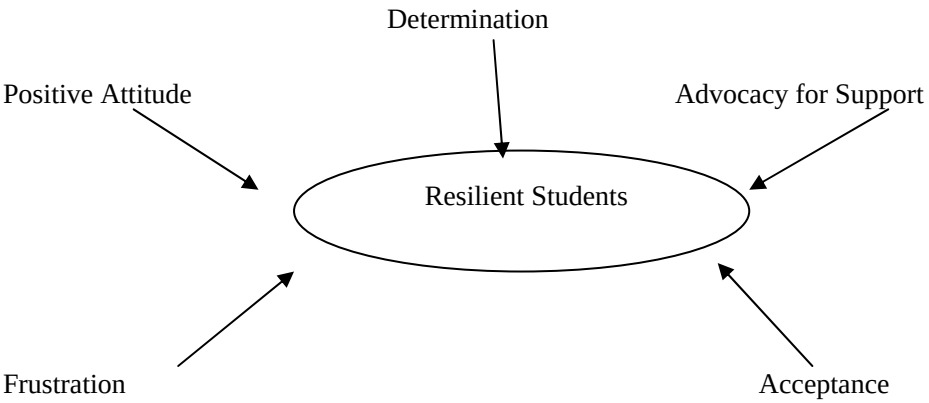

Figure 1. Characteristics of resilient students.

The results of our study indicated that despite the identification of dyslexia, students with dyslexia can overcome difficulties related to their disability with support, intervention, accommodations, and resilience. Being identified with this learning disability during elementary school and receiving direct reading instruction through an intervention program provided the tools, strategies, and resources needed to develop into successful high school students. As they look towards the future after high school graduation, they do not feel limited in their choices and are anticipating success.

Schools administrators need to promote this success for dyslexic students on campus by educating their staff on early signs of dyslexia, encouraging appropriate identification and intervention through the school system, requiring teachers to provide necessary accommodations, and teaching students strategies of resilience. Acknowledging and meeting the needs of students early in their elementary years and assisting students to develop protective factors will allow the opportunity for a successful future, despite the risk factors related to dyslexia. By fostering resilience among students with dyslexia, school leaders can, indeed, make schools a better place for children.

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Leadership in Children's Books: Bridging Values of Equity in Creating Gender Awareness

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At the base of the Statue of Liberty in New York City harbor, the following words by Emma Lazarus (l886) are inscribed, "Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Ostensibly, these words declare that all human beings are welcome to find freedom within the confines of the 50 United States of America (USA). The children who attend USA schools are the descendents of immigrants and indigenous people who value freedom and other values that are associated with freedom (Fowler, 2009), such as equality, diversity and social justice. On August 28, 1963, civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr., in his *I Have a Dream* speech quoted from the Declaration of Independence and stated, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, . . ." With Barack Obama, a biracial male, inaugurated as President of the USA, King's dream became a reality in 2009.

Since 1789, 42 Caucasian males (who can trace their ancestry to European nations) have been inaugurated president. With the election of Barack Obama, the USA closed the gap between its *espoused theory and its theory in use* (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004), and succeeded in reflecting the values of equality, diversity and social justice. Now, hopefully, when the descendents of diverse immigrants turn on their television sets or laptops, perhaps they will be able to identify more closely with the reflection that is mirrored back to them by the current President and First Family.

Therefore, it is probably reasonable to assume that the results of the two-year presidential campaign indicated across the globe that USA citizens were ready to accept a biracial man, as their president, but did Americans also communicate to the world that they were equally ready to accept a woman as a viable president or vice-president? On the national scene, the appearances of former New York State Senator Hillary Clinton in the presidential primaries as a Democratic candidate, and Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska as the Republican vice-presidential candidate would seem to communicate the message that the USA was ready. But the appearances of these two women also raised various questions and discussions on whether the values of equality, diversity and social justice could be also extended as readily to women when the positions of president or vice president were considered.

Even though women steadily have made leadership inroads since national Women's Liberation Day was declared by the federal government on August 26, 1970, their progress has not been equitable to males. Women make up approximately 50% of the adult population in the USA, but they still do not occupy 50% of the upper level leadership positions in various fields of employment such as business management (Eagly & Carli, 2007) or education administration (Grogan, 2005), which share a common knowledge base. According to Eagly and Carli (2007), women occupy 40% of all managerial positions in the USA, but comprise only 2% of the CEO positions and 6% of the highly paid executive positions in Fortune 500 companies.

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Moreover, within education administration, there has been steady documentation of an under-representation of women in the top central leadership positions even though women dominate the education profession as teachers (Grogan, 2005; Shakeshaft, l989). In l989, Shakeshaft claimed that 3% of district superintendents were women; in 2005, Grogan stated the number had only risen to 18%.

Eagly and Carli (2007) noted that the glass ceiling that has prevented women from obtaining equity with males at the top of the executive ladder should be described more accurately as a *labyrinth of leadership mazes* that cause women to "disappear in various numbers at many points" of their careers (p. 64). Similarly, Rusch and Marshall (2006) outlined institutionalized gender filters that sustain the inequity of females and the dominance of males in education administration. Additional factors may contribute to this imbalance; one of these may be the media, which provide very powerful male role models (Giroux & Shannon, 1989). Another factor may be the myriad of classroom materials and curricula utilized, and how males and females are depicted in them (Sleeter, 2005). Sleeter claimed that there is sufficient evidence regarding the chronic over-representation of Caucasian, straight and middle class males in school textbooks. Moreover, classroom materials and leadership depictions may shape the views of female and male children. Bishop (1997) wrote about children's literature being both a mirror and a window, a place where children can see themselves reflected in order to learn about
others.

Instructors and academicians of education leadership have questioned how school leaders are prepared from theoretical, practical and value-laden perspectives (Andrews & Ridenour, 2006; Barbour, 2008; Creighton, Harris, & Coleman, 2005; Donmoyer, Imber, & Scheurich, l995; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Rusch & Marshall, 2006). With regard to gender equity issues, Andrews and Ridenour (2006) stated that "there is not only an academic need to broaden educational administration preparation to include gender awareness but also a public policy demand for it" (p.35). To address multiple and various inequities, Capper (l993) suggested that educators question the status-quo. Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) recommended that instructors engage their students in reflective self-examination so inequities may be changed. Osterman and Kottkamp also suggested that if educators can change on a personal or professional level, they may be able to influence change on an institutional or school level as well. Through reflective practice, students may gain insight regarding their perceptions of leadership, and change them if their leadership models consciously or unconsciously have perpetuated outdated or stereotypical leadership examples and practices (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Andrews and Ridenour (2006) illustrated how they were able to influence a change in their students' professional practice toward gender fairness in their education administration courses through increased reflective practice.

According to Andrews and Ridenour (2006), "school administrators must have a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and gender discrimination if all children are to be served at the levels of excellence required by accountability standards" (p. 42). Currently, the school principal is considered the primary instructional leader within elementary and secondary schools according to national and state directives (Armstrong, 2003; Brown & Green, 2006; Hoy & Hoy, 2006). But because of various time constraints in overseeing a myriad of building-related issues as well as the pressures of meeting immediacy matters, a school principal may not always be cognizant of the specific content of the books that their teachers choose and use in their classrooms from a diverse leadership perspective. Moreover, school superintendents

may not be fully informed regarding the leadership messages these specific books might convey to female and male children as they advance from grade to grade or school to school. Therefore, it may be the responsibility of higher education professors and instructors in leadership preparation programs to continue to generate an awareness of diversity from multiple perspectives, including gender awareness, in their courses, curricula and assignments (Andrews & Ridenour, 2006).

PURPOSE

The purpose of our study was to conduct an exploratory action-research examination of leadership depictions in children's books that were chosen by 53 graduate students and to examine the values that influenced their choices. Students were aspiring or current administrators enrolled in a *School Leadership* course in a nationally-accredited Master's degree program in Educational Leadership at a private suburban university in New York. They worked in Long Island or New York City public and private schools as administrators or teachers. They were seeking New York State public school certification on the school building level, which includes serving in the positions of principal, assistant principal, director or chairperson. The study was conducted over a 26-month period and overlapped with the 2008 presidential election campaign. Many questions were generated in this qualitative study, but overall two main questions were explored. These were:

1. What aspects of leadership did the participants emphasize in their book choices?
2. What assumptions and values about leadership seem to influence the choice of children's literature when a diverse lens (i.e. culture, race**,** ethnicity, gender) is applied?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The central theoretical frame that was used in this study was based on the work of Senge (2006) and his concept of systems theory as applied to leadership. According to Senge, the disciplines of *personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning* affect systems thinking and the system at-large. In applying a systems-thinking perspective to this study, each of the 53 participants came into a *School Leadership* course with an individual identity and a *personal mastery* based on their distinct *mental models* (i.e. assumptions, beliefs, perceptions and values). Furthermore, as leadership students, they engaged in reflective practice, and explored their values regarding leadership and aspects of diversity (i.e. culture, race, ethnicity, gender). They were asked to communicate with the instructor and one another, and *share their visions* and perspectives about leadership, so that they could engage in *team learning* about children's literature within the context of diversity as it applied to leadership.

METHODOLOGY

Mills' (2003) qualitative action-research model served as the design of our study. Mills advised: a) focusing on a theme (the focus in this study was leadership as depicted in children's books), b) data collection, c) data analysis, and d) formulating an action-plan. The resulting action-plan of the instructor might be to revise the *School Leadership* course syllabus so as to broaden students' learning about leadership. The resulting action-plans of the leadership stu-

dents might be to apply what was learned about leadership (as depicted in children's literature) to their own schools and classrooms. In this study, the instructor was one of two action-researchers, but the 53 participants were also considered secondary action-researchers as they gathered data and analyzed it.

Participants were Diverse

There were 53 participants; 26 were Caucasian, and 27 self-identified or were characterized as representing a minority group. Therefore, an almost equal balance of Caucasian students relative to minority students was represented. There were 44 females and 9 males participating in the study with 21 Caucasian females and 5 males. Of the 27 who were characterized or self-identified as a diverse minority, 23 were female and 4 were male. There were 14 African-Americans (1 was male), 6 Caribbean-Americans (2 were male), and 2 Asian females. Additionally, there were 5 ethnic or foreign-born participants included: 3 Hispanic students (2 females and 1 male), 1 Middle Eastern female and 1 European female. A majority of them were married and had children of their own. Participants represented 21 private and 32 public schools. Included in the study, were 11 administrators (9 females and 2 males) who were primarily from private schools or organizations seeking public school certification. The remaining 42 were teachers and teacher leaders on the secondary (8 females and 6 males) and elementary (17 females and 1 male) levels; and specialists in reading or special education (10 females). Forty participants lived on Long Island (33 females and 7 males), in New York City (11 females) and Westchester county (2 males). Of the 53 participants, 22 worked in Long Island schools (17 females and 5 males), while 31 worked in New York City schools (27 females and 4 males). Table 1 depicts the demographics of participants.

Table 1. Diversity of Participants Relative to Education Positions and Levels of Teaching.

Race	**Adm.** Female	**Adm.** Male	**Sec. T** Female	**Sec.T** Male	**ElemT** Female	**ElemT** Male	**SpecT** Female	**SpecT** Male	**Total** Female	**Total** Male	**Total**
Cauc.	2	0	7	4	8	1	4	0	21	5	26
AfroA.	4	0	1	1	4	0	4	0	13	1	14
Carib.	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	2	6
Hisp.	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	3
Asian	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2
Europe	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
MidE.	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sub Total:	9	+2	8	+6	17	+1	10	+ 0	44	+ 9	
Total:	=	11	=	14	=	18	=	10	=	53	53

Key: Cauc. = Caucasian; AfroA. = African-American; Carib. = Caribbean American;
Hisp. = Hispanic American; Asian = Asian American; Europe = European;
MidE. = Middle Eastern; Adm. = Administrator; Sec.T = Secondary Teacher;
Elem.T = Elementary Teacher; SpecT = Specialty Teacher in Reading or Special Education.

Participants were registrants in six *School Leadership* courses taught by a single instructor. There were 6 participants in the 1st course (5 females and 1 male); 7 in the 2nd (5 females and 2 males); 14 in the 3rd (13 females and 1 male); 9 in the 4th (6 females and 3 males); 10 in the 5th (9 females and 1 male); and 7 in the 6th course (6 females and 1 male). Students gave

their signed consent to the instructor. There were 5 additional students who were registered in these courses who did not participant in this study (3 females and 2 males).

Context of the Study

Two action-researchers were associated with this study; one was the instructor of the *School Leadership* course. The other was an instructor from the Literacy program who taught a *Children's Literature* course. The researchers decided to explore classroom leadership materials and start *at the beginning* with children's literature. The *School Leadership* course included a class assignment that examined children's literature in regard to various leadership models and characteristics (Green, 2009; Senge, 2006; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2009). These concepts were discussed prior to the class assignment. The instructor engaged the students in reflective discussions and conversations about leadership in the classroom and over the Internet (through the Blackboard network). The instructor believed that reflective discussions might help students widen their awareness of leadership, and also awareness of personal, professional and societal values about leadership and its practices within the context of diversity (i.e. culture, race, ethnicity, gender). One of the goals of the course was to have participants approach children's texts critically.

We, the researchers, viewed ourselves as critical educators who support students in transforming their experiences so that they can *acquire a language* (McLaren, 1992, l993). A critical educator tries to enable students to become socially responsible (Freire, l973, l985; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Giroux & Shannon, l997; McLaren, 1992, l993; Pace, 2006). According to Banks (l995), "to create and teach liberatory, transformative knowledge, we must not only be aware of the knowledge produced, but must also understand that the knowledge producer is located within a particular social, economic, and political context of society" (p. 15).

The instructor's values about leadership were affected by a feminist lens (Alquist, l992) that included examination of various aspects of diversity, equity and social justice issues (Marshall & Oliva, 2006). Dialogic questioning of literature choices was utilized, and was central to the participants' understanding of children's literature. We believed that it would help students speak both the language of power and the language of literacy (McLaren, 1992, l993; Shor, 1987). Pace (2006) acknowledged that educators "can use various methods for encouraging students to investigate their critical questions about literature" (p. 592). We recognized that students' choices would be complex, and would be influenced by various factors of identity (Baym,1990); we also acknowledged that *ideological becoming* (Bakhtin, 1981; Pace, 2006) is a lifelong struggle, and the beginning of that struggle might only be partially glimpsed in a classroom.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data were gathered from six *School Leadership* courses, which spanned a 26-month period (some of which coincided with the presidential campaign). In applying the Mills' (2003) action-research model, the words of the participants became the main unit of analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, l998) as well as the words and visuals in the children's literature chosen. The instructor did not want to influence students' choices so a list of children's books was not provided beforehand. A triangulation of methods was utilized (Mills, 2003). The data sources included field notes, the children's books and the leadership role-models chosen within these

books, written reflective papers and copies of technological PowerPoint presentations regarding the participants' book choices, as well as discussions in class and follow-up questions in person and over the discussion board of the Blackboard network. Within the action-research model, these data sources were compared for commonalities in patterns and themes as well as surprise occurrences; categories and sub-categories were formulated in the analysis of data (Miles & Huberman, l994). Data were analyzed from the total group of participants, and were also broken down into separate categories that were compared and contrasted. For example, data from each course were analyzed as a separate entity and also as a combined grouping. Additionally, data from females and males were compared as were Caucasian and minority students. Data from private and public school participants and administrators and teachers were also compared.

The choice of a children's book was left to each student. Leadership students were assigned specifically to perform the following multi-functional tasks of the assignment: (a) choose a children's book that depicts leadership, (b) briefly summarize the children's book, (c) apply a leadership model or leadership characteristics to the book,(d) examine the children's book in the context of diversity (i.e. culture, race, ethnicity, gender), (e) write a reflective paper (approximately, 1500 words or the equivalent of five pages) about the book, (f) present the book to the class in oral or technological format, and (g) follow-up with discussion in class and over the Internet. We felt that through shared discussion with their peers, students might become aware of their mental models (i.e. assumptions, beliefs, perceptions, values) about leadership (Senge, 2006). If their models of leadership were outdated, stereotypical or narrowly focused, then perhaps participants might try to change them (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004).

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Reflective practitioners have posited that by creating an environment in which students learn about themselves, growth and improvement occur (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004; Senge, 2006). Leadership students engaged in reflective practice and became aware of their own assumptions and perceptions of leadership through their interpretations of the children's books they chose. Of the 55 books chosen (two female students chose two books and compared them), 46 different books were represented. Duplicate books or recurring role-models chosen were: *Swimmy* (l963) chosen by five students*; Mr. Lincoln's Way* (2001) chosen by three students; and *The Lorax* (l971); and versions of *Cinderella* (2003, 2001) and *Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (1996; 1964) each chosen by two students. Tables 2 and 3 represent the book choices and gender of the teachers and administrators, and a gender breakdown of a book's main character or leader.

There were no apparent differences noted in the results based on whether participants were in administrative or teaching positions, or whether they worked on Long Island or in New York City private or public schools. But there were several themes that were revealed when data from the entire group were analyzed in regard to Question 1.

QUESTION #1: WHAT ASPECTS OF LEADERSHIP DID THE PARTICIPANTS EMPHASIZE IN THEIR BOOK CHOICES?

The themes relating to Question 1 are as follows.

Theme 1: Both Leadership Models and Leadership Characteristics are Applied

Participants applied specific leadership models (i.e. authoritarian, behavioral, contingency, hierarchical, participatory, servant, situational, transactional, transformational and team leader to their book choices, and they also applied leadership characteristics, such as, confidence, courage, creativity, decisiveness, determination, empathy, experience, fairness, flexibility, integrity, intelligence, organizing, planning, problem-solving and risk-taking (Drucker, l999; Green, 2009; Katzenbach & Smith, 2003; Kline, l999; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). For example, certain books illustrated: a) authoritarian leader (i.e. *Follow the Leader; Grouchy Ladybug; The Lorax*), b) hierarchical (i.e. *Charlotte's Web; The Frog Principal);* c) participatory (i.e. *Dora's Book of Manners*; *Two as a Team; The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*), d) transformational (i.e. *You Forgot Your Skirt Amelia Bloomer*; *Miss Nelson Is Missing*; *Swimmy; The Recess Queen*), e) situational or contingency (i.e. *One Grain of Rice; Granddaddy's Gift; Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer; Thomas and Friends: Calling All Engines),* f) servant leader (i.e. *Following Isabella; Mr. Lincoln's Way*), and g) team leader (*Harry Potter*; *The Little Red Hen*; *Wanda's Roses*). Participants wrote:

> The contingency model of leadership is displayed in *Granddaddy's Gift* [l997]. . . This book depicts the story of a courageous man who pursued his right to vote and created hope and pride for his granddaughter. The leadership traits of risk-taking, courage, determination and integrity are clearly portrayed. . .Joe Morgan, although an ordinary man, in a moment of crisis and decision had a vision of what needed to be done and was able to communicate this to others through his actions. Much like Mahatma Gandhi and Joan of Arc, he knew when his actions were pivotal and [he] allowed the situation to give him control and influence (Asian female).

Table 2. Female (F) and Male (M) Teachers and Gender of a Book's Main Character(s).

Teachers' Choices	Gender of Book's Main Character (s) or Leader (s)
F - A Fine, Fine School	Female
F - Aladdin	Male
F - Angelina at the Palace	Female
F - Brave Irene	Female
F - Charlotte's Web	Female
F - (Chose 2 books) Disney's Cinderella	Female
& Fairy Tale Treasure: Cinderella	Female
F - Dora's Book of Manners	Female
F - Duck on a Bike	Male
F - Elmer	Male Elephant
M - Follow the Leader	2 Male Brothers
F - Following Isabella	Female
F - Granddaddy's Gift	Male
F - Grouchy Ladybug	Female
F - Harry Potter Series	Male
F - I Love You All Day Long	Male Animal/Female Parent
M - John, Paul, George & Ben	Males
F - Mr. Lincoln's Way	Male

F - Mr. Lincoln's Way	Male
F - Mud for Sale	Male
M - One Grain of Rice	Female
F - Rudolph's Lessons for Life	Male
M - Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer	Male
F - Swimmy	Male
F - Swimmy	Male
F - Swimmy	Male
M - Swimmy	Male
F - The Best Way to Play	Male
F - The Frog Principal	Male
F - The Jungle Book	Male Animals
F - The Lion, Witch & Wardrobe	2 Males/2Females
F - The Little Red Hen	Female
F - The Lorax	Male
F - The Lorax	Male
F - The Recess Queen	Female
M - The Shark Who Was Afraid of Everything	Male
M - Thomas & Friends: Calling All Engines	Male
F - Toy Story: Buzz & the Bubble Planet	Male
F - Turtle Bay	Male
F - Two Is a Team	Male
F - You Forgot Your Skirt Amelia Bloomer	Female
F - (Chose 2 books) Wanda's Roses &	Female
How Mr. Monkey Saw the Whole World	Male
F - What Mommies Do Best; What Daddies Do Best	Males/Females

Table 3. Female (F) & Male (M) Administrators (A) & Gender of Main Character (s).

Administrator's Choices	Gender of a Book's Main Character (s) or Leader (s)
F - Amazing Grace	Female
M - Berenstain Bears, the Bully	Female/Male Main Family Members
F - Best Beak in Boonaroo Bay	Male Birds
F - Chrysanthemum	Female
F - Green Eggs & Ham	Male
F - Little Lion Goes to School	Male
M - Mr. Lincoln's Way	Male
F - Ms. Nelson Is Missing	Female
F - Swimmy	Male Fish
F - The Little Engine That Could	Female Engines
F - The Wonderful Wizard of Oz	Female

If we see the Principal as the key leader in a school, we can use Lionni's [l963] picture book metaphor of *Swimmy* [l963] to visualize the key element needed for all the parts to function as a whole. . . This little black fish uses a transformational style to gain trust and confidence in order to make his kind follow him in spite of great fear and risk (Caucasian female).

Reading with a critical eye, reading with a purpose does cause one to do an analysis of what is read. Thinking back on each character reviewed, I observed that so many of them had to surmount some obstacle, but they persevered and were successful in the end despite the discouragement that presented itself. Various leadership qualities were displayed . . . those that stood out for me were determination, perseverance against all odds and wisdom (African-American female).

Theme 2: Partnerships, Sharing, Families, Teaming and Relationship-Building are Identified

Leadership as an example of relationship-building was highlighted by participants. This was not surprising because currently, there is an emphasis on working in teams and groups to enhance diversity, creativity and problem-solving (Kline, 1999). The value of partnerships, sharing, cooperating and teaming was depicted in many of the books chosen (i.e. *Best Way to Play; Dora's Book of Manners*; *Following Isabella; Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer; Swimmy; The Little Red Hen*; *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz; Two Is a Team*). The importance of family and family values steeped in support and sharing were displayed as family members interacted with one another (i.e. *Angelina at the Palace; The Berenstain Bears, the Bully; Brave Irene; Chrysanthemum; Granddaddy's Gift; I Love You All Day Long; The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe; Turtle Bay; What Mommies Do Best, What Daddies Do Best*). The successes and pitfalls of follower-ship were also illustrated (i.e. *Follow the Leader; The Lorax*). Participants said:

> The book, *Swimmy* [1963] is all about teamwork. It's about this little black fish that influences others to overcome a tremendous obstacle (Hispanic male).

> *The Little Red Hen* is an age old story about teamwork. The story begins with the little red hen finding some wheat seeds, while pecking in the ground. Delighted at the prospect of having a cake to eat, she asks her house-mates to help her plant the wheat. . . The book was originally written in l907 so it's all about preparing a cake, something rather domestic (Caucasian female).

Theme 3: Fictional Characters and Nostalgic Choices Predominate

Fifty participants chose books that depicted fictional leadership role-models, and also fictional characters that were portrayed as animals, insects, aquatic or flying creatures. In all instances, these creatures could also be characterized by gender. Included in these characterizations were birds, chickens, ducks, fish, elephants, gorillas, ladybugs, mice, monkeys, reindeer, pigs, spiders and mechanistic objects (i.e. train engines), that performed leadership roles or possessed leadership characteristics. Three African-American students chose non-fictional characters, Little Bill in *The Best Way to Play* (l997) written by comedic actor, William Cosby, Jr., Ed.D (i.e. Bill Cosby), who resembled Bill Cosby as a child; *You Forgot Your Skirt, Amelia Bloomer* (2000)**,** which depicted woman's suffragette, Amelia Bloomer; and *John, Paul, George and Ben* based on USA Founding Fathers (John Adams, Paul Revere, George Washington and Ben Franklin). The first two books were chosen by female students, and the last was chosen by a male student. The participants also chose books, which spanned a broad period of

time, namely, from 1894 (i.e. Kipling's *The Jungle Book*) to 2007 (i.e. Rowling's *Harry Potter).* Table 4 outlines the publication dates of the 55 books chosen.

Table 4. Publication Dates of the 55 Books Chosen.

Dates	Number of Boc Selected	Actual Dates Represented
1890s to 1939	2	1894; 1907
1940s through 1950s	3	1945; 1950; 1952
1960s through 1970s	12	1960 (2); 1963 (5); 1964 (1); 1971 (2); 1977 (2)
1980s through 1990s	18	1984; 1986; 1991 (2); 1992; l993; l994; 1995 (2); 1996 (2); 1997 (5); 1998; 1999
2000 to 2007	20 Total: 55	2000; 2001 (7); 2002 (3); 2003 (3); 2004 (2); 2005 (2); 2006; 2007.

Some participants seemed to rely on beloved or nostalgic literature (including *Disney* or *Dr. Seuss* books) when making their choices. They seemed unaware that some of these books had been criticized by literacy insiders because of their stereotypical messages or traditional gender depictions (for example, *Aladdin* featuring Princess Jasmine (l992) and *Cinderella* (2003, 2001) [representing *Disney's Princess series*] as well as *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (l950) [from C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* series].

When a female was the main subject of a book, the female seemed to be depicted in traditional female occupations, such as, baking in *The Little Red Hen* (l907); healing in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (l950); sewing in *Brave Irene* (l986); teaching in *Miss Nelson Is Missing* (1977*)* and *Chrysanthemum* (1991); dancing in *Angelina at the Palace* (2005), or as advisors or supporters to the males who were the primary leaders in *Best Way to Play* (1997) and the *Harry Potter* series (1997 to 2007). For example, in *The Frog Principal* (2001), a female is in the secondary role as the supportive Assistant Principal, while the male is the Principal. Females in primary or as secondary characters were also depicted as bullies, evil stepmothers and witches, for example, in the *Berenstain Bears, the Bully* (l993); *Cinderella* (2003, 2001)*; Chrysanthemum* (l991)*; Grouchy Ladybug* (l977)*; The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (l950); and *The Recess Queen* (2002*).* Participants commented:

> The gender roles were quite conservative and old-fashioned in some of the books (African-American female).
>
> The females were leaders [but] in only specific fields like healing, dancing or teaching (Caucasian female)
>
> The common thread in many of the stories read were for the most part [based] on leadership (negative or positive), but we also found several negative stereotypes. For example, in *Angelina at the Palace* [2005], the theme revolves around dancing princesses and the book itself is so *pink* (Caucasian female).

Surprisingly, children's books that were dated more recently also displayed stereotypical leadership examples in regard to gender depictions with girls in traditional roles as educators, healers or make-believe dancing princesses. Moreover, males also outshined the females. In

Angelina at the Palace (2005*)*, it was noted that Angelina's cousin, Henry, and not Angelina, the main character, was actually the catalyst of the story; Henry becomes the hero and saves his female cousins. In the *Berenstain Bears, the Bully* (1993), the brother advises his sister on how to stand up to the female bully overshadowing even her mother's advice. In the *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950),* the youngest female, Lucy, seems to be the leader throughout the story, but by the end of the story, the eldest male, Peter, becomes the chosen leader because of his age and gender.

Conversely, in some cases, there were updated female versions of books. For example, the later version of *The Jungle Book* (2003) has a female animal interacting alongside the males. The l894 version of the book featured male animals. *The Little Engine That Could* (l995), depicts female train engines in the lead roles. The l930 version featured males in the lead roles of the engines. A Caucasian female said:

> It was particularly interesting that *The Little Engine* was updated [in l995] to include female engines. . .*The Jungle Book* was also updated, but male animals still dominated.

Theme 4: Context and Setting are Influences

Initially, some participants (particularly those who were at the secondary school level) expressed some difficulty in finding children's books that focused on leadership or displayed the type of leadership models or characteristics they valued. Participants noted:

> It was difficult finding a book that dealt explicitly with the assumption of leadership. I chose *The Shark Who Was Afraid of Everything* [2002] due to the paucity of tales that deal with this topic. Also this book would be universally appreciated by parents and educators. It teaches values and morals that are universal in appeal. . .It simply tells the tale of how one person can make a positive change in his/her life despite being confronted by many obstacles (Caucasian male).

> I was intent on finding a book with a girl as a leader. I worked with the school librarian. We rejected so many books until we found Tillie in *A Fine, Fine School* [2001] (Caucasian female).

Because education was the primary setting of the 53 participants in this study, it was not surprising to find that 12 of them or almost 23% chose books that featured lead characters within a school setting such as, *A Fine, Fine School*(2001); *Amazing Grace* (1991)*; Berenstain Bears, the Bully* (1993); *Chrysanthemum* (1991)*; Harry Potter* (2007)*; Little Lion Goes to School (2003); Miss Nelson Is Missing* (l977)*; Mr. Lincoln's Way* (2001), which was chosen by 3 participants*; The Frog Principal* (2001)*;* and *The Recess Queen* (2002). In addition, three participants chose books that featured the subject matter that they taught, namely mathematics in *One Grain of Rice* (l997); music in *How Mr. Monkey Saw the Whole World;* and application to the environment in *The Lorax* (l971). Moreover, in the sixth course in this study, the recent presidential election seemed to influence participants' choices. *Granddaddy's Gif*t (l997) and *You Forgot Your Skirt, Amelia Bloomer* (2000) were books chosen that focused on voting rights for women and African-Americans. An African-American female noted:

> *You Forgot Your Skirt, Amelia Bloomer* [2000] has the capability of eliciting so much dialogue regarding feminism, and one individual's ability to positively advance and move a nation to change.

