

Special Issue

It Takes More Than a Village: Inviting Partners and Complexity in Educational Leadership Preparation Reform

Jeffrey S. Brooks
University of Missouri-Columbia

Tim Havard
Auburn City Schools

Karen Tatum
Auburn University

Lynn Patrick
Auburn University

Heeding the advice of Young, Petersen, and Short (2002), the Educational Leadership Program at Auburn University included a variety of stakeholders in the reform of its preparation program. Collaborative partnerships were formed with school districts, local and state educational agencies, and with a variety of other educational stakeholders. This paper discusses how various stakeholders were involved in the redesign process. Insights gained from this process may be instructive to other programs as they consider involving multiple stakeholders while facilitating change in their own programs.

“...key to the success of any effort to positively and substantively change the preparation of school and school-system leaders is a commitment among stakeholders to finding common ground and working interdependently toward the realization of mutually agreed-on goals. No single organization, group, or individual can create the kind of changes for leadership preparation that our nation’s children need and deserve” (Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002, p. 140).

Calls to reform educational leadership preparation in the United States have echoed in the halls of

policymakers, academics, and schoolhouses for nearly a century (Brooks & Miles, 2008; Campbell,

Fleming, Newell, & Bennion, 1987; Jean-Marie, Normore & Brooks, 2009; McCarthy, 1999). These reforms have focused on the curriculum, instruction, and theoretical base of university preparation programs. Indeed, more recently many question whether or not universities are the proper place for training to take place at all (Hess, 2004; Levine, 2005). However, while much of this conversation takes the form of caustic and divisive rhetoric that pits “theory-based” universities against “practical” field-driven models, others envisage the preparation of educational leaders as a collaborative process and engage in ongoing dialogue and cooperative action to reform leadership preparation (Bjork & Ginsburg, 1995; Cibulka & Kritek, 1996; Dryfoos, 1994). Considered as a collaborative enterprise, where a multitude of organizational and personal qualities are enmeshed to complement strengths and minimize weaknesses, leadership preparation stakeholders, as a single and unified entity, can embrace the “opportunity to critically examine and generatively discuss the complex factors and interconnections that support and detract from quality leadership preparation” (Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002, p. 140).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the processes and outcomes created in an effort to reform the Instructional Leadership Program (ILP) in the College of Education at Auburn University between 2006-2008, which ultimately led to the admission of a new cohort of Master’s students in the Summer of 2008. In some ways, this redesign concentrated on traditional

reform activities, such as aligning the curriculum with state and national standards, reviewing historical and contemporary trends in the knowledge base of educational administration, and assessing of instructional techniques. Yet in other ways, the reform provided an innovative and collaborative model that included multiple stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels that may prove useful to other programs seeking to change their own programs. The article begins with a review of literature focused on the reform of educational leadership programs in general, and then segues into a more focused section that examines how reformers operate as a collection of policy actors, with some complementary and some conflicted interests and goals. This review of literature helped frame the discussion of the processes and outcomes of the reform at Auburn University. In explaining the reform, we discuss the various stakeholders invited to inform the design of the new educational leadership program and how their roles shifted as the program went from design to implementation. Finally, the article concludes with a discussion centered on the implications of this work for the program and a presentation of lessons learned and challenges yet to overcome.

The Reform of Educational Leadership Preparation Programs

Many share Cambron-McCabe’s (1999) “substantial concerns about the lack of connection between the nature of educational administration preparation programs and the crisis conditions

facing many school administrators" (p. 217). However, what is not in agreement is how this reality gap between preparation programs and problems of practice should be decreased. Among recommendations, interested stakeholders have called for adopting national leadership preparation standards (Murphy, 1990d)—or doing away with such standards entirely (English, 2001; English 2003). They have called for more stringent certification requirements (Murphy, 1990a, 1990b, 1990c), or for doing away with these altogether. There are calls for experimental research to investigate issues, while others demand a rejection of the overblown claims of this mode of inquiry (Firestone & Riehl, 2006). There are those who claim we already know what effective principals do (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005), and others who challenge that leadership practice is idiosyncratic, context-bound, and that no list of competencies, skills, or

