

COMBINING FORCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES: BRINGING EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT, AND NONPROFIT AGENCIES TOGETHER*

Bonnie Beyer

This work is produced by OpenStax-CNX and licensed under the
Creative Commons Attribution License 2.0[†]

Abstract

Public education is one portion of a complex system of society that extends far beyond the walls of the schoolhouse. The administration of educational institutions is impacted and influenced by businesses, communities, governmental agencies, laws, special interest and not-for-profit groups, and the general citizenry. The demand of these groups to improve the quality of public education and prepare students for the world of work beyond school is becoming more intense each year. Universities can and should be instrumental in thinking "out of the box" in the development of school administrator preparation programs. This article reviews one university that is taking the lead in innovative program development by combining the organizational worlds of the service sector through the integration of preparation programs in educational, public sector, and nonprofit administration.

Note: This MODULE has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a scholarly contribution to the knowledge base in educational administration.

Since *A Nation At Risk* in the early 1980s, the general public along with governmental, educational, and the business community have called for changes and improvement in educational systems at all levels. These calls for change have been directed toward improvement in programs ranging from early childhood education to university programs. In recent years, public and private agencies have been developing non-traditional public education formats such as charter schools, school/business internships and partnerships, contract schools, K-14 partnerships, school-to-work programs, or attempting to expand on already existing private educational opportunities through vouchers and tax exemptions. Some of these calls for change and restructuring have been directed at university programs in both the areas of teacher preparation and the training of school administrators (Milstein and Associates, 1993; Murphy & Hallinger, 1995; Newman & Wehlage, 1995) and have been incorporated into the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, No Child Left Behind (U.S. Government, 2001).

*Version 1.2: May 16, 2006 4:41 pm -0500

[†]<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

Administrative theory as traditionally taught in educational administration preparation programs is rooted in organizational management and leadership theory and in the social sciences. Theoretical frameworks that can be found in texts utilized in educational administration preparation programs include: systems theory, human resource management, organizational change and development, total quality management, power and politics, decision-making, general management and leadership skills, visioning, teaming, and organizational culture, to name only a few. These theoretical constructs form a foundation for understanding organizational administration in general and educational administration in particular. Examples of this can be found in books and articles by authors such as Bolman & Deal (2004), Cunningham & Cordeiro (2000), Hersey & Blanchard (1984), Hoy & Miskel (1996), Kimbrough & Nunnery (1988), Lunenburg & Ornstein (2000), Morgan (1986), Sergiovanni (1995), Seyfarth (1999), Silver, (1983), and Yukl (2002). These cited authors only touch the tip of the iceberg in published works on educational administration. Additionally, professors in educational leadership and administration programs regularly incorporate the works of such well known organizational and social science theorists as Argyris, Barnard, Bass, Bennis, Demming, Drucker, Etzioni, Fayol, Fiedler, Galbraith, House, Kanter, Katz & Kahn, Kotter, Kouzes & Posner, Likert, Maslow, McGregor, Mintzberg, Peters, Pfeffer, Schein, Senge, Stogdill, Taylor, Vaill, Vroom, and Webber among others.

Following *A Nation at Risk*, some academicians have challenged the rationale of applying general organizational leadership and social science theories to the preparation and development of school leaders. Subsequently, there has been an emphasis on preparing school administrators to be instructional leaders, with researchers and writers emphasizing the uniqueness and importance of curriculum and instructional knowledge for school administrators (Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs, and Thurston, 1999; Starratt, 1996). Yet, as Leithwood (1992) notes:

"Instructional leadership" is an idea that has served many schools well throughout the 1980s and 1990s. But in light of current restructuring initiatives designed to take schools into the 21st century, "instructional leadership" no longer appears to capture the heart of what school administration will have to become. (p. 8)

Public education is one portion of a complex system of society that extends far beyond the walls of the schoolhouse. The administration of educational institutions is impacted and influenced by businesses, communities, governmental agencies, laws, special interest and not-for-profit groups, and the general citizenry. The demand of these groups to improve the quality of public education and prepare students for the world of work beyond school is becoming more intense each year. The development of state and national standards, public charter schools, and schools-of-choice across the nation has placed the school administrator in a position of competition and accountability heretofore unknown. Demands by businesses, parents, community groups, legislation, and federal and state governments have forced the school administrator to listen to and collaborate more closely with social service providers and governmental agencies. These economic, social, and political pressures and changes require "leadership that is so completely revolutionary that it challenges all our old paradigms" (McFarland, Senn & Childress, 1994, p. 29). The importance of this statement is supported by Beyer & Ruhl-Smith (2000) when they state, "This opinion is shared by a cross-section of leaders representing business, education, government, entertainment, and other for-profit and not-for-profit sectors" (p. 35).