Theme 5: Life's Lessons, Serious Subject Matter And Realistic Situations Are Important

Participants chose books that would teach children to do the right thing and teach them about the lessons of life. Whether the lead characters were fictional or characterized as animals or other characters (for example, *Dr. Seuss* characters), students were intentional in their choices that the books illustrate realistic situations and serious subject matter. This mindset was apparent throughout the six courses in the study. Students chose books that depicted their concern for social justice issues; portrayed serious subject matter and realistic situations; and featured leaders who overcame life's obstacles, while displaying admirable leadership qualities. Books featured depictions of courage and determination (i.e. *Swimmy; The Little Engine That Could; The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*); overcoming shortcomings (i.e. *Elmer*; *Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindee*r; *The Shark Who Was Afraid of Everything*); environmental issues (i.e. *The Lorax; Turtle Bay*); examples of bullying (i.e. *Chrysanthemum*; *The Berenstain Bears, the Bully; The Recess Queen*); racism and discrimination (i.e. *Amazing Grace; Mr. Lincoln's Way*) and the denial of voting (*Granddaddy's Gift; You Forgot Your Skirt Amelia Bloomer*). A majority of the students claimed that when choosing a book, they were concerned not only about portraying good examples, but also about the story-line or message conveyed. A Caribbean female said:

> I think *Rudolph* [l996] illustrates how shortcomings can be turned into abilities …*Rudolph* stood out because he was different from the others; he had a shiny nose. . . The story demonstrates that although one might be different, he/she can still be a leader, and some of the things that make us different can be instrumental in transforming us into real heroes.

Interestingly, some of the book choices revealed a conflicting message when a diverse leadership lens was applied, for example, a Caucasian female noted:

> *The Lorax* [1971] is an excellent book that can be used to teach aspects of science and the environment, but in regard to gender and leadership, it serves as a poor example.

In this study, there were several emerging themes that could be traced to the declared assumptions and values of the participants when a diverse leadership lens was applied. Some of these assumptions and values could be traced to societal, cultural or media influences when data were analyzed in regard to Question 2.

QUESTION #2: WHAT ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES ABOUT LEADERSHIP SEEM TO INFLUENCE THE CHOICE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE WHEN A DIVERSE LENS (I.E. RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER AND CULTURE) IS APPLIED?

Themes related to Question 2 follow.

Theme 1: The Desire for a Global World Based on Tolerance and Understanding

Participants chose books that affirmed the messages of tolerance, understanding, global unity and appreciation for cultural and racial differences. A participant said:

> A common theme in the books chosen in our class was tolerance and appreciation of differences in race and culture (Caucasian female).

Books highlighted appreciation for all humankind regardless of differences in culture, race or ethnicity. For example, books focused on various cultures or countries. These included: *Aladdin* (Middle East); *Dora's Book of Manners* (Hispanic); *Following Isabella* (Spain); *Little Lion Goes to School* (Caribbean); *One Grain of Rice* (India); *Turtle Bay* (Japan). Moreover, participants fully expected their current leaders to display tolerance and understanding from a global perspective for all cultures, races and ethnicities. Additional books that displayed a unified or global appreciation of people and culture included: *How Mr. Monkey Saw the Whole World* (1996) and *Wanda's Roses* (l994). Students also relied on multiple aspects of diversity when choosing children's literature. A Caucasian female stated:

> I chose *Following Isabella* [2001] because it is historical, global and ethnic. [It is] about a female sheep who is mentored by a wise male sheep.

Out of the 53 students, 13 participants or 25% (3 African-American females, 3 Caribbean-Americans [2 females and 1 male]; 1 Hispanic male, 1 Asian female, and 5 Caucasian students [4 females and 1 male] chose books with Black (i.e. African-American or native Caribbean) role models. Participants commented:

> I chose *Mr. Lincoln's Way* [2001] about a person of color to illustrate my value of having respect for people of all races, colors or creeds (Caucasian female).

> The differences between the engines in *Thomas and Friends: Calling All Engines* [2005], could just as well represent gender, racial or ethnic differences between different groups of people in the world; this book helps children to see that all engines and all people can work together to get the job done (Caucasian male).

With regard to the 20 participants who were identified as African or Caribbean-Americans, six of them or 30% indicated that they intentionally wanted to emphasize their race or ethnic identity when they chose their books. Participants said:

> I intentionally chose *Amazing Grace* [l991] about an African-American girl who wants to be *Peter Pan* in the school play because I wanted to highlight my race and my gender, and I wanted to show my students that they can become anything they want if they try hard enough. . . *Grace* learned her part and prepared well, and was able to achieve her goal (African-American female).

> I chose *Little Lion Goes to School* [2003] because it displayed my Caribbean culture (Caribbean female).
>
> I chose *Swimmy* [1963] because it is about a black fish who becomes a leader. The book is a symbol for my students. It tells them they can be leaders too (Caribbean female).

Theme 2: Leadership May Still be Considered a Male Entitlement

When specifically exploring leadership in regard to gender, there were more books chosen with males in primary leadership roles. This was surprising because 44 or 83% of the 53 students who participated in the study were female. Even animals, insects, aquatic or flying creatures that were depicted as main characters in the books chosen were male (i.e. *Duck on a Bike*; *Elmer; How Mr. Monkey Saw the Whole World; Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer*; S*wimmy*; *The Jungle Book).* In addition, there were more male characters in secondary roles when multiple characters were featured. Participants wrote:

> I noticed that most of the books displayed males as leaders; even the animals were mainly male (Caucasian female).
>
> When I looked to apply leadership to a children's book, I found that the subject of the book was mainly male (African-American female).
>
> A common theme that I saw was the MALE leader—even though all of them showed POSITIVE leadership, they were still MALE (Caucasian female).
>
> Most of the leading characters portrayed were male, and a few were female (Asian female).
>
> When I think of leaders, I think of men. All the leaders are men in my book (Caribbean female).

Most books viewed individualistically served as excellent examples of leadership, but taken as a whole, there seemed to be an underlying message communicated in the books chosen that *males were primarily the accepted leaders, and females were the supporters and advisors to the males.* Of the 55 books that students chose, 32 books or 58.2% featured males as the primary or main leadership character; 19 or 34.5% featured females as the primary leadership character or role-model; and 7% or 4 books were equally divided with books representing lead characters representing both genders. The gender balanced books were chosen by 3 females (1 African-American and 2 Caucasians) and 1 Caribbean male. One Caucasian female chose two books, one with a male as the leader, and the other with a female as leader. One Caucasian male chose a female, Rani, in *One Grain of Rice* as leader. The remaining 7 male teachers (78%) chose books with males or male characters in the leadership roles. Yet, most of the participants in this study were female (n = 44). Focusing on the 40 females (who did not choose books representative of both genders), 24 of the females or 60% chose books with males as leaders, and 16 or 40% of the females chose books with females as leaders. Analyzing further,

65% of the female teachers and 55% of female administrators chose males. When students were asked by the leadership instructor (in class and over the Internet) to reflect and analyze their choices, some female teachers stated and agreed that gender "wasn't a main concern." Participants responded:

> I chose *Swimmy* [l963] and stated that it didn't really advance a gender, racial or ethnic perspective. I completely missed that *Swimmy* was a male fish (Caucasian female).

The book choices did influence me. I would never have thought about *Swimmy* [1963] as advancing a racial or gender perspective, but yet it could (Asian female).

Theme 3: Who Is To Blame For The Absence And Depiction Of Female Leaders?

Based on the books that were chosen, further questions were raised, such as "if more males are depicted in leadership roles in children's books overall as were highlighted in this study, might female children begin to assume erroneously that boys are the *expected* leaders in society?" Secondly, "considering that women predominantly serve as teachers, librarians, and caregivers, are they at fault when they choose or buy children's literature that seems to favor males over females when a leadership lens is applied?" Or thirdly, "are societal influences such as the popular media (including the publishers and distributors of children's books) to blame?"

Most of the females in our study admitted that they did not believe that they had achieved parity with males in society when analyzing leadership from a national or state-wide perspective in regard to upper echelon positions in government, business or education. Eleven of the females in this study or 25% stated that they were conscious of their gender when making their book choices. These females especially expressed disappointment regarding the stereotypical depictions of females in the children's literature, and dissatisfaction regarding the absence or *invisibility* of females as leaders in many of the books chosen. They were especially concerned about the influence of the popular media regarding the messages that were being conveyed.

Upon reflection, there were also females who admitted that they may have perpetuated gender inequities in their own classrooms and schools because of their own lack of gender awareness. Participants stated that in the future, they would try to become more conscious of their own leadership choices regarding classroom materials, and the *messages* that they might be delivering to their own students from grade to grade. Participants stated:

> I must confess that although I feel very strongly about unfair treatment to females as opposed to males, I seem to promote this bias as my faculty is 2/3's male and one third female (African-American female).

> Being a primary grade school teacher, I am left wondering how or if hidden messages [of leadership] are affecting my students (Caucasian Female)**.**

> I see that at the age of five, gender biases are already made. When a boy says that his favorite color is pink, the children laugh because they say that pink is a girl's color. I also see that boys will avoid playing with the dolls in the family kitchen play center. It is amazing that they already have this preconceived notion that

> dolls are for girls and the trucks are for the boys. As teachers, we encourage all children to play with different toys available in the classroom, and we explain that pink is not a girl's color. We also see that many of the children think only men are firefighters and police officers. I think parents, society and the books we read to children have a lot to do with these gender thoughts (Caucasian female).
>
> I believe that there are both positive and negative messages sent through the media to children and to us. As adults we need to be very, very careful and aware of what those hidden messages are. . .Unfortunately, there are more negative messages sent to our youth today than ever before…Gender roles are also dictated through the media. What toys boys play with, what sports girls should not become involved in, how teenagers should be dressing and behaving is normally dictated by music videos and teen idols on television shows (African-American female).
>
> There are many ways that imbalance can be seen in the media. We see that certain products are marketed to women over men. Although in the last few years, there have been areas where the gap is closing. There are ads in which we see men doing housework and women working in construction. In the political arena, the vote for president and the things that were said about Hillary in the primary were different than what was said about the men in the race (Caucasian female).

Theme 4: The Realization that Leadership and Change Begins with Me

After discussion (in class and over the Internet), the participants (who were in influential positions to make schools better places for children) became aware of the gender implications of some of their book choices. Participants made declarative statements that indicated that change would begin *with me.* Both male and female participants stated that they would begin to make more *conscious* choices about the literature and materials they would begin to choose for their students (and their own children) in order to offer a curriculum based on gender equity. Participants declared:

> I will introduce books that balance gender immediately (Caribbean male).
>
> I think we all will begin to look at the material we present to our students and children with a more keen eye (Caucasian female).
>
> I think we need to be aware of the messages we are teaching and relaying, and we can start by examining the books we read to children (Asian female)
>
> Every effort must be made to transcend the race and gender biases that may be encountered. Prejudice and stereotyping is due to a lack of information on a particular issue (African-American female).
>
> I must say this assignment really made me think about messages sent to youngsters through the media. This is something I never really thought of. During my write-up, I began to think back at the gender roles in many stories that I've read to my students or have heard growing up (African-American female).

> We should try to create an environment in which there is gender balance so kids can truly experience the true diversity of what being male or a female is all about and not just the one-sided show that we now have. Think of how different that simple impact will have on the students and how their perception of leadership and authority will change. It is like a boy or a girl not listening to their mothers because it is believed that males rule—and many times wives put themselves into this position, especially when it has to do with discipline. They say, "wait until your father gets home," undermining their own authority and leadership role in their child's life (Caribbean male).

> I usually don't look to children's literature for examples of leadership. After the class presentations, I find myself looking at my children's books and pre-screening them when I read stories. . .I think that stories containing positive examples of leadership and communication are able to set a good foundation for future leadership qualities in our children (Caucasian male).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

It is recommended that a follow-up study be conducted with the 53 participants of this study to ascertain whether they are continuing to create gender awareness when they choose children's literature for their schools and classrooms. Furthermore, it is suggested that education administration professionals introduce their teachers, staff, students and various stakeholders to children's books that display leadership concepts and practices so that *leadership* as a recurring theme may be emphasized in schools and classrooms. According to Sleeter (2005), there was sufficient evidence regarding the chronic overrepresentation of males in school textbooks, and this study seems to support Sleeter's contention when children's books were explored. Bishop (1997) wrote about children's literature being both a mirror and a window, a place where children can see themselves reflected in order to learn about others. If that is true, then what is the message children's literature is reflecting about leadership? Do *all* the children see themselves when a diverse leadership lens is applied? More importantly, *how* do female and male children see themselves reflected? Is the message fair and equitable?

Within this study, the children's literature chosen by the 53 participants seemed to convey messages of stereotypical and outdated models of leadership when a diverse leadership lens focused on the females (or the absence of females as leaders). As education administrators and instructors, we make assumptions that everyone is on the same page, and the message of equity is clear and consistent, but, sometimes assumptions may belie the facts. Children's books are viewed nostalgically by parents and grandparents. Publishing dates become unimportant as *Walt Disney's Cinderella* (2001), *Green Eggs and Ham* (l960), *The Lorax (l971),* or *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (l964) become classical favorites; they are re-published and re-read to children from one generation to the next. But these nostalgic classics (as well as current favorites) seem to come with mixed messages when explored within a gender leadership lens. Furthermore, children's books representative of distinct cultures may also perpetuate a message that males are valued more than females as leaders in that society.

If school principals and district superintendents are not cognizant of all the details regarding the instructional materials that are chosen and utilized from grade to grade and school to school, then the message of *opportunity for all* may not be communicated clearly or fairly. When female children routinely see males or male animals performing the leadership roles in

their picture books (in school and then at home), then they may assume erroneously that boys are the ones expected to lead. Therefore, we recommend that gender equity be considered a component when choosing children's literature in order to improve the representation of females depicted in leadership roles. We suggest that when reading a book to children with a male character as leader that it be balanced with a female character as leader in order to improve the self-efficacy and identity of *all* the children in the classroom.

Eagli and Carli (2007) advised confronting the lack of women in high-ranking leadership positions from multiple fronts, and stated that "if women are to achieve equality, women and men will have to share leadership equally" (p. 71). It has been suggested that education administration faculty will need to create and re-create awareness of diversity issues, including gender equity by engaging in planned conversations with their students who are current and aspiring education administrators (Rusch & Marshall, 2006). We would advise extending those conversations to teachers, teacher leaders and various stakeholders such as, government officials, business representatives, librarians, parents and even grandparents.

Andrews and Ridenour (2006) advised that diversity courses and gender fairness initiatives be included in leadership preparation courses and curricula. We contend that an assignment similar to the one that appeared in our study may serve as another example. Grogan (2005) advised extending those conversations into monetary contributions for programs and initiatives from officials in federal and state agencies and foundations so that the number of women in education leadership increases substantially. Instituting on-going conversations among all members of the education profession and their stakeholders, giving due diligence to courses, curricula and assignments that are cognizant of gender and equity issues, and supporting women's initiatives monetarily would eventually *make schools better places for all children*. When the number of female to male leaders increase, female and male children will begin to see examples of equity *for all* acted out in their neighborhoods and homes as well as in their picture books, on laptops and in the media. If we provide a myriad of models for boys and girls to value and emulate regardless of gender or diverse characteristics, then it won't really matter whether there is a Barack, a Carly or a Chris in the White House, the corporate boardroom or the superintendent's office. The message of opportunity will have been delivered and received by *all* our children without interference or doubt—imagine the possibilities.

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Leadership for Social Justice: Voices of Female School Principals

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More than 50 years have passed since Thurgood Marshall argued *Brown v. Board of Education*; however, schools throughout the United States remain largely segregated by race and by class (Orfield & Gordan, 2001). According to The Education Trust (2003), despite decades of reform efforts and increased attention to accountability, high-stakes testing, standards, and now the *No Child Left Behind* legislation, a persistent disparity exists between the performance of African American, Hispanic, and Native American students with that of White and Asian students on standardized tests as well as gaps in students' learning, in general. Nationally, too few African Americans read or compute math at the proficient or advanced levels. In reading, for instance, a mere 12 percent of African American fourth graders attained proficient or advanced levels while 61 percent had not been instructed at the basic level. In math, the same proportion of African American eighth graders fell below the basic achievement level compared to only 7 percent who reached the proficient level or above on the NAEP. However, it doesn't have to be this way. There are schools where African American and other diverse students excel (The Education Trust, 2003).

The principal is a critical factor in creating the condition for success in schools that serve children of color and children of poverty (Edmonds, 1986; Terrell & Lindsey, 2008). Several research studies confirmed that the commitment to social justice by female principals is what attracted them to the position and is what keeps them grounded (Strachan, 1999; Smith-Campbell, 2002). Female principals' approach to leadership for social justice has been cast as "servant leadership" (Alston, 1999; Brunner, 1999c), in which they seek to be of service to others. Women, in general, seem to want to make things better, right social wrongs, and increase support for underserved groups (Alston, 1999; Dantley, 2005; Foster, 2005; Murtadha & Watts, 2005).

Caliper Corporation's (2005) conducted a study that consisted of 59 women leaders in the United Kingdom and in the United States. The study specifically focused on the personality qualities and motivational factors that are at the core of underlying gender differences. The findings of this study revealed that women leaders were: (a) more persuasive, assertive and willing to take more risks than male leaders; (b) had a more inclusive way of leading based on open lines of communication, listening, and bringing people together; (c) more likely to engage in risk taking; and (d) had an open, consensus-

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building, collegial approach to leading. The conclusion drawn from this study was that these personality qualities of women leaders were needed in order to work successfully in today's diverse workplace.

What Wachs (2000) discovered in her book, *Why the Best Man for the Job is Woman: The Unique Female Qualities of Leadership*, resonated with the Caliper Corporation's study. She, too, found that women leaders were able to sell their visions, demonstrated a willingness to reinvent the rules, and were determined to turn challenges into opportunities. Leadership for social justice in diverse schools in the 21st century is highly complex and challenging as high-stakes testing has increased tensions over student performance. Dantley and Tillman (2006) describe leading for social justice in the statements below:

> It is demanding, fraught with controversy, and highly contextualized. Most people believe it is important but far fewer take the time or energy to actively pursue it. Thinking about social justice from a theoretical or historical perspective is a necessary but insufficient condition for actually achieving social justice. (p. 261)

Shields (2004) found that too often educators unknowingly may "allocate blame for poor school performance to children from minoritized groups based on generalizations, labels, or misguided assumptions" but, she continued, "We must expect that the average performance of each group will be similar" (p. 111–112). Shields (2003) further advocated that leaders must situate the responsibility for student success in the context of the school rather than in the lived experiences of children, their parents, home life, culture, and socioeconomic status. To accomplish this task, Shields (2003) challenged leaders to become transformational leaders who will develop school communities where educators accept the challenge to advance "equity, social justice, and equality of life. . ." (p. 11). Therefore, this research sought to study social justice from the perspective of female principal leaders who were identified as leaders of social justice based on advocacy for students and student success. More specifically, the study aimed to determine how eight female school principals in diverse schools promoted and supported social justice. The research questions that guided this qualitative study were:

1. How do eight female school principals define social justice?
2. How do eight female school principals' views of social justice impact the vision for their schools?
3. How do eight female school principals work to establish social justice for their campuses?
4. What centers or grounds these eight female school principals as leaders for social justice?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework that guided this study was drawn from three perspectives, which are: social justice, critical social theory, and the feminist standpoint.

Social Justice

The definition of social justice is a shifting concept and is often described in multiple ways, depending upon the context in which it is used. According to Bogotch (2005), "its

multiple *a posterori* meanings emerged differently from experiences and context" (p. 7). Viewing social justice as a reality of public school work, Theoharis (2004) conceptualized social justice in terms of what administrators and teachers do. He noted, "Administrators and teachers advocate, lead, and keep at the center of their practice and vision issues of race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and other historically marginalizing conditions in the United States" (pp. 3–4). Still another explanation of social justice is related to fairness, equity, and inclusion. Schockley-Lee and McKerrow (2005) also acknowledged the difficulty in capturing the notion of social justice by stating, "Social justice is defined not only by what it is but also by what it is not, namely injustice. By seeking justice, we anticipate the ideal. By questioning injustice we approach it. Integrating both, we achieve it" (p. 2).

Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) described the goal of social justice within the context of society by noting that it is "full and equal participation of all groups in a society" with a "vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable" (p. 4). Similarly, Brown, Irby, and Lara-Alecio's study (as cited in Brown and Irby, 2006), identified several outcomes that occur from practicing social justice, which were: (a) democracy in schooling, (b) equitable practices in school, (c) academic excellence for all children, and (d) choices given to the marginalized or the oppressed.

Critical Social Theory

Critical theory, in this paper, was viewed from the perspective of Horkheimer (1982). He distinguished critical theory from traditional theory by its specific practical purpose and proposed, "A theory is critical to the extent that it seeks human emancipation to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them" (p. 244). Freire's (1994) work on critical social theory focused on the awakening of critical consciousness in order for people to be able to perceive the social, political, and economic contradictions of their time and to take action against the oppressive conditions in society. Thus, as its purpose of inquiry, criticalists "confront injustices in society, and aim to understand the relationship between societal structures (especially those economic and political) and ideological patterns of thought that constrain the human imagination and thus limit opportunities for confronting and changing unjust social systems" (Clark, n.d., p. 1).

Feminist Standpoint Theory

In the 1980s, feminists, such as Hartsock (1983), Collins (1986), and Haraway (1988), argued that the existing scientific and social scholarship was not objective although it claimed to be. Harding (1991) pointed out that feminists not only took issue with the "easily identifiable theories, methods, institutions, and technological consequences of the sciences but also something harder to describe: the Western scientific world view or mindset" (p. 3). This scholarship was subjective because it reflected masculine values and methods. Feminist epistemologists consider how knowers' social situations (gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, kinship status, etc.) affect what and how they know (Collins, 1986; Harding, 1991; Shakeshaft, Brown, Irby, Grogan, & Ballenger, 2007). Based on their different identities, knowers occupy different social roles that provide them with different powers, duties, and role-given goals, and interests (Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, 2007). In addition, they adhere to different norms that prescribe different virtues,

habits, emotions, and skills that are believed to be appropriate for these roles (Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, 2007).

More recently, Brown and Irby (1995) confirmed the negative impact on women of most leadership theories taught in administrative preparation programs by stating,

> Current theories taught in administrative preparation programs are negatively impacting the field because they (a) do not reflect currently advocated leadership practice; (b) do not address the concerns, needs, or realities of women; (c) perpetuate the barriers that women encounter; and (d) do not prepare women or men to create and work effectively in inclusive systems. (pp. 42–43)

Gender differences in leadership have been reported through the work of Shakeshaft, Brown, Irby, Grogan, and Ballenger (2007), in the recently published *Handbook on Gender Equity in Education.* These researchers found, in both qualitative and quantitative studies, that female principals considered relationships and their ability to listen to others whether in teamwork or one-on-one to be essential qualities of their leadership behavior. Other gender differences were noted with the sharing of power. Women appeared to be more comfortable with the notion of *power with* than *power over*. Therefore, women saw power as a way to help others strengthen relationships (Brunner, 2000a; 2000b).

Standpoint theory (Collins, 1986; Harding, 1991), which developed from the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, provides a way for feminists to understand and explain the world from a woman's perspective. Ho and Schraner (2004) supported this notion and added that standpoint theory is, "both deconstructive in exposing the androcentrism within the theory and practice of the sciences and social sciences, and reconstructive in offering explanations of the world informed by women's experiences and activities" (pp. 3–4). A standpoint is place from which to view the world, and this place determines what is focused on as well as what is not seen. The social groups to which women belong shape what is known and communicated (Harding, 2004; Wood, 2005).

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to determine how these eight female school principals promoted and supported social justice in their schools using social justice, critical social theory and feminist standpoint theory perspectives

Procedures

This study involved the use of asynchronous interviews via e-mail to allow participants to reflect on their responses without the pressure of time restraints as noted by McAuliffe (2003). With the exception of two, all of the interviewees participated in on-line interviews consisting of standard open-ended questions with the same questions presented to all interviewees in the same sequence. In addition to their benefit of reflexivity, on-line interviews were used due to accessibility issues related to geographic location and scheduling complications that made face-to-face interviews prohibitive. Two of the interviewees preferred to interview via telephone and face-to-face, respectively. The interview questions

were e-mailed to all participants. The researchers recorded the participants' responses and then conducted member checks.

The researchers followed Walther's (2002) guidelines for research ethics in conducting internet-enabled research. Before participants were e-mailed the interview questions, they were contacted by telephone to obtain their permission to participate in this research study. They were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that data were collected in a context of free speech and that personal data would not be communicated externally without their consent. They granted permission for their interview responses to be used in this study without specific attribution to them so that confidentiality was maintained.

After all participants were interviewed, their responses were compared and analyzed according to the themes identified by the research questions. In addition, descriptive coding was used to ascertain actions and beliefs of these female principals from a social justice, critical social theory and feminist standpoint perspectives. In the process of descriptive coding, abbreviations to segments of words in sentences and paragraphs of transcribed notes were used in order to classify the words, resulting in the "the attribution of a class of phenomena to a segment of text" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 57).

Participants

The participants in this study were eight female principals who lead diverse public schools in four elementary campuses and four secondary campuses in east Texas. Pseudonyms were used for the participants' name to ensure anonymity. The following pseudonyms were used for the eight female principals: Principal 1: Teresa, Principal 2. Sally, Principal 3. Jane, Principal 4. Laura, Principal 5. Nola, Principal 6. Georgia, Principal 7. Veronica, and Principal 8. Sharon. Principal 1, Teresa, is White and leads a Middle School Academy that is rated Recognized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The student population consists of 89 percent students of color. Teresa has been the principal of this campus for 7 years and she has 14 years of experience as an administrator. Principal 2, Sally, is White and leads a Preparatory Elementary School that is rated Exemplary by TEA. The student population consists of almost 30 percent students of color. Sally has been the principal of this campus for 4 years and has 13 years of experience as an administrator. Principal 3, Jane, is African American and leads a High School Campus that is rated Acceptable by TEA. The student population is about 90 percent students of color. Jane has been the principal of this campus for 4.5 years and has 6 years of experience as an administrator. Principal 4, Laura, is African American and leads a Magnet Elementary Academy that is rated Acceptable by TEA. The student population is 93 percent students of color. Laura has been the principal of this campus for 6 years and has served as an administrator for 7 years.

Principal 5, Nola, is White and leads an Elementary School Campus that is rated Recognized by TEA. The student population is 67 percent students of color. Nola has been the principal of this campus for 12 years and has served as an administrator for 12 years. Principal 6, Georgia, is Hispanic and leads an Elementary School Campus that is rated Exemplary by TEA. The student population is 95 percent students of color. Georgia has been the principal of this campus 8 years and has served as an administrator for 8 years. Principal 7, Veronica, is White and leads the largest Middle School Campus within the state. The campus is rated Recognized by TEA. The student population consists of 59 percent

students of color. Veronica has been the principal of this campus for 5 years and has served as an administrator for 11 years. Principal 8, Sharon, is African American and leads a High School Campus that is rated Acceptable by TEA. The student population consists of 88 percent students of color. Sharon has been the principal of this campus for 3 years and has served as an administrator for 9 years.

A purposeful sampling technique was used. The criteria for selecting the participants included the following: (a) female principal; (b) three or more years as a principal on the current campus; (c) a campus with 25 percent or more of culturally diverse populations; and (d) a campus rating of at least Academically Acceptable.

Although all of the participants in this study were female, they reflected other diversity: three were African American, one was Hispanic, and four were White. The majority of the participants in this study were veteran principals who had worked three years or more on the same campus. All of the administrators in this study shared the following common characteristics: they were operating under a state-driven accountability system that included high-stakes testing, they led campuses with diverse populations, and they faced significant challenges involving social justice issues. See Table 1 for more demographic information about the participants' and their eight campuses.

Table 1. Demographics of Participating Principals and Their Schools and Districts.

Principal	Principal Ethnicity	Total Principal Experience & Yrs this Campus	Size of District	Grade Span	Size of Campus	Culturally Diverse Populations	Rating
Laura	AA	7–6	8,135 students	Pre-K to 3	319 Students	93.2%	Acceptable
Nola	W	12–12	8.430 students	Pre-K to 5	557 Students	67.5%	Recognized
Sally	W	13–4	8,135 students	1–5	403 Students	27.5%	Exemplary
Veronica	W	11–5	8,601 students	6–8	1,736 Students	58.2%	Recognized
Jane	AA	6–4.5	45,625 students	9–12	4,228 Students	94.8%	Acceptable
Teresa	W	14–7	19.463 students	6–8	755 Students	88.2%	Recognized
Sharon	AA	9–3	66,792 students	9–12	2,218 Students	88.3%	Acceptable
Georgia	H	8–8	21,180 students	Pre-K to 5	665 Students	94.4%	Exemplary

Instrumentation

We obtained permission from Dr. Katz to use her Interview Guide to collect data for this study (See Katz, S. J. 2006, *Supporting and Promoting Social Justice: Women Superintendents Speak Out*). The Interview guide included eight open-ended questions and several demographic questions. Katz designed the questions based on a framework developed by Furman and Shields (2003), who created a model to investigate how educational leaders support and promote social justice in their school districts. The participants were asked the eight questions from Katz's Interview Guide to investigate problems and issues that they encountered related to social justice as well as to the leadership practices in which they engaged to establish social justice on their campuses. The interview guide questions were:

1. Please tell me about yourself, your position, and your work.
2. What is your definition of social justice?
3. What is your vision for your school campus?
4. Does your vision include social justice? If so, how does it include social justice?
5. What is your vision for realizing social justice on your school campus?
6. How do you work with your school staff in realizing your vision?
7. Would you please talk about any previous and current work toward social justice?
8. What centers or grounds you as you carry on the work toward social justice?

FINDINGS

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to determine how eight female school principals promoted and supported social justice in their schools. The research questions were used to frame the study's findings. The findings of this study also identified participants' perspectives of social justice, critical social theory and the feminist standpoint.

Research Question One Theme: Defining Social Justice

These eight female principals were asked to define social justice. Their definition of social justice focused on equal opportunity and equity for all students. In other words, these participants imagined a society where equitable distribution of resources, such as textbooks and other appropriate classroom resources, quality curriculum, a safe and secure school environment, and access to highly qualified teachers were evident. The female participants spoke of equality in the sense that students are not discriminated against because of their race, ethnicity, gender, class or religious affiliation. They spoke of equity as fair treatment to all children regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, or religious affiliation. The need to redress inequitable situations for marginalized students was based on the fact that education for equality and education for inequality have been inherent in U.S. education since its beginning. According to Anderson (1988), both schooling for democratic citizenship and schooling for second class citizenship have been basic traditions in American education. Thus, DuBois (1906, 1975) challenged the nation to "live up to itself and denounce schooling for second-class citizenship" (p. 175). DuBois acknowledged that all children have the right to knowledge, to think critically, and to have hope for a better life (DuBois, 1906, 1975). These female principals' conception of social justice appeared to be grounded in this belief system.

