# Standards for School Leadership Programs: A Conceptual Analysis*

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Abstract

In this article, we examined the development of the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium/Educational Leadership Constituent Council Standards. Along with this examination, studies and researchers' viewpoints that supported these standards as well as studies and researchers' viewpoints that were critical of these standards were examined. Then, the National Council for Accreditation of Teachers Education accreditation program review process was discussed. We then addressed the role of universities in preparing principals to be successful in today's schools.
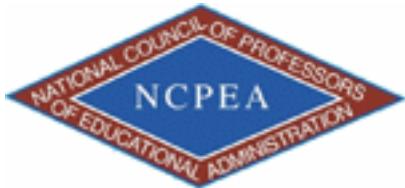
1 Introduction

In this article, we examined the development of the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (IS-LLC)/Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) Standards. Along with this examination, studies and researchers' viewpoints that supported the ISLLC/ELCC Standards as well as studies and researchers' viewpoints that were critical of the ISLLC/ELCC Standards were examined. Then, the National Council

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for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation program review process was discussed. This process uses the ELCC standards to determine if school leadership preparation programs are recognized or denied. We next discussed the role of universities in preparing principals to be successful in today's schools. Finally, we concluded with an overview of the many roles of principals in today's schools.

2 Development of the ISLLC/ELCC Standards

In 2002, Tucker and Codding indicated that school principals had become very, very aware of the account-ability movement. With the American public demanding immediate improvement of schools and enhanced student success, the federal government assumed a leadership role. As the federal government began to hold states accountable, local school accountability increased at the state level. Local school boards began hold-ing superintendents and individual building principals accountable. Ultimately, the accountability rested squarely with the building principal. Sanders and Simpson (2005) stated that even before No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, state policymaking groups were focused on development of school leadership as a way to improve student achievement. With the requirements of NCLB and its implementation in 2002, school administrators have experienced increased levels of accountability regarding student achievement. Grubb and Flessa (2006) stated that "current federal, state, and local school accountability measures as well as policy initiatives that call for improved leadership have placed increasing demands on principals" (p. 518).

A report presented in 1987 by the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, an organization sponsored by the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA), spotlighted the challenges and concerns of educational leaders and preparation programs of educational leaders. This report brought awareness and focus to educational leadership preparation programs. The UCEA commissioned the National Commission for the Advancement of Educational Leadership Preparation in 2002 to address the challenges highlighted in the report (Jackson & Kelley, 2002).

The UCEA brought together researchers from across the nation in the mid 1990s to determine the knowledge base in educational administration. At about the same time in 1994, the ISLLC was established by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). In its infancy, the ISLLC was comprised of representatives from 24 states, as well as key stakeholders from many nationwide stakeholder groups. The ISLLC had two purposes. First, the organization would work to develop a set of standards that would guide the rethinking of the role of school administration. Secondly, the group planned to support the reshaping of the preparation and practice of school administrators. Expectations regarding the role of school administrators had changed, and the school leadership preparation programs needed to provide content within the curriculum that would support the development of the skills required to meet these expectations (Murphy, 2005).

The ISLLC developed a set of clear, concise Standards desiring several actions to follow. They hoped the Standards would support a change in thinking regarding content in school leader preparation programs. They also wanted the Standards to highlight the need and content for on-going professional development required for practicing school leaders. Lastly, they hoped the Standards would support a revision in the principal licensure process (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). Murphy (2005) stated that the ISLLC Standards were written with the idea of supporting a change within existing schools' leaders as well as reshaping the knowledge, performances, and skills of aspiring leaders in preparation programs. The ISLLC intended that these Standards would be the impetus to provide decision-making movement at the state level in two areas. First, the Standards would support decision-making within states regarding the review of existing leadership programs, development of new leadership programs, and review of licensure requirements. Second, the standards would serve as a tool to promote discussion among states. Members of the ISLLC hoped the discussions would focus on mutual topics brought about by the standards and begin to support a shift in paradigms of school leadership expectations (Missouri Professors of Education Administration, 2003).