behaviors could hope to capture the complexity most educational leaders face in a single day on the job (Brooks, 2006; Wolcott, 1970). There are calls for a normative approach to leadership practice perspective on practice and the necessity of acknowledging a postmodern or critical perspective (English, 1998). Put simply, the knowledge base of educational administration, if indeed there is 'a' knowledge base, is hotly contested and protean (Brooks & Miles, 2008; Donmoyer, Imber, & Sheurich, 1995). This leaves those who would prepare educational leaders in a quandary: they don't know what, *if anything*, works—in terms of both practice and preparation. Moreover, the knowledge base is only one of many interrelated key components in the design of effective administration preparation programs, so the complexity of the knowledge base is only one of many complicated, yet interrelated, issues (See Figure 1).

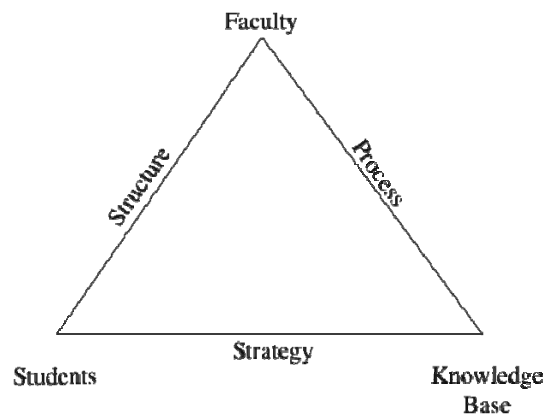


Figure 1. Key components in the design of effective administration preparation programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002).

That being said, there is no shortage of ideas about how the field might, can, or must move forward. Jackson and Kelley

(2002) identified several practices of exceptional and innovative programs in

educational leadership. Among these were the following:

Exceptional and innovative educational leadership programs use problem-based learning (PBL) instructional strategies

PBL strategies typically employ a narrative, critical activities, and a debriefing (Brooks, 2006). Among potential benefits of PBL are those named by Lortie (1998):

- PBL strategies can “increase awareness of where further knowledge is needed, particularly when groups studying cases find gaps in the knowledge base” of the fields which inform the preparation, training, and development of educational leaders.
- PBL strategies can add to the knowledge bases in educational leadership as the “development of cases and their compilation into books and other collections can help to organize knowledge of practice” in the related fields which inform the preparation, training, and development of educational leaders.
- PBL strategies “can be used to teach about a wide range of subjects, including topics which are becoming important but are not yet well-understood.”
- PBL strategies “can be used to study a variety of subjects and theories.”
- PBL strategies can encourage “collaboration between professors and those students

who are ready to undertake data-gathering, to write memos and initial drafts. Such work involves acquiring and/or improving skills that are eminently practical in the practice of administration. They include: the ability to win the confidence of informants, developing interviewing and observational skills and, not least of all, learning to sift through and separate significant from trivial facts in the situation under study.”

Exceptional and innovative educational leadership programs use cohort models

As Jackson and Kelley (2002) explain, “advantages include the development of stronger social and interpersonal relationships, increased contact with faculty members, better integration into the university, clearer program structure and course sequencing, higher program completion rates, greater cohesiveness, and the development of professional networks” (p. 196).

Exceptional and innovative educational leadership programs develop meaningful and substantive field experiences that integrated into other educational experiences

It is important for aspiring leaders to not only read, hear, or write about leadership, they must experience this firsthand whenever possible. As Jackson and Kelley (2002) observed, “field experiences should provide core learning experiences in programs to enable future leaders to observe, participate in, and...to apply what is

learned in the classroom, rather than using class work to support learning that occurs in the field” (p. 197). It is therefore critical that coursework for aspiring leaders be embedded with field experiences to maximize the potential for relevant learning and growth.

Exceptional and innovative educational leadership programs use cutting-edge technology

In the current technological milieu, and given what the rapidly-changing nature of both popular and instructional technology, it is important that leadership preparation programs (a) incorporate the use of contemporary

instructional technologies into their delivery and (b) that they help leaders develop an understanding and appreciation of what it means to lead in a rapidly-changing world of technological advance (Hughes, McLeod, Brahier, Dikkers, & Whiteside, 2005; McLeod, 2005).