Principal 1. Teresa specifically noted that social justice was about equality, but she was not quite sure how to achieve this in a world where students often come from such diverse societal and cultural backgrounds and often lacked experiences that would enable them to be treated as equals. She stated, "Social justice is about equal treatment for all. However, I don't know how that is achieved." She compared her grandchildren to her students in her school and noted, "So many of these children were born to children who lacked the societal, educational, and a cultural means to nurture them." Teresa was aware that not all children enter school at the same level and with the same experiences to enable them to experience any kind of equality. These students need to be taught based on their needs. Principal 8, Sharon, speaks to this need.

Principal 8. Sharon spoke of equity rather than equality. She noted that not all children are the same and should be taught based on their individual needs, rather than treated inferior based on the color of their skin. Sharon posited, "Children of diverse cultural background should be graded like any other student and not judged to be inferior based on the color of their skin." She also noted the inequities children received from teachers regarding discipline and explained, "Give these children [children of diverse cultural backgrounds] the same courtesy that you would give another child." This principal spoke from direct observations of teachers interacting with students from diverse background in their classroom. She noted the injustice of treating students differently because of their race or ethnicity.

In addition, *Principal 8,* Sharon, spoke of the desire for teachers to not treat students as if they were all the same. She noted, "You need to recognize that people are different. You need to know about the history and culture of these children and respect them as individuals." The literature on color-blindness supported Sharon's belief. According to Johnson (2002), the research is clear that when teachers do not see color or acknowledge race there may be "ignored discriminatory institutional practices toward students of color such as higher suspension rates for African American males" (p. 154). Additionally, teachers who say they do not see color are, in reality, ignoring the rich culture that these students bring to the school.

Principal 3. Jane also defined social justice as equity for all. She placed social justice within the context of power and stated, "Those in positions of power and influence should seek ways to ensure that there are no marginalized people in our society. And, if for some reason there are, efforts and reforms should be implemented that will erase those deficiencies." Furman and Shields' (2004) research on social justice also addressed the need for "a deliberate intervention that challenges fundamental inequities that arise, in large part, due to the inappropriate use of power by one group over another" (pp. 12–13). The findings of these women confirmed the research findings of Dantley and Tillman (2006) who noted, "Social justice scholarship includes concepts such as the impact of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and disability on the educational outcomes of students" (p. 19).

Principals 4 and 5. Fairness was a common phrase espoused by Laura, Nola, and Principal 8, Sharon. Laura coined the term "equal exposure for all" and Nola expanded upon this concept by focusing on the system of rules, rewards, and consequences. Nola stated, "We need a school system where the rules, rewards, and consequences are clearly defined

and fairly handed down without regard to ethnicity or economic status." Principal 8, Sharon, concluded, "Social justice is where all individuals regardless of race, color, gender, or religious affiliation are given the same opportunities." She desired a campus where students who excelled were promoted and recognized for their abilities regardless of their race, color, gender or religious affiliation." All eight of these female principals spoke of social justice from a feminist standpoint perspective. According to standpoint theorists, knowledge reflects the situation or perspective of the knower (Collins, 1986; Harding, 1991). These women's knowledge of social justice was similar and influenced by the distinct relations in which they stood as female principals working on diverse school campuses. In addition, their thinking appeared to be informed from a critical theory perspective. From that perspective, they focused their attention on marginalized groups of students. These female principals were primarily concerned with equity, fairness, and academic success for all students. They led their schools with a normative orientation toward freeing disenfranchised groups from conditions of domination and subjugation (Freire, 1970; Habermas, 1988, Held, 1980). These foci points of interest emerged in all of their responses.

Research Question Two Theme: Envisioning Social Justice

Research question two asked how these female principals' view of social justice impacted their school vision. Three interview questions were asked that related to their school vision. Three primary subthemes emerged: (a) envisioning success for every student; (b) ensuring equity and fairness for all; and (c) instilling concepts of cultural understanding and productive citizenry.

Envisioning success for every student. Vision is the belief system that guides the actions of the leader and the organization. According to Mendez-Morse (1993), the leader provides and holds the organizational vision. Principals, as leaders of the school campus, are responsible for ensuring the implementation of that vision through the actions of the staff, students, parents, and community. All eight principals articulated their vision and stated that their school vision included precepts of social justice. Their definitions or beliefs related to social justice could be synopsized in the three themes related to this research question.

All eight female principals identified success for every child as a primary focus of their vision. In addition, each of these principals alluded to the need to meet the individual needs of each child, in order to ensure their academic success. Principal 8, Sharon, expressed the need for hiring highly effective teachers that understand how to teach to individual student's learning styles. She stated, "My motto is: If the child does not learn the way you teach, then teach the way they can learn." Principal 2,Teresa, expressed the same sentiment regarding meeting the needs of the individual, "My vision for the school district is that we keep getting better at finding the right path for each child, one child at a time." A similar vision was espoused by Principal 2, Sally. She stated, "My vision for this campus is to continue to hire excellent teachers and for all to embrace the belief that all children can be successful." She added, "My campus is Exemplary. If all teachers would teach the curriculum to the level of complexity that it is written to all children to mastery, the district would be exemplary."

While all of these successful principals identified academic success and meeting the individual needs of each child as the primary focus of their vision, the way in which they defined success differed slightly. Three of the participants related academic success for the

campus and district as student success on the state test, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, (TAKS) and Recognized or Exemplary state ratings based on *TAKS*. However, the other five principals either identified TAKS as a hindrance or did not refer to the state assessment when defining academic success. They measured success based on inclusion of students in advanced placement classes and instilling hope in the lives of these students. In order to meet the individual needs of each student, the majority of participants identified access, equality of outcomes, fairness and equity as beliefs that led to success.

Ensuring equity and fairness for all. Fairness and equity were characteristics identified by seven of the eight female principals interviewed as how social justice was an integral part of their vision for success. Principal 6, Georgia, expressed her vision for the campus, "My vision is that all students are treated equitably and provided the best education possible." Three of the participants were specific in how teachers and administrators could ensure equity in education for children from all backgrounds and experiences. Principal 7, Veronica, believed that barriers must be removed that would disadvantage some children by providing rich educational experiences when she expressed that we must "…remove the barriers of inequity, as well as access to classes and programs". When all stakeholders are treated fairly and equitably and students are successful, then they will be able to enter society as productive citizens that respect and understand all people from all backgrounds and cultures.

Instilling concepts of cultural understanding and productive citizenry. The precepts of social justice include characteristics of cultural awareness and productive citizenry (Terrell & Lindsey, 2008). Though expressed in a variety of ways, five of the eight participants either stated directly or alluded to their vision including the need for students to know how to work with diverse cultures in order to become productive citizens and give back to society. Principal 4. Laura suggested that cultural awareness was part of her vision, "I believe that students should be exposed to a variety of cultures in order to make informed decisions." In addition, Principal 5, Nola stated, "… all students should have equal access to supportive systems that will ensure that they become productive citizens." These productive citizens are the future of our communities and society as a whole. Principal 7. Veronica's final thoughts expressed the specific characteristics that demonstrate this theme, "To provide opportunities for students for students and staff to practice civic behavior by learning to listen and take turns, negotiate, and take responsibilities for one's behavior and learning."

All eight of these successful female principals integrated the concept of social justice in their visions for student success. Though the characteristics or guiding principles might have been different, the primary focus of fairness, equity, and success for all were common themes for each.

Research Question Three Theme: Working toward Social Justice

To investigate how the female principal participants established social justice on their campuses, they were asked the following two interview questions: "How do you work with your school staff in realizing your vision?" and "Would you please talk about any previous and current work toward social justice?" The following three subthemes emerged: (a) high expectations, (b) on-going staff development, and (c) the provision of equal opportunities.

High expectations. Seven of the eight participants in this study voiced high expectations for their staff and students, and themselves as they described their work toward social justice. Bogotch (2000) stated, "Social justice, like education, is a deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of power" (p. 2). The majority of the principals in this study intervened in school activities through the use of moral power by holding their staff and students, as well as themselves, to high expectations.

Principal 2, Sally, believes that everyone should be held accountable. She stated, "All employees, from the bus driver to the principal, must believe in all children and hold all accountable, with no excuses."

Principal 7, Veronica worked to remove barriers of inequality at her school, and voiced her expectations that teachers and students must model the motto of "no excuses" and that they must believe "giving up is not an option." This educational leader advocated that her staff must focus on "making school a place where all students can be successful and enjoy the experience of an education." In a similar vein, Principal 2, Sally, supported there were no reasons for failure, including minority representation, economic disadvantage, a broken home environment, and sickness. She stated, "We have to work every day to ensure that all children are given the same opportunities, and when I hear a teacher say a negative remark and give an excuse for failure, it is simply not accepted." This educational leader advocated that educators must look beyond students' hardships and continue to help them be successful. Principal 8, Sharon, also emphasized the importance of working with the family and students, indicating that she holds everyone accountable. She described how she expected her teachers to design "engaging, meaningful lessons that incorporate a variety of learning styles." In addition, Sharon discussed how she also expected her school staff to partner with church and civic groups to educate parents on the importance of education and their role in helping their children experience success.

Principal 3, Jane, believed that those in a position of power should work to ensure that there are no marginalized persons in our society. She discussed how she expected her staff to put forth their best efforts in educating students. Regarding this expectation, she stated, "I let each staff member know that our clientele deserves the best of what they have to offer, and if their best is not aligned with my expectations, then there are opportunities for them to learn the necessary skills to help our students be successful."

Principal 1, Teresa, strove to make a difference for the students in her school and spoke of her focus on each child leaving her campus with "the tools to be successful in the future." She also discussed how as an educational leader, she takes the time in the community to sit on various boards, including the YWCA, Some Other Place, and the March of Dimes, "that work to make a difference in people's lives." Thus, community involvement appeared to be a personal expectation of this leader.

Principal 6, Georgia, voiced how she expected her staff to monitor all students' progress to ensure that they are academic successful. She commented that they must make sure that bilingual students are learning the language and that those students with disabilities are being challenged and progressing. This principal worked to ensure that her students are well prepared academically and well rounded. She stated:

> I have expressed my expectations in regard to our students. I am an advocate for my students, and I make decisions based on what is best for them. I continually remind my staff that our decisions must be made in the best interests of our students.

Principal 8, Sharon, described her background "as a child of color who because of a teacher and how she touched my life, I am here and I am talking to you." In the interview, she described how she expects her staff to provide solutions when they complain about things. Principal 8, Sharon, stated, "I don't want to say that I am confrontational, but if I hear something out there that somebody said, I will pull them in to tell me what the solution is." This administrator also discussed how she expected her staff to communicate with others to solve problems instead of trying to involve her as a third party. If someone mentions another's name to her in regard to a particular situation, she immediately asks that person to meet with them and participate in the discussion.

Principal 8, Sharon, discussed how she built relationships by pointing out strengths of the teachers when she visits classrooms, she expected her assistant principals to address teachers' deficiencies as needed. This principal described this process in the following statements:

> When I do 'walk throughs' in classes, I do not point out deficiencies, I point out strengths. I allow my assistant principals to do the deficiencies, and if I do see a deficiency, I share it with one of my administrators and tell him that he needs to go into the room and check this out and write it up.

Principal 5, Nola, wanted all students to become productive citizens and discussed how she expected all of her teachers to teach a social skills curriculum in their classrooms on a daily basis. She pointed out that they must follow a calendar to ensure that all students are learning the same social skills vocabulary and steps of each social skill, and they also must hold class council meetings during which they discuss social concerns with their students.

Four of the participants acknowledged the importance of staff development in working toward social justice on their campuses. Shields (2003, 2004) pointed out that social justice needs to encompass a form of education that is not only just and democratic but also academically excellent. One way to achieve academic excellence is through the provision of high quality staff development activities for teachers.

On-going staff development. Principal 5, Nola, considered all of her years in public school to be part of her work toward social justice, supported the need for "on-going staff development in working with children of poverty and diversity. Principal 7, Veronica, who supported showing tolerance and confidence in all stakeholders at school, advocated the training of staff in Ruby Payne's *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* (1998) so that they could learn to deal with children of poverty. In addition, she supported exposing her staff and community to Developmental Assets (Project Cornerstone, 2008), a program that examines the assets of successful people. Principal 7, Veronica, also discussed the importance of her staff attending conferences and reading books about African American males in an attempt to reach this segment of the population that is not making as much academic progress as other minority or gender groups.

Principal 3, Jane, firmly believed that students deserve the best of what her staff has to offer. She supported opportunities for her staff to be trained to facilitate the expectation of her school district's motto, "Preparing students for tomorrow by caring for them today." This administrator provided opportunities for her staff to be trained in some of the following programs that involve an ethic of care: Safe and Civil Schools (Sprick, 2008), CHAMPS/Life

Skills Program (NCAA, 1991), Professional Learning Communities (Reichstetter, 2006), and Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships (Kristin, 2005).

Principal 8, Sharon, expressed her belief that individuals can lead from anywhere in the organization. She discussed her efforts to share ideas from books she reads with groups of teachers. She also started a book club with other administrators and also sends out "excerpts from books and the excerpts, all of them, are about social justice." Currently, Principal 8, Sharon, is writing a dissertation that addresses issues of social justice, and she plans to talk about this because she realizes that she is in a position in her district where she can talk and people will listen. Interestingly, this leader pointed out that her dissertation is actually more about social injustice; it is about "what we have to do to bring justice to these places." Furman and Shields (2003) point out, "Injustice occurs when there is no space created into which students may bring their lived experiences, their whole selves inquisitive about the worlds and the words, when some voices are silenced and others privileged" (p. 17).

The provision of equal opportunities. All of the participants in this study referred to the provision of equal opportunities in some way as they discussed their work toward social justice on their campuses. Addressing how educational leaders can promote and support social justice in schools, Furman and Shields (2003) discuss the importance of challenging and transforming inequalities "in the status quo, in the distribution of power and other resources," so that all children are provided with "doors of opportunity and windows of understanding" (p. 14). The eight principals in this study addressed various ways in which they are working to provide equal opportunities to students on their campuses.

Principal 8, Sharon, acknowledged that in schools with groups of individuals of all colors, races, religions as well as both genders, there exists a need "to work every day to ensure that all children are given the same opportunities." Principal 3, Jane, emphasized the importance of all staff members giving students the best that they have to offer and having opportunities to learn the necessary skills to help all students experience success.

Principal 6, Georgia, focused on equal opportunities for bilingual students to learn English and special needs students to be academically challenged and to make progress. This leader stated, "All students are monitored throughout the year to ensure academic success, and interventions are provided for those who are not making sufficient progress."

Principal 4, Laura, also discussed her work toward social justice in relation to the provision of equal opportunities. She has written a book, entitled *A No Fail Approach to the Writing Process*, "to model strategies to teach at-risk students how to write." In addition, she is currently working in "a magnet school that supports and recognizes all types of cultures."

Principal 5, Nola, focused on all students having equal opportunities to learn important social skills that would help them succeed in future situations, including in the work force. She emphasized the importance of teachers following a calendar to ensure that the entire school is learning the same social skills vocabulary and steps of each social skill. As part of this social skills program, class councils hold weekly meetings when teachers and students have opportunities to discuss social concerns. Principal 6, Veronica, also recognized the need to focus on social skills, on how to treat others. This administrator supported the teaching of manners and student learning of the hidden curriculum. English (1992) discussed the social injustice that occurs on a daily basis when educators become so narrowly focused on formal, prescribed curriculum that they are unaware of the obstacles

presented to many students by the hidden curriculum. As an educational leader, Principal 6, Veronica, recognized the need for students to learn the hidden curriculum in order to be successful at school.

Principal 6, Veronica, created an advisory group on her campus so that every student had an adult to whom s/he could go to for advice. This leader stated, "The program's goals are building self-confidence, understanding learning styles, goal setting, and getting along with others." As previously discussed, this principal expressed a special concern about teachers learning more about African American males, a segment of the population that was not making as much progress as other minority or gender groups at her school. In addition, she set up a Student Health Clinic on her campus so that all students would have access to quality health care. This educational leader also discussed her current efforts to institute open enrollment in Pre-AP classes by targeting under representative groups in these classes. These efforts involved "making personal parent contact to encourage participation in advanced classes" and "providing additional support for struggling students in advanced classes." Currently, this administrator is exploring an after-school program to provide opportunities for academic and social support.

Three of the interviewees alluded to existing inequities in schools or in the outside world. Principal 3, Jane, discussed how those students who did not pass a state-mandated test, the *Math TAKS*, at her school, were required to take an additional math class. As a result of this requirement, elective classes of French and orchestra were cut to provide funding for additional math teachers, and subsequently, her students did not have access to opportunities to take elective classes that students at other middle schools had. Her request for additional funding was denied, but she arranged for the students at her school to be transported by bus to a nearby school that offered the elective classes. Although this was not easy for the students who had to get up one hour early to catch the bus, they were able to access the elective classes they needed. Jane was determined to provide equal access to these elective classes for these children and accepted no excuses.

Principal 8, Sharon, acknowledged that she knew of racial tensions and biases existing in some high schools and that she would not want her child, who is a high school student, to attend these institutions. Principal 2, Teresa, stated that she hopes she has given her students the "tools to survive in a world that is not always kind or fair." It is crucial that educators critically examine their practices and reform efforts to determine if these "replicate the unequal distribution of knowledge, power, and resources by race and class that occurs in society" (Scheurich & Imber, 1991, p. 297).

Research Question Four Theme: Grounded Theories for Social Justice

Research question four asked the participants to respond to what centered or grounded them as leaders for social justice. Three primary subthemes emerged as the foci for their development as leaders for social justice: (a) personal convictions, (b) influences from outside sources, and (c) personal experiences with issues of social justice.

Personal convictions. Five of the eight women shared that their main reason for their leadership beliefs grounded in social justice stemmed from a personal conviction. For Principal 1, Teresa, these beliefs began with the many lessons taught to her by her parents. She commented, "Certainly the lessons of my parents who believed that everyone had a right

to live a positive life and who were active, although quietly, tried to make that belief a reality during the 1950s." Sharon believed that the reason she worked with children in the capacity of a school leader came from a higher purpose for her life. This purpose came from her notion of God:

> Someone higher up gave me the purpose that I have in my life. I understand the purpose and I understand that He gave me and put things in my path to make me able to articulate what it is that He wants me to say.

Principal 2, Sally, shared this belief and said, "My relationship with God and my personal belief that all are created equal grounds or centers me toward social justice."

Another aspect of the theme of personal conviction was revealed as the participants shared their beliefs about helping the children on their campuses. Principal 6, Georgia, revealed, "I am aware that my job here is to serve my students and to provide them with the best education possible. We can make a difference." Principal 7, Veronica, added that her entire teaching career had been spent "serving underprivileged or underrepresented children."

Influences from outside sources. The participants' personal convictions were not the only influences for them in their development as leaders for social justice. Other outside sources also influenced the lives of these women. When one of the principals, Principal 4, Laura, began her educational career and working with students and staff members on a daily basis, the words and works of Dr. Martin Luther King greatly influenced her. Her conviction for ensuring social justice mirrored a quotation from Dr. King in a letter he wrote from the Birmingham jail in April of 1963, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (*quotationspage.com*, n.d.).

Personal experiences with issues of social justice. The concept of social justice in these women's lives was molded by personal experiences that they faced when dealing with issues of social justice for themselves or in their careers. A classroom memory as a teacher stirred Teresa, so greatly that she developed a lifelong commitment to ensure social justice for all of her students. She shared this experience from her teaching career:

> …perhaps the equally enduring vision of the first African-American child who integrated into Vinton High School, the second year I taught. My heart went out to her as she sat alone in my classroom, without friends and without a welcome during one of the hardest times of a child's life. Her dignity and her courage have formed my commitment to my students.

Being overlooked for a promotion and raise because of her gender, left Principal 2, Sally, feeling the sting of social injustice on personal and professional levels, reflected,

> I was once not given a raise because I was not the man of the house even though my performance was better. I could not understand how a school could justify why the male principal deserves the 5% raise and the woman principal would get a 2% raise. Why? My money goes toward feeding and paying the bills just like the man. I guess I have never gotten over that.

Principal 6, Veronica, based her particular feelings of social justice on daily reflections she witnessed as she works with the children on her campus. After watching almost 2,000 students a year walk through her campus doors, a definite pattern of social justice emerged. She stated:

> What better place to have social justice as a platform than at a middle school. Here students are beginning to try to understand themselves and where they fit in with society. They begin to form their own opinion of themselves. It is my personal belief that in order to survive in a global world where the differences of others must not only be tolerated, but embraced, we must help our children learn the importance of tolerance and compassion if they are to realize their infinite abilities.

Beyond the major themes that surfaced, several additional comments supported the respondents' reasons for their continuous support of social justice on their campuses. For example, Principal 8, Sharon, told of her fight to keep a sense of pride and accomplishments alive on her campus. The following statements reflected her feelings:

> Some will take no notice of us because we are academically acceptable because of the African American, the Hispanic population. But if we kick it up and we're recognized, initially three or four schools are going to follow. Oh wait, we can't do that. The parents are going to see that this school got recognized and ya'll are sitting there academically acceptable. My vision is to come up.

This particular principal also expressed that her high expectations centered on every student population on her campus, White, African American, and Hispanic.

Social justice issues not only deal with gender and ethnic equity for all but issues that do not always lie on the surface. This awareness paralleled with Principal 5, Nola's, thoughts on the growth of her students as citizens outside the school community.

> I focus on the development of our students as the hope for our country's future. We must each do our part, especially those of us who are leaders to ensure that we give our students the tools they need to be productive students.

In addition, Principal 6, Georgia, added, "…for some students, we are the key to ensuring they will continue with their education."

CONCLUSIONS

In defining social justice, each of the women participants spoke of equality of opportunities and equity (i.e., fair treatment) for all students. "Fairness" was a common term espoused by all of the principals. All eight of these successful female principals integrated the concept of social justice in their visions for student success. Though the characteristics or guiding principles might have been different, the primary focus of fairness, equity, and success for all students were common themes for all of the participants in this study. Viewing decision making as value-laden, criticalists focus on questions of how and why, and they are concerned with goals and ends (Clark, n. d.). These eight female principals were

concerned with how the vision and mission of their campuses supported social justice, the establishment of which was their goal.

Critical theorists focused their attention on confronting injustices and changing the unjust. The ultimate goal of critical theory is to transform our present society into a just rational and humane society. This transformation is accomplished by revolting against all forms of discrimination, including those based on sex, gender, race and socioeconomic status (Jensen, 1997). These eight female principals worked to transform their schools to benefit the most marginalized students, to eradicate deficit thinking and color blindness, and to focus their vision on developing schools that are just. They actively sought to remove barriers that would disadvantage some children by providing rich educational experiences for all children. These women truly believed that students should not be discriminated against on the basis of their race, ethnicity, social status, economic class, gender, language, disability condition, or religious affiliation. To prevent this from occurring, educators must create educational experiences at school that are just and that communicate trust, support, and hope for all students.

Consistent with feminist standpoint theory, these female principals could see how certain children were denied equal opportunities and equitable treatment since they too, had experienced oppression as emphasized the notion of equality as access not sameness. They fought against maintaining the status quo and opt, instead, for equal access, outputs, and outcomes. All of the female principals in this study talked about the importance of providing equitable access to programs and educational experiences for all students. These female principals worked to create an educational environment in which trust, hope, safety, and tolerance were provided for all students, regardless of their race, gender, language, or disability condition. These female principals operationalized a belief in equity of access and equality of outcomes in relation to fairness and social justice.

The eight female principals in our study supported and promoted social justice in their schools by challenging and transforming social justice on the campuses so that all children were provided with "doors of opportunities and windows of understanding" (Furman & Shields, 2003, p. 14). The concept of social justice in these women's lives was molded by personal experiences that they faced when dealing with issues of social justice for themselves in their careers. It was their desire that teachers hold high expectations for every child and to provide all students with the tools they need to be productive students and future citizens. These female principals grounded their beliefs for social justice in their personal convictions that everyone has a right to a good life and truly believed as Martin Luther King often stated, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (*quotationspage.com*, n.d.). These female principal spoke of their relationship with a higher being. They felt that they were called to dismantle these structural barriers to ensure that all children were provided the knowledge and skills to be productive citizens. These female principals had a desire to make things better, right social wrongs, and increase support for underserved groups. They were both touched and moved by their passion for social justice. As a result, they touched and moved others.

In conclusion, the Greek philosopher, Aristotle said, "It is in justice that the ordering of society is centered" (*quotationspage.com*, n. d.). For the female principals in our study either life experiences or deep personal convictions centered their lives as they worked toward continuing the concept of social justice on their campuses. While their reasons and comments varied, each of them, to this day, remains committed to working with and helping the

children on their campuses. The dedication to their schools and obligation to ensure that justice is felt and received by all, follows the belief of another ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, "If it were not for injustice, men would not know justice: (quotationspage.com, n. d.). Through their personal experiences, these women exemplify and live this concept.

RECOMMENDATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

A few of the female principals participating in this project occasionally struggled with the concept of social justice and how it pertained to their campuses. Some did not actually know how and what to do to implement social justice strategies on their campuses. While each had a strong sense of what social justice meant to her on a personal level, taking those thoughts and putting them into action strategies proved to be challenging for some of the principals. However, most of these female principals not only had a clear conception of social justice but used their position of power and influence to seek ways to ensure that more students had access to advanced placement classes and highly qualified teachers. These principals recognized the need for teachers to differentiate instruction, teach to their students' learning styles, and build a caring relationship with each student. These principals held high expectations for teachers as well as students. They conducted walk-throughs in the classrooms, dialogued with teachers during small group meetings, and conducted book studies in an effort to build the capacity of their teachers to provide a just and quality education for all students. Their focus on the teacher, the curriculum, and instructional practices used to address inequities in student learning explicitly recognizes the importance of the core work of schools in working for social justice (Apple & Beane, 1995).

Many of these women shared that the reasons that they stood so strongly for social justice was due to some personal or professional experience with social injustice through the hiring process, lack of equity in salary compensation, and lack of opportunity to advance in their career. Equity also was mentioned continually, either on a personal level or when addressing the needs of many ethnic populations on their campuses. All of these women were focused on student success and their influence in the lives of their students. Defining success for some of the participants went beyond state-mandated assessments. They did not feel the success of their students was actually defined by test scores.

Based on the results and conclusions of this qualitative study, the following recommendations are made to principals in diverse schools who are leading with a social justice agenda:

1. School staff should participate in additional on-going professional development activities that focus on multicultural awareness and cultural proficiency. These could include attending conferences and in-services as well as participating in book studies;
2. Principals should create a vision of excellence that involves equitable access and equality of outcomes for all children. As Shields (2003) noted, principals should focus on both on academic excellence and social justice principles because these are symbiotic in nature;
3. Educators and all stakeholders must continue to use criticality to recognize the inequities and unjust norms of bias, prejudice, and privilege, and they must work toward building new just norms in school and communities;
4. Educators should learn how to provide differentiation in the areas of content, process, product, and learning environment in order to meet all learners' academic, physical,

social, emotional, and intellectual needs so that they are able to attain their fullest potentials in life as productive citizens and lifelong learners;

5. Additional criterion besides student performance on standardized tests should used to determine student academic success; and
6. Principal preparation programs must actively incorporate social justice principles and strategies in leadership coursework.

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POLICY AND STANDARDS

High School Exit Exams and Conditional Standard Error or *Mis*measurement

Christopher H. Tienken

Assessment-driven education policies are in place in all 50 states. The latest assessment-driven legislation included the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but the modern-day groundwork for recent federal education-reform initiatives was laid more than 30 years ago with the release of the report *Improving Educational Achievement* (National Academy of Education, Committee on Testing and Basic Skills, 1978). The report seemed to be the foundation for the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The authors of the report called for changes in schooling and recommended a return to *Basic Skills*, increased achievement-test scores as a goal of government, greater teacher quality, and test-score driven accountability of teachers and administrators as ways to 'improve' education.

One influence of 30 years of increased federal pressure to pursue assessment-driven education policies has been the rise of high school exit exams. Broadly defined, a high school exit exam is a statewide standardized test given to all high-school students in a specified grade or at the end of specified courses, such as Algebra II or Biology, as a basis for a judgment about whether youth can (a) graduate from high school with a standard diploma, (b) graduate but receive a lesser diploma, or (c) not graduate. A state board of education can waive the exit-exam requirement for groups of students with individual education plans (IEP) or other special cases if defined in state education statutes. Some states' rules allow students, especially those with IEPs, to take an alternative assessment if they do not pass the exit exam.

In 1978, state education agency (SEA) personnel from Virginia unveiled a "minimum competency" test required for high school graduation. In 1979, the New York SEA instituted a basic competency test administered to students in the ninth-grade (Sanger, 1978). By 1990, 14 states used high school exit exams and by 2001, prior to NCLB, 18 states required youth pass a standardized statewide exit exam for graduation. By the end of the 2008-2009 school year, 23 states required that youth pass a standardized statewide test in at least Language Arts (LA) and mathematics to receive a standard high school diploma. The states included Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. By 2012 Arkansas, Maryland, and Oklahoma might also use exit exams, bringing the total to 26 states (Education Commission of the States. 2008).

The macro-level problem with state-mandated high school exit exams is that the reported results from all statewide tests of academic skills and knowledge contain inherent technical flaws that should preclude them from being used as the only data point or as the deciding factor to make high-stakes decisions about individual students, such as for high school graduation (American Education Research Association [AERA], American Psychological Association [APA], & National Council on Measurement in Education [NCME], 1999; Joint Committee on Testing Practices [JCTP], 2004). The technical qualities of the reported test results for individual students do not support the potential negative social and educational

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consequences raised by their use as a diploma gatekeeper. Unintended social and educational consequences of high school exit exams can include students being retained in grade (increasing the chances of not completing high school), placement in low-level course sequences (increasing the chances of not completing high school), not receiving a standard high school diploma, or being denied graduation. Each of the potential consequences, and this list is not complete, causes society more money in the long term because of the depressed earnings of those who do not attain a high school diploma. Depressed earnings result in depressed tax receipts and they are also associated with higher public medical costs, greater rates of incarceration, and greater use of the welfare system (Levin, 2009).