Very early in the process, the ISLLC decided that a change in theoretical thinking was necessary for effective standards for educational leadership to be the outcome. Past thinking had been to focus on the corporate world to determine if an idea could be reworked or rethought for school leaders. Behavioral sciences previously had also provided ideas for reform. The overall goal of the Consortium was to determine the core

beliefs of the profession and the skills and knowledge needed to support their implementation successfully (Murphy, 2005).

In 2000, the NPBEA established a group of key stakeholders. This group was given the task of designing performance based standards for NCATE for the purpose of reviewing educational leadership programs. The result was a set of performance based standards aligned with the ISLLC Standards which were officially approved by NCATE in 2002 (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). Murphy (2005) stated that the resulting Standards designated the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) Standards were almost identical to the ISLLC Standards with the exception of the added internship standard. The ELCC Standards were and continue to be used by the ELCC for NCATE accreditation reviews (Jackson & Kelley).

2.1 NCATE Accreditation Review Process for ELCC

As one component of an NCATE accreditation review, a group of reviewers trained by the ELCC conducts in-depth evaluations of educational leadership programs in colleges of education across the country (NPBEA, 2005). This revised process, which began in 2004, required educational leadership programs to submit six to eight assessments to the ELCC. According to NCATE (2004), these assessments, which were to be submitted one semester before the scheduled visit, must show evidence of candidate mastery of the ELCC Standards that address the following areas:

(a) state licensure examinations of content knowledge; (b) at least one additional assessment of content knowledge; (c) an assessment of candidate ability to plan instruction, or (for non-teaching fields) to fulfill identified professional responsibilities; (d) the evaluation of clinical practice; and (e) an assessment that demonstrates candidate effect on student learning, or (for non-teaching fields) the ability to create supportive learning environments. (NCATE, 2004, p. 1)

As part of the accreditation process for the NCATE Education Unit (typically the College of Education), university principal preparation programs are accredited by the ELCC. University principal preparation programs undergo the ELCC review on a voluntary basis once every seven years. Once the review is completed and it is determined that the principal preparation program follows the guidelines set by the Standards for Advanced Programs in Educational Leadership, the program is awarded "National Recognition" status (NPBEA, 2005).

3 Support of the ISSLC/ELCC Standards

Widespread support for the Standards was evident in a 2005 survey that showed 41 states were using either the ISLLC standards or an adapted version [the ELCC Standards] to guide their leadership preparation programs (Sanders & Sampson, 2005). Margaret Crutchfield (personal communication, July 30, 2007), Associate Vice President for Program Review, stated that as of July 2007, approximately 1200 institutions in the United States possessed professional education preparation programs. Of those 1200 institutions, 167 or 13.9% are ELCC-recognized. According to Murphy (2005), this success in implementation is due to several factors. First, the publication of the ISLLC Standards in late 1996 came at a crucial time. For 20 years, the educational leadership profession had endured studies regarding effective leaders leading productive schools. The profession was ready for concrete guidelines in the form of standards, that when followed, would ensure increased levels of student achievement. Additionally, the education field, in general, was in the midst of a larger school reform, and reform in the role of the leadership coincided with a new paradigm. Lastly, the standards were embedded with the vision of professional learning that supported learning of all students, which was the focus of the accountability measures being instituted from the federal government to the local school board.

In support of the ISLLC Standards, Murphy (2005) stated that the Standards were written broadly to allow for knowledge growth in the area of leadership, and that the value of the Standards had its basis in the empirical research used in their development. When writing the Standards, the ISLLC analyzed four beliefs about education. These beliefs were: (a) high student outcomes result from certain administrative actions; (b) all students can learn; (c) schools are responsible for student outcomes; and (d) schools work best when

they function as wholes instead of groups of individual elements. Researchers provided the Consortium with a collection of data explaining the role and purposes of school leaders. The Consortium worked to determine the connection between leadership and school environment that led to student achievement. The Consortium also carefully examined research on principals who lead productive, high-performing schools. Lastly, the Consortium examined the changes in the educational industry and how those changes might affect the role of the principal. The Consortium believed that the Standards and the intellectual pillars on which they rest—provide the means to shift the metric of school administration from management to educational leadership and from administration to learning while linking management and behavioral science knowledge to the larger goal of student learning. (Murphy, 2005, p. 166)