Exceptional and innovative educational leadership programs are based on collaborative partnerships

Young, Peterson, and Short (2002) described a “league” of potential partners with a vested interest in the preparation of educational leaders (see Figure 2).

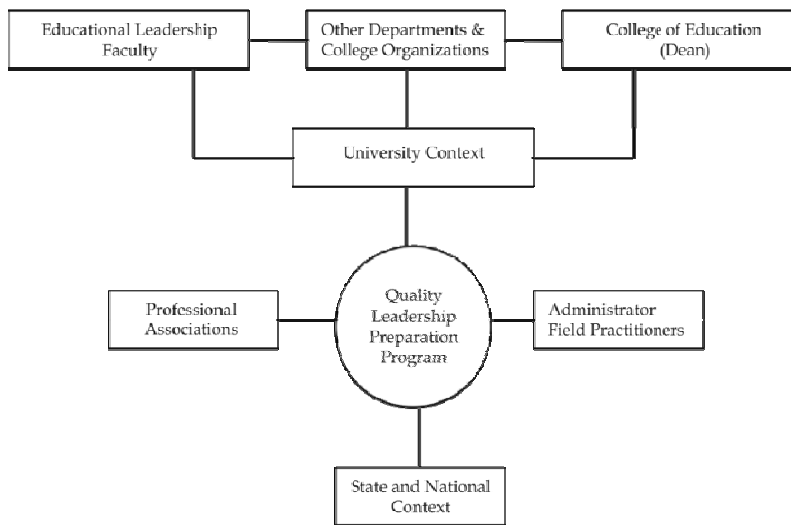


Figure 2. Key stakeholders contributing to the quality preparation of educational leaders (Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002, p. 159).

Further, these authors emphasize the reciprocal nature between educational stakeholders and argue that their relationships must be conceived as interrelated rather than separate if we are to serve the needs of all students:

“...if we are to realize the goal of ensuring educational excellence and equity for all children, we must first recognize that our work is fundamentally interdependent. None of our organizational or

individual activities operate within a vacuum. Rather, we are constantly affecting each other and the preparation of school leaders. Second, we must rethink what we do to ensure that it contributes to, rather than detracts from, quality preparation. This will require that we come together, seek a

This conclusion suggests, then, that stakeholders must not only be named as important, but have respect for other perspectives and acknowledge that each of the multiple contexts within which leaders and those who prepare them operate is a valid and important facet of leadership preparation. Young, Short, and Peterson (2002) continue by suggesting a set of operational dispositions imperative to the success of such endeavors:

- We must recognize our interdependency
- We must come together
- We must seek understanding
- We must build common ground
- We must work collaboratively

To summarize, exceptional and innovative educational leadership preparation includes collaborative relationships between multiple stakeholders that must seek to work together with both a respect and a commitment to establishing and sustaining practices that help accentuate the strengths of the various partners while diminishing their individual weaknesses. Paraphrasing a traditional African aphorism: it takes a village to raise a leader.

Yet, it is important to acknowledge that the stakeholders and

contexts named in Figure 2 do not always work well together or meaningfully interact; they can have conflicted interests and often wield differentiated amounts of power over each other. The following section explains how the various stakeholders related to the preparation program redesigned, collaborated, and sometimes encountered conflict as they conducted their work and attempted to incorporate other aspects of Jackson and Kelley's ideas into the program.

The Redesign: A Local Education Agency Partnership at Auburn University

The movement to reform educational leadership programs has led to the examination and redesign of principal preparation programs, with a particular emphasis on those programs that lead to initial certification. In these programs, systemic changes have been ongoing in university curricula, internships, and state certification and licensure procedures for educational leaders. Alabama, like many other states, faced the challenge of aligning actions across the leadership preparation system through a statewide redesign process. A survey of sixty-one university leadership preparation programs within a 16-state region of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) found many leadership programs producing ill-qualified, unprepared principals (Southern Regional Education Board [SREB], 2005). While a variety of other factors contribute to low student achievement results, longstanding trends suggest that Alabama's public school

principals may be poorly prepared to effectively lead schools for learning in an era of data driven accountability. It seems plausible that administrator preparation is at least part of this seemingly systemic problem. In any event, insufficient principal preparation is an issue many colleges and universities have discussed in consortia and other panel meetings (SREB, 2001) and one that the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has attempted to address when looking at the elements that make many statewide academic initiatives effective or failed efforts. Although numerous studies show that school leadership has an indirect affect on student learning (Ellis, 2002; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Sweet, 1996), in light of low test scores throughout the state of Alabama, it is evident that student success is somehow interdependent with school leadership. By extension, the argument can be made that the preparation of these leaders is of importance.