Test-score validity takes center stage in the debate over high school exit exams when validity is discussed in the context of whether the interpretation of a single test score is a valid measure of an individual's high school achievement (i.e., traditional construct validity). The traditional view of validity as three distinct categories—construct, content, and criterion—is ill-suited to explain the potential negative social and education consequences of test-score misinterpretation. Messick (1989, 1995, 1996) called for a view of validity that integrated criteria and content, with intended and unintended consequences within the construct validity framework. Messick (1995) placed the intended and unintended social and educational consequences of test score interpretation as an aspect of construct validity and not as its own category of validity. The integrated view of construct validity allows education administrators and policymakers to consider social and education consequences in the validity discussion.

The micro-level problem centers on one specific technical characteristic associated with the construct validity of using large-scale exit exam results as the determining factor for allowing a student to graduate from high school: conditional standard error of measurement (*CSEM*) and its effect on individual test-score interpretation. The reported results of individual pupils may not be the actual or true score. The *CSEM* is an estimate of the amount of error or the lack of precision one must consider when interpreting a test score at a specific cut-point (Harville, 1991). Think of it as the margin of error reported in political polls (e.g. + or – 5 points): The individual student-level results from every large-scale state standardized test have a margin of error. The *CSEM* describes how large the margin of error is and how far the reported test results might differ from a student's true score. The *CSEM* reflects the amount of scale-score imprecision of individual test scores. For example, if a student receives a reported scale score of 199, and there are + or – 10 scale-score points of *CSEM*, then the true score could be located somewhere within the range of 189 to 209 and the student could be expected to score within that range if that test is taken again. Furthermore, if that state's proficiency cut score is 200, then the student is rated *not proficient* based on the reported score if the SEA does not account for *CSEM* someway in its proficiency calculations, even though the student scored within the error band. Not accounting for *CSEM* when SEA report test scores results in students being categorized incorrectly. This is especially troubling when the test score determines if a youth can graduate high school or receive a standard diploma.

If bureaucrats within SEAs and legislators do not provide policy relief for the *CSEM* that exists in their tests results some percentage of students may be denied wrongly a standard high school diploma, when in fact they passed the exit exam. For example, in 2007, about 13,000 New Jersey high school youth scored within the range of their mathematics exit exam's SEM a the proficiency cut-score. Likewise, approximately 54,000 students in California scored within the *CSEM* margin of error on their November 2006 LA exit exam. This happens in every state. The reported student-level scores are not the true scores, yet SEAs make determinations about graduation eligibility as if scores were error free.

RESEARCH AND LITERATURE ON HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMS

The space limitations of the chapter do not permit a full literature review. This section provides an overview of the characteristics of the literature. The search term "high school exit exam" produced three types of results: (a) non-empirical literature, (b) empirical literature, and (c) psychometric technical documents and related standards for testing. The results divided into writings that advocated for the use of exit exams, writings that oppose their use, and psychometric and technical standards and recommendations for the use of test results. Administrators looking for coherent answers about the efficacy of exit exams are hard pressed to find a consistent message in the non-empirical and empirical literature, whereas technical psychometric standards provide concrete guidance and recommendations to guide administrators' initial judgments about their state's exit exam program. I conducted an Internet search and used Boolean techniques to explore the literature on the topic of exit exams and *CSEM*. The search terms included *measurement error and high school exit exam,* and *exit exam and conditional standard error of measurement*.

Non-empirical Literature

The non-empirical literature ranges from advocacy, policy briefs, and editorials published by think-tanks and pseudo-scientists who support the practice (e.g., Achieve Inc., 2008; Education Commission of States, 2008; Freedman, 2004; Greene & Winters, 2004; Hanushek & Welch, 2006; Hoover Institution, 2004) to opposition advocacy (e.g., Fairtest.org, 2008; Neill, 1997; Ohanian, 1999). Advocates' arguments for high school exit exams focus on six areas. Exit exams (a) provide a measure of quality control for the high school diploma, (b) motivate students and teachers to do their best, (c) represent important content, (d) foster equal education opportunities for all students (e) provide accountability for students and teachers, and (f) provide a reliable measure of individual achievement (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). Opponents state that the exams: (a) lack construct validity, (b) are not suitable to make high stakes decisions about individual students or teachers, (c) penalize minorities, special education students, and English language learners, (d) increase drop outs, and (e) increase gaming strategies, such as test preparation and narrowing the curriculum. While the lay person's literature might not rise to the level of empirical research as defined by Haller and Kleine (2001), it has influenced education policy (e.g., Goals 2000, NCLB, Achieve, Inc. and its *American Diploma Project*). There is little discussion about the *CSEM*.

Empirical Literature

A search of three databases, EBSCO, OVID SP, and ERIC, and the *American Education Research Journal, Educational Researcher, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Review of Education Research, Review of Research in Education,* and the *Education Policy Analysis Archives* for literature on *CSEM* issues and high school exit exams revealed 53 peer-reviewed articles with the terms "high school exit exam." I conducted a Boolean search with the terms *conditional standard error of measurement* and *exit exam* and did not find a peer-reviewed article that reported the actual *CSEM* present in high school exit exams or reported directly on the influence of *CSEM* on interpretation of the results. Three common claims about exit-exam influences on achievement and graduation rates surfaced. High school exit exams (a) improve overall achievement and graduation rates (Stringfield & Yakamowski-

Srebnick, 2005; (b) suppress overall achievement and graduation rates, and have negative unintended consequences, especially for minorities (Hursh, 2007; Lee & Wong, 2004; Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008); or (c) provide mixed, uneven, or inconsistent results (Allensworth, 2005; Clarke, Shore, Rhoades, Abrams, Miao, & Li, 2003; Dee & Jacobs, 2006).

Standards for Education Testing

Authors of *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999) and the *Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education* (JCTP, 2004) present specific standards and recommendations for test developers, test takers, and those who use test results to make decisions about children. The standards and recommendations cover test construction, fairness in testing practices, appropriate documentation of technical characteristics of tests, and other related topics. Both publications make specific recommendations for how to address *CSEM* in the context of high-stakes testing. I chose to focus on the *Standards* instead of the *Code* because the three largest organizations (in terms of membership) associated with testing produced the *Standards* (APA, AERA, and NCME). They provide specific guidance for developers and users of high stakes testing programs, and the working group who produced the *Code* included members of the three *Standards* organizations and many recommendations contained in the *Code* are included in the *Standards*.

Specific statements related to construct validity, as defined by Messick (1995, 1996), and measurement error appear in Part I and Part III of the *Standards* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999). The authors stated:

> Measurement error reduces the usefulness of measures. It limits the extent to which test results can be generalized beyond the particulars of a specific application of the measurement process. Therefore, it reduces the confidence that can be placed in any single measurement. (p.27)

The authors recommended that error and its sources be reported, "The critical information on reliability includes the identification of the major sources of error, summary statistics bearing on the size of such error…" (p. 27). Also, "Precision and consistency in measurement are always desirable. However, the need for precision increases as the consequences of decisions and interpretations grow in importance" (p. 30). They explained why test developers and users (i.e., SEA) must report the *CSEM* at the cut-score levels of their tests:

> Mismeasurement of examinees whose true scores are close to the cut score is a more serious concern. The techniques used to quantify reliability should recognize these circumstances. This can be done by reporting the conditional standard error in the vicinity of the critical value. (p. 30)

Several standards for test-score precision in high-stakes contexts exist (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999) that policy-makers and school administrators can use to guide high-stakes testing policy (See Table 1). Table I includes the applicable macro-standards, statements, and paraphrased recommendations. Authors of the *Standards* provide overall guidance on interpretation and score precision, "The higher the stakes… the more important it is that the test-based inferences are supported with strong evidence of technical quality" (p. 139).

Table 1. Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999) Related to Test-Score Precision and Conditional Standard Error of Measurement.

Standard	Standard Statement	Recommendations
2.2	"The standard error of measurement, both overall and conditional…, should be reported…in units of each derived score" (p. 31).	The CSEM is important in high school exit exam situations due to the consequence of imprecision.
5.10	"…those responsible for the testing programs should provide appropriate interpretations. (They) should describe …the precision of the scores, common misinterpretations of tests scores…" (p. 65).	Score precision should be illustrated by error bands or potential score ranges for individual students and should show the CSEM.
6.5	"…When relevant for test interpretation, test documents ordinarily should include item level information, cut scores…the SEM…" (p.69).	The SEM should be reported .
7.9	"When tests or assessments are proposed for use as instruments of social, educational or public policy, …users …should fully and accurately inform policymakers of the characteristics of the tests…" (p. 83).	Precision is an important issue… Users should report the amount of error present in scores.

Although the non-empirical and empirical literature on high school exit exams is characterized by multiple perspectives, contradictory research results, and worn-out slogans, the *Standards* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999) provide guidance about the influence of *CSEM* on construct validity related to the potential negative social and educational consequences for children. The *Standards* call clearly for recognizing *CSEM* as a factor that affects score interpretation of individual results and thus affects the test's usefulness as a valid measure of high school achievement (e.g., construct validity as defined by Messick,1995, 1996).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMS

Advocates of high school exit exams generally harvest policy frameworks from the rationalistic and behaviorist theories of cognitive development which are operationalized via policies that use positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement, also known as carrots and sticks. Bryk and Hermanson (1993) termed this an instrumental use model. The theory is that a policy body develops a set of expected education outcome measures, monitors the relationship between the measures and school processes, and then implements rewards or sanctions to attempt to change behavior through external force to maximize performance. Advocates of exit exam policies postulate that high-stakes exit exams cause students and teachers to work harder and achieve more because the tests create teaching and learning targets that have perceived meanings to both groups. Another example includes the threats from SEAs to withhold funding for poor performance to compel school personnel to work harder because they do not want to lose funding. A similar version is the use of public castigation via the press and ratings and/or rankings of districts by SEA personnel to spur educators to work harder to achieve outcomes.

Conversely, exit-exam opponents derive theoretical guidance from an enlightenment model based on self-determination theory (Laitsch, 2006). Creators of an assessment system based on an enlightenment model seek to foster greater discussion, study, and reflection of education practices based on the indicators of the assessment system. Standardized tests still play a part, but their uses and interpretations are different compared those within an instrumental use model.

Purpose, Questions, and Significance

There is a paucity of literature published on the amount of *CSEM* present in the results of individual students on high school exit exams. The purpose of this study is to add literature on the amount of *CSEM* present in the mathematics and language arts high school exit exams to help school administrators understand the validity issues associated with exit exams.

Four questions guided the study: (a) How many states report the scale-score *CSEM* at the proficiency cut-score point for the language arts and mathematics sections of the high school exit exam in their official technical documents as recommended in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999)? (b) What is the size of the reported *CSEM* at the proficiency cut-score point, in scale-score points, for the language arts and mathematics sections of the exit exams? (c) What policy remedies exist within each state's testing program to overcome the potential negative consequences of *CSEM* on the interpretation of reported test scores? (d) How congruent are state practices regarding *CSEM* with accepted standards of educational testing?

The results of this study provide leaders with additional information as they advocate for policy adjustments. Education policy and high-stakes testing continue to take shape at the federal level and the informed discussion of *CSEM* should be a priority topic.

DESIGN AND METHOD

I used a non-experimental, exploratory, descriptive design (Johnson, 2001) because the purpose of the research was to (a) investigate the type of *CSEM* information SEAs reported and the policy remedies in place to address the *CSEM* present in individual test scores and (b) to report results of the investigation. I conducted an Internet search of SEA websites for the mathematics and language arts exit exam technical manuals of the 23 states that use high school exit exams. I used the "search" function on each site to locate the technical manuals and used Boolean search techniques and appropriate descriptors (i.e., *testing and accountability, exit exam, high school exit exam, exit exam and mathematics, exit exam and language arts, technical manual and language arts, technical manual and mathematics, technical report and mathematics, technical report and language arts*, and *technical manual and exit exam*) to find the technical manual. I sent a formal email to the SEA testing coordinators and requested the technical manuals if the manual was not posted on the SEA website and I sent another email after two weeks if I did not receive an initial reply.

The search occasionally led to several exit exam technical manuals for each subject. I chose the most recent manual at the highest grade level if there were exit exams for multiple high-school grades. For example, if a state included Algebra I and Algebra II exams as exit exams, the Algebra II exam was chosen because of the assumption that the Algebra II exam would represent more closely the higher level of high school math achievement.

After locating a technical manual for a high school exit exam I used the *find* function and searched the terms *Standard Error* and *Conditional Standard Error*. Sometimes a SEA did not report the *CSEM* for the proficiency cut-score. In that case a search was conducted for the reported *SEM* at each scale-score point and the just-proficient scale score. I located the just-proficient scale score and recorded the *SEM* reported for that scale-score as the *CSEM*. In the cases when the *SEM* was not reported for the scale scores, but reported for raw scores, I cross referenced the just-proficient raw score with its corresponding scale score. Then I cross referenced with raw scores at one point above the just-proficient score and one raw score point below the just-proficient raw score with their corresponding scale scores, calculated the

difference between the just-proficient and not proficient scale scores, and used that as the estimated *CSEM*.

I recorded the *CSEM*, in scale-score points for language arts and mathematics. In some cases, SEA personnel reported *CSEM* or *SEM* values for reading and writing separately. I reported only the reading *CSEM* under the heading of language arts because most questions and scale-score points for the language arts portion of the exit exam came from the reading section. I recorded the *CSEM* for the first testing administration in cases when states offered multiple testing opportunities. The number of testing opportunities was located by searching the graduation requirements located on each SEA website. When SEA personnel scheduled two testing cycles, for example, one in October and a retake in March, I recorded the *CSEM* for the October test.

RESULTS

Table 2 lists the name of each state, the most recently reported or approximate *CSEM* at the proficiency cut-point for the language arts and mathematics portions of the high school exit exam, and the number of opportunities to take and pass the exam. Almost 25%, 8/23, of SEAs did not report *CSEM*. Half of the eight SEAs that did not report *CSEM* also did not post technical manuals on their websites. I received, via request, technical manuals from two testing coordinators, and the two other coordinators were unable to provide the requested manuals at the time writing this manuscript. Testing personnel from two states did not respond to email requests for information. The range of *CSEM* at the proficiency cut-point for language arts was 3.15 on the Idaho language arts exit exam to 33 scale-score points on the Nevada math exit exam. That means that the Nevada students' true math score can be + or – 33 points from the reported test score. I am less concerned with the size of the error because each state uses a hard and fast cut-score. Therefore, even one point of *CSEM* can cause misinterpretation and miscategorization of student performance. Every SEA provided at least two opportunities for students to take and pass the high school exit exam. The mode was three testing opportunities. None of the SEA reporting policies averaged students' scores from multiple testing opportunities to form a single score to determine proficiency. Eleven SEAs posted technical manuals for tests administered in 2007 and nine SEAs posted only technical manuals for tests administered prior to 2007.

Not all SEAs adhere to the standards and recommendations regarding *CSEM* advocated in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999). For example, Standard 2.2 (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999) reads, "The standard error of measurement, both overall and conditional…, should be reported…in units of each derived score" (p. 31). Almost 25% of the states did not report *CSEM*. When SEA personnel choose not to report the *CSEM* (Standard 2.2), it creates a snowball effect of *Standards* violations. "When test score information is released to parents…, those responsible for the testing programs should provide appropriate interpretations. The interpretations should describe in simple language…the precision of the scores and common misinterpretations of tests scores…" (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999: Standard 5.10 p. 65). "…[W]hen relevant for test interpretation, test documents ordinarily should include item level information, cut-scores…the standard errors of measurement…" (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999: Standard 6.5 p. 69).

Table 2. Reported CSEM in Scale-Score Points for the Language Arts and Mathematics Portions of State High School Exit Exams (n=23) and Number of Testing Opportunities.

State/Year	Language Arts CSEM	Mathematics CSEM	Testing Opportunities
Alabama	Did not respond	Did not respond	Not Available
Alaska 2007	19	19	3
Arizona 2007	13	8	3
California 2007	11	9	7
Florida 2005	15	13	3
Georgia 2007	6	6	3
Idaho 2007	3.15	3.24	3
Indiana 2006	Did not respond	Did not respond	3
Louisiana 2006	3.54	3.98	3
Massachusetts 2007	Not reported	Not reported	3
Minnesota 2007	14	12	3
Missouri 2007	Approximately 8	Approximately 9	> 1
Nevada 2007	26	33	> 3
New Jersey 2006	Not reported	Not reported	3
New Mexico 2006	10	7	2
New York 2006	Not reported	Not reported	2
North Carolina	Not Available	Not Available	3
Ohio 2006	Approx. 8.59	Approx. 10.02	5
South Carolina 2004	5.6	5.5	3
Tennessee 2007	Not Available	Not Available	3
Texas 2007	Not available	Not available	3
Virginia 2004	24	17	Not available
Washington 2007	8.99	8.44	3

The lack of transparency and lack of psychometric professionalism calls into question the overall quality of entire testing programs and raises questions about the construct validity, as defined by Messick (1995, 1996) to include the social and educational consequences of high-stakes testing. School administrators, students, and parents in states where SEAs do not report *CSEM* or publish technical manuals in the public domain have no way to judge the precision of reported individual test results, and they are limited in attempts to appeal the results. Administrators are also handcuffed in their attempts to lobby for a fair testing system that protects youth and minimizes unintended social and educational consequences. How can administrators initiate policy remedies for problems that they do not know exist? All large-scale standardized tests contain *CSEM* and administrators, parents, and policymakers need to be aware of the size of the *CSEM*. What do the testing personnel in the SEA have to hide? Where is the institutional accountability and where are procedural safeguards for children?

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to add literature on the topic of *CSEM* and exit exams, not to draw unwarranted aspersions upon the entire practice of exit exam testing. That would be inappropriate. Huebert and Hauser (1999) wrote,

> Blanket criticisms of tests are not justified. When tests are used in ways that meet relevant psychometric, legal, and educational standards, students' scores provide important information that, combined with information from other sources, can lead to decisions that promote student learning and equality of opportunity. (p. 276)

Is *CSEM* a real concern for students? Yes, according to the leadership of APA, AERA, NCME, and JCTP and individuals in the field of educational testing like Messick (1995, 1996) and Koretz (2008) because of the unintended consequences that it produces if SEA personnel do not report it or if SEA do not account for it through policy remedies. Even a small amount of *CSEM* can have severe consequences for students when SEA personnel do not account for it and instead simply require students to achieve a set cut-score to demonstrate proficiency (Koretz, 2008) as do states in this study.

Because high school exit exams and *CSEM* are nationwide phenomena, we can be sure that perhaps hundreds of thousands of youth might be potentially affected negatively by what I perceive as inaction at the state level to develop policy remedies aligned with standards and recommendations for appropriate testing practices. As stated in the *Standards*, "Measurement error reduces the usefulness of measures. … it reduces the confidence that can be placed in any single measurement"(p. 27).

Almost all of the states with exit exams, 21/23, provide a basic policy remedy to help account for *CSEM*: multiple testing opportunities. While this seems like a positive approach, it does not overcome the issue and simply shifts the *CSEM* to another test (Koretz, 2008) and does not account for it in the interpretation phase.

Policy Remedies

One appropriate policy remedy is for SEAs to keep their current number of testing opportunities but report scores with the *CSEM* band and award the higher score to the student (i.e., student's reported score plus the *CSEM* at the proficiency cut point). This increases the transparency of the process and helps with score interpretation because the SEAs would recognize formally the *CSEM* on the individual score reports. This policy would help to ameliorate the potential negative social and educational consequences to students of not accounting for the *CSEM*. The score advantage should always go to the student in the high stakes situation because of the inherent uncertainty and imprecision of the reported test results (APA, AERA, NCME, 1999). An advantage of this recommendation is that the SEAs do not have to change the testing cycle nor incur additional costs.

Another approach is to allow students unlimited testing opportunities during their high school years and up to one year after completing their high school credit requirements, report scores with the *CSEM* band, and award the higher score to the student. This recommendation simply adds the reporting and awarding of the *CSEM* to the individual score of that test. While it does cost more to allow unlimited testing opportunities, it does not cost more to award the *CSEM* to the reported score. The major weakness of this policy recommendation is

that it simply shifts the *CSEM* from one test to another test but it does reduce the effect of *CSEM*. Other weaknesses include the costs and logistical issues associated with unlimited testing. A strength of this recommendation is that it gives students more time to prepare for the assessment and provides multiple practice opportunities. Including the *CSEM* in the student's score and awarding the score at the top end of the *CSEM*, along with unlimited testing opportunities, would provide one procedural safeguard to lessen the unintended consequence of students not being awarded a high-school diploma due to *CSEM* precision issues. "Precision and consistency in measurement are always desirable. However, the need for precision increases as the consequences of decisions and interpretations grow in importance" (APA, AERA, NCME, 1999, p. 30).

A third remedy is to provide students unlimited testing opportunities and to average their scores because we can trust that the average of multiple scores represent student performance better than just one score (Koretz, 2008). The psychometric reliability of the reported scores for a student increase with the amount of times the student takes the test. The averaging process helps to erode the effect of *CSEM*. While some might argue that this recommendation does not really help the student, it does provide for psychometric honesty and greater score reliability.

A fourth option is to combine recommendations one through three: (a) allow unlimited testing opportunities up to one year after students satisfy high school credit requirements, (b) report the *CSEM* for individual scores, (c) award the student the reported score plus the *CSEM* at the proficiency cut-point, and (d) average the scores from all testing opportunities. This option seeks to address *CSEM* on multiple fronts, is psychometrically sound, and it goes the furthest to mitigate the potential negative and social consequences associated with the interpretation of individual results.

The larger policy question remains and is not explored in this study: Given what we know about the effect of *CSEM* on score interpretation and the high stakes negative social and educational consequences to youth associated with score imprecision, do the ends (i.e., the mythical standardizing of the high school diploma) justify the means of using high stakes tests with known technical flaws that effect score interpretation?

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Money Matters: Making Schools Better for Children—An Equity Study of Mean Per-Pupil Instructional Expenditures Among Property-Wealthy and Property-Poor Small School Districts in Texas

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Making schools a better place for children may have a relationship with state funding allocations for public schools. State funding disparities continue to plague school districts in Texas, particularly small districts (Howard, 2005). One purpose for this paper is to discuss the results of an investigation of funding differences in per-pupil expenditures between property-wealthy and property-poor small districts in Texas.

BACKGROUND

Differences in education expenditures per pupil across school districts in a state continued to attract national attention (Odden & Picus, 2004). Podgursky, Smith, and Springer (2008) explained that equity and adequacy were the two most prominent school finance policy principles. These authors defined equity as "…fairness in distribution of education goods and services" while adequacy was defined as "… the availability of a sufficient level of resources for all students to reach some level of performance" (p. 175).

In 1949 the Gilmer-Aikin Bill was instrumental in school funding reform (Walsh, Kemerer, & Maniotis, 2005). In 1968 lawsuits emerged that challenged the constitutionality of different state funding systems for public schools based upon practices making the quality of education reliant on the property wealth of local communities (Alexander & Alexander, 2005). Since the late 1960s, 46% of the states had their school funding system ruled unconstitutional on the basis of adequacy (Podgursky et al., 2008). Podgursky et al. (2008, p. 1223) suggested that "Instead of pursuing equal resources for all schools, school finance litigation supposedly seeks recognition of a right to an adequate education and the resources necessary to provide it."

Since *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* (1973), school funding policies implemented by the state of Texas have resulted in litigation between the state and property-wealthy and property-poor school districts (Finch, 1998). Lawmakers, school administrators, and the courts continued to debate a definition and equitable funding per pupil to ensure a quality education that meets legislative, state, and federal performance standards ("Why Adequacy", 2003).

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LITERATURE REVIEW

District/School Size

School districts have struggled with changing demographics, increases in low socioeconomic populations, and depleting financial resources (Howard, 2005). Some districts discouraged or closed small schools on the basis of perceived higher costs (Hill, 2008). Jones (2002) noted small schools faced higher teacher salaries per student when compared to schools with larger student enrollments. However, some researchers have noted that smaller schools developed a sense of community not evident in large schools and provided greater opportunities for student participation and support which were especially beneficial for students educationally at-risk (Hill, 2008; Jones, 2002; King, Swanson, & Sweetland, 2003).

Viadero (2006) discussed a U.S. Department of Education report stating that schools with 300 or fewer students showed higher academic gains and fewer discipline problems than did schools with 1,000 or more students. Rural districts were more likely to be innovative and share ideas since the district allowed flexibility in staff development, scheduling, and resource allocation (Rural Schools and Community Trust or RSCT, 2004). According to individuals from the RSCT, employees tended to be devoted to their vocation because many of these employees attended the same school in which they worked and they continued to live in the community.

Student Performance and School Funding

Odden and Picus (2004) noted that the major education issue today is raising levels of student achievement. The Coleman Study released in 1966 was considered one of the nation's most important studies used as the basis for investigating educational opportunities of students from different socioeconomic backgrounds (Hoff, 1999). Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld, and York (1966) utilized achievement test scores from students in first, third, sixth, ninth, and twelfth grade as well as questionnaires administered to students, teachers and principals nation-wide. The questionnaire addressed educational issues and concerns. According to Coleman et al. disadvantaged students would make achievement improvements if the quality of the school improved. Coleman et al. identified qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, support services, adequate funding, and appropriate educational resources as factors contributing to student achievement.

Gardner and others (1983) in *A Nation at Risk* investigated student performance in American schools and made specific recommendations including fiscal support. The debate between per-pupil expenditures and effects that funding had on student achievement continued focusing on adequacy and allocation of funding ("Does Spending", 2004; Hedges, Laine, & Greenwald, 1994). The debate among educational policy makers was to determine the amount of local, state, and federal funding required to achieve performance standards consistent with local state and federal accountability goals (West, Fortenberry, & Cabrera, 2003). West et al. (2003) noted that before an appropriate amount of funding was determined for public education, a clear definition of instructional and non-instructional expenditures must be defined. West et al. found discrepancies in the calculation of instructional expenditures among standard reports provided by the Texas Education Agency.

Imazeki and Reschovsky (2004) noted that Texas' finance reform mandates have focused on reducing the revenue gap between property-poor and property-wealthy districts since passage

of Senate Bill 1 in 1990. Imazeki and Reschovsky suggested that implementation of Public Law 107-110, The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 signed January 8, 2002, created the impetus to provide a more equitable distribution of financial resources to property-poor and property-wealthy districts. Imazeki and Reschovsky suggested a major focus on student outcomes and the cost to improve student performance on standardized tests.

Baker, Taylor, and Vedlitz (2004) found schools in which teachers implemented "best practices" and successful organization methods were able to provide an adequate education based upon the minimum requirements of the state at an economical level. Baker et al. noted that the Texas Education Agency studied successful schools in 2000 and estimated that per pupil expenditures varied from $3,675 to $8,874.

Alexander, Boyer, Brownson, Clark, Jennings, and Patrick (2000) found that districts with the highest academic performance on standardized tests spent more per-pupil than did districts with low academic performance. Alexander et al. (2000) reported that nine Texas school districts whose accountability rating increased between 1996-97 and 1998-99 identified a link between allocating resources for instruction and student achievement.

Litigation Impact—Texas' School Funding System

In 1968, suits first challenged the constitutionality of some state school finance systems (Alexander & Alexander, 2005; Ryan, 2008). Ryan (2008) noted the major issue concerned the lack of comparable resources and opportunities among different schools. Ryan (2008) noted that court decisions mandated state legislatures to create funding systems that prohibited substantial funding inequalities and to provide substantially equal access to similar revenues per pupil at similar levels of tax effort. Brimley Jr. and Garfield (2008) noted that the *Serrano v. Priest* court case (1986) established the principle of fiscal neutrality; a child's education must not be affected by wealth except for the wealth of the state.

In 1984, Texas implemented a major school finance reform providing a minimum foundation program, weights for categories of pupil need, price adjustments for purchase of education commodities, and a small guaranteed yield program (Odden & Picus, 2004). Simultaneously, the *Edgewood Independent School District v. Kirby* case (1989) challenged the state school funding system claiming the funding formula allowed an inconsistent revenue gap between property-wealthy and property-poor school districts (Walker & Casey, 2001). Webb (2005) noted in the Edgewood lawsuit that property-wealthy districts taxed at a lower rate and received more ad valorem tax revenue than property-poor districts that must tax at a higher rate. Webb found the disproportionate amount per student deprived property-poor districts of the capacity to provide the same education opportunities as property-wealthy districts, rendering them unable to hire qualified teachers, meet curriculum requirements, or construct needed facilities.

In 1990, the Texas Legislature implemented Senate Bill 1, nicknamed *Robin Hood*, because the bill included funding components that redistributed revenue from 132 property-wealthy districts and established a controversial property-tax system. Senate Bill 1 and its successor, Senate Bill 351, were both challenged by *Edgewood II* and *Edgewood III* respectively and declared unconstitutional (Imazeki & Reschovsky, 2004). Imazeki and Reschovsky (2004) reported that subsequently Senate Bill 7 established a fiscally neutral finance system providing a three-tiered formula to curb disproportion of school revenue to districts. These authors explained that the first tier guaranteed a per-pupil amount if the district set a minimum tax rate. The second

tier generated additional revenue for districts' tax effort for each cent above the minimum rate. The third tier was the property-wealthy (or Chapter 41) recapture condition which capped the amount of revenue a property-wealthy district could generate by limiting access to its own wealth and recapturing revenue generated above a designated amount (Imazeki & Reschovsky, 2004).

According to Thompson and Crampton (2002), the tiered funding system implemented in Senate Bill 1 reduced state aid as a school district approached the $1.50 maintenance and operations rate cap and denied meaningful discretion for school districts when setting a tax rate. These authors explained that the property-wealthy school districts at, or approaching, the tax cap were losing their capacity to generate sufficient revenue to operate their districts and pay the state recapture money required by Senate Bill 1. Similarly, property-poor districts approaching the tax cap were losing state aid and did not have the tax base to increase taxes to replace lost state revenue (Thompson & Crampton, 2002). As a result, school districts experienced an inability to acquire the necessary financial resources to meet expanding state accountability standards and the national mandates of adequate yearly progress required by NCLB (Imazeki & Reschovsky, 2005).