McFadden, Mobley, Burnham, Joyner, and Peel (2003) conducted a study to determine if the national ISLLC Standards were important to job performance. A survey comprised of selected indicators from the ISLLC Standards, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Standards for School Leaders was sent to preselected North Carolina Master's of School Administration graduates to determine their perceptions of the adequacy of their principal preparation programs. The North Carolina Master's of School Administration program supported the ISLLC standards within its curriculum. Analysis of the returned surveys revealed that these graduates were satisfied with their preparation program and felt adequately prepared for their leadership role.

Recently, Hoyle (2005) responded to many critics and reviewed successes of principal preparation programs by saying that principal preparation has "never been better" (p. 1). He stated that, "leadership preparation in America's colleges and universities has made significant progress in the past decade and can respond with convincing evidence to critics demeaning current preparation programs" (p.1). Researchers have documented that support for reforming leadership preparation programs continues to grow. Numerous preparation programs are being revamped to align coursework and field-based studies to the ELCC standards. He stated that researchers who see all preparation programs as inadequate have failed to notice successful reform efforts. Hoyle stated that criticism was beneficial because it supports reevaluation of programs and goals which result in improvement, but he argued that America's public schools are stronger than ever before. This successful reform that has occurred in American public schools would not have been possible without highly qualified graduates of leadership preparation programs in recent years. According to Hoyle, researchers have documented the presence of an increasing number of innovative leadership preparation programs that are developing effective school leaders who are leading reform at the building level and increasing levels of student achievement. In essence, leadership preparation programs nationwide have been working to revise their curricula to meet the expectations and ever-changing needs of aspiring school leaders (Hoyle).

4 Criticism of the ISLLC/ELCC Standards

Though much nationwide support exists for the Standards (Sanders & Sampson, 2006), some critics have voiced clear opposition. These researchers criticized the ELCC Standards based on their incompleteness and inadequacy to support the development of leaders who can effectively promote reform (Fry, O'Neill, & Bottoms, 2006; Wildman, 2004), and they questioned the high expectations set forth by the Standards for the educational leadership profession (English, 2003). Some researchers also believed that teaching curriculum which develops the knowledge and skills listed in the Standards is not enough to prepare school leaders to lead school reform effectively (Bell, 2005; Levine, 2005).

Fry et al. (2006) argued that states hoped that the adoption of the Standards and new assessments would support change within principal preparation programs and therefore create a new and improved group of principals. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) (2002) conducted a study that showed one-third of the principal preparation programs examined had made changes necessary to support the development of the knowledge and skills to bring about change in curriculum and instruction. However, Fry et al. believed that a substantial amount of evidence indicated that student achievement was impacted when principals developed rigorous, high quality instruction within their faculty. For the most part, principal preparation programs examined by the SREB were not seeking to develop the

knowledge and skills of aspiring principals to develop rigor and high quality instruction within their school faculties. If student achievement were to be positively influenced, graduating principals needed to possess the necessary skills to support their faculties to develop rigorous, and high quality instruction within their Standards-based state curriculum.

English (2003) stated that the Standards were based on the Total Quality Management (TQM) concept. He believed the Standards followed the principles of "TQM dogma" (English, p.113) which included total commitment, a culture of constructed inclusivity, data-driven decision-making, and consumer utopia. Total commitment was shown in the Standards with the inclusion of everyone in the leadership process. Constructed inclusivity was demonstrated in Standard 2, focused on school culture, which included every part of the workplace and required quality. English defined "consumer utopia" as thoughts of perfection that set up unrealistic expectations for a system. He believed high expectations were good, but when expectations of perfection were not met, high levels of disappointment occurred. He criticized the Standards as being unrealistic, unattainable expectations for school leadership preparation programs. The Standards were a set of high expectations that set up the preparation programs for failure. English believed the ISLLC Standards were based on the group's vision of school leadership and contained no theories that could be tested. If school improvement did not occur, university professors would shoulder the blame.