Poor student reading performance and strict accountability laws at the turn of the 21st century led to massive implementation of the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI). And coupled with an external evaluation that suggested that the single most important human factor in the success of the initiative was the leadership of the school principal, scrutiny on preparation programs increased (Alabama Department of Education, 2000; Alabama Department of Education, 2002; Mitchell, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). These findings from the SREB and the Alabama State Department of Education revealed

that the problems of leadership were systemic and indicated a need for a strong partnership between the state department, universities, and local school districts for effective and systemic change (SREB, 2002).

Before the initiation of program redesign of instructional leaders by Alabama Governor Bob Riley, Auburn University's educational leadership program took a "traditional" approach in its graduate admissions policies and curricula. This traditional program emphasized compliance with state standards and faculty interest and expertise rather than focusing on needs of local schools. A new plan incorporated both theory-based knowledge and application of knowledge centered on current accountability issues, continuous improvement of schools and communities, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders to reach a common purpose.

During the initial stages of development and implementation of redesign, Auburn understood the need for collaborative partnerships. If effective change is determined by working interdependently (Young, Peterson, & Short, 2002, p. 140), then Auburn had a clear advantage in the arena of collaborative efforts prior to the redesign. The university established working relationships with several regional communities and has a history of collaboration and partnerships. Existing partnerships with various grant and university-initiated programs helped establish trust and capacity between various stakeholders, which formed an important foundation for subsequent work. The result of an ongoing program

of collaboration with district partners reduced questions that can initially arise about the need to support local efforts in recruitment, financial assistance, and academic fidelity of the redesign program. Understanding this critical need in the early stages allowed the effort to quickly enlist the assistance of key stakeholders from LEAs in the east central Alabama region. Consequently, reaching out to local school systems for their expertise and support of the Instructional Leadership redesign was seamless and vital to the success of the redesign process. The Educational Leadership faculty identified seven school systems with the largest historic enrollment in the program and invited those districts to become Instructional Leadership Program (ILP) partners. Soon thereafter, this large group formed an advisory council comprised of representatives from each LEA, former Educational Leadership students, ALSDE representatives, and university faculty.

Initial advisory council planning revealed the need to establish four committees in the redesign effort: (a) curriculum, (b) partnership, (c) admission, and (d) accountability/assessment. While each committee was an important piece to the process, it is evident that partnership became central to the entire process connecting the common strands in each committee¹. Open lines of communication between district partners, faculty, and students facilitated a pliable, adaptable, and adjustable

process connecting the charges and challenges of each committee.

The Partnership Committee

The Partnership Committee was responsible for identifying district needs, projecting hiring needs for building administrators, discussing issues for a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), and developing effective ways to work together throughout the process of program development and implementation. The Memorandum of Agreement was a critical component of the ILP partnership and, therefore, required extensive input from the LEAs. The purpose of the MOA was to identify the parameters of working together, to clearly state participants' roles, to emphasize that goals should be mutually beneficial, to acknowledge there might be different system agreements, depending on the amount of release time, and to ensure sign-off by the superintendents and the College of Education Dean. In addition, there were areas of concern expressed by LEAs that centered on release time for personnel, recruitment difficulties, consistency of principal guidance intra-district, and personnel resources in smaller districts. Resolving these issues to the point that they were workable for each district was a testament to the strong partnership between the university and LEAs. Collaboration was also evident in that LEA representatives were included in the admission process. The candidates' writing sample, admission portfolio, and interview was assessed by a committee with at least one LEA representative. To avoid bias, the representative could not

¹ Other committees are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this special issue.

be employed by the same school system as the candidate.