Dissatisfaction with present educational leadership has resulted in school districts hiring business and military leaders to fill school administration positions. These actions have been supported by the premise that successful leadership skills in the military and the business sector are easily transferable to the leadership of schools. Rodriguez (2000) states, "consensus among educators supports the development of programs that train future administrators to work in collaborative and interdisciplinary settings (p. 65). An example of such a collaborative effort is an international educational program entitled, "Collaborative Educational Programs for the Americas" (CEPA). The CEPA program is one example of an interdisciplinary group of professionals in law enforcement, education, and the military working together. CEPA develops educational programs that focus on "the establishment of collaborative partnerships to deal with the challenges of educational and social reform" (Rodriguez, 2000, p. 66). More recently, the City of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley announced an initiative in which the Chicago Public Schools are exploring a charter school format that will combine the

expertise and educational personnel of private schools with that of the public schools to offer an alternative educational opportunity for public school students. The reform plan will lean heavily on the private sector for ideas, funding, and management (Dell'Angela & Washburn, 2004; Grossman, K. N., 2004)).

By 2010 the mayor intends to re-create more than 10 percent of the city's schools—one-third as charter schools, one third as independently operated contract schools and the remainder as small schools run by the district (Dell'Angela & Washburn, 2004).

Movements and programs such as those mentioned above, begin to blur the lines that have traditionally separated schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and governmental agencies. The lack of leadership preparation to meet the challenges of such collaborative educational endeavors should be a major concern of educational reform efforts.

1 Preparation Programs

Universities can and should be instrumental in thinking "out of the box" in the development of school administrator preparation programs (Peterson and Finn, 1985). The University of Michigan-Dearborn is taking the lead in innovative program development by combining the organizational worlds of the service sector through the integration of preparation programs in educational administration and public administration. The combination of educational, governmental, and nonprofit agencies working together is something that occurs in school districts across the United States daily, as well as on an international basis. Researchers have observed that combining the efforts of these agencies is a successful method of school improvement. As stated by Newmann & Wehlage, (1995) in their study of successful school restructuring:

To build the organizational capacity required to promote student learning of high intellectual quality, schools need support from beyond their walls. We found a wide variety of external agents attempting to help schools restructure. They included state legislatures, district administrators, universities, unions, professional organizations, foundations, courts, parents, and the federal government. In the schools we studied, districts, states, parents, and private nonprofit organizations working for educational reform—we call them independent developers—were the most active and influential. (p. 41)

Incorporating the preparation of educational administrators in a program that combines multiple entities of the service sector creates an atmosphere and educational setting for students that promotes greater mutual understanding of the functions of each sector and enhances the ability of these future leaders to work more efficiently and effectively together. Bolman and Deal (1991) support the importance of preparing leaders with multiple perspectives when they state,

Leaders fail when they take too narrow a view of the context in which they are working. Unless they can think flexibly about organizations and see them from multiple angles, they will be unable to deal with the full range of issues that they will inevitably encounter. (p. 450)

This broader view of organizational leadership can be utilized to improve educational administration preparation programs, educational systems as a whole, and ultimately student learning. Universities must "provide innovative programs and curriculum that will prepare educational leaders who have the courage, knowledge, and skills it will take to lead tomorrow's schools" (Lambert, 1995, p.6).

2 The Masters of Public Administration Program

The Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, prepares leaders for educational, government, and nonprofit organizations. The interdisciplinary and experimental nature of the program requires both structure and flexibility in course development, offerings, and in classroom instruction. The Masters of Public Administration is a 30 (minimum) credit hour program divided into three parts: (1) Core and Information Systems, (2) Specialty Courses, (3) Internships, and (4) Assessment Seminar.

The courses are cross-listed between educational administration and public administration. The core courses are: Introduction to Administration; Principalship/Leadership and Administration; Administration of Human Resources; School Budgeting and Finance/Administration of Financial Resources; and Information

Systems and Statistics for Administrators. All MPA students (educational administration, nonprofit, and public sector) are required to complete an Assessment Seminar near the conclusion of their program. The seminar is a capstone course and is structured to permit the students in the program to synthesize their specialized coursework and to examine problems common to the various specialties.