Wildman (2004) stated that the Standards were inadequate. In particular, Wildman contended that the Standards failed to address the administration of special education, academic disciplines, or curriculum content to be learned, and little attention was given to public education and other vital areas of school leadership such as school finance and school facilities management. The Standards were inconsistent and unclear in terms of philosophical premises. English (2006) stated that no overall theoretical base was evident that united the Standards and that a great deal of content knowledge was left out. He believed that new knowledge is constantly arising in the field of educational leadership, and graduate professors must construct and incorporate this new knowledge into the curriculum. Whereas many principles were mentioned throughout the Standards, the content that should be taught was not addressed (Wildman, 2004).

Bell (2005) stated that in the process of universities restructuring educational leadership programs, much more than the ELCC Standards must be taught. The Standards addressed only minimum requirements. English (2006) believed that the Standards lowered the expectations for principals by addressing a limited set of school leader responsibilities. This limited vision of school leadership did not allow the aspiring principal to learn to deal with the ever changing challenges in a school setting. English argued that the limited set of Standards supported the thinking that the Standards were good for all leaders, when in actuality they might not be as all encompassing as ISLLC/ELCC believed.

English (2006) reported that with the implementation of the Standards, the opportunity had arisen for principal preparation programs to move off university campuses. With the implementation of the set of one size fits all Standards, he believed that teaching had been relegated to training to meet the Standards. He contended that the field was not supporting graduate faculty focused on gaining new knowledge to improve the knowledge base within the curriculum.

Lastly, Levine, in his 2005 report, implied that implementing the Standards was not enough. The Standards that should be guiding leadership preparation programs were not providing the guidance that was needed. He stated in his report that principal preparation programs were not realizing and accepting that their old paradigm of school leadership did not meet the current needs of aspiring principals. According to Levine, principal preparation programs have ignored the changing expectations in the role of the principals, and the resulting curriculum is not relevant to the needs of graduating school leaders. Critics believe the ISLLC/ELCC Standards are an unrealistic set of expectations that are not inclusive of all of the knowledge, skills, and practice needed by school leaders who are required to support the development of curriculum and instruction which will result in increased levels of student achievement.

5 Use of ISLLC/ELCC Standards

Even though criticism exists from several researchers, a great deal of support remains for the Standards. In 2005, 201 of an estimated 500 universities in 25 states used the ISLLC/ELCC Standards to guide the

curriculum implemented in their principal preparation program. In addition to these 25 states, another four states have adapted the ISLLC/ELCC Standards and conduct their own reviews. In total, the ISLLC/ELCC Standards are used to evaluate "at least 40% of all educational leadership preparation programs" (NPBEA, 2005, p. 1), and these Standards guide principal preparation program curriculum in the universities of more than half of the states nationwide.

6 Preparing Principals

The work of principals is difficult and requires a wide array of leadership skills. One method of developing these leadership skills is through principal preparation programs. Because the accountability of student achievement has rested squarely with the building principal (Sanders & Simpson, 2005), school leadership preparation programs have experienced higher levels of accountability as demanded from accreditation agencies, as well as by state departments of education (Usdan, 2002).

To cope with the environmental pressures and management imperatives we face, we clearly need to give more thought to the new paradigm of educational administration that is needed today—one that emphasizes a better balance between a concern for performance and a concern for people. (p.293)

A paradigm shift has occurred with the expectations and role of the principal. NCLB has forced school districts to hold individual campuses accountable for student achievement. As a result, the principal who is the designated leader of each campus is accountable for the student achievement at each campus (Sanders & Simpson, 2005). The principal is expected to provide staff development that will improve the rigor of instruction which will ultimately raise the level of student achievement. These new expectations for principals have led school districts to rethink and adjust their paradigm concerning the role of the principal. The challenge now lies with the university principal preparation programs (Copeland, 2001). Every field, including educational leadership at the university level, must evaluate the needs, expectations, and performance of its aspiring practitioners. This evaluation informs the professors of changing expectations as well as supports a shift in curriculum (McCarthy, 2002).