Other partnerships were further strengthened by the use of Field-based Coaches (FBCs), who were selected collaboratively by the superintendent and the Educational Leadership faculty. The following criteria were used in the selection process:

- Candidate has a minimum of three successful years in current administrative position;
- Is respected as a leader by peers and supervisors;
- Provides evidence of documented success in school improvement activities;
- Displays a willingness to spend time mentoring aspiring leaders;
- Displays a willingness to participate in training sessions on how to be an effective field-based coach, and
- Advances university/district expectations for working with and assessing candidates.

The Educational Leadership faculty trained FBCs in line with the most current research findings on effective coaching and coordinated their responsibilities and the internship plan for each semester. The Curriculum Committee took into consideration valuable ideas shared by partners in the development of course syllabi and internship activities. Partners assisted in the writing and development of course syllabi, adding strategies and activities directly related to current educational issues and practices at the school level. The internship for each semester was

directly related to the courses being taught, which ensured correlation of the ALSDE instructional standard and suggested activities that aligned with the Internship course objectives. This is in line with SREB's (2005) argument that educational leadership departments and other state agencies responsible for higher education, program approval, and licensure should share the responsibility for internships. Auburn was fortunate in that the state department of education began revising and rewriting state standards (as outlined in the Alabama Code) at the same time that the redesign process commenced. This revision in the Alabama Code allowed for more effective planning for internship activities, which promoted greater compatibility between theory and practice at the school level. The strength of this program, on paper, lied in knowing about and meeting the needs of school systems.

Discussion: Navigating the Complexity of Partnerships in Program Redesign

While the models suggested in the literature and process described above are to some degree logical, make sound arguments about important issues, and can easily be embraced by university faculty and leaders in K-12 schools, practical implementation is more complex and potentially problematic. As Auburn University moved through the process of redesigning its instructional leadership program to represent not only research-based findings but also the needs and expectations of local school districts, whom the university served in this endeavor, numerous challenges

arose. Also, through these strong partnerships with the LEAs, agreement was reached on some significant program components that moved beyond the typical and addressed many of the research findings in creative and challenging ways.

One of the initial challenges for the development of the program at Auburn University was that the impetus for program redesign that came from the state level in the form of a Governor's Congress on School Leadership. This effort, and subsequent mandates from the state superintendent of education, assured systemic change in the standards for instructional leadership, designing sound and demanding curricula, providing meaningful field experiences for upcoming administrators, and the revision of the certification and evaluation programs. Additionally, the state department of education revised the standards for instructional leadership, providing directives for college and university preparation programs in Alabama. Much of the literature shows that standards for leaders, as defined by ISLLC, Alabama Standards for School Leaders Policies, and school improvement programs in Alabama, as well as other states, are closely tied to the practical application of what principals do on a daily basis.

The state mandate that resulted from this initial effort at reform required, among other things, that all universities with educational leadership programs close admissions during the redesign process. This allowed the university to address issues of concern expressed by meaningful parties regarding training of new and existing faculty on new

teaching strategies, rewriting syllabi to address the new standards and blend theory and practice, and providing professional development targeted at helping faculty design class projects and activities that focused on both theory and the practical demands of school and community. Accountability, stringent standards imposed by the state and other education related agencies, as well as ongoing efforts for continuous school improvement provide impetus for professional development. The program at Auburn had lost faculty members due to illness and other issues, so the opportunity to shut down admissions while focusing on redesign allowed time to reconsider staffing needs. However, it also provided a situation where almost the entire faculty that would be in place once the program was approved and opened for operation would be new. Hiring a totally new faculty created a wonderful opportunity, but with opportunity always comes accompanying challenges. In this case, five new faculty members were hired to work with the master's and doctoral level programs. Three of the five were career K-12 educators whose only higher education experience was from work as adjunct faculty. While those individuals were hired to create a cadre of instructors with varying strengths and experiences, inculcating them into the university experience would be an issue that complicated the implementation process. In addition, blending five new faculty members into a team that understands each other and can appreciate how each member can best impact the total program requires time and a focus on collaborative processes. While each of

these issues is ultimately positive for the quality of the program, they presented initial challenges beyond the typical programmatic considerations.