The Government/Public Sector program requires completion of the MPA Core, specialty requirements, electives appropriate to administration in the public sector, and the MPA Assessment Seminar. Students must select 13 credits of courses from the specialty areas of leadership, finance, human resources, planning, analysis, and evaluation with approval of a public sector faculty advisor. The program is structured to follow the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) guidelines. An internship may be required if the student is unable to present evidence of prior experience in public administration.

The program in Nonprofit Leadership requires completion of the MPA core as described above, specialty requirements, electives appropriate to the Nonprofit Leadership Program, and the MPA Assessment Seminar. The design of the program is consistent with the guidelines established by the American Society of Association Executives. A Nonprofit Leadership Certificate is available and is consistent with the certification process established by the American Society of Association Executives and has been endorsed by the Michigan Society of Association Executives. Eligibility for the certificate requires completion of the MPA Core, eight (8) credit hours specialty requirements: Public Relations for the Nonprofit and Public Sectors, Fundraising, Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment, and Program Evaluation. The remaining electives are chosen with approval of the nonprofit faculty advisor. An internship with a nonprofit organization may be required if the student is unable to present evidence of prior experience.

Eligibility for the MPA degree and certificate in Educational Administration includes completion of the core courses, specialty requirements in school and community relations, legal and regulatory issues, curriculum deliberation and development, program evaluation, applications of technology for organizational administration, and an internship in elementary or secondary school administration. Students must also complete the MPA Assessment Seminar. A 20 credit hour certificate-only program is available to students already holding a masters' degree and desiring a certificate in elementary or secondary school administration. The program consists of the MPA core (minus the statistics course), plus administrative law, school/community relations, curriculum development, and an internship. A certificate in Central Office Administration is also available. Candidates for this certificate are required to complete an additional 15 credit hours beyond the MPA degree or 20 credit hour certificate-only program in appropriate course work including Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment, Labor Relations, Fund Accounting, and Policy Analysis & Development along with appropriate electives from the public administration and/or education graduate degree offerings with approval of the educational administration advisor. An internship in central office administration is also required for this certificate. In addition to the MPA coursework in educational administration described above, candidates must hold a valid State of Michigan teaching certificate and have a minimum of three years classroom teaching experience. Upon successful completion of the program, the candidate will receive a certificate from the University of Michigan-Dearborn, School of Education.

2.1 Meeting Standards

Standards for educational administration preparation programs and professional practice are a topic of intense interest continually being discussed by professional organizations and university preparation programs across the nation. Numerous articles, books, and presentations have addressed the topic of applied standards such as those by Beyer & Ruhl-Smith (2000), Capasso & Daresh (2001), Hoyle, English, & Steffy, (1998), Murphy, Hawley, & Young (2005), and Wilmore, E. L. (2002). The State of Michigan does not offer a certificate in school administration. From 1995 to 2004, the educational administration strand of the public administration program was developed and patterned after previous Michigan Department of Education (MDE) program standards for school administrators, which were eliminated by the State in 2000, and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration Knowledge and Skill Base for School Principals (NPBEA, 1993). Both the required and elective courses in the MPA program addressed the NPBEA essential

knowledge and skills base for effective school principals (Thompson, 1993). In 2004, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) approved a new set of program standards for the preparation of school principals. This program is patterned after two specific sets of existing national standards. First, is the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium Standards for School Leaders (ISLLC) (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996) which specifically address the topics of leadership and vision, instruction and student academic success, allocation of resources, school and community relations, ethics, and the political, social, legal, and cultural context of leading schools. The Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA, 2004), is the second set of standards incorporated into the new MDE preparation guidelines. These are defined as:

I. Leadership and Vision - Educational leaders inspire a shared vision for comprehensive integration of technology and foster an environment and culture conducive to the realization of that vision.

II. Learning and Teaching - Educational leaders ensure that curricular design, instructional strategies, and learning environments integrate appropriate technologies to maximize learning and teaching.

III. Productivity and Professional Practice - Educational leaders apply technology to enhance their professional practice and to increase their own productivity and that of others.

IV. Support, Management, and Operations - Educational leaders ensure the integration of technology to support productive systems for learning and administration.

V. Assessment and Evaluation - Educational leaders use technology to plan and implement comprehensive systems of effective assessment and evaluation.

VI. Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues - Educational leaders understand the social, legal, and ethical issues related to technology and model responsible decision-making related to these issues (TSSA, 2004).