With the changing role of the principal, a shift in thinking has begun to occur with regard to some principal preparation programs. If principal preparation programs are going to thrive, they must support the development of the skills needed by effective principals. The first step to meeting the needs of aspiring principals was the development of the ISLLC standards for Principals, Superintendents, Curriculum Directors, and Supervisors in 2002 (Tucker & Codding, 2002). The next step was for universities to incorporate these standards into their principal preparation programs, to analyze which courses support the development of the necessary skills, and to determine which courses need further development (McCarthy, 2002). This process has required professors of principal preparation programs to analyze and rethink long standing paradigms regarding the skills and knowledge needed to fulfill the principal role effectively (Copeland, 2001).

Professors in higher education need to stay connected with practicing principals to continue to understand their needs and expectations (Quinn, 2005). Senge (1990) stated that passive study does not allow for learning to occur. Standing in the background and observing practicing principals does not provide enough interaction or information to support the development of the necessary elements of higher education programs to keep pace with the tools, skills, and experience needed to be an effective principal. Keeping in touch and dialoguing with practicing principals, as well as recent graduates of principal preparation programs, is paramount.

McCarthy (2002) questioned whether principal preparation programs were preparing leaders for a school leadership role that was no longer useful. In the past, the tendency has been to use old approaches with new problems. The challenge with this approach is that the context and expectations of education have changed and old approaches do not always work.

University professors need to understand that the challenges school leaders face are changing (Quinn, 2005). Principals of schools serve the entire campus organization while serving several smaller organizations. The expectations for each setting are very different and require skills that may or may not overlap. Terry (1999) suggested that school leaders need to work from a new paradigm, one which must include visionary leaders who are risk-takers willing to think in new ways. University professors must understand and analyze the knowledge needed for prospective school leaders to lead effectively within this new paradigm. This

knowledge needs to be used to revise the curriculum within their principal preparation programs (Bottoms et al., 2003; Quinn, 2005).

The stress of the ever-changing internal and external forces in the principalship poses many challenges to principal preparation programs. Lashway (1999) stated that principal preparation programs have been known to contain irrelevant curriculum. Departments of Educational Leadership are having to rethink the content of their principal certification programs in order to support aspiring principals. Traditionally, principal preparation programs have focused on the academic considerations of the profession and left out the practice of the principalship. In many institutions, the content of these programs was not driven by either education or leadership (Murphy, 2001).

According to Quinn (2005), researchers have documented in recent studies the need for higher standards within leadership preparation programs. Reform at the university level would require professors to understand the skills needed by future principals. The challenge for many universities is that policy for promotion and tenure of faculty emphasizes research and publication in scholarly journals. However, teaching, community service, and applied research are necessary to understand the needs of aspiring principals. Many junior university faculty see the need to focus on these areas at the potential cost of their own university professor careers.

Sanders and Simpson (2005) stated that leadership plays a significant role in increasing student learning. The principal is beginning to be held accountable for the learning of every student in the school. The ELCC Consortium believed that the principal played a key role in students' learning; every Standard with the exception of the Internship Standard began with the phrase "A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by..." (ELCC Standards, 2002, pp. 2-5). Widespread approval exists for improving leadership as a way to support reform at all levels (Sanders & Simpson).

With the publishing of the ELCC standards in 2002, many colleges of education have revised or are in the process of revising the principal certification course content in hopes of meeting the ever-changing needs of the effective principal. As Price (2004) noted, many expectations are placed on university principal preparation programs. Bottoms et al. (2003) and Fry et al. (2006) stated that if school leaders are going to be successful in their role of meeting state goals of increased student achievement, principal preparation programs need to do a better job of preparing their graduates.

External pressures such as accountability, accreditation, candidate performance, and alternative principal preparation programs have resulted in little change to traditional principal preparation programs. Glassman, Cibulka, and Ashby (2002) stated that the isolated nature of higher education is cited as the cause for the gap between the reality of the principal role and the content of the principal preparation program. Programs that do not institute radical reform to meet the new role expectations of aspiring principals risk the loss of legitimacy. This loss is due to the common acceptance that traditional principal preparation programs are ineffective and do not prepare candidates to meet the expectations of the reformed principal role (Glassman et al., 2002).