Figure 2 shows the interrelated functioning of a group of potential partners who may work together in bringing an innovative program to being. In this case, the partnership was one of the true strengths of the redesign effort. In particular, the importance of the Dean of the College of Education was paramount, in part because she previously served as a faculty member in the educational leadership program for over a decade. Her work with LEAs, along with other key faculty members' experience in that arena, created an environment where working alongside K-12 partners was something typical and comfortable for everyone involved. Her leadership also helped create a synergy within the college of education that made getting things done and capitalizing on the collective expertise within the college more accessible than it might have been otherwise². The university context can be confusing and unwieldy for those with little experience in its administrative and bureaucratic architecture. However, through leadership and cooperation from the various entities within the college and university, this process was not problematic in any way.

The real strength of this process was, however, the degree to which a significant number of very active LEA partners were willing and able to participate in extremely meaningful ways in development of every aspect of

the program. The four committees that functioned throughout the redesign process (curriculum, partnership, admission, and accountability/assessment) each had LEA representation and leadership. Participants consistently recognize the level of cooperation among university faculty and these stakeholders as a signature strength of the program. Not only were the partners willing, but some of the insights into program aspects, potential problem areas, and future LEA needs reflected a high level of ability and knowledge about both their individual situation and the profession-at-large.

However, no operation of partnerships is without challenges. While gathering many partners, representing numerous schools and school districts, is a fantastic opportunity, it was difficult to obtain consistent participation from all seven districts involved in the Auburn program. Time, distance, and job requirements of practicing administrators were all issues that made the process complex. Additionally, it also is necessary, when working with representatives from various and diverse districts, to make sure that there is no appearance of favoritism among partners. Yet creating ways for all partners to feel like they are equally represented at the table is essential and was accomplished through a concerted effort on the part of leaders of the redesign effort from the faculty and administration.

Further complicating Auburn's partnership arrangement was the fact that multiple partner districts experienced changes and turnover in leadership both during and immediately

² This point is discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this special issue.

after the redesign effort. This complicates any implementation process because the new leaders must be oriented into something that their predecessor had been working with for multiple years. In Auburn's case, each superintendent signed an MOA specifying his or her district's obligations as a partner. For example, each MOA committed each partner district to supporting a thirty-day internship through working with students on release time requirements. As leadership changed in partner districts, that issue, along with others, had to be revisited and agreed upon again. This process required additional effort on the part of university faculty but has not as yet proven to be a limiting factor in the implementation of the program as originally formulated.

The placement of student interns has been one area of agreement between partner LEAs and the university that has been complex. Each of the seven partner districts with whom Auburn University is working is small to medium in terms of size. Finding time to release valuable instructional employees for internship experiences is not something that can be taken lightly in this time of stringent accountability processes and principals, and superintendents have concern when the issue arises. By having a clinical supervisor who is able to devote her time totally to the ILP and its students, the university has been able to coordinate these activities in the least cumbersome way possible for the partner districts. Also, the degree of coordination has enabled students to have diverse experiences and not just go to their home school or school district. Each student only serves one of his or her four

internship rotations in their home school/district. The clinical supervisor has even been able to work with partner districts with different school calendars (holidays) to allow interns to fulfill their program obligations without missing time at their home school. This again shows the degree of attention to the university-LEA partnership and the quality of interaction between the cooperating agencies.

Finally, another valuable asset in the development of Auburn's program was the partnership's relationship to the state and national context. Although state department of education officials were ultimately to sit in a compliance monitoring position, they were very involved in communicating with university faculty and administrators about program expectations, resources, and assistance. The staff from the Alabama State Department of Education served as true partners in many ways, and their knowledge and expertise was most helpful in the development phase. Also, national entities, such as Southern Region Education Board (SREB), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), provided important standards and other supporting materials that informed the development of standards, internship experiences, and assessment strategies for the program.

The synergy created by the interaction among these valuable stakeholders helped create a dynamic process whereby the Instructional Leadership Program was ultimately developed. Without the vast expertise that was available to the committees,

such a program would have been impossible. As the faculty and partners move forward, new information is continually made available about additional challenges and issues. The comprehensive evaluation process plus the ongoing discussion with all of the partners discussed in prior sections will provide a continuous improvement focus that is important for any type of program, but especially so for one that is trying to produce leaders for schools where continuous improvement is the key to success.