The educational administration portion of the MPA program has been revised to meet the Michigan Department of Education Program Standards for the Preparation of School Principals (Michigan Department of Education, 2004). This preparation program is based on the ISLLC Standards and Technology Standards for School Administrators, as described above, with the addition of an internship requirement in a school setting providing the educational administration student with the opportunity to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills to practice:

1. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of the students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
7. A school administrator is an educational leader who understands and comprehensively applies technology to advance student achievement.
8. A school administrator is an educational leader who synthesizes and applies knowledge and best practices and develops skills through substantial, sustained, standards-based work in real settings to advance student achievement (Michigan Department of Education, 2004).

2.2 Student Reactions

There are a variety of reactions and opinions from students in the MPA program to the integration of students and course materials from the educational, public, and nonprofit sectors. Some students immediately see the value of the interdisciplinary nature of the program and its applicability to the world of work. Others see the importance only after graduation when they are actively involved in administrative positions. While in the program, some students express dislike of the interdisciplinary course content and in-class discussions and activities, and would prefer to have instruction and materials relate specifically to their area of interest. Instructors remain cognizant of these desires and make every attempt to address the needs of each group thorough the use of examples, case studies, group projects, and class discussions. Once students graduate from the program and are involved in the application of new knowledge and skills to practice on a daily basis, the usefulness of blending the disciplines together begins to be recognized. As part of an MPA program review conducted in 2004, a graduate student survey was conducted and open-ended responses were solicited. Following are graduate responses related to the interdisciplinary nature of the program:

- “This program was of value to me because of its wide and broad applicability. Additionally, because the program was so broad-based it attracted students from many different sectors. This was valuable to all of us in the program because it exposed each of us to arenas of public administration with which we were not familiar. This added to and increased our learning.” (Assistant Principal)
- “The MPA program fosters personal friendship and professional relationships. Since the graduates of the program are from the public, education, and non-profit sectors, a great network is created. If I need information pertaining to another sector, I know I can call a fellow graduate for assistance.” (City Administrator)
- “The MPA program at the University of Michigan-Dearborn provides an incredibly well rounded experience for those seeking to enlarge the scope of their knowledge, skills, and experiences as it applies to public organizations. I found great value in the way the program included the varied backgrounds of all of the individuals in the program.” (Assistant Principal)
- “Pedagogically, the classes at UM-D contained a very informative instructional basis. This combined with a very diverse and eclectic student base, allowed me to see real world aspects of public administration from a wide variety of backgrounds and viewpoints. These benefits have been extremely useful in my field of endeavors.” (Police Sergeant and Community College Adjunct Professor)
- “The sharing of ideas from my peers with diverse backgrounds enhanced the learning experience.” (Public Relations Consultant)
- “My MPA degree helped me get my two positions as instructor of political science (at a college and a university) and as a freshman dean (at a college). It is certainly a degree I drew upon regularly (as a city council member and as mayor)”. (Mayor)
- “Valuable instruction in leadership, organizational development, labor relations and financial management; Learning with a diverse student body; A school where teachers and students learn from each other.” (Assistant to the Chancellor and Director of Equity & Affirmative Action)
- “UM-D is unique in bridging the gap between theory and practical experience. Classmates brought ‘real world’ situations into the classroom while instructors shaped theoretical implications of administration.” (Assistant Principal)
- “I found the combination business and education environment stimulating and informative. Working with people from diverse backgrounds affords a more real-world look into administrative issues and has prepared me to be more empathetic with parents of school-aged children” (Educator)
- “The challenging coursework and diverse backgrounds of classmates provided a solid foundation from which to launch a new career.” (Executive Director-University Campus Recreation)
- “Michigan-Dearborn’s MPA program provided me with a knowledge base, which I was able to apply across a variety of professional experiences.” (Technical Analyst)
- “The MPA program did an excellent job training me to be a leader in the non-profit sector. I would recommend this program (and have numerous times) to any person who has the drive and desire to become a leader in the nonprofit, educational, or government sector.” (University Director of

Development)

Student responses assist MPA program faculty in curricular, instructional, and program assessment. This on-going process of program development and course preparation is helpful in meeting the wide variety of students the program serves. Philosophical issues become a matter of discussion among MPA faculty and course content, development, and materials are regularly reviewed in an effort to ensure that each program's requirements and student needs are being addressed.