If those persons who enter the principalship have any real chance of leading their schools to higher levels of achievement in today's high pressured, high-stakes testing environments, acquiring these requisite skills through the principal preparation program should be a priority. Institutions of higher education that have principal preparation programs have an important role to play in ensuring that their graduates know and are able to perform the necessary tasks. The structures of many preparation programs may require some redesigning (Quinn, 2005).

Terry (1999) stated that qualities of an effective principal can be analyzed and incorporated into principal preparation programs. Principal preparation programs should be meaningful and appropriate for aspiring principals. Therefore, principal preparation programs need to revise their curriculum to reflect the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by effective principals (Gantner, Daresh, Dunlap, & Newsom, 1999). The end result of a principal preparation program should be a principal who is equipped to meet the expectations and requirements of the job in an effective manner (Davis & Jazzar, 2005). The responsibility of principal preparation programs is to put a qualified principal in every school across the nation, one who can lead change in the school environment, ultimately to result in higher levels of student achievement (Spence, 2006).

7 Leadership Role of the Principal

Evans (1995) recounted the increasing expectations of the role of the principal.

Wanted: A miracle worker who can do more with less, pacify rival groups, endure chronic second-guessing, tolerate low levels of support, process large volumes of paper, and work double shifts. He or she will have carte blanche to innovate but cannot spend much money, replace any personnel, or upset any constituency. (p. 36)

A successful principal has always managed several roles (Quinn, 2005). These roles included supporting the accomplishment of the organizational goals (Leithwood, 2008; Schmitt, 2001), modeling teaching, learning and reflecting for students and teachers (Tucker & Codding, 2002), supporting teachers as an instructional leader (Tillman, 2005), supporting the change process (Gill, Levine, & Pitt, 1998), developing a system of learning as a group (Senge, 1990), and developing and conducting staff development to improve the rigor of the instruction (Fry et al., 2006). These roles have required a wide array of skills, that when refined through practice, have supported the principal in leading a school effectively through everyday tasks as well as large-scale reform. These skills include managerial, social, and technical skills. In the role of the principal, each day is different because of the human element involved in nearly every duty (Tillman, 2005).

First, a leader's role is to help the organization meet the needs of the group (McGrath, 1962). The goal of leadership is to support the achievement of the organization's goals (Schmitt, 2001). Hackman and Walton (1986) emphasized that the leader supports and facilitates necessary actions so the organization can be effective. Leadership successfully organizes activities that support the attainment of the organizational goals while working with the contextual demands (Mumford, 1986).

Principals also have the role of modeling teaching, learning, and reflecting (Tucker & Codding, 2002). A successful school organization stays focused on the teaching and learning based vision, disregarding outside forces. Leaders must build and maintain productive relationships among the staff (Bolman & Deal, 2003). These relationships, along with focused staff development, must seek to build the capacity of the organization (Tillman, 2005).

Since the 1990s, the main role of the principal has been to be the instructional leader. One part of the role of instructional leader was focused on the academic success of the students, which includes many facets (Tillman, 2005). According to the ELCC standards, these facets include: developing and implementing a vision, developing and supporting an effective instructional program, managing the organization, operations and resources, developing supportive relationships within the community, understanding and considering the role of the cultural, social, and political contexts, acting fairly and ethically, and using standards-based work (ELCC Standards, 2002).

Another role of the principal that is required for survival in the new millennium is to reflect on and shift thinking and behaviors as environment and expectations change. This new leadership paradigm includes how leaders respond to change while possessing the ability constantly and actively to create change within their organizations. This role in implementing change must be led by innovative leaders, not managers of people (Gill et al., 1998). The school organizational environment has to be one of continuous flexibility if change is to be accepted and implemented successfully (Peters, 1993). Permanence within an organization ceases to exist, and the leader must be able to deal with constant change. This phenomenon is necessary for school organizations to meet the fast and ever-changing needs of the environment. Trusting relationships will need to be built within organizations in order for members to make changes quickly and often (Gill et al., 1998).