Discussion: Navigating the Complexity of Partnerships in Program Redesign

Young, Petersen, and Short's (2002) model (Figure 2) is helpful in that it identifies some of the key players who must collaborate if leadership preparation is to be reconceived as a collective endeavor that ultimately improves education. Further, such partnerships are regarded as features of outstanding and innovative preparation programs (Jackson & Kelley, 2002). This article investigated some of this complexity and suggested that such partnerships can be as complicated as they are potentially fruitful. Working on

this article urged us to reconsider the relationships between various stakeholders (Figure 3).

Figure 3 suggests that instead of conceiving of the relationships between stakeholders in educational leadership preparation programs as being connected through clear lines of communication as suggested in Figure 1, they might more accurately be considered as discrete components of a single, nested system. This alternative depiction of educational leadership preparation programming suggests the interrelationship of all components of the system that support and inform the work of university faculty. This interrelationship is evident in Auburn's case: the synergy created by the interaction among our valuable stakeholders helped create a dynamic process whereby the Instructional Leadership Program was ultimately developed. Without the discrete components and collective expertise that informed the program's redesign—both theoretical *and* clinical expertise—that was available to committees and ultimately all stakeholders, an authentic program redesign would not have been impossible.

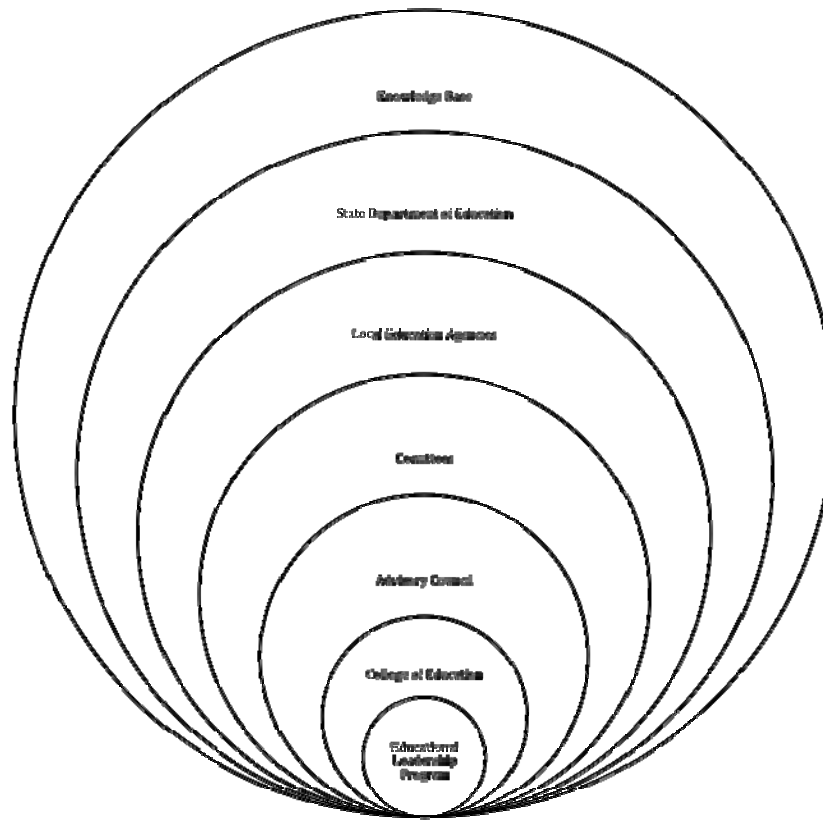


Figure 3. A nested model of leadership preparation stakeholders.

Although we would like to place students, school districts, and school district partners at the base of our diagram, it is ultimately university faculty who initiate reforms, ensure that any changes are in-line with university policy, invite partners to join in the work and implement the program. Beyond the program, the work of the dean of the college of education is critical in providing internal support and serving as an external liaison to LEAs. When the network is then extended beyond the university, structures must be in place to facilitate partnership activities or they will suffer from lack of coordination and focus, likely resulting in a partnership on paper but not in practice. Auburn