2.3 Conclusion

Developing a quality innovative program is not an easy task. It is an ongoing process that requires creativity, flexibility, collaboration, reflection, analysis, and response to public, institutional, and student concerns. There is a great deal of overlap and hence commonality in professional standards among the three disciplines. It is important for program faculty and instructors to be cognizant of similarities and differences between standards and ensure that required knowledge and skills are addressed and assessed. The foundational knowledge presented in the MPA program is regularly recommended and required of anyone in a leadership position, whether it is in education, government, a nonprofit organization, or in the corporate world. Educational, non-profit, government, and for-profit organizations are not isolated in the world beyond academia. Members of these organizations interact, work together, and depend upon each other on a regular basis. What better way can there be than to prepare these future leaders together and for professors to model the integration and interactions in practice? The University of Michigan-Dearborn is doing just that in their Masters of Public Administration program.

References

- Beyer, B., & Ruhl-Smith, C. (2000). Research and collaboration as keys to improved performance. *Journal of the Intermountain Center for Education Effectiveness*. 1(2), 35-40.
- Bolman L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2004). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Capasso, R. L. & Daresh, J. C. (2001). *The school administrator internship handbook: Leading, mentoring, and participating in the internship program*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Council of Chief State School Officers.(1996). *Interstate school leaders consortium: Standards for school leadership*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Cunningham, W. G., & Cordeiro, P. A. (2000). *Educational administration: 8 problem-based approaches*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Dell'Angela, T. & Washburn, G. (2004). Daley set to remake troubled schools. (2004, June 25). *Chicago Tribune*, pp. A1. A22.
- Grossman, Kate N. (2004). Daley unveils plan to shut some schools to copy success stories. (2004, June 25). *Chicago Sun-Times, METRO*, p. 20.
- Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1984). *The management of organizational behavior* (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (1996). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Hoyle, J. R., English, F. W., & Steffy, B. E. (1998). *Skills for successful 21st century school leaders: Standards for peak performance*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.
- Kimbrough, R. B., & Nunnery, M. Y. (1988). *Educational administration: An introduction* (3rd ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Lambert, L. (1995). Cultivating leaders. *Association for California School Administrators*. 24(5), 6-9.
- Lunenburg, F. C., & Ornstein, A. C. (2000). *Educational administration: Concepts and practices* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomas Learning.
- McFarland, L.J., Senn, L. E., & Childress, J. R. (1994). *21st century leadership: Dialogues with 100 top leaders*. New York: The Leadership Press.

Milstein, M., & Associates (1993). *Changing the way we prepare educational leaders: The Danforth experience*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of Organizations*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Murphy, J., & Hallinger, P. (1993). *Restructuring schooling: Learning from ongoing efforts*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Murphy, J., Hawley, W., & Young, M. (2005). Re-defining the education of school leaders. *NCPEA Education Leadership Review*, 6(2), 48-55.

National Policy Board for Educational Administration. (1993). *Principals for our changing schools: Knowledge and skill base*. Fairfax, VA: Author.

Newmann, F. M., & Wehlage, G. G. (1995). *Successful school restructuring: A Schools*. Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools.

Peterson, K. D., & Finn, C. E. (1985, Spring). Principals, superintendents, and the administrator's art. *The Public Interest*, (79), 127-131.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1995). *The principalship: A reflective practice perspective (3rd ed.)* Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Rodriguez, F. J. (2000, Spring). Interdisciplinary leadership in the Americas: Vision, risk, and change. *Journal of the Intermountain Center for Education Effectiveness*, 1(2), 64-71

Sergiovanni, T. J. Burlingame, M., Coombs, F.S. & Thurston, P.W. (1999). *Educational governance and administration (4th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Seyfarth, J.T. (1999) *The principal: New leadership for new challenges*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Silver, P. (1983). *Educational administration: Theoretical perspectives on practice and research*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Starratt, R. J. (1996). *Transforming educational administration: Meaning, community, and excellence*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Technology Standards for School Administrators Collaborative (TSSA) (2004). Retrieved from <http://cnets.iste.org/tssa/i>

U. S. Government (2002). *No child left behind act of 2001: Reauthorization of the elementary and secondary education act of 1965 (P.L 107-110)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Wilmore, E. L. (2002). *Principal leadership: Applying the new educational leadership constituent council (ELCC) standards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Yukl, G. (2002). *Leadership in organizations (5th ed.)*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

¹ <http://cnets.iste.org/tssa/index.html>