An additional role of the principal is to build what Senge (1990) referred to as an organization that learns to work together to achieve a common goal. Current unique conditions faced in schools today require a staff that functions as a learning organization. This learning organization requires a leader who facilitates among the staff a continual "learning how to learn together" (Senge, p. 3) model of thinking. This model of thinking increases the capacity of the staff to meet the challenges and expectations of the current educational system. A learning organization in an educational setting requires a principal who possesses more than the management skills traditionally taught in principal preparation programs.

Another role of the principal is to support teachers in the development of rigorous curriculum that

impacts student achievement (Fry et al., 2006). An effective leader has the ability to develop an on-going staff development system that continuously analyzes the teaching curriculum (Terry, 1999). Leadership is best measured when members' performances improve (Terry) and ultimately impact student achievement. Effective and skilled leaders create an environment that motivates, energizes, and inspires teachers to want to learn how they can meet the academic needs of their students. When effective leadership is in place, the school improves in many ways. The school begins to embrace change based on state and community expectations (Daresh, 2001).

Senge (1990) stated that leaders of successful organizations are designers, stewards, and teachers who accept responsibility for building relationships among members. Effective leaders build an organization and lead based on a vision and a mission. An effective leader knows how to create a system of learning that is valued by its members. Leadership becomes a way to provide meaning and purpose (Obisesan & Cooper, 1999) to a school that drives student learning to a higher level.

8 Summary

In this article, we reviewed the increasing level of accountability facing principal preparation programs at the university level (Sanders & Simpson, 2005; Usdan, 2002). With the development of the ISLLC Standards in 1996 and the ELCC Standards in 2002, the NPBEA hoped to open a dialogue to improve consistency among principal preparation programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Murphy, 2005). Because the expectations of an effective principal have greatly increased from being a manager of teachers and students to developing a community of learners and supporting reform that impacts student achievement, the role of the effective principal has become in many cases a task too big for one person (Grubb & Flessa, 2006).

Preparing effective principals who can lead reform at the building level and impact student achievement (Sanders & Simpson, 2005) is one of the most important roles of university leadership preparation programs (Copeland, 2001; Fry et al., 2006). However, university level administration faces the challenges to develop an appropriate, evolving curriculum that continues to meet the needs of the ever-changing role of the principal. University leadership at many institutions values only empirical research. This limitation forces graduate professors in educational leadership departments to spend their time focusing on empirical research instead of developing their understandings of the real world demands and expectations of school leaders. Therefore, university professors may not know or understand that their curriculum is out of date and irrelevant to the needs of today's school leaders (Glassman et al., 2002; Lashway, 1999; Quinn, 2005).

Supporters and critics have voiced their opinions of the Standards and their implementation nationwide. Supporters believe that reform has begun and continues to evolve within most university leadership preparation programs, and principals today are more qualified than ever before to handle the increased expectations they now face in their leadership role (Hoyle, 2005). Even with the wide acceptance and use of the ELCC Standards, critics remain. The critics focus on the incompleteness and inadequacy of the Standards to support the development of leaders who can effectively promote reform (Fry et al., 2006; Wildman, 2004), and they question the high expectations set forth by these guidelines (English, 2003). They also believe that teaching curriculum that develops the knowledge and skills of the Standards is not enough to develop leaders who are adequately trained to support effective school reform at the building level (Bell, 2005; Levine, 2005).

The varied roles required of the reform-oriented principal were presented. These roles include supporting the accomplishment of the organizational goals (Schmitt, 2001), modeling teaching, learning, and reflecting for students and teachers (Tucker & Codding, 2002), supporting teachers as an instructional leader (Tillman, 2005), supporting the change process (Gill et al., 1998), developing a system of learning as a group (Senge, 1990), and developing and conducting staff development to improve the rigor of the instruction (Fry et al., 2006).

It is apparent that the development and implementation of the ISLLC/ELCC Standards have highlighted the multi-faceted role of principals and the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a school effectively. The Standards have led to reform in most principal preparation programs nationwide. Many researchers argue that the reform in principal preparation programs, which has been guided by the Standards, has been successful. However, some researchers contend that the Standards have not provided adequate guidance

needed to reform principal preparation programs as well as the profession, in general.

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