The West Orange-Cove Consolidated ISD lawsuit was originally filed in 2001 and requested relief from the Senate Bill 1 Robin Hood Clause implemented in 1991 (Thompson & Crampton, 2002). From 2001 to 2005, the West-Orange Cove lawsuit increased from four school districts to more than 300 districts (Bramblett, Cortell, Tachtenbert, Thompson, & Fraissinet, 2005). The court did not create a new finance system but mandated the Texas Legislature to correct the deficiencies by June 1, 2006 or public school funding would cease (Bramblett et al., 2005).

During the 79th third-called Texas Legislative Session, the Texas Senate passed House Bill 1, a comprehensive finance and school reform bill (Texas Association of School Administrators, 2006). House Bill 1 met the provisions of the Texas Supreme court directive to overhaul the Texas public school finance system by May 2006 allowing the Travis County District judge to lift his injunction to cease funding for Texas public schools, which would have become effective June 1, 2006 (Texas Association of School Administrators, 2006).

The Texas Legislature and the Governor drafted legislation to define instructional expenditures, including instructional components as part of the Financial Integrity Rating System in Texas (FIRST), a financial accountability instrument for public schools (Texas Education Agency, 2006). The Texas legislative body failed to support any bills that carried the instructional expenditures definition during the regular or special legislative sessions ("The 2nd Called Session", 2006). When the legislative sessions ended, the Governor issued an executive order that mandated the implementation of instructional expenditures legislation. This order required a minimum of 65% of a district's operating budget to meet the definition of instructional expenditures, with the percentage being an indicator on the district's FIRST rating (Executive Order No. RP47, 2005).

Purpose for Study

The purpose for this study was twofold: 1) to investigate differences in per-pupil instruction expenditures between Chapter 41 (property-wealthy) and Chapter 42 (low-to-medium property-wealthy) small school districts; and, 2) to investigate differences among per-pupil instructional expenditures using student performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge

and Skills (TAKS) on 7th grade math and reading tests between property-wealthy and low-to-medium property-wealthy small school districts.

THE STUDY

Components of the study discussed here include the sample, research method, delimitations, limitations, data analysis, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and references.

Sample

In the 2005-2006 school year, 1,057 public school districts operated in Texas (TEA, 2006). There were 152 property-wealthy districts. Thirty property-wealthy districts were randomly selected to meet small district criteria. The remaining 905 district names were placed in a box. The 30 medium-to-low property-wealthy districts were randomly selected by the researcher to meet the small district criteria. A total sample of 60 small school districts participated in this study.

Data Collection

The TAKS data for the 7th grade math and reading test results were collected by the researcher from the 2005–2006 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report. The district's percentage of passing was the total number of students meeting or exceeding the TEA passing standards for each test used in the study for the 60 districts selected to participate.

Research Method

The quantitative research method of this study was nonexperimental-comparitive. The researcher investigated differences in 7th grade math and reading scores among randomly selected property-wealthy and middle-to-low property-wealthy small districts. There was no manipulation or direct control of conditions experienced.

Delimitations and Limitations:

The delimitations and limitations for this study included:

1. Only instructional expenditures defined by the school Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) were used. The researchers used only the general fund (Fund 199) after excluding federal entitlement funds and the capital projects fund.
2. Only 7th grade reading and math tests were used because all students were required to take these tests and dropout was not an option at this grade level.
3. The researchers did not consider socioeconomic status or other sub-population test scores for this study.
4. Alternative assessments for students qualifying were not considered for this study.
5. This study was limited to small public school districts in Texas.
6. The study was limited to per-pupil instructional expenditures and did not consider other educational resources, services, or program expenditures.
7. The sample size was small, n = 60 of the 1,057 school districts in Texas.

Data Analysis

Instructional expenditures from the *TEA 2005–2006 Financial Actual Reports* were divided by average daily attendance to compute a per-pupil instructional expenditure. The independent samples *t*-test was used to determine mean differences among the independent variables of district size and property-wealthy and medium-to-low property-wealthy districts and the dependent variables, percentage of passing rates. A *p* value of .05 or less was established to determine the level of significance.

A Bivariate Correlation Analysis was used to investigate if a relationship existed among per-pupil instructional expenditures and the percentage of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade math and reading tests. Pearson (*r*) correlation coefficients were utilized to examine the strength of the relationship.

FINDINGS

The research questions were used as the framework for reporting the study findings.

Question 1: Is there a difference among property-wealthy school districts' mean per-pupil instructional expenditures and the mean instructional expenditures of low-to-medium property-wealthy districts?

Information found in Tables 1 and 2 below shows the mean average daily attendance (ADA), mean instructional expenditures, mean per-pupil instructional expenditures, and mean percentage passing rates on the Texas TAKS tests for 7th grade math and reading. An independent samples *t*-test was used to examine mean differences to answer question 1. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the 30 property-wealthy district participants in the study. Table 2 shows the characteristics of the 30 medium-to-low property wealthy district participants.

Table 1. Characteristics of Property-Wealthy Districts N = 30.

Class	*N*	Mean Ave. Daily Attendance (ADA)	Mean Instructional Expenditures	Mean Per-Pupil Instructional Expenditures	Mean % Passing Rates TAKS 7th Grade	
					Math	Reading
1A	10	416	$2,217,422	$5,372	78.50	86.10
2A	10	1,054	$4,602,077	$4,458	79.30	84.30
3A	10	2,278	$8,455,986	$3,776	77.70	79.90

Table 2. Characteristics of Medium-to-Low Property-Wealth Districts N = 30.

Class	*N*	Mean Ave. Daily Attendance (ADA)	Mean Instructional Expenditures	Mean Per-Pupil Instructional Expenditures	Mean % Passing Rates TAKS 7th Grade	
					Math	Reading
1A	10	471	$1,942,237	$4,155	70.20	76.30
2A	10	927	$3,847,851	$4,200	72.90	80.10
3A	10	2,199	$7,964,563	$3,624	72.60	77.80

Table 3 shows the independent samples *t*-test per pupil instructional expenditures of the 60 districts used in this study.

Table 3. Independent Samples t-test: Per-pupil Instructional Expenditures N = 60.

Source	*t*	*df*	Sig. (two-tailed)	Mean Difference
Between groups	2.81	44.43	.01	$542.4

The *t*-test results for equality of means indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between property-wealthy districts' mean per-pupil instructional expenditures and medium-to-low property-wealthy district's mean per-pupil instructional expenditures, $t(44.43, 60) = 2.81$; $p = .01$. The mean average per-pupil instructional expenditures in property-wealthy districts ($4,536.37) were higher than the per-pupil instructional expenditures in medium-to-low property-wealthy districts ($3,992.97). The difference between the average mean was $542.40. Property-wealthy districts have more funds per pupil and spend more on instructional expenditures than do medium-to-low property-wealthy districts.

Question 2: Is there a difference among the mean percentage of passing rates in 7th grade TAKS math scores for property-wealthy versus low-to-medium property-wealthy small school districts?

Table 4 below shows the descriptive statistics for the percentage of passing rates for the TAKS 7th grade math test.

Table 4. District Wealth by Percentage of Passing Rates on TAKS 7th Grade Math Test N = 60.

District Wealth	*N*	Range	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
Wealthy	30	52	47	99	78.50	11.83
Medium-to-Low	30	47	52	99	71.90	13.19

The *t*-test for equality of means results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between property-wealthy districts' mean percentage of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade math test and medium-to-low property-wealthy districts, $t(58, 60) = 2.04$; $p = .05$, see Table 5 below.

Table 5. Independent Samples t-test: Percentage of Passing Rates on TAKS 7th Grade Math Test N = 60.

Source	*t*	*df*	Sig. (two-tailed)	Mean Difference
Between groups	2.04	58	.05	6.60

The mean percentages of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade math test for property-wealthy districts (78.50) were higher than the mean percentage passing rate on the TAKS 7th grade mean test for medium-to-low property-wealthy districts (71.90). The difference between the average means was 6.60. Property-wealthy districts scored higher on the TAKS 7th grade math test than medium-to-low property-wealthy districts.

Question 3: Is there a difference among the mean percentage of passing rates in 7th grade TAKS reading scores for property-wealthy versus low-to-medium property-wealthy small school districts?

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics for the percentage of passing rates for the TAKS 7th grade reading test.

Table 6. District Wealth by Percentage of Passing Rates on the TAKS 7th Grade Reading Test N = 60.

District Wealth	*N*	Range	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
Wealthy	30	36	63	99	83.43	9.12
Medium-to-Low	30	41	55	99	76.07	11.08

The *t*-test for equality of means results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between property-wealthy school districts' mean percentage of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade reading test and medium-to-low property-wealthy districts' mean percentage of passing rates, $t(58, 60) = 2.05$; $p = .05$, see Table 7 below.

Table 7. Independent Samples t-test: Percentage of Passing Rates on TAKS 7th Grade Reading Test N = 60.

Source	*t*	*df*	Sig. (two-tailed)	Mean Difference
Between groups	2.05	58	.05	5.37

The mean percentage of passing rate on the TAKS 7th grade reading test in property-wealthy districts (83.43) was higher than the mean percentage of passing rates in medium-to-low property-wealthy districts (78.07). The difference between the average means was 5.37. Property-wealthy districts' students scored higher on the TAKS 7th grade reading test than students from medium-to-low property-wealthy districts. For property-wealthy school districts, there was no statistically significant correlation, $r = .01$; $p = .97$ (two-tailed) among per pupil instructional expenditures and percentage of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade math test. For medium-to-low property-wealthy districts there was no statistically significant correlation, $r = -.17$; $p = .36$ (two-tailed) among per-pupil instructional expenditures and percentage of passing rates on that TAKS 7th grade math test.

Question 4: Is there a relationship between per-pupil instructional expenditures and 7th grade reading and math scores in property-wealthy and low-to-medium property-wealthy small school districts?

A Bivariate Correlation Analysis was used to determine what relationship existed among per-pupil expenditures and the percentage of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade math and reading tests. Pearson (*r*) correlation coefficients were used to determine the strength of the relationship. For property-wealthy districts, there was no statistically significant correlation $r = .28$; $p = .14$ (two-tailed) among per-pupil instructional expenditures and TAKS 7th grade reading test percentage of passing rates. For medium-to-low property-wealthy districts, there was no statistically significant correlation, $r = -.22$; $p = .24$ (two-tailed) among per-pupil instructional expenditures and TAKS 7th grade reading test percentage of passing rates. These results show no relationship between per-pupil instructional expenditures and 7th grade reading and math scores in either property-wealthy or low-to-medium wealth school districts.

CONCLUSIONS

In our study, we determined that a mean per-pupil funding gap of $542.40 exists among property-wealthy and medium-to-low property-wealthy small districts in Texas. The majority of school districts in Texas are small. After numerous litigation suits, the Texas Supreme Court concluded that the Texas constitution requires the legislature to create an efficient school system prohibiting substantial inequalities and requiring substantially equal access to similar revenues per pupil at similar levels of tax effort (*Edgewood Independent School District v Kirby*, 1989). It may be necessary for Texas legislators to reexamine how the relative tax efforts of poor and wealthy districts affect funding gaps among small districts, and reduce these funding gaps by increasing the targeting effort of poor districts, or increasing the state share of total funding or increasing both.

We did not find any significant relationship among per pupil instructional expenditures and the percentage of passing rates on the TAKS 7th grade math and reading tests for either property-wealthy or property-poor districts. Efforts to specify an adequate level of spending per student reliably using student test results may be futile at the present time.

Our study's findings support research reported by Imazeki and Reschovsky (2005), Baker et al. (2004), and Alexander et al. (2000) who concluded that achievement scores were higher when funding was higher. In this study mean 7th grade math and reading percentage of passing rates on TAKS tests were significantly higher in property-wealthy districts. There are many

funding sources, each with its own narrow goals in each district. It is difficult to know whether different uses of resources are associated with different student learning outcomes. Comparability of resources is not the same as equal funding per pupil. Exactly how personnel in different schools spend their instructional funds differ. Some analysts have examined links in spending and achievement to estimate funding needed to increase achievement, while others have based achievement increases on particular programs assuming that these programs would have the same effect if adopted in another district. Even if an adequate per pupil instructional amount were defined, that amount may not be the amount needed in the future because of uncertainty about skills needed in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations from this study:

1. Disseminate the study results to education administrators who inform and support state legislators concerned with school funding issues and disseminate this paper to some state legislatures directly as an Executive Summary.
2. Conduct further studies to examine instructional expenditures in districts that have similar wealth per student in both property-wealthy and property-poor school districts in Texas to identify resources and determine if different uses of resources are associated with different learning outcomes.
3. Replicate this study for larger school districts in the state and include all sub-populations.

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Leadership in the Effective Change Zone: A Case Study of the High-Touch Needs of Educators Implementing the Georgia Performance Standards

Walter S. Polka

INTRODUCTION

Successfully implementing and sustaining large-scale education innovations such as the Georgia Performance Standards require that local educational leaders attend to both external and internal forces that impact their respective schools (Kaufman, Herman, & Watters, 2002). However, the ability to effectively manage people, things, and ideas in the change process also requires that educational leaders develop a focus on providing for the micro-contextual organizational, personal, and professional high-touch needs of school personnel (Hall & Hord, 2006). Educational leaders who actualize an acute emphasis on the human side of change operate in the *effective change zone*. This is the zone, "…where high-touch interpersonal management practices, based on meeting personal and professional needs, intersect or commingle with the application of appropriate organizational management practices" (Polka, 2007, p. 12). Educational leaders who operate in this zone have a greater potential for successfully implementing and sustaining innovations (Fullan, 2005). In this paper, the significance to educational leaders of recognizing the impact of both their respective macro and micro contexts on implementing innovations will be explored. Specifically, a case study of the high-touch needs of school personnel implementing the Georgia Performance Standards will be examined to identify the value to educational leaders of operating in the *effective change zone* when dealing within their micro-context.

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE SYSTEMS APPROACH

The institution of schooling has been classified as an open social system that is impacted by its environment, including both the macro and micro contexts, in such a manner that as the environment or context changes so does the institution of schooling (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). The institution of schooling is constantly evolving in structure and substance as society evolves. This conceptual perspective is consistent with the seminal works of von Bertalanffy (1950) and Senge (1990) in that the internal as well as the external influences on the system impact its growth and development (Norton, 2005). Such an approach views education as the sum of various components working inter-dependently within its context in order to continue to achieve its constantly evolving education goals, and any change in one component of the system evokes a change in the others (Kaufman, Herman, & Watters, 2002; Norton). However, as Hoy and Miskel adroitly pointed out, "To survive the organization must adapt and to adapt, it must change" (p. 20). Therefore, change is a pre-requisite for continuous open system growth, and education in the United States pragmatically demonstrates this concept.

A synthesis of over 75 years of education system literature concluded that schools are externally impacted by the values and resources of their community contexts including local

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and regional politics and that those employed in those systems act on the basis of their respective human needs and roles (Hoy & Miskell, 2005; Norton, 2005). Consequently, educational leaders must be knowledgeable about their contexts and the various internal and external dynamics that impact schooling in America. Educational leaders need to be prepared to envision more comprehensively and more perceptively the next emerging developments that may affect their respective schools. They must continuously update their macro-perspectives as well as their micro-perspectives relating to education changes to appropriately and effectively manage in both present and future tenses (James, 1997).

EFFECTIVE CHANGE ZONE MICRO-CONTRXT MANAGEMENT

Educational leaders who operate in the *effective change zone* utilize key organizational planning processes and provide for the high-touch micro-contextual needs of the personnel who are implementing changes. The *effective change zone* is to organizational change as the *zone of proximal development* is to individual change (Kauchak & Eggen, 2008). It is the key time or condition where learning and behavioral change is optimum or as Slavin stated, "…the point of readiness for a given concept" (p. 44). Organizationally, the *effective change zone* occurs where high-touch interpersonal management practices intersect with the application of appropriate planning concepts. The following Venn diagram, Figure #1, illustrates this concept:

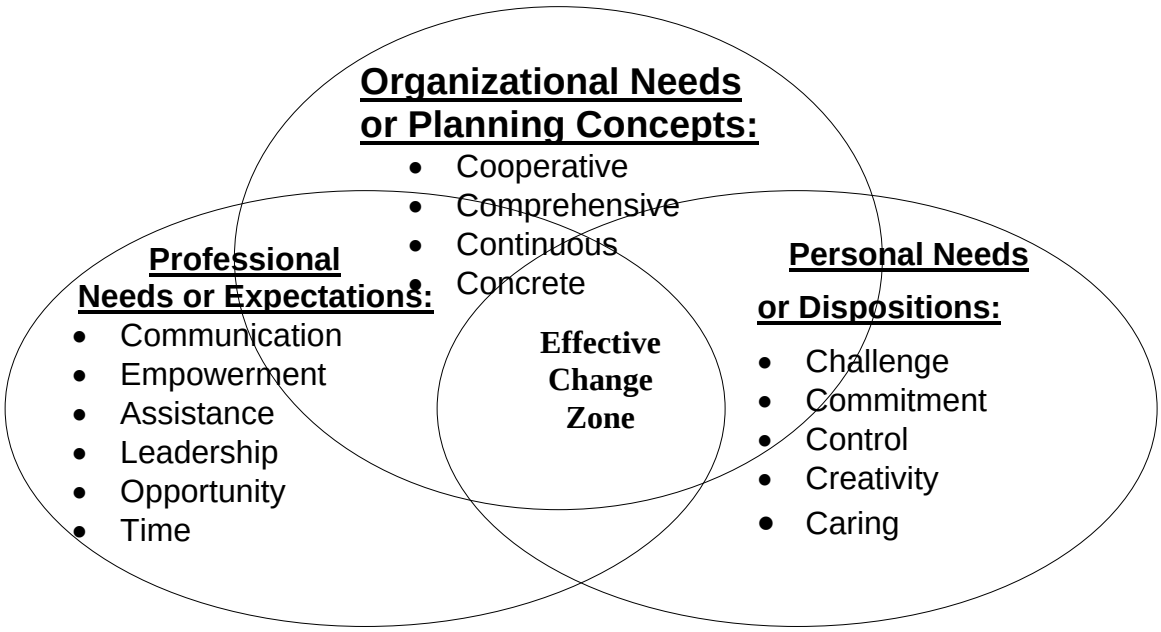

Figure 1. The effective change zone (Polka, 2007).

Transformational leaders are most efficacious in managing in the *effective change zone* since they are proactive, raise the awareness levels of followers about collective interests, and help followers achieve unusually high performance outcomes (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). They manage the issues in a systematic manner by scaffolding complex changes using simple, but sound, organizational planning principles that can be appreciated, articulated and internalized by all involved (Hall & Hord, 2006). They are cognizant of the importance that individuals

place on their respective organizational needs, personal needs, and professional needs. They are aware of the research findings regarding these needs so that they may address them most appropriately (Polka, Mattai & Perry, 2000).

ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS RESEARCH

Education planning as a strategic process for the improvement of teaching and learning first appeared in the educational literature of the post-World War I era (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). But, education leaders have utilized several different approaches in designing programs to improve teaching and learning in light of changing societal factors (Hyman, 1973; Brandt, 2000). However, a cogent planning framework that has effectively been utilized since the later half of the 20th century to improve schooling is based on the premise that sound organization planning activities for improvement incorporate the following four key concepts: (a) *cooperative*, (b) *comprehensive*, (c) *continuous*, and (d) *concrete* (Beane, Toepfer & Alessi, 1986; Harnack, 1968; Hyman; Krug, 1957; Marzano, 2003; Parkay, Anctil, & Hass, 2006; Unruh, 1975).

Accordingly, planning for change must not be completed by individuals or small groups, exclusively, but should be undertaken by large groups of stakeholders working in *cooperative* settings to develop implementation projects. The more people involved in the decision-making and problem analysis of innovations the better and more sustainable the solution (Beane, Toepfer & Alessi, 1986; Harnack, 1968; Marzano, 2003; Unruh, 1975). The planning process itself must be *comprehensive* and consider a vast array of real and potential intervening variables (ie. people, things, and ideas) that may impact on the implementation of change (Kaufman, Herman, & Watters, 2002). The planning process must be viewed as a *continuous* experience that may not have a specific end-date. There must be continuous monitoring and adjusting of the innovation itself as the context changes (Brant; Kaufman, Herman & Watters; Krug). The planning process must produce specific artifacts or events related to the innovation in order for participants in the process to have *concrete* evidence that they can identify and celebrate as the outcomes of their collective efforts (Marzano; Polka, 2007).

PERSONAL NEEDS RESEARCH

During the dusk of the 20th century, social science research and literature on coping with change reinforced the significance of the following five high-touch personal needs or dispositions: challenge, commitment, control, creativity and caring. Those personal needs were also identified as meaningful for organizational, personal, and professional satisfaction and productivity in a climate of pervasive flux (Polka, Mattai & Perry, 2000).

Various researchers recommended that each individual facing significant changes in their life must have their respective personal needs met to successfully cope (Csikszentmihaly, 1990; Kobasa, Maddi & Kahn, 1982; Glasser, 1990; DePree, 1989). Specifically, an individual confronting change must look at life as a constant challenge and develop the ability to see change as an opportunity, not a crisis (Csikszentmihaly). Also, people who are able to cope successfully with significant life changes exhibit a strong commitment to themselves, their families, and their organizations (Kobasa, Maddi & Kahn). In addition, individuals who believe, and act as if they are in control can influence the course of events in their particular lives and are better prepared for change (Glasser). People who, also, possess the creativity to envision optimal experiences are able to cope most effectively with change (Csikszentmi-

haly). Finally, a factor that helps individuals cope with change is a caring family attitude in the work place since it reinforces high-touch feelings in another environment of significance to the individual (DePree).

The five high-touch personal dispositions have also been cited as the key hardiness factors that contributed to the success of organizations that, "… have made the leap from good to great" (Collins, 2000, p. 82). Therefore, *challenge, commitment, control, creativity* and *caring* are key personal needs that must be addressed when introducing any changes in organizations since the individuals who make up the organization possess them (Stossel, 1992).

PROFESSIONAL NEEDS RESEARCH

The following six professional high-touch needs or expectations: communication, empowerment, assistance, leadership, opportunity, and time have been comprehensively articulated in the education research and literature about improving student achievement in schools (Danielson, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Marzano, 2003; Harnack, 1968). The significance of these six professional needs as related to effective curriculum implementation activities was confirmed by various research studies (Miller, 1981; Polka, 1977; Yuhasz, 1974). Those six needs are integral components of the late 20th century literature and research about the professional considerations of most significance in terms of dealing with change (Beane, Toepfer & Alessi, 1986; Brandt. 2000; Hall & Hord, 2006). Subsequently, leaders promulgating changes in their respective organizations must be certain that the people being impacted by those changes have:

> (a) the ability to know (communicate) diverse thinking and feeling concerns about the changes; (b) the ability to have significant input (empowerment) relating to the applications of the changes in their work settings; (c) resource personnel available (assistance) to help scaffold their experiences (d) knowledge that their supervisors (leadership) are sincerely committed to the changes;(e) comprehension of both the personal and organizational benefits (opportunities) associated with the changes; and (f) time to reflect about the changes (time) to internalize the benefits and pragmatically apply the changes in their daily operations. (Polka, 2007, p. 13)

Consequently, the above six high-touch professional needs or expectations of people experiencing change are critical to its successful short-term implementation, as well as significant to its long-term sustainability (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Hall & Hord, 2006).

EFFECTIVE CHANGE ZONE IMPLICATIONS

Therefore, the above five personal needs or dispositions and the six professional needs or expectations as well as the four key concepts of sound organizational planning have been identified as significant micro-contextual components for personal satisfaction and organizational productivity in diverse research studies and serve as major high-touch references for the effective planning, implementation, and sustainment of education changes. This perspective is consistent with the "real change" research of Kotter and Cohen (2002) who stated, "Both thinking and feeling are essential, and both are found in successful organizations, but the heart of change is in the emotions. The flow of see-feel-change is more powerful than that of the analysis-think-change" (p. 2).

The significance of possessing a high-touch focus for school leaders and the imperative to manage in the effective change zone was emphasized by management authorities,

> Everyone must take responsibility for understanding the concerns that they and other people have about change, and they must also be willing to ask for what they need and be there for others in their time of need …. Effective change is not something you do to people. It is something you do with them. (Blanchard & Waghorn, 1997, pp. 200–201)

Fullen (2005) corroborated this perception by insisting that sustainable changes in education are promoted by leaders who help people find meaningful connections to each other in their respective school contexts, "… they find well-being by making progress on problems important to their peers and of benefit beyond themselves" (p. 104). Leaders encourage the implementers to learn from each other in the finest Vygotskian tradition, by helping each other in the effective change zone, using both personal artistry and sound management science principles (Slavin, 2003). Thus, educational leaders operating in the effective change zone utilize key organizational planning processes and provide for the above high-touch micro-contextual needs of their respective personnel as they promote and sustain innovations (see Figure 1).

MANAGING IN THE EFFECTIVE CHANGE ZONE CASE STUDY RESEARCH

Research conducted in New York commencing in early 1992, with a sample of 279 educators, specifically identified the significance of the five personal needs and the six professional needs for the implementation of technological changes in education (Polka, 1994). Another study, involving 312 educators replicated that research and reconfirmed the significance of those high-touch micro-contextual needs as key factors to be addressed when dealing with educational changes (Polka, Mattai, & Perry, 2000). The results of these studies illustrated that education leaders must not only be cognizant of these high-touch needs but must directly provide for them in a customized manner to promote meaningful changes in their respective schools and districts.

Those research findings were corroborated by a study of more than 1200 teachers that found that the interpersonal relationships exhibited by educational leaders were the most critical factors that made a difference in facilitating effective school reforms (Blasé & Kirby, 2000). Subsequently, educational leaders need to recognize that there may be diverse hierarchies of these high-touch personal and professional needs within their respective organizations and they must be prepared to provide for them in appropriate ways.

Doctoral students at Georgia Southern University enrolled in the Augusta, Savannah, and Statesboro cohorts in 2007 reviewed the above research and literature regarding the effective change zone needs of educators implementing innovations. Those 35 doctoral students and their professor, decided to develop a questionnaire, based on those previously cited studies, and conduct research about the contemporary organizational, personal, and professional needs of Georgia educators implementing the new state student achievement standards.

THE GEORGIA PERFORMANCE STANDARDS CASE STUDY

The Georgia Performance Standards (GPS), a comprehensive set of specific student achievement standards were first introduced in the state of Georgia in 2004 during phase I of

the project. The State Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Cox, specifically identified the purpose of this statewide innovation in the following official statement:

> The GPS will change how teachers teach and will positively impact how students learn. All elements of teaching and learning will be affected. Teachers will be planning their lessons based on our new performance standards and designing learning activities to engage their students. And assessments aligned to the GPS will prove that students understand the materials they are being taught. This is a "show what you know" curriculum. If our tests are designed well and align to the standards being taught, our students will perform better than ever. (Cox, 2004, p. 2)

Subsequently, during that first phase in 2004–2005 school year, there were several professional development workshops and presentations for educators designed to help them appreciate the purpose and the impact of the GPS on their instructional programs. Cox reiterated the significance of the GPS standards during that initial phase by emphasizing,

> The new performance standards are not optional. GPS is our state's curriculum. Systems and schools across our state will be measured against these new standards for making Adequate Yearly Progress—but more importantly for improving the performance of ALL students. (Cox, 2004, p. 2)

Therefore, the Georgia Performance Standards were presented to educators and the public as the mandated approach to teaching and learning throughout the state. Although teams of educators assisted the state officials in developing the standards and presenting workshops about them, the GPS program was being implemented statewide as a top-down fiat. The State Education Department reinforced the significance of the implementation phase of the GPS project and guaranteed the improvement in education in Georgia, if the implementation was completed appropriately, at several presentation sessions to administrators via the following admonishment,

> It is guaranteed that those schools who embrace the new standards and whose implementation is strong will have students who make extraordinary gains in achievement. Implementation is the key, and your role as a supportive principal is the most critical factor affecting student achievement. (Cox, 2004, p. 2)

Thus, this program was introduced as a high-stakes mandated program that must be implemented in all schools of the state and education leaders had the key responsibility to implementing it.

According to the Georgia State Education Department, the statewide implementation plan consisted of the following two phases: Introduction: Awareness Training, Year 1, 2004-5 school year; and Implementation: Methodology Training, Year 2, 2005-6 school year (George Education Department, 2004). During the 2004-5 school year the GPS would be implemented in classrooms as follows: English and Language Arts in K-12; Math in Grade 6; Science in Grades 6 & 7 and Science in Grades 9–12. In addition, in the 2005-6 school year Math GPS would be introduced in K-2, and in Grade 7, and Science GPS would be introduced in grades 3-5. During the next phase of implementation in the 2006–7 school year GPS would be introduced in the following subjects and grades: Math in Grades 3–5 and Grade 8; Science

in Grades K-2 and Grade 8; Social Studies in grade 6 and Grades 8–12. The final implementation was planned to occur in the 2007-8 school year when the following subjects and grades would complete the process: Math in Grades 9–12; Science in Grade 8; Social Studies in K-5 and Grade 7. Therefore, a fairly comprehensive and aggressive implementation plan was presented and expected throughout the state. This was, indeed, a large-scale educational innovation and one definitely worthy of study from a change perspective.

GEORGIA PERFORMANCE STANDARDS CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

During the Fall of 2007, the Georgia Southern doctoral students and their professor, developed and pilot tested their implementation needs survey instrument that consisted of three components. Part I, (Demographic Data), was designed to gather information about participants educational experiences. Part II (Personal and Organizational Needs), was designed to gather information about the personal, professional and organizational perceived needs of participants in effectively implementing the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS). This part consisted of 55 implementation need statements based on previous needs research (Harnack. 1968; Miller, 1981; Polka, 1977; Polka, 1994; Polka, Mattai, & Perry, 2000; Yuhasz, 1974). Each participant was asked to rate their needs on the following Likert-type scale: 1—not considered a need, 2—a need of relatively little importance, 3—a need of moderate importance, 4—a need of considerable importance, or 5—a need of great importance. Part III, (Open-ended Questions), was designed to enable participants to provide free responses to questions related to their implementation of the GPS as they desired.

Once the Georgia Southern University Institutional Research Board (IRB) approved of the research project, a convenience-purposive survey sampling technique was used to distribute and anonymously collect the surveys. Each of the 35 doctoral candidates is given 12 surveys to distribute to educators they knew within their school buildings or in their respective districts who had professionally experienced the implementation phase of the GPS project. Subsequently, a total of 420 survey instruments were distributed to known GPS implementers throughout the state of Georgia. A total of 229 useable surveys were returned for analysis. This number represented a return rate of 54.5%.

GPS Research Survey Sample Demographic Data

The following tables (1–4) provide demographic information about this sample.

Table 1. Teaching Service Level of GPS Survey Participants.

Teaching Service Level	# Participants	% Sample
Elementary Grades K-5	97	42.4
Middle Grades 6-8	87	38.0
High School Grades 9-12	30	13.1
Did not respond	15	6.5
Totals	229	100.0

Therefore, participants in this implementation survey represented more K-8 teachers (80.4%) than high school teachers. But, it should be noted that more K-8 teachers were in-

volved in the first two years of the implementation of the GPS than, proportionately, were high school teachers according to the state implementation plan.

Table 2. Educational Experience of GPS Survey Participants.

Years Teaching Experience	# Participants	% Sample
1–5	47	20.5
6–10	46	20.1
11–15	50	21.8
16–21	45	19.7
Over 21	26	11.4
Did not respond	15	6.5
Totals	229	100.0

Thus, most of the educators who responded to this question identified that they had over five years of teaching experience. Since most teachers who leave the profession do so in their first five years, this sample represented those educators who most likely will continue their careers in education (Rebore, 2007). Also, since most of the sample had over 10 year of teaching experience (53%), this sample may be considered an experienced sample. In addition, since almost a third of the sample (31.1%) identified that they had over 16 years of teaching experience, this sample may be considered to represent a fairly senior group of educators who have been involved with educational changes during their respective careers.

Table 3. Subjects Taught by GPS Survey Participants.

Subjects Taught	# Participants	% Sample
All Subjects	83	36.2
English Language Arts	39	17.0
Mathematics	25	11.0
Science	24	10.5
Social Studies	17	7.4
Did not respond	41	17.9
Totals	229	100

According to the data collected from this sample, the participants in this research study represented, fairly proportionately, the teachers who have been teaching the subjects that have been part of the first three implementation phases of GPS (Georgia State Education Department).

Table 4. GPS Implementation Experience of Survey Participants.

GPS Experience	# Participants	% Sample
Less than 6 months	26	11.4
6 months to 1 year	36	15.7
1 to 2 years	94	41.0
2 to 3 years	54	23.6
Did not respond	19	8.3
Totals	229	100

This sample, as confirmed by the data in Table 4, has had considerable experience implementing the GPS given that the program did not commence until the 2004–5 school year. Almost 85% of the sample has had at least 6 months or more of implementation experience with the Georgia Performance Standards. Thus, the sample may be considered a knowledgeable group of professionals to question about their needs and experiences implementing the GPS.

Georgia GPS Case Study Findings

Once the surveys were returned, the data were tabulated and various statistical treatments were applied, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), to determine relationships between and among the demographics and the responses to the 55 statements of the survey. Those 55 statements were derived from the 15 categories associated with the personal, professional, and organizational needs of educators implementing innovations as previously articulated in this paper and illustrated in Figure 1 as:

1. Personal Needs: Challenge, Commitment, Control, Creativity, Caring.
2. Professional Needs: Communication, Empowerment, Assistance, Leadership, Opportunity, Time.
3. Organizational Needs: Cooperative, Comprehensive, Concrete, Continuous.

It should be noted that in addition to a descriptive statistics, key statistical analysis applications including the stepwise linear regression were applied to the data to ascertain if there were any significant differences between and among the independent (demographic data) and dependent variables (survey statements) of the study. The results identified that there were no significant differences at the .05 level. Thus, neither the teaching service level (elementary, middle, or high school), length of teaching experience, subject matter taught, nor time spent implementing GPS made any significant difference vis-a-vis the importance of the high-touch needs expressed by this sample.

The following tables 5, 6, and 7 illustrate some of the key findings as a result of surveying the 229 educators in this sample.

Table 5. Effective Change Zone Needs by Category with Mean Ranking by GPS Sample From Highest Mean to Lowest Mean.

Need Category	Specific Need	Mean Score
Personal	Caring	4.36
Personal	Creativity	4.14
Personal	Commitment	4.11
Personal	Control	4.10
Personal	Challenge	3.98
Sub-total	**Personal Needs**	**4.13**
Professional	Time	4.33
Professional	Leadership	4.32
Professional	Communication	4.18
Professional	Assistance	3.97
Professional	Opportunity	3.88
Professional	Empowerment	3.88
Sub-total	**Professional**	**4.08**
Organizational	Cooperativeness	4.28
Organizational	Comprehensive	4.17
Organizational	Concreteness	4.08
Organizational	Continuous	3.90
Sub-total	**Organizational**	**4.09**
Totals	**High-touch Needs**	**4.10**

Thus, this sample identified the importance of *Caring, Time, Leadership, Cooperation* and *Communication* as their top five needs for the implementation of the GPS program. These needs had a mean score of at least 4.18 or slightly more than of *Considerable Importance* to them. The next five ranked needs were those of *Comprehensiveness, Creativity, Commitment, Control* and *Concreteness.* These needs had a mean score of at least 4.08 making them also of *Considerable Importance* to this sample. While the last five needs ranked were *Challenge, Assistance, Continuousness, Empowerment* and *Opportunity.* Although these needs had a mean score in the needs of *Moderate Importance,* they were all at the upper end of that score with a mean score of at least 3.89.

Thus, this sample identified that the top 15 specific need statements from the survey all have a mean score of at least 4.29 which is better than a *Need of Considerable Importance*. The top five need statements were those related to getting assistance to implement the innovation, having communication about the impact of the innovation and time to make changes as sociated with the innovation as well as working in a caring environment that enabled individuals to implement the innovation without fear of failure or criticism from supervisors or colleagues. This sample is fairly consistent with previous samples related to similar need studies in that the high-touch needs of *assistance, communication, time* and *caring* were identified as key to successful implementation of innovations (Polka, 2007; Polka, Mattai, & Perry, 2000).

Consequently, this sample identified that the high-touch needs as specified in this research study were of definite importance to them as they implemented a major education innovation. Leaders need to be cognizant of the high-touch personal, professional, and organizational needs and the importance of them to their subordinates when implementing innovations.

Table 7. Rank Order of Specific Survey Need Statements by GPS Sample.

Rank	Item #	Specific Survey Need Statement	Category	Mean
1	8	Receiving assistance in the identification of the needs, interests, learner characteristics	Assistance	4.56
3	2	Communication between individual teachers and building administrators about GPS related to teaching learning process	Communication	4.50
3	19	Time to determine specific group and individual classroom activities to teach GPS	Time	4.50
4	22	Time to determine specific assessment tools used in appraising student progress according GPS	Time	4.49
5	39	Being able to take risks implementing the GPS without fear of criticism	Caring	4.47
6	47	Communicating curriculum innovations to school community, students and parents	Comprehensive	4.39
7	15	Having adequate human and material resources for effective GPS teaching	Leadership	4.38
8	38	Having others in school assist in the implementation of GPS	Caring	4.33
9	13	Helping people within the school community comprehend GPS goals	Leadership	4.32
9	44	Knowing the faculty and administration recognize that internal and external factors impact curriculum change	Comprehensive	4.32
11	35	Having the ability to change recommended implementation strategies associated with curriculum innovations such as GPS	Creativity	4.31
11	42	Knowing that I may actively interact with my colleagues to plan GPS implementation	Cooperative	4.31
13	4	Having choices in terms of content, subject matter, centers of interest, or other strategies related to GPS	Empowerment	4.30
13	7	Having choices about instructional resources related to teaching the GPS such as: texts, supplemental materials, and instruction references including software	Empowerment	4.30
15	3	Communication between individual teachers and central office personnel about the relationship of the GPS to the teaching learning process	Communication	4.29

LEADERSHIP FOR INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS

Contemporary educational leaders must possess an acute focus that change in education ia process, not an event, and is accomplished first by individuals (Hall & Hord, 2006). Subsequently, the most effective educational changes, or those that yield the most personal and organizational satisfaction and productivity are those that occur in the *effective change zone* and reflect attention given to the five personal needs or dispositions of (a) *Challenge*, (b) *Commitment*, (c) *Control*, (d) *Creativity*, and (e) *Caring*, as well as the six professional needs

or expectations of: (a) *Communication*, (b) *Empowerment*, (c) *Assistance in Decision-making*, (d) *Leadership*, (e) *Opportunity for Professional Growth*, and (f) *Time* as well as the four key organizational planning needs of: (a) *Cooperativeness*, (b) *Comprehensiveness*, (c) *Continuousness* and (d) *Concreteness***.**

Therefore, education innovations that address contemporary cultural forces such as accountability, technology, and diversity as well as others that may emerge should be introduced to educators and implemented using a macro-perspective, but with primary focus given to their micro-contextual high-touch needs. The innovations related to people, things, and ideas will, then, be more successfully implemented and they will be more sustainable because leaders managed their respective school context in the *effective change zone*.

SUMMARY

Effective education leaders, or those aspiring to become one, need to focus on attending to those aforementioned personal, professional and organization factors to appropriately manage the ever-changing education landscape of the twenty-first century. They must continuously hone their open social system acumen and utilize both their personal change artistry and their management science skills to adapt their respective employees and organizations to their future. The sustainability of school reform efforts, according to Fullan (2005), is related to "…continuous improvement, adaptation, and collective problem solving in the face of complex challenges that keep rising" (p. 22). The imperativeness of this leadership approach is consistent with the comprehensiveness advocated by contemporary strategic planners, "If we are not to dehumanize, oversimplify and artificially make our educational world linear and restricted, it is imperative that we develop strategic plans based upon the actual realities of our organization and society, which are complex" (Kaufman, Herman, & Watters, p.109). Thus, education leaders who function in the *effective change zone* at their local context and maintain their acute perspective regarding schooling as an open social system will be most likely to implement and sustain the institutional changes necessary for the future.

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Challenging the Battleship Mentality of Education Leadership and Practice: A Metaphor Borrowed from History

Donald E. Larsen

From the board rooms of industry to the family kitchen table, the implications of our 44th President's "change" message are being turned and examined carefully. The results at the polls last November may signal a nation beset by anxiety over the state of the economy and frustrated at America's image in the world, or herald a populace ready to step beyond the parochialism of "the way we've always done things." The bow wake generated by a freshly crewed Ship of State may well test ideologies that have heretofore enjoyed a calm anchorage. The outcome of the 2008 presidential election arguably carries the message that Americans will embrace new social and political initiatives. Educators are justified in asking whether a new ideological perspective at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue will send ripples of change across the shoreline of public education.

My purpose is to use the lens of history to suggest to leaders in education how an invitation to change may rise from the crucible of challenge. Using historical metaphor, we may inquire whether the energy that has inspired recent political events may augur a redaction of education policy and practice. The metaphor that follows originates in cataclysmic events that history views as having awakened and steeled American resolve in World War II. The juxtaposition between combat tactics, on the one hand, and education strategies that might presage new hope for student success, on the other hand, is intended neither to justify nor to condemn what occurs in war, whether viewed as science, art, exigency, or folly. I posit that educators and citizens must be more prescient and dare to be more innovative than contemporary platitudes and practices about leaving no child behind might suggest.

THE LENS OF HISTORY

A few years ago, on our first trip to Hawaii, my wife and I visited Pearl Harbor. An introductory video about the events of December 7, 1941, and brief comments by a uniformed representative of the National Parks Service preceded a short boat ride to Ford Island and the U.S.S. *Arizona* memorial.

Minutes later, Jan and I stood atop the graceful, arching monument to the sailors and marines who lost their lives, most without having fired a shot, on a warm Sunday morning more than six decades ago. A few feet below the blue waters of the harbor, the rusting hulk of the *Arizona* is still visible; the base of at least one of her massive turrets breaks the surface at low tide. An oily residue still seeps from the bowels of the ship and forms iridescent patches that dance with the gentle lapping of the waves. More than 1,000 U.S. servicemen remain entombed in compartments where they perished.

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A short distance from the memorial, the U.S.S. *Missouri*, a 45,000 ton battleship commissioned in 1944, rests at anchor. Her main batteries, capable of firing 16 inch shells, are muzzled. Yet even in her current role as a museum piece, the *Missouri* begs the question: by what stretch of the imagination could such an impressive symbol of military strength be rendered irrelevant? The beginnings of an answer reside in treaties in which the U.S. shared in the aftermath of World War I (Washington Naval Treaty, 1922; London Naval Treaty, 1930; London Naval Treaty, 1936), as well as in a pervasive complacency among American military and national leaders that strategies of the past would suffice for the present and that Pearl Harbor lay beyond the likely reach of would-be aggressors approaching from the direction of the sunset. As the American giant slept near the end of 1941, the paradigms of war shifted.

NEW REALITIES; NEW STRATEGIES

By sunset on December 7, 1941, the U.S. Navy's striking arm in the Pacific lay at the bottom of Pearl Harbor. The date that President Franklin D. Roosevelt (F.D.R.) promised would live in infamy not only marked the beginning of our country's involvement in World War II but also initiated a sweeping revision of the texts by which the world's naval powers would thereafter teach the science of warfare. According to time-honored warfare theory, the battleship was the principal offensive weapon in the array of ships that a nation might bring to war. Admirals of the world's naval powers—then the U.S., England, and Japan—would have readily agreed that a navy deprived of its battlewagons would stand little chance against armor-plated ships capable of hurling projectiles the size of a Volkswagen Beetle 25 miles over the horizon.

As important and daunting as were the losses the U.S. counted after the Pearl Harbor attack were the vital things that America had *not* lost. After the Congress of the United States, at the behest of F.D.R., had declared war on the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan, American young men flocked to recruiting offices to volunteer for service. Women in unprecedented numbers joined the labor force. American factories, some of which had been producing weapons for countries that now became our comrades-at-arms, devoted a monumental and single-minded effort to manufacture the ships, aircraft, tanks, and other weaponry that would be needed in North Africa, in the Pacific, and in Europe. Families conserved, saving a host of castoffs that might be melted or remade, skimping on everything from gasoline, to tires, to silk stockings. The average citizen bought War Bonds. America had lost neither its will nor, as would be demonstrated, its ingenuity.

The Battle of the Coral Sea, in May 1942, provided an indication of the inventiveness of American military strategists. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commanding the Pacific fleet from Pearl Harbor, had no battleships to engage the might of the Japanese navy. Instead he cobbled together a task force clustered around two aircraft carriers: U.S.S. *Lexington* and U.S.S. *Yorktown.* Although the *Lexington* fell to the skill of Japanese pilots, Nimitz considered the engagement a win (Boyne, 1994; Prange, 1982). For an American public hungry for news that the U.S. had joined battle, the Battle of the Coral Sea was a welcome tonic.

The Battle of the Coral Sea foreshadowed the larger, more decisive Battle of Midway. Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku, Commander in Chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet and mastermind of the Pearl Harbor attack, gathered the largest flotilla of ships ever assembled in the western Pacific. The Japanese battle group included four aircraft carriers, *Soryu, Kaga, Akagi,* and *Hiryu*; troop transports accompanied by two battleships, a light carrier, and seven cruisers; and the Main Body, consisting of seven battleships subdivided into a group of three

and a group of four. Yamamoto's orthodox strategy called for his carrier-borne planes to soften up the resistance of U.S. Marines stationed at Midway, paving the way for troops to land on the island and secure the airfield for use by Japanese aircraft. The role of his battleships, trailing the carriers by some 300 miles, would be taken as a page from the naval warfare textbook: to engage and eliminate any U.S. warship that might have the temerity to show its stack over the horizon (Calvert, 1995; Cutler, 1994; Prange, 1982).

On June 3, 1942, the crew of an American PBY flying a patrol mission from Midway spotted the troop-carrying transport ships. The following day, pilots from the aircraft carriers *Yorktown*, *Enterprise*, and *Hornet* located the Japanese carrier task force and, at great cost in American aircrews and aircraft, destroyed *Kaga*, *Akagi*, and *Soryu*. Before sunset, *Hiryu* joined her sister ships at the bottom of the Pacific. *Yorktown* was stricken after bombs dropped by Japanese carrier-borne planes ignited fires; torpedoes from a Japanese submarine administered the coup de grâce (Astor, 2005).

In the Battle of Midway, the role of the battleship merits little more than a footnote. Without discounting the roles that sheer luck and youthful courage played in the outcome, the Battle of Midway redefined how naval warfare would thereafter be prosecuted. With the exception of a fierce battle between Japanese and American battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines in the Surigao Strait in October, 1944 (Cutler, 1994; Hornfischer, 2004; Thomas, 2006), naval warfare would hereafter focus on the aircraft carrier. The last of Japan's great battleships, the *Yamato*, at 65,000 tons the largest dreadnought ever built by any of the world's navies, sank on April 7, 1945, after aircraft from the U.S. Fifth Fleet silenced her 18-inch main batteries with bombs and pierced her 25-inch armor plating with torpedoes (Astor, 2005). The orthodoxy of accepted practice had bowed irrevocably to new strategies born in the crucible of challenge.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION PRACTICE

This past fall, a new crop of five- and six-year olds enrolled in kindergarten. If our record of the past may serve as a reliable predictor of the future, 50% of these eager, energetic, optimistic children may expect to be retained in grade at least once before they graduate or drop out of school (Thomas, 2000). Despite *No Child Left Behind*, schools in the United States "leave behind" more than 2.4 million K-12 students each year, a consequence of the students having failed to meet the measures of proficiency established for promotion to the next grade (Jimerson, 2001; Jimerson, Anderson, & Whipple, 2002).

Viewed from a distance, these statistics might be assumed to apply equally to pupils of all parts of the demographic spectrum: those from circumstances of wealth as much as those from poverty; those from two-parent homes in proportion equal to those from single-family homes; white children as often as children of color. Such an assumption would be wrong (Grissom & Shepard, 1989; Hong & Raudenbush, 2005; Kaase, 2002; Orlich & Gifford, 2007; Parker, 2001; Shepard, 1989; Whipple, 2002). For many students, the landscape of education presents an uneven playing field.

School achievement cannot reasonably be considered as an entity or manifestation separate from other factors in a student's world. Relying on several studies that seek to connect students' social capital to school achievement, Orlich and Gifford (2007) concluded that the relative affluence or poverty of a child's family is the primary predictor of student success or failure. " . . . A child's socioeconomic status may be used as a predictor of success or failure on high-stakes tests" (p. 34). Hong and Raudenbush (2005) found that a child whose parents did not emphasize the importance of school achievement was more likely to be identified

as failing to meet standards for promotion than the child whose family values placed a priority on school success. A study of the relationship between homework completion and classroom performance (Cooper, Jackson, Nye, & Lindsay, 2001) concluded that the parent's role as facilitator of—or impediment to—a homework environment correlated positively with student proficiency demonstrated in the classroom. "Policymakers are penalizing children for conditions over which these youngsters have no control" (Orlich & Gifford, p. 34).

Although it may be tempting to conclude that the war against illiteracy and inequality cannot be won, perhaps a more realistic assessment would conclude that we have been applying the wrong weapons—or insisting on using only the weapons we know. More to the point, the artillery pieces we currently aim at chronically failing schools more likely target only the *symptoms* of sub-standard achievement than the endemic—and likely more challenging—*causes* in which those symptoms are rooted (Apple, 2006; Ozmon & Craver, 1999; Senge, 2007), including poverty, fractured and dysfunctional families, school resources determined by local wealth, and gifted teachers easily lured to affluent suburbs where the most serious threat to classroom decorum may be the student who cheats from a classmate's paper.

NEW DIRECTIONS; NEW HOPE

This past summer, the University of Washington, Tacoma, welcomed 120 students in grades 7 through 12 to a workshop whose focus is mathematics, science, and leadership. Over the space of the six summers the program's organizers envision, the students enrolled will have access to 960 hours of learning time, the equivalent of almost a full year more exposure to curriculum content than would otherwise occur.

Each candidate for the *Math+Science+Leadership Program* must satisfy three criteria: (a) No one in the student's immediate family has earned a four-year degree; (b) the student belongs to a group that is underrepresented in math and science disciplines, including people who have historically been marginalized because of gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background; and (c) the student is a member of a low-income family. "Like similar programs across the nation, the aim is to create and fill a pipeline of math/science/tech-savvy students who'll eventually become physicians, scientists, engineers, leaders and problem-solvers" (Sherman, 2008, p. A8).

In addition to completing hands-on science and mathematics assignments, the students participate in community service activities, from securing "no dumping" stickers to storm drains to painting houses for low-income community residents. This approach attempts to counter the contextual challenges faced by students for whom school may well seem an alien and formidable landscape.

A pre- and post-program assessment of student achievement in 2007 showed that 77% of the students raised their math grade by at least one grade from the spring semester to the following fall. Ninety-four percent of the students reported that they have acquired an increased interest in pursuing studies in math, science, engineering, and technology fields, including medicine (Sherman, 2008).

At Explorer Middle School in eastern Washington, a school that is heavily impacted by poverty and deeply-rooted social issues, teachers, counselors, and building administrators have reached the conclusion that "the way we have always done things" is not likely to be effective in guiding high-needs students to academic success and social competence (Larsen & Akmal, 2006). Ninety percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch benefits. Gang loyalties in the community surrounding the school tug at pre-pubescent hearts. Some students will not start the school year until the end of September, after the last crop has

been harvested; a few will not return from Christmas vacation in Mexico until February. Seventh-grade scores on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in 2003 showed that fewer than 20% of the students were achieving standard in reading, writing, and math.

For the teacher in the classroom, the prospect of pushing 100% of the student population to proficiency might daunt the most sanguine idealist. However, the staff members at Explorer Middle School have adopted a purposeful plan, distinguishing between (a) the state's expectation that pedagogy and curriculum materials will align with what the state assessment will measure in the spring and (b) the need to do more for their student population than boost their test scores.

This intentionality reflects a commitment to a set of core values (Fullan, 2007; Kidder, 1995; Sergiovanni, 1992) manifested in strategies aimed at improving the achievement *and* the lives of students. Staff development has been purposefully linked to learning needs reflected in assessment data; Explorer's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) has led in shaping the curriculum and the school schedule to align with those data; and a belief that *all kids can learn* permeates the halls and classrooms.

A framed and matted copy of Explorer's state assessment scores is the first thing one sees upon entering the main office. All communication with parents, including an orientation meeting for incoming sixth graders and their parents, is conducted in English and Spanish. Students take pride in keeping their campus spotless. A "whatever it takes" attitude prevails. In 2007, more than 60% of students in Grade 7 met standard in reading and writing, although proficiency in mathematics continued to trail, with less than 40% of this grade level meeting standard.

The Chicago Public Schools will not make next Saturday's edition of *News from Lake Wobegon* on National Public Radio. A high rate of inner-city poverty combined with a track record of failure to educate children living on the margins of society would seem to justify fatalistic resignation. Chicago represents that slurry of poverty, transciency, inherited privation, and hopelessness that often portend school failure. Having established clear benchmark standards for student promotion to grades 4, 7, and 9, the Chicago Public Schools faced the looming prospect that a high percentage of students would not achieve near grade level on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Accountability to the standard would require that these students be retained in grade 3, 6, or 8 (Roderick, Engel, & Nagaoka, 2003).

Starting in the 1996–97 school year with a cadre of 40 participating schools, Chicago Schools implemented both an after-school program and a summer school curriculum designed to give at-risk students the boost necessary to squeeze over the bar represented by the ITBS (Engel & Tepper, 2001; Harrington-Lueker, 1998; Roderick & Nagaoka, 2001; Smith & Degener, 2001; Smith, Roderick, & Degener, 2001). At-risk students are defined as those needing to gain at least one year academically to be considered at grade level. The after-school program, called Lighthouse, augments the 900 hours of instruction available during the school year by adding up to four hours of instruction each week in a regimented tutorial session. Each one-hour session is followed by a snack time and another hour of structured athletic and recreational activities. At the end of the first year of the Lighthouse program, 38 of the 40 participating schools showed improvement in the proportion of their students who reached the district's standard for promotion (Engel & Tepper, 2001; Roderick & Nagaoka, 2001; Smith & Degener, 2001; Smith, Roderick, & Degener, 2001). By 2001, more than 350 schools in Chicago offered Lighthouse as a safety net for students at risk of scoring below the cut-off for promotion to the next grade.

Summer Bridge, a companion to the Lighthouse program, was initiated by Chicago Public Schools in 1997 as a last-chance opportunity for students in grades 3, 6, and 8 to attain the ITBS score required for promotion. "Between the summers of 1997 and 2000, more than 21,000 students in the third, sixth, and eighth grades attended Summer Bridge, making it one of the largest and most sustained summer school programs in the country" (Roderick, Engel, & Nagaoka, 2003, ¶ 3).

For third- and sixth-grade students, summer classes meet for three hours each morning for six weeks starting immediately after the end of the school year. Eighth-grade students meet for four hours daily for seven weeks. For the teacher, daily lesson plans follow a regimen prescribed by the district focusing on reading and mathematics. Class sizes average 16 students. At the end of the summer session, the students are again assessed using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills to determine whether gains achieved warrant their being promoted to the next grade.

The result: between 1997 and 2000, about half of the sixth- and eighth-grade participants who attended Summer Bridge were promoted; 40% of third graders met or exceeded the cut-off score for promotion. Although participants in the summer program showed learning gains for students at all achievement levels and demographic groups, third-grade students at highest risk of failure gained the most (Roderick, Engel, & Nagaoka, 2003).

A longitudinal study of students who participated in Lighthouse and Summer Bridge showed that, when compared with a control group of students who passed the third grade ITBS by a slim margin, students who were identified for Chicago's safety-net programs during the third-grade year tended to increase their skills in mathematics and reading and then maintain the gains they achieved (Roderick, Engel, & Nagaoka, 2003). Although their achievement levels do not intersect with those of students who met the third-grade ITBS threshold without the supplemental programs, over a period of several years the at-risk students who participated in one or both of the safety-net programs in third grade sustained their marginal, yet passing, performance (Roderick, Engel, & Nagaoka, 2003).

Although longitudinal data would suggest that the Chicago model was effective in remediating those students who showed the lowest skills on a norm-referenced test, a comprehensive examination of causes and effects should consider whether the format of test-preparation and subsequent testing became a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. Nevertheless, in a national climate that tends to embrace assessment without necessarily considering whether those thus scrutinized benefit from having been dealt benefits and disadvantages from the same deck of cards, the Chicago model attempts to provide to its least advantaged students a measure of targeted support in their quest to attain success in school.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

On December 8, 1941, as the Congress of the United States voted overwhelmingly to support a declaration of war, the call for universal resolve silenced a decades-long national posture of isolationism (Brands, 2008). Although Pearl Harbor thrust the United States into military actions for which the nation's armed forces were ill prepared, the inventiveness and determination of military strategists and common citizens improbably turned the tide. The ascendancy of the aircraft carrier, and the concomitant relegation of the dreadnought to a supporting role, signaled that the battleship mentality rooted in past practice had given way to new, more contextually relevant strategies.

The Commission on Excellence in Education, in its report on the state of education in the United States (1983), warned, memorably, that America's willingness to embrace medio-

cre educational attainment amounted to "an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament" (p. 5). This salvo might have been expected to have a galvanizing effect on leaders in education, spurring a close examination of practices and ideologies that lent to the mediocrity the Commission charged, and a sense of urgency to identify and remedy deficiencies. Apologists (e.g. Berliner & Biddle, 1995) rose to defend America's public schools. New battleships roiled the waters. George H. W. Bush campaigned in 1988 on the promise to support standards in the classroom through state minimum competency tests for graduation and grade promotion (Kornhaber & Orfield, 2001). William Jefferson Clinton, in his bid for the nation's highest office, also pledged to hold schools and education accountable. Soon after taking the oath of office in 1993, Clinton signed into law *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Oliva, 2005). *No Child Left Behind*, a hallmark of George W. Bush's early presidency, demonstrated that the momentum of federal influence on school reform was not yet spent (Reeves, 2004).

Even the most seasoned and knowledgeable leader can persist in pursuing textbook strategies that have been rendered obsolete by the exigencies of current events. A "battleship mentality" can impede the vision of education leaders as readily as it can limit the horizon of military strategists or federal policymakers. Whether their professional titles signify a leadership role at the building level or in a district office, in a county or regional office of education, in the state capitol, or in the U.S. Department of education, education leaders can ill afford to leave unchallenged ideologies and practices whose efficacy cannot be demonstrated in successful learning outcomes of students—all students—in the classroom.

The answer to persistently lagging student achievement, especially in those school districts that serve student populations that are poor, transcient, or otherwise disadvantaged, is not likely to be found in more testing, nor in more strident cries for accountability, and, most certainly, not in withholding from those most in need the funding that should support sound pedagogy and successful innovation. As leaders in education, we can and must speak with conviction the core values that drew us to school leadership. Yes, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop fully her or his abilities and ambitions in schools staffed by caring, skilled, committed education professionals. Yes, we can develop strategies and programs, on a scale larger than has heretofore been attempted, that reach beyond symptoms of sub-standard achievement to address causes whose genesis may lie outside the school house. Yes, we can!

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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND LEADERSHIP

Seeking to Make Schools Better for Students: High School Principals Implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCS)

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The principal is understandably at the center of action in any school, leading efforts in school management while providing leadership to promote faculty learning and student achievement: tall orders for the people who preside over this nation's high schools. Fleming (2004) stated, "In our research at five schools that successfully operate as PLCs, we found clear evidence that the administrator is key to the existence of a professional learning community" (p. 20). The leadership from building principals, which may be the force that ignites the hopes and dreams of improving student learning, is the focus of this paper.

What is the leadership that makes a difference in the establishment of professional learning communities (PLCs)? Hord (1997; 2004) described attributes, skills, knowledge or behaviors of principals who are successful in implementing PLC concepts in schools: (a) supportive and shared leadership, (b) collective creativity, (c) shared values and vision, (d) supportive conditions, and (e) shared personal practice.

We documented comments from principals who described what was happening in their schools as teachers worked to implement PLC concepts. Principals commented on what was working and what was not relative to the change efforts and revealed, from their standpoint, how they were supporting these efforts.

BACKGROUND

From 2002-2004, one of the researchers worked as a consultant for a regional service agency and was hired to assist with high school reform efforts in the county, specifically, with 24 high schools to study PLC concepts with the intention of bringing those concepts back to the schools for implementation. Faculties from 12 schools completed the training each year during that time period. Each high school was represented by a team of teacher leaders and the principal for the nine-day training, which spanned the nine-month academic year.

Training was developed from the research base on PLCs (Fullan, 2001; Hord, 1997; Kruse, Louis & Bryk, 1994; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001) and the literature base for the same (DuFour & Eaker 1998). Participants learned about collaboration as a tool to improve student learning results; using data to assess learning, and interventions for students who were not learning. Teacher leaders and administrators studied how to assess and work with the culture at the school, developing capacity within the faculty, designing teacher-generated assessments to assess student learning, and establishing a shared and professional practice to improve teaching.

Between 2003, when the first training ended, until 2007, when the participants were interviewed for the study, educators from 12 schools began the work of establishing PLC concepts. The personnel from another 12 schools worked on the PLC concepts from 2004,

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when the second training ended, until 2007, when they were interviewed. Group I refers to the first group of schools that had four years from the end of the training to work on implementing the PLC concepts. Group II refers to the second group, which had three years to implement the concepts. The core learning of the program in year one was essentially the same for year two. Researchers assessed levels of change in these schools during the time from the implementation to the interviews, as told through the perceptions of the administrators leading the efforts.

METHODS FOR STUDY

We developed a survey based on the works of Hord of the Southwest Educational Regional Laboratory (1997) to assess the five domains of PLCs. The 16 question survey was designed to ask the participants to rate the extent of implementation of the PLC principles using a numeric response to the answer according to the following categories: (4) Almost always, (3) Sometimes, (2) Seldom, and (1) Almost never.

Respondents were asked to qualify or explain the answers. Qualifying or explaining answers allowed the researchers to look for consistency of responses, noting if the numeric responses seemed to match the descriptions of what was occurring in the school. The narratives helped researchers to understand the reasoning behind the numeric responses. Hence, the questioning promoted the internal consistency of numeric and qualitative responses. The survey included ten open-ended questions. The survey was field tested with one school for content validity with no changes made for use with subsequent schools in a previous study. The instrument yielded satisfactory results and did not require alterations.

The researcher visited each of the 23 schools (two of the schools were combined to form one high school) to interview the principals. In three cases, the assistant principal answered the survey questions. In one case, a department chair, as the person in charge of PLC efforts participated in the interview. The interviews were conducted privately, with the researcher scripting the answers. Interviews lasted approximately one hour or longer as administrators told their stories of what happened as their schools tried to implement the PLC concepts. The descriptive study had quantitative and qualitative elements, with mean scores computed for each answer. Most of the administrators had attended the regional service agency PLC training as principals, or assistant principals. Principals in this study indicated that they were pursuing PLC implementation in their schools.

LIMITATATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Several factors limit the generalizability of study results. The schools were not selected at random. They were purposely chosen for the study because they were the high schools that completed the nine-day training. The study involved only suburban schools. The survey relied on perceptions of administrators, some of whom went through the training in the learning community principles, and others who had replaced principals who subsequently changed jobs. Other faculty members were not interviewed for this study. The survey captured the perceptions relatively early in the implementation process; as such, it reflected a “work in progress.” Personnel in 11 of the schools had one additional year to implement the PLC concepts since they had completed the training one year before the educators from the other 12 schools. Conclusions cannot be drawn about the final transformation in each school. Annual surveys might have added validity as to the implementation of PLCs. Student achievement data were not collected.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, we document the responses of administrators who told the stories of what was happening in their schools as teachers worked to implement PLC concepts. The researcher asked the questions about the successes and challenges of attempting broad, cultural changes in the school by using the survey generated for the study. The means generated by their responses revealed the difficulty in making the changes that are fundamental to establishing a PLC, in particular, working collaboratively and with intentionality to improve teacher practice and analyze and improve student learning.

As shown in Table 1, means of the 23 schools ranged from 3.56, in other words, between 'sometimes' to 'almost always' for the question, "The extent to which you and the teachers are in agreement about the need to collaborate" to 2.06, signifying 'seldom' for "The extent to which teachers are changing the way they teach based on their work with other teachers." The mean scores for this study were divided in three tiers, and categorized by top, middle, and low levels of implementation. The top tier responses were those questions that generated a mean score of 3.0 or higher, meaning that those concepts were between *almost always* and *sometimes (3.56–3.0).* The middle tier represented those concepts that were *between sometimes and seldom (2.94–2.50).* The bottom tier represented those concepts that had the lowest means, closest to the *seldom* scale of implementation (*2.44–2.06*).

These means revealed that principals perceived growth in establishing PLCs in their schools, with the growth due largely to the continued working in teams and establishing common assessments for courses. The areas of least implementation were areas that were foundations for PLC work, namely, the continual learning of faculty to improve instructional practice and the work on behalf of students to study and seek to improve student learning results. (see Table 1).

Table 1. PLC Rank-Ordered Mean Responses of Principals for all Schools.

	Mean	S.D.
First-Tier Responses		
Agreement with administration about need to collaborate	3.56	0.55
Teachers develop common assessments for this course	3.32	0.72
Teachers meet with teachers who teach the same course	3.26	0.56
Agreement about the use of common assessments	3.22	0.66
Teachers work together to achieve a common goal for student learning	3.02	0.71
Discuss when they want to teach various concepts in the curriculum	3.00	0.78
Second-Tier Responses		
Teachers determine the most essential outcomes for this course	2.94	0.78
Agreement about learning community	2.94	0.95
Teachers discuss instructional methods	2.68	0.83
Teachers learn something useful from dept members	2.56	1.11
Agreement failing students	2.50	0.85
Bottom-Tier Responses		
New teaching methods and reflecting on the results	2.44	0.67
Plan of assistance for the students who are not learning	2.40	0.61
Teachers examine and compare student learning results	2.36	0.81
Teachers are changing the way you teach	2.06	0.94

These data indicate that important concepts such as analyzing student learning and helping failing students are the least implemented strategies. Generally, responses that received the highest level of implementation were areas that reflected either more comfort for teachers to approach, such as meeting together and working for common goals for student learning.

Administrators indicated that teachers 'seldom' worked on instructional methods, analyzing the results and sharing those methods. The administrators said that this type of dialogue was absent in their buildings. They reported that the teachers 'seldom' developed plans of assistance as departments, for failing students, or examined student learning results as collaborative teams.

There were exceptions to the reports listed above. Two principals discussed the emphasis on working with ninth-grade students, where low functioning students were put in double-blocked classes to work with their skill levels. One of the schools had an articulated program where the teachers worked with the math teachers of these low functioning students. In this school, the students first received math instruction in their assigned class and then went to a smaller class where the math concepts were re-taught, giving them more attention to the students

Most administrators expressed their frustrations in trying to coordinate help for failing students. One said, "We're trying to have random acts of intervention and make them school-wide. We meet with counselors weekly, but it's a drop in the bucket." The area that generated the most challenge for administrators was with the teachers who commented that students should be penalized for failing, instead of offering additional help. Some comments on this topic were:

- I struggle with staff members who think that kids who struggle with learning will be motivated by earning a zero.
- If we instituted a program where there was a forced remediation for students, teachers would be in favor of it, but they wouldn't want to do it themselves.
- That's always the fight. You have the bleeding hearts who want to save everyone and the ones who won't pass students and those in the middle.
- There's still a great divide with a segment of teachers who do not ask, 'What can I do?' They say, 'You know those kids. They just don't want to learn.'
- Sometimes I think no one knows what to do for them.

Some administrators expressed frustration that students were not being helped to pass courses because there was no emphasis on analyzing student learning results. The administrators explained that they needed a software program to help them interpret the student learning. Almost all respondents indicated that the analysis of student learning occurred in small pockets in schools, if it happened at all. The administrators' response to the question about analyzing student learning results resulted in the mean score of 2.36, just above the seldom category. Some comments for the question about analyzing student learning were as follows:

- We haven't done anything with them. We have a software system, but the teachers weren't interested. We're trying to get the data put in.
- We're trying to do this on a district level where there is no trust.

- We don't use data to drive instruction. We have a high college rate so we don't feel the urgency.
- We're just getting to this area.
- The math department does more of this, but it's a cultural shift that has to happen first.
- About three years ago, I began to share the numbers of students who were failing the exams, asking teachers if they were teaching the same concepts. Some teachers were astounded with this information and others were oppositional and defiant, blaming the students.

One administrator was working extensively with student learning results. He indicated that the teachers in his school analyzed all final assessments, and the end-of-the year finals would be reviewed when the teachers returned to work in the fall. Otherwise, principals either expressed concerns as to how the analysis could be more effectively done with external support or the need to have technology to make assessment analysis a reality.

Administrators gave a variety of answers when asked to give general comments about efforts in the school to become a learning community:

- It's been sporadic. We have good starts, but when you change leaders as often as we have, you lose momentum.
- When you talk with the individual staff, they're very proud of their efforts. They feel frustrated with the recent budget cut. There's more emphasis on data now.
- It's been a positive experience. Even though teachers wanted to be on their own, they are working together.
- We're working on it. Cultural shift does not happen overnight.
- It's been a slow process. The staff thinks and is hoping that this will go away.
- Roller coaster. We were excited to start this, and then we ran into a wall with one teacher. We kept hitting another wall.

The administrators said that they could benefit from a variety of skills needed to lead the efforts in establishing PLCs. These included working with data; knowing what to do with data; working with other principals who were successfully leading the efforts; helping teachers learn how to work together; strengthening communication skills; building leadership capacity; trying to get buy-in from the staff; knowing more about what happens in a PLC; getting staffs to work on helping failing students; and dealing with conflict.

The means of the questions in the top and bottom tiers for both 1st and 2nd year of training were highly consistent. The sample size was small and no significant differences were detected. Analyses of means revealed some trends. For example, the means that were reported as being *the top tier of implementation* for people, regardless of going through the training in year one or two, were as follows:

- The extent to which teachers meet with teachers who teach the same course.
- The extent to which teachers are in agreement with the administration about the need to collaborate.
- The extent to which teachers discuss what and when they want to teach various concepts in the curriculum.
- The extent to which teachers work together to achieve a common goal for student learning.

- The extent to which teachers learn something useful from other members of their department in these meetings.

Responses that were in *the bottom tier of results* regardless of year one or two of training, indicating less implementation were as follows:

- The extent to which teachers develop a plan of assistance for the students who are not effectively learning the material.
- The extent to which teachers examine and compare student learning results. (see Table 2).

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations and Mean Differences for Year 1 and Year 2 of PLC Implementation.

	1st Year		2nd Year		Mean
	Mean	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Diff.**
Teachers meet with teachers who teach the same course	3.19	0.66	3.36	0.45	**0.17**
Discuss when to teach various concepts in the curriculum	3.13	0.43	3.14	0.55	**0.01**
Teachers determine the most essential outcomes for this course	3.08	0.67	2.68	0.84	-0.40
Teachers develop common assessments for this course	3.04	0.72	3.59	0.63	**0.55**
Teachers examine and compare student learning results	2.19	0.85	2.59	0.77	**0.40**
Plan of assistance for the students who are not learning	2.23	0.73	2.55	0.42	**0.31**
Teachers discuss instructional methods	2.67	0.58	2.91	0.70	**0.24**
Teachers learn something useful from dept members	2.92	0.60	2.78	0.51	-0.14
Teachers are changing the way you teach	2.23	0.47	2.40	0.66	**0.17**
Teachers work together for common goal for student learning	2.81	0.88	3.18	0.34	**0.37**
New teaching methods and reflecting on the results	2.19	0.72	2.77	0.47	**0.58**
Agreement about learning community	2.71	0.69	3.45	0.65	**0.75**
Agreement about the use of common assessments	3.08	0.61	3.32	0.72	**0.24**
Agreement with admins about need to collaborate	3.46	0.56	3.64	0.55	**0.17**
Agreement failing students	2.38	0.80	2.82	0.51	**0.44**

Mean differences tell part of the story. For example, means increased from .01 to .75 in all but two responses in comparing Group I and Group II; the means decreased from .14 to .40 for the same time period. The means from administrators in year one of training were similar to those who went through training the second year. When the administrators' comments were analyzed, it was evident that the resistance of teachers to change to a PLC had a drain on the emotions of all the principals, and in some cases, to a greater extent for the principals who had been at the task for an additional year.

THE CASE FOR LEADERSHIP IN PLC WORK

What about the importance of leadership relative to PLC implementation? The question is an important one because educational analysts have pointed to the fact that wave after wave of educational reform has washed upon the shores of educational institutions with little

change (Cohen, 1988; Cuban, 1993; Elmore, 1992, 2006, Joyce, 2004; Murphy, 1990). The research on PLC implementation points to the difficulty of leadership for significant change (Capers, 2004; Fullan, 2001, 2006; Hord, 2004, 1997; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Wells & Feun, 2007). The transformation to a PLC involves reculturing the school where the push for change is often met with a push back to return to the status quo. Leaders are confronted with resistance to change, a natural occurrence as people respond to challenges to change from what they know or experience (Fullan, 2001).

While educational reform efforts usually result in few changes, the emergence of PLCs as a "national movement" (MacGregor & Smith, 2005, p.2) suggests that many principals could be struggling to initiate 'one more concept,' this time a call for PLCs, to an already crowded table of initiatives that involve teachers. In essence, it is the principals who will be the ones leading the changes to PLCs, changing the culture of the schools, a change referred to as "second-order" (Fullan, 2006; Marzano, Waters and McNulty, 2005).

Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) referred to seven responsibilities that principals should engage in while leading second-order change. In rank order of effectiveness, the responsibilities are: "(1) Knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment, (2) Optimizer, (3) Intellectual stimulation, (4) Change agent, (5) Monitoring and evaluating, (6) Flexibility, and (7) Ideals/beliefs" (p.70).

Second-order changes require leadership skills that are dramatic and sensitive to the environment. Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005) summarized by saying,

> To successfully implement a second-order change, a school leader must ratchet up his idealism, energy, and enthusiasm. Additionally, the school leader must be willing to live through a period of frustration and even anger from some staff members. No doubt, this takes a great personal toll on a school leader and might explain why many promising practices in education have not led to improved student achievement and ultimately have been abandoned. (p.75)

The case for leadership is compounded by the emerging evidence that PLC initiatives are not being implemented in the schools. Fullan (2006) said, "But a lot of evidence indicates that PLCs (or any other strategy) are not making their way with any substance inside the classroom" (p.56). The word, 'intentionality' is useful here, because intentional efforts of principals will be required to transform schools into PLCs that ultimately may make a difference (Capers, 2004: Fleming, 2004; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001).

Principals must integrate the demands of being the instructional leader with the day-to-day management issues of the school. The bottom line is that principal leadership may matter a great deal when it comes to PLC implementation. Research indicates that there is not only one way to lead the changes needed for transformation to a PLC, although principals who were successful kept a sharp focus on the shared values and vision for the school with a common element on being out in front, keeping the message alive (Fleming, 2004).

Morrissey and Cowan (2004) indicated that the principal's actions were the key to the success in creating the PLC. They acknowledged that while successful implementation happened, it was not without "conflict and dissension" (p.56). The principals stayed on task, calling for and modeling continuous learning to engage and support the teachers.

Administrators already have much to juggle as they approach the magnitude of the job to implement a PLC. For example, principals must deal with the pressing issues of discipline, parental requests, standardized testing, budgets, and student and faculty needs. The

importance of the principal in making central the instructional needs of the students is part of the struggle and complexity that defines positive growth and change in the school.

Principals working to implement PLCs in their schools are the champions of the efforts. Their attention to detail is important because it means being the role model for continuous learning while asking the same of the faculty. Resistance, if redefined, does not have to be viewed as a negative and obtrusive force. Like any political situation, it can be addressed and respected for the benefit that it might bring to the change efforts.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study point to the difficulties in establishing PLCs and the slow process of changing a high school culture to work with concepts such as teacher collaboration. Time is an important variable in the transition to a PLC. The research would suggest that three to four years is not enough time to successfully implement the most important of the PLC concepts (Hord, 2004).

This study points to the slow progress that is made as faculties push past their initial awkward attempts to collaborate on issues that have typically been private in the past, such as results of student learning and alignment of the curriculum. The challenge to a school culture results in personal, emotional responses that ripple through the school. The changes that were most readily adopted in this study were the ones that were generally of most comfort to teachers. Teachers wanted to work together, but they were most interested in sharing resources and materials, rather than analyzing student achievement.

Administrators in this study said that they could benefit from understanding how to lead the efforts in establishing PLCs. The literature about working with second-order change aligns closely with PLC work, so the seven behaviors that Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005, pp.69–70) described, (listed in italics below) provided one conceptual background for approaching some of the difficulties observed in this study. The following strategies may help administrators involved with PLC implementation:

- *Being knowledgeable about the innovation—(Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment).* Principals with extensive knowledge about PLCs have an advantage of being able to articulate the vision to faculty, parents, board members, and students. The principals who are knowledgeable about PLCs are able to describe how learning communities work collaboratively to analyze and adjust instruction to improve student learning. They can describe what their school will look like when they implement PLC concepts. They can also keep reinforcing and building the shared knowledge base of teachers.
- *Being the driving force behind the innovation—(Optimizer).* The principals who are optimizers are out in front of the efforts to implement PLCs in their schools. These principals continually make references that encourage the transformation of the school. They are often the ones who provide books or articles to read, modeling continuous learning. They provide enthusiasm, encouragement, insistence, and compassion for the hard work being completed.
- *Being knowledgeable about the research and theory of the innovation (Intellectual stimulation).* The principals, who are effective in their knowledge and understanding of PLCs, relate the challenges in implementing the changes and the reasons for what and why concepts such as collaboration should be taking place.
- *Challenging the status quo and moving forward without a guarantee of success (Change agent).* The principals who are change agents continually challenge the order and the

traditions of the school by being respectful and honest. These principals are out in front of the change efforts, despite not having a clear road map for how the changes would happen. They understand that change involves ambiguity and confusion.

- *Continually monitoring the impact of the innovation (Monitoring/evaluating).* The principals who monitor and evaluate the PLC efforts in their schools are aware of the successes and the efforts that are stalled out with their staff. They sense the political terrain of the school, and they deal with the resistance, rather than allowing it to fester and grow.
- *Being directive and nondirective as the innovation warrants (Flexibility).* The principals who are flexible in their approaches to working with the staff use different approaches to lead and follow, such as the expanded capacity of department or school improvement leaders. They know when to follow and when to lead.
- *Operating with consistency to the values of the innovation (Ideals/beliefs).* The principals who follow the ideals and beliefs of PLC work are intentional in their efforts. They stay the course of the work, by acknowledging difficulties and challenges while staying true to the foundational beliefs and concepts.

Results of our study point to the need to analyze the leadership in schools, concentrating on the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are needed to effectively help transform the schools. The principal is a central figure in building capacity for shared decision making and teacher leadership, and the one who should inspire and lead the efforts to establish a PLC in a school.

Professors have an important role in the preparation of practicing and aspiring principals to serve as leaders of PLCs. Evidence from this relatively small study suggests that professors can assist principals in ways that inform each leader's practice. As Levine's (1964) quote suggested over 40 years ago, "There is nothing as practical as good theory" (p.169). The theories involving educational change and leadership can provide a practical guide for the practitioners who are working to improve schools. Much work needs to be done, and the stakes are high to make schools better for the students they serve.

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Looking for the Crossroad: Merging Data Analysis and the Classroom Through Professional Learning Communities Dialogue

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The accountability era has amassed enough information though data collection to allow for analyzing various educational situations on a daily basis, but what has become an important bottleneck in addressing educational issues is the effective use of the information derived from the data. Stringfield, Wayman, and Yakimowski (2005) noted that as we attempt to address accountability standards, we are in a "paradoxical situation by being both data rich and information poor" (p. 464), meaning that the presented data either yield little usable information for classroom application or are overwhelming to the classroom teacher. Collecting information from assessments, environments, and stakeholders, then analyzing the data have become the standards when addressing issues, especially those of an education system nature. Much like the line in a well-known movie, "Show me the data," has become the educational out-cry, but that out-cry becomes lifeless when combined with "How are these data changing classroom instruction? Or how are these data addressing improvement of instruction?"

Although an enormous amount of student data has been collected and analyzed in relation to student outcomes, much of these data never reach the classroom. Supovitz and Klein (2003) described educators' generally held beliefs regarding this situation by commenting that "Many educators report feeling that they are "flying blind" through the burgeoning amount of student data" (as cited in Wayman, & Stringfield, 2006, p. 464). Teachers must have a way to promote dialogue, organize these data, and then correlate the data with common goal-oriented strategies to improve learning.

In this article, we examine both the literature and the research surrounding data utilization and professional learning community (PLC) dialogue. Additionally, the authors strive to synthesize the research and present a preliminary framework for PLC dialogue in an attempt to promote the effective utilization of data within the classroom.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The concept of learning communities is a growing aspect of the accountability era. Heading the lists of "best practices" in education are professional learning communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hord, 1997; Schmoker, 2004a, 2004b). Mitchell and Sackney (2000) noted ". . . a learning community consists in a group of people who take an active, reflective, collaborative, learning-oriented and growth-promoting approach toward the mysteries, problems and perplexities of teaching and learning." (p. 42) While other researchers (Coburn & Russell, 2008; Protheroe, 2008) support this definition, some (DuFour, 2004b; Jessie, 2007) also suggested that other definitions often painted a broader picture of the inner-workings of

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educational professional learning communities in preparation for addressing accountability issues, and that this promotes the misuse of PLCs in which data-driven decisions are being made.

Various other researchers (Fullan, 2000; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Resnick & Hall, 1998) in addition to Hord (1997), the originator of the concept of professional learning communities, and Dufour and Eaker (1998), promoters of professional learning communities, have also turned to PLCs to encourage direct, positive improvement in the classroom. As early as 1992, Eastwood and Louis suggested that collaboration provided opportunities to break away from isolation and "foster a collaborative environment and reflective culture" (p. 215). Eastwood and Louis also indicated that a collaborative learning environment is primary to any successful school improvement plan. Schmoker (2004a, 2004b) recommended the implementation of professional learning communities and noted the inclination for teacher practices to mimic ineffective collegiality and poor discussion strategies in most other situations. Schmoker wrote that teachers should "meet regularly to share, refine, and assess the impact of lessons and strategies continuously to help increasing numbers of students learn at higher levels" (2004a, ¶ 12). Schmoker (2004b) also suggested that only in smaller, teacher-learning teams could ongoing improvement of instruction be understood and implemented. Workshops will not allow "the application of and experimentation with new assessment ideas in real classrooms, and sharing that experience with other colleagues in a team effort" (p. 430). What Schmoker and others have described is the need for focused professional dialogue within learning communities in order to promote the connection between the data and teaching and learning improvement in the classroom.

The literature concerning PLCs centered on five (Hord, 1997) or six (DuFour, 2004b) attributes in support of instructional improvement through professional learning communities. Hord held that a supportive and shared leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice made PLCs work. DuFour contended that there were six attributes at work in successful learning communities: a shared mission, vision, values; collective inquiry; collaborative teams, action orientation/ experimentation; continuous improvement; and results orientation. Commonly, PLCs provide structural and interpersonal support with sufficient structured planning time; are founded on a shared vision; have a common mission centered on student learning; are constantly changing and evolving; are inquiry-based; and "de-privatizes" teacher practice through collaborative, reflective, data-based conversations, where the participants feel valued through the constant and open participation of their peers. Teachers come to realize they are also learners who must learn to implement what they know about each of their students to personalize improvement plans though differentiated instruction thereby reaching each learner in his/her own learning environment. In order to promote this specific depth in teacher and student learning, teachers must address the dialogue revolving around data, data results, and selected strategies, which, in turn, will place teachers on a clear path to instructional improvement in the classroom.

USE OF ANALYZED DATA

Teachers' uses of data are often times stifled by technical obstacles, lack of qualitative and quantitative knowledge, data management policies and procedures, practices that yield little, if any, information from the data, unclear organizational goals, and inconsistent accountability policies (Choppin, 2002; Corcoran, Fuhrman, & Belcher, 2001; Earl & Fullan, 2003; Ingram, Louis, & Schroeder, 2004; Young, 2006). The call to "Show me the data," continues to limit the utilization of data and implementation of data-driven results to influence

teacher dialogue that could lead to successful student learning outcomes in the classroom. Current literature magnifies the connection of data analysis with action plans that lead to improvement in instruction and to professional development (Center for Educational Decision Support Systems, 2004; Learning Point Associates, 2000; National Education Association & Assessment Training Institute, 2003; Stiggins, 2004). Professional learning communities achieve this through encouraging teachers to discuss data and, align data, desired outcomes, and share classroom strategies in an effective manner (DuFour, 2004b).

From various viewpoints, including both campus and district-level, there are built-in barriers that limit organizations from successfully implementing practices that could make a difference in the classroom. Elmore (2005) wrote, "Organizations that improve do so because they create and nurture agreement on what is worth achieving" (p. 25). As noted by Good (2006) in a quantitative study analyzing the impact of a data analysis process to improve instruction using a collaborative model, in order that collective expectations, such as commitment and values, shape the work of individuals within the organization. Too often support for new programs has little or no impact on improved classroom practices (Fullan, 2001, 2006) due to these barriers.

PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE FRAMEWORK

Teacher collaboration practices relating to PLCs could reach outside these barriers and far beyond just gathering and presenting data when it comes to promoting student achievement and student learning. Schmoker (2004a) along with others (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Hightower, Husbands, LaFors, Young, & Christopher, 2003; Elmore, 2000; Fullan, 1998; McLaughlin & Mitra, 2003; Stiggins, 2004) have indicated that a structure to frame the goals of the collaboration is not only necessary but must be supported by leadership within the educational community. Without further structure for teams within the professional learning community, Fullan (2005) suggested that the practice would only last as long as those who have endorsed sustainability remain on that campus. Fullan (2005) insisted that PLCs, if not implemented and supported as a district initiative, will provide only pockets of strong usage and cannot progress beyond 20% in popularity in any district. A framework or model to initiate professional dialogue within the PLCs could provide a structure to effectively discuss data, data results, and make further connections with classroom strategies when addressing instructional improvement.

IMPLICATIONS

Despite years of studies reflecting the success of the professional learning community process, finding schools or campuses that have successfully implemented sustainable PLCs are rare. Moreover, finding successful practicing PLCs district-wide is even rarer. This failure is indicative of a lack of organizational framework to support PLCs and the corresponding productive dialogue that may develop within these communities.

Hord (1997, 2004) reviewed literature regarding PLCs and found there were significant benefits for both teachers and students within PLC schools. Findings indicated that PLC schools often provide an environment for less teacher isolation; more dedication and energy given to the mission and goals of the campus; increased commitment to change; higher trust between colleagues; and professional development that link individual needs with the school's collective mission. According to Strahan (2003), Supovitz and Christman (2003), and Hughes and Kritsonis (2007), PLC campuses may indirectly benefit students by reducing the dropout

rates, and absenteeism; and promote gains in reading, math, science, and history compared to non-PLC campuses. Furthermore, achievement gaps between students from diverse backgrounds in PLC schools are often minimized.

Sustainability has become the major detractor for PLCs. Fullan's (2001) and Barber and Fullan's (2005) thorough research into and discussion of the implementation of PLCs reinforced the notion that resources and energy must go into putting vertical structures in place at the state, district, and campus level to build in accountability in order to reach sustainability. As Fullan (2001) stated, "General support or endorsement of a new program by itself has very little influence on change in practice (e.g. verbal support without implementation follow-through)" (p. 81). Districts cannot mandate the implementation and sustainability of PLCs without having a structure of accountability that ensures successful implementation in the classroom. Campuses are reluctant to embrace practices that work due to internal and external factors such as a lack of internal accountability (Elmore, 2005). Structuring a framework for professional learning community dialogue and supporting that dialogue maybe a major step toward sustainability of PLCs and accountability efforts.

CONCLUSION

Policies and school organizational behaviors often dictate the use of data. Under the institutionalized logic, analyzing data contributes to superior decision-making. Schools and districts may display outward signs that conform to such logic—for example, formulating annual plans based on disaggregated test scores, without the underlying sustainability that reaches and improves instruction in the classroom. It is appropriate that we plot a fresh course as we approach the intersection of data collection and instructional improvement by merging data analysis, PLCs, professional dialogue, and the classroom in a manner that supports a high level of both student and teacher successes in the classroom.

The cycle of examining the data and having dialogue concerning data in connection with classroom strategies, in an effort to improve instruction, provides an opportunity to explore areas in need of improvement. Multiple studies on teacher quality (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond et al., 2003) correlated increased levels of student achievement with educators who took part in continual job-embedded professional development based on content-specific pedagogy and data-driven decisions and who then reflected on classroom strategies associated with that learning. For example, improvement could begin with enriched lesson plans based on successful strategies shared during the PLC team meeting. Strategies are selected because they were successful in other classrooms and indicated repetition through some type of formal assessment linked to current best practices. Students should also be part of the process, possibly through use of rubrics and data portfolios to keep track of their success, under the guidance of the classroom teacher. The instructional plan may then be carried out in the classroom and monitored by a teacher leader or coach who would then immediately initiate a team debrief of the lesson. Teacher team discussions or dialogue could then revolve around the student or students, these data, the strategy, and current best practices. The classroom improvement structure would provide a basis for ongoing professional dialogue. Caution must be exercised as professional learning community dialogue is initiated and sustained. Schmoker (2004a) noted,

> Mere collegiality won't cut it. Even discussions about curricular issues or popular strategies can feel good but go nowhere. The right image to embrace is of a group of teachers who meet regularly to share, refine, and assess the impact of lessons

> and strategies continuously to help increasing numbers of students learn at higher levels. (¶ 12)

Educational best practices, trends in current research and theory, and the resulting classroom improvements becomes each team member's responsibility to understand and share, helping to focus professional dialogue and *authentic* instruction. "Authentic instruction is built upon the common foundation of construction of knowledge, disciplined inquiry, and value beyond school" (Stewart & Brendefur, 2005, p. 6). Evaluating and assessing the improved instruction are the responsibility of both the student and the teacher. Student work, brought to the next PLC team meeting with a "rigor rubric" to help analyze the lesson after implementation of the selected strategy, has shown to be a successful practice (Stewart & Brendefur, 2005) that leads to an increase in understanding how *authentic* the students found the lesson. Over time, the teams of teachers learn how to increase rigor and relevancy by using both the students' work as their "learning tools," and the data at hand to focus professional dialogue (Stewart & Brendefur). Therefore, improvement is not static. Instead, instructional improvement is an evolving cycle and structured process, where each step is carefully and continually carried out, thus teacher and student learning ultimately influence achievement.

A structure for PLC dialogue helps teachers become effective analysts of the data and of the overall classroom improvement process. The purpose of this structured dialogue is to eliminate the mundane dialogue that often leads to discussion of other school-related issues such as discipline, parent conferences, and upcoming assemblies and field trips. Although, those conversations are important, they should be reserved for a separate meeting. Having structured PLC dialogue center on data-based decisions concerning data results and a plan of action for redirecting instruction requires a special, focused agenda. This dialogue agenda could form the crossroads between the actual implementation of strategies and best practices in the classroom, the available data, and instructional improvement. PLC dialogue could encompass the intersection of all we know concerning classroom improvement and student learning, creating a global look at each students' learning in order to tailor and improve instruction in the classroom.

Foundational development of a PLC dialogue framework must be owned by the community that will be directly involved in the improvement process. The following are suggested community discussion questions, which may lead to steps for providing a structured framework for professional dialogue within the learning community.

1. Are the summative/formative student data available?
2. How do we translate the data?
3. What classroom strategies will be used to address the data findings? How were the strategies selected?
4. Is there a need for professional development?
5. When will the strategies be implemented? (During the school day? tutorials? Saturday school?) And to whom? (Who needs the classroom strategies?)
6. Do the strategies need to be tried out before implementation? Are there first year/struggling teachers who need to see the strategy demonstrated first?
7. What time period will be needed to cover the plan?
8. When will the debriefing take place? Over what data?
9. How will we measure the success or failure of the implementation? How will we involve the students in measuring the implementation?
10. What/who are the outside resources/specialists needed?

The continual use of a PLC dialogue framework, using these suggested questions as foundation for data-decision making practices, could lead to positive achievement outcomes, which are mandated and could provide campus administrators the opportunity not only to oversee, but also to take part in the PLC teacher team meeting dialogue. These practices, in turn, not only "Show teachers the data," but also provide them with a clear direction in data-use strategies in the classroom, thus providing the desired crossroad between data analysis and student academic improvement connected to the classroom.

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We are True Witnesses on the Side of Those Who are Oppressed: People of Color and Co-Created Leadership

Christa Boske

As educators continue to work to prepare children for the workforce of the 21st century, the way in which schools are led continues to be of interest to scholars. Undeniably, educators are in a position to influence the way in which children learn and interact with society. The nation is facing a need for highly skilled problem-solvers who have a wealth of knowledge (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 2003). As such, scholars have a vested interest in understanding the impact of leadership practices on schools (Bushe, 2001; Greenleaf, 1977), the way in which power is distributed (Spillane, 2006), developing quality relationships (Wilkinson, 2005). Furthermore, there is a substantial need for examination of how leadership decision-making can and does benefit the school community (Stanfield, 2000).

The notion that education can benefit a school community, understanding the influence of social, economic, political, and cultural contexts, is not a new idea. Scholars have written about the intimate connection between these contexts. Paulo Friere used education as a means of changing the conditions for those who were oppressed, noting that "educational change must be accompanied by significant transformations in the social and political structure in which education takes place" (McLaren, 2000, p. 148). Che Guevara's philosophy focused on practices that liberate people to educate themselves (Harkavy, Donovan, & Zlotkowski, 2000; McLaren, 2000). Other theoretical frameworks emphasize the need for educators to deepen the democratic nature of their work to promote ethical and political choices that deconstruct context-specific boundaries of power and influence (Henderson, 1989; Henderson & Kesson, 2004). Understanding the possibilities and influence of power encouragages an examination of what it means to lead *with others* rather than *to lead others*. A central tenet of co-created leadership is continuing to integrate the best possible solutions with the leader and school leadership (Wasonga & Murphy, 2006).

Co-created leadership engages the entire organization to actively participate toward its full potential (Wasonga & Murphy, 2006). The consequence of diluting the creation of a collective intelligence influences organizational competence, which is the sum of knowledge and experiences that leads to increased learning (Sergiovanni, 1996). Co-created leadership is measured by what is generated by the cooperation of others, spelling out mutual obligations for the purpose of creating an institutionalized collaborative culture (Bredeson, 2004; Sergiovanni, 2004). Unlike co-created leadership, distributed leadership is best understood as ''practice distributed over leaders, followers and their situation and incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals'' (Spillane et al., 2001, p. 20). Distributed leadership implies social context and inter-relationships play an integral part of the leadership activity (Spillane, 2006a; 2006b). Such activity depends on the way in which leadership is distributed, how it is distributed, and for what purpose.

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Although co-created leadership generates the cooperation of organizational members, to what extent does the conceptual model of co-created leadership deconstruct the impact of oppressive practices in creating spaces to *work with others*? Consideration should be given to the impact of multiracial structures in creating spaces for leading as a collective to make social changes (see Dantley & Tillman, 2006). Little attention has been given to the ways in which school leaders, especially those who live on the margins (due to race, class, sexual identity, language, immigration status, and ability) frame issues of co-created leadership within increasingly diverse school communities (see Watkins, 2005). Although historically disenfranchised groups experience inequities due to race, ethnicity, class, language, religion, ability, sexual identity, and immigration status, for the purpose of this study, I focused specifically on issues of race, class, and language. I investigated how aspiring school leaders, who self-identified as members of marginalized populations (race, class, language), understood the possibilities of creating spaces for co-created leadership in public schools. Leadership practice, in this case, was examined using the pretext of Nonoka and Takauch's (1995) five phase model. This model explores how members within an institution work together to co-create knowledge and expand upon that knowledge for the betterment of the organization.

I begin this chapter with a brief review of the literature regarding the social construction of race and an introduction to the theoretical framework. Next, the methodology and findings are discussed. I conclude with recommendations to consider when emphasizing co-created leadership as a vehicle to lead for social justice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It might seem that in the 21st century, Americans would no longer consider racism, sexism, and classism as important societal issues. However, there is considerable evidence suggesting American society continues to discriminate against oppressed populations (National Council on Disability, Association of University Centers on Disabilities, and the National Center for Victims of Crime, 2007). Oppressive practices perpetuate inequality through stratification based on race, gender, sexuality, and disability, especially in schools (Bochenek & Brown, 2001; Epstein, 2006; Frattura & Capper, 2007; Johnson, 2005; Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Sleeter & Grant, 2008). The perpetuation of unjust school practices is justified through racial hierarchies (Bell, 1992; Darling-Hammond & Bradford, 2005). These racial hierarchies determine which group possesses innate abilities and intellect (Gossett, 1997; Hubbard, 1994; Marks, 1995; Rothenburg, 2001; Stanton, 1960). Contemporary scientists, including anthropologists, reject these biological assumptions between groups of people, identifying fossil DNA and humans as one variable species originating in Africa (Chapnick Mukhopadhyay, Moses, & Henze, 2007). Some 21st century anthropologists have concluded that race is socially constructed (Lamphere, 2003; Moses, 2008). The social construction of race creates social, political, and economic inequities between people, specifically European immigrant groups and historical racial minorities (Takaki, 1993). These lived inequities influence the health, residency, educational experiences, employment, life experiences, and resources afforded to People of Color (Black, Latino/a, Native American, Asian, and Pacific Islander) in the United States (Darder, Torres, & Gutiérrez, 1997; National Center for Health Statistics, 2008; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Purnell, Idsardi, & Baugh, 1999; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008; U.S. Department of Justice, 2007). In the field of education, the way in school communities understand human oppression impacts the way in which educators collaborate and advocate for historically marginalized communities (Sleeter & Grant, 2009). What White

school leaders must reconsider is what White people stand for and act upon for oppressed people (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2003). Leaders of Color (Black, Native American, Asian, and Latino/a) have the daunting task of creating spaces address these conceptualized realities and conditional forces educators may not be aware (Foster, 1986; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Sleeter & Grant, 2009).

School leaders alone cannot transform the lives of historically disenfranchised groups without considering the complexities associated with the nature and causes of oppression (Marshall & Oliva, 2006; Pounder, Reitzug, & Young, 2002; Riehl, 2000). Consideration must be given to deepening understanding of power in creating systemic equity, which is essential to the concept of co-created leadership. For the purpose of this discussion, creating systemic equity is the way in which individuals collaborate to ensure that every learner's opportunities are enhanced (Scott, 2001). Committing to this urgent need begins with a vision for renewal and the belief that oppression undermines the quality of human life (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). The concept of power is vitally important to discussions of social justice and creating spaces for co-created leadership.

Follet (1927) suggested power is the self-developing capacity to evolve rather than to devolve. As a result, power and responsibility are dispersed within the organization (Heenan & Bennis, 1999). Maxcy (1995) furthered the consideration of power identifying three democratic ideals fundamental to fostering co-created leadership: (a) the belief in the worth and dignity of individuals; (b) the reverence of for freedom, intellect, and inquiry; and (c) the concerted effort to choose to work collaboratively. In addition to upholding democratic ideals, the way in which power is dispersed should also be considered.

Engaging in the process of dispersing power and responsibility is critical to facilitating co-created leadership. Nonoka and Takeuch (1995) provided a five-phase process that supports the notion of co-creating leadership. Their model suggests organizational goals are rooted in social exchanges between and among its members. In order for organizational goals to be met, this model assumes that the organization embraces democratic ideals, quality relationships, and opportunities to share power. Creating knowledge is a shared process. Conceptualizing co-created leadership encapsulates this shared process by engaging the full use of the organization's potential through interaction and socialization (Nonoka & Takeuchi, 1995). In co-created leadership, the sum of quality perspectives from the co-ordination of interacting parts and perspectives is the foundation of leadership practice (Follet, 1927). Devising good organizations, or in this case, good schools, requires organizing the work of adults so that they are more likely to work collaboratively in a coherent open environment. Bryke and Schneider (2002) referred to the nature of such work as a social exchange, which shapes and conditions the organization's capacity to improve. Gronski and Pigg (2000) defined collaboration as "an interactive process among individuals and organizations with diverse expertise and resources, joining together to devise and execute plans for common goals as well as to generate solutions for complex problems" (p. 783). In order to create conditions in which the organization develops a capacity for self, I pulled from Dewey's work (2001, 1987, 1938) as well as establishing quality relations (Wilkinson, 2005) and power capacity (Follett, 1925; 1926).

In addition to co-created leadership involving a deep democracy, quality relations, and sharing power and responsibilities, co-created leadership is anchored in the assumption that an organization's goals are attained through social exchange. Nonoka and Takeuchi (1995) created a co-leadership model that expands upon a process that involves a five-phase process of co-creating. These phases include the following: (a) Sharing knowledge; (b) creating concepts; (c) justifying concepts; (d) building an archetype; and (e) cross-leveling knowledge/leadership. In the five-phase model Nonoka and Takeuchi present a blueprint for co-

creating leadership. In my study, aspiring principals examined the implications of this model in co-creating leadership in schools. The practice of creating democratic spaces, establishing quality relationships, dispersing power and responsibility, and evolving power to serve the organization as a whole are investigated in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The overarching research question for the study was, "In what ways do aspiring school leaders understand co-created leadership in schools?" The participants reviewed Nonoka and Takeuchi's (1995) tenets of co-created leadership during an administrative internship, curriculum, or school-community relations course. All of the participants completed courses with me as their instructor.

In the tradition of narrative inquiry, the human experience method approach allowed me as the researcher to develop interpersonal relationships within the context of the study (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). Narrative inquiry is based on the view that educator knowledge is founded upon social and personal contexts (Bruner, 1987; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The notion of personal knowledge reflects the interactions of prior knowledge and the contextual nature in which this knowledge has been acquired (Clandinin, 1992). The use of narrative provided opportunities to uncover analytic themes and field note excerpts throughout the study (Creswell, 1998). Using narrative inquiry tradition provided a systematic, replicable technique for the study (Berelson, 1952; Weber, 1990). Filtering large volumes of data in a systematic fashion was a useful technique for discovery and in-depth analysis of these aspiring principals. This in-depth analysis led to examining trends and patterns within the collected data from the participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). More specifically, I employed story constellations, which sought to make visible the complexities that shaped the participants' experiences (Craig, 2007).

Sample

A purposive sample was used for this study because the 26 participants identified as Students of Color (Black, Asian, Native American, or Latino/a) (Patton, 1990). All of the participants were enrolled or graduated from a southern university administrative preparation program. Of the 26 participants, eight students were Latino/a, eleven students were Black, and six students were Asian. Eighteen students were female and eight students were male. Eighteen students were between 30–35 years of age, five students were between 35–40 years old, and three students were between 40–45 years of age. All of the aspiring school leaders held school leadership positions at the time of the study (e.g. department chairs, coordinators, directors, team leaders, deans, assistant principals, and principals). Fifteen students were employed in suburban school districts outside a major metropolitan area and eleven students were employed in inner-city schools.

Data Collection

Data were collected from written narrative responses and interview questions aligned with Nonoka and Takeuchi's (1995) tenets of co-created leadership. Participants responded to questions regarding the following: (a) sharing knowledge; (b) creating concepts; (c) justifying concepts; (d) building an archetype; and (e) cross-leveling knowledge/leadership. Participants conceptualized co-created leadership as a conceptual model for understanding the construc-

tion of power within their schools. First, participants were asked to provide anonymous written responses to the following questions for each tenet of co-created leadership:

1. How do you define collaboration?
2. Describe a positive experience in making decisions with school community members.
3. Describe a negative experience in making decisions with school community members.
4. How would you describe co-created leadership?
5. What is necessary to support the facilitation of co-created leadership?

Participants also responded to reflective prompts during individual interviews. The following questions were used as a guide for facilitating each one hour interview on the participant's school campus. The following interview questions were aligned with Nonoka and Takeuchi's tenets for co-created leadership:

1. Define collaboration
2. Think back to an experience with school leadership that has made a strong impression on you, either positive or negative
3. How do we make decisions that are best for children?
4. What role do mandates play in fostering how decisions are made?
5. What does it mean that other people want to have a voice in decision-making?
6. Think back to an experience you had with doing what is best for students or school accountability or other people having a voice in decision-making that was outstanding
7. Think back to an experience you had with doing what is best for students or school accountability or other people having a voice in decision-making that was disappointing
8. Out of all of these issues, which one is the most important to you?

The participants' verbal and written responses were compared to Nonoka and Takeuchi's tenets of co-created leadership.

MODES OF ANALYSIS

I analyzed interviews utilizing a cross-case analysis (Patton, 1990) of 26 interviews, using the constant comparison method to group answers to common questions, analyzing different perspectives on central issues. Data were analyzed using a constant comparative method (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) to compare incidents applicable to each category. Each incident or section of the data from transcripts, field notes, and observations with other sections of the data was compared to the same or different data set (Merriam, 1998). All interactions were transcribed and coded (Miles & Huberman, 1984). I unitized the data, which refers to finding meaning in the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used open coding in addition to axial coding, allowing me to condense categories into fewer and fewer themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Readers assisted in confirming the coding system in order to maintain authenticity and credibility.

Participants were provided opportunities to review transcripts of previous conversations to ensure viability and accuracy. The participants were given pseudonyms to protect their anonymity.

Limitations in the study must be noted. I sampled one southern university's school leadership preparation program, which limits the generalization to other university preparation

programs. Because campus climate is local, researchers might consider conducting studies to confirm or disconfirm the findings of this and other studies.

FINDINGS

I focused on comparing participants' thoughts and feelings throughout the inquiry, searching for meaning among the words and actions that addressed how they understood co-created leadership in schools. A call for deep democracy and support for co-created leadership with an emphasis in leading for social justice emerged as two major themes, illustrating an integrated story line between all of the participants. The focus of the story line centered on the impact of race and how race influenced their understanding and competencies to facilitate co-created leadership in schools.

The Call for Deep Democracy

Participants articulated an immediate need for the nation's educational system to embrace the ideals of a deep democracy. Participants noted deep democracy as "upholding democratic ideals that address the power gaps within schools and the larger society" and "a call for democratic action." Participants noted how federal mandates, such as No Child Left Behind, perpetuated oppressive school practices. The perpetuation of oppressive school practices influenced the participants' abilities to create spaces in which school members actively engaged in equity-oriented practices and believed all children had the right to experience the nation's democratic ideals. Margaret, a Latina school leader, noted,

> Not everyone thinks our children are important. As a leader, co-created leadership ideals are something to aspire to, but I am not sure all of the teachers feel we can or should move forward together. The White teachers just look at their positions as jobs in which they clock in and clock out. We have universal education in this country, but it's not universal in what we can offer each of our children. We need to think about how our children, who don't look like them, can be seen as valuable. Then, we can make co-created leadership a reality.

Participants noted the importance of inviting school leaders and community stake holders to address the impact of power gaps within schools. They also emphasized the need to assess the quality of intercultural relations between and among teachers, students, school leaders, parents, staff, and community members. Participants noted the smaller the power gaps between and among these members, the greater sense of cohesion and deep democracy practice.

Their sense of urgency for deep democracy demonstrates the significance of engaging with school community members. Participants expressed a need for belongingness and group identification among its membership. These feelings of identification and belongingness were critical to the participants, reflecting the need for interdependence between its members and the organization itself. Michael, a Black aspiring principal, shared his beliefs regarding the importance of this interdependence.

> I have a responsibility to create a climate that makes everyone feel as though they are worthy. We have to make sure that our goals not only reflect "academics", but go much deeper, a deeper level into finding out what makes people feel

> as though they are part of something larger than themselves. If I can't do this, create a sense of belonging, I am afraid that voices won't be heard. As a principal, I have to ensure that there is a group of people working together for the betterment of our school. Doing that means walking my talk and making sure we really are choosing to be collaborative and making a concerted effort to build real relationships within our school. We can't just sit back and take for granted this idea of a democracy. We have to make it happen. It doesn't happen enough in our schools.

The participants emphasized the need for school leaders to consider *what it takes* to support the call for a deep democracy. This call for a deep democracy created a foundation for the participants in which to foster collaboration among school community members. Participants emphasized the need for the conceptual model to reconsider the way in which democratic ideals are conceived and how power is constructed. Participants specifically focused on understanding and addressing the the social construction of race. They perceived a deepened understanding of the abuses of power in social, economic, and political structures as critical steps to supporting co-created leadership in schools. Requesting school community members to engage in deeper understanding and commitment to advocate for social change are necessary to uphold democratic ideals for a just society (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Lugg & Shoho, 2006).

Participants shared experiences in deepening the democratic ideals of co-created leadership. Michelle, a curriculum coordinator, identified challenges she faced as a Black woman addressing a predominantly White faculty.

> I found that although I was open and willing to share what I learned along the way, not everyone was feeling as enthusiastic as I was about sharing my experiences and what I learned. White teachers looked at me as though I was just standing on soap box professing what it's like to be Black in America. I found it difficult to get issues on the table. I put myself right out there. I showed them I was willing to be vulnerable. I shared my power. I didn't hold onto it. It took some time before some people to trust I was really trying to facilitate discussions to share our view points of view.

Michelle's efforts illustrate the first step to sharing within the organization, which is the first phase of co-created leadership according to Nonoka and Takeuchi (1995). In order to continue facilitating a process in which all school community members were honored, several participants noted how critical the words *all community members* are to the co-created leadership process. Participants noted *feeling valued* was critical in demonstrating their ability to uphold the ideals of co-created leadership. Jesse, a Black high school dean, noted,

> I never ruffled any feathers. If I did that, I thought I was dead in the water. I needed to help people trust me and feel comfortable interacting with me. I was a Black man. Maybe the first Black man they ever knew. They watched every move. I spent so much time and energy trying to prove to them I wasn't the stereotype in their heads. Here I am trying to bring our kids up, and there they are trying to keep them down. It's hard when you have colleagues who don't value the same thing. I had to work hard to create the feeling that it was okay to share your thoughts openly.

The participants' ability to facilitate a process of integrating institutional and personal knowledge, as well as a myriad of viewpoints as a collective perspective was the foundation for promoting co-created leadership. Participants emphasized the process of co-created leadership "moved people away from individual ideas" and fostered social collectives. Julie, a Black high school department chair, noted,

> It's hard to help people understand that we can move in a new direction if we take the risk to share what we know. Too often, especially in high school, we are so departmentalized and don't involve other departments in our learning. Getting people to share and really sit down and decipher how we can work together to create something new is hard work. People think it's easy just to sit around a table and make decisions. It is easy to do that if you were simply making decisions, but co-creating something means to me that we all have a voice. We all have something to say. I work with people who seem to think they have little or nothing to say, but I work at it and help them express what they know. We are all in this together and we can really learn from each other. Creating these spaces is hard work. It doesn't happen in other departments. I'm not convinced it's happening in ours, but I know we are trying.

Participants emphasized the need to foster social exchanges that uphold democratic ideals. These social exchanges led to new discoveries, which were dependent on the quality of relationships between and among its members. These relationships were also dependent on the school members' deep respect for freedom.

Participants also noted positions of power influenced their ability to participate in the co-created leadership process. Adam, a Black middle school grade level chair, noted,

> I feel like I am trapped. I am not in a position to make institutional changes. It's as though I am in my little world. I do my best to create opportunities to share with each other, but I can't control what happens outside of our grade level. I feel like I hit a ceiling. They give promotions to the guys who go and play golf with the other administrators. I'm not White and I don't have any interest in playing golf. So, you have this idea of bringing people together, but not everyone is invited to the table in the first place.

Participants shared similar experiences. Several noted how often they considered whether or not their ideas were worth pursuing. Many noted how often the ideas shared by White colleagues were perceived as "intellectual contributions" where as their ideas were often questioned, requesting additional data to support proposed ideas. Engaging in dialogue, reflection, and analysis is a critical to the co-created leadership process. Yet the hierarchies of race seem to impact the participants' ability and at times, willingness, to address these oppressive school practices. Henrietta, a Latina assistant principal, noted how she addressed such oppressive practices in an effort to facilitate co-created leadership.

> Although I disagree with the political nature of No Child Left Behind, without this federal mandate, my teachers would not think about focusing their efforts on serving our children more effectively. To them, the children are nothing but a paycheck. I grew up in this area. I know what goes on here. Things have changed. If we weren't teaching the poor kids or the kids on the other side of the

> tracks per se, I'm not convinced that we would be working together for the purpose of making sure these kids learned too. It's sad to say, but everyone wasn't interested in helping those kids. What we worked on didn't always help all children, just the chosen few, if you know what I mean. Now I can justify why we need to work together on new ways of reaching kids and people know they can use NCLB to make a case. I don't think that really happened before.

Participants noted the "idea of co-created leadership is ideal," but living the reality as a Person of Color in a "White world is something entirely different." Participants noted exploring and choosing to work collaboratively aligns with democratic ideals, but engaging in a collaborative process in which members advocate for democratic ideals is not a common experience in schools.

Although one participant perceived federal mandates as a means for justifying co-created leadership, others claimed federal, state, and local mandates hindered their co-created leadership process. Maxine, a Black elementary grade level leader, explained,

> I find all of these mandates and restrictions demoralizing to the profession because we are told what to do and how to do it. We are attempting to create classrooms and schools where we can give power away. I agonize over this because we are restricted by mandates to really do what we feel is in the best interest of our children. How do you co-create leadership knowing that the outside forces don't support this and don't value the knowledge you've created? We no longer have opportunities to make decisions collaboratively when the government decides what we can teach and what it means for schools to be identified as successful.

Participants noted being active in facilitating the co-created leadership process provided a framework for supporting school member decision-making. Participants emphasized the need for school leaders to foster discussions and questions to support school members in determining the consequences of their decisions.

Participants shared experiences of moving from making decisions to acting on the decisions made as an organization. Ty, an assistant dean at a middle school, shared his strategy to "move the organization forward." Ty referred to his strategy as a "pilot study" on his campus, which referred at as building an archetype in co-created leadership. Ty discussed how he worked with school members to create an urgency to build meaningful relationships between diverse racial groups within the school. Ty noted how small collective wins, such as the experience below, resulted in transforming the culture, climate, and social interactions within his school community. Marcus, a multiracial male who identifies himself as Black, discussed how co-creating leadership inspired new curricula and school practices at the middle school.

> I knew coming in I was hired because I'm Black. The school was full of White-people, but the students weren't White. It was obvious to me they needed someone to bring people together. I was asked to do talk with Black parents and kids because I knew how to communicate Black people. I turned this racist situation into an opportunity for us to come together. I went to over 217 students' homes to visit with their families. I learned what people really wanted. They were afraid of each other. I brought people together to think of ways to encourage kids to

> come to school, not kick them out…all of our ideas were pilots…You should see the difference a year makes. I would never recognize this school.

Participants noted translating democratic ideals into action was the most rewarding experience of facilitating co-created leadership. Participants emphasized the need for school leaders to revisit to what extent democratic ideals were upheld throughout the process, not simply initiating actions.

Participants identified revisiting the co-created leadership process as a means to assess to what extent group members considered the influence of power I social, economic, and political structures. Participants noted this phase of co-created leadership focused on justifying why their concerted efforts were worth pursuing as a group. Intercultural relations within organizations seemed to influence the organization's ability to carry out co-created leadership practices. Jim, a Black team leader, discussed his experiences.

> I knew being put in the back of the school in trailer with the "bad" kids wasn't right. All these teachers kept sending me these kids who would sit there and had nothing to do. I worked with everyone in the school. I documented every interaction and made sure we stuck with our goal to keep children out of that trailer. We had to change… and encourage one another to do the right thing.

Participants noted this phase of co-created leadership depended on the leader's ability "to bring people together with a common goal in mind." Participants emphasized the facilitation of co-created leadership is a process, "not simply attained because we made a goal." The efforts made toward co-leadership illuminate the premise of leading for human advocacy. Ling, an Asian team leader, noted,

> You have to internalize what it means to change the conditions in which we live. You want to make sure all of you have done is part of who you are now. That's how you know you've made it.

Co-created leadership presented a guideline for fostering democratic ideals in schools. The challenges posed by participants included how schools generate and reproduce power inequities, which interfere with the co-created leadership process.

The Need to Support Co-Created Leadership

Participants utilized limited campus resources to construct opportunities for co-created leadership. The benefits of promoting this concept far exceeded their initial expectations. Participants noted higher quality relationships within the organization due to cross-leveling communication, validating perspectives, and honoring the presence historically disenfranchised people as well as all organizational members. Participants noted co-created leadership provided opportunities for organizational problem-solving as well as "making sacrifices for the good of children." Participants linked their work as school leaders and co-created leadership in an effort to create democratic spaces. At times, such spaces afforded organizational members opportunities to work for the common good. Other times, such spaces encouraged problem-solving, justifying decisions, and revisiting solutions to promote deeper understanding. Participants noted some organizational members seemed more willing to share their understanding if they noted their efforts as respected, acknowledged, and honored. For example,

participants shared experiences of teachers "giving up" their lunch time to revisit an organizational concern. As organizational members continued to internalize and routinely practice democratic ideals, some school practices changed, leading to a greater emphasis on recognizing the influence of power in social, economic, and political structures. Martha, an Asian woman, noted,

> We were a low-performing school for years. No one ever questioned whether or not certain practices worked with our children. The idea of sharing decision-making was great, but it wasn't real. Not at first. It took us three years before we established trust. Several teachers left the school because they were threatened by the process. You really have to believe in this model and you most certain need the support of the people of above while you go through rocky times. After our third year, we were off AYP for the first time.

Other participants noted oppressive practices continued to generate or reproduce inequities within the school. These participants noted the movement for co-created leadership was perceived as threatening to their established power structures. These power structures seemed based on the social construction of race in which colleagues identified the needs of People of Color as insignificant or problematic. Creating deep democratic spaces for members to engage in co-creating leadership is imperative to the evolvement of power. Matt, a Latino male, shared how he understood his live reality as a Person of Color.

> No matter how hard you try to bring people together, it can't be done. Race matters. People want someone or something to blame. This type of leadership is threatening.

Participants demonstrate their efforts and insights to deconstructing the inequities of power within schools through co-created leadership. Their resiliency and commitment to the philosophical underpinnings of establishing a deep democracy are evident throughout the lived experiences shared in this study. These lived realities serve as an impetus to refocus our thinking on how school leaders, especially People of Color, can lead toward the elimination of oppressive school practices. Participants remind us that improving schools and deepening democratic ideals cannot be left to the guiding principles of a conceptual model. Leading for human advocacy and addressing the abuses of power in social, economic, and political structures is multidimensional and in need of further study.

SUMMARY

Theoretical underpinnings provide spaces for school leaders to understand the process of co-created leadership, as well as potential outcomes. However, the realities of working within multiracial systems should not be ignored. Nonoka and Takeuchi (1995) suggested engaging members in a process by which social interactions, quality relations, and democratic ideals are embraced and internalized. Participants lived the complexities associated with promoting reform and revolutionary change through co-created leadership. Participants noted the importance of sharing a common vision and purpose rooted in revolutionary movement in order to pursue as a collective.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings suggest the need for scholars to inquire about the impact of unjust and inequitable school practices for historically disenfranchised groups. Scholars assume aspiring school leaders define and experience collaboration in similar ways (Lunenburg & Orstein, 2004). However, the lived experiences of People of Color who work in predominately White schools are challenged in their ability to engage in collaborative efforts because they are perceived as *inferio*r by their colleagues due to their racial identity (Bell, 1992). Although collaboration begins with "admitting we do not know or can do everything" (De Pree, 2004, p. 9) and "crafting interdependence" (Bruffee, 1993, p. 12), deconstructing the influence of race and racism is essential to understanding the influence of power structures in facilitating co-created leadership. Deconstructing racial power structures exposes why such school practices exist and uncovers who benefits from engaging in such school practices (Hafner, 2006).

When scholars consider new conceptual models, such as co-created leadership, discussions regarding the intersections of race, racism, and power must also be considered. However, as noted by the participants, instructors within the program did not seem aware of issues facing People of Color. And in some cases, professors were indifferent to addressing the intersections of race and racism. The findings suggest scholars in this preparation program reconsider how they emanate democratic ideals proposed in state competencies, national leadership standards, and programmatic student outcomes for *all* aspiring school leaders.

The challenge of facilitating co-created leadership is an astounding and courageous calling. Because People of Color have a limited presence in this university's preparation program, their voices and lived experiences are not recognized, marginalized, or silenced. The perspectives from historically disenfranchised groups provide important insights to understanding the realities of school leadership (Dantley, 2005; Grogan, 1999). Interrogating the policies, procedures, and practices that shape schools and perpetuate oppression is essential to leading schools (Dantley & Tillman, 2006). Scholars within the program need to reconsider how socially constructed realities, such as race, influence how aspiring school leaders, specifically those from historically disenfranchised groups, understand the intersections of conceptual leadership models and oppressive school practices.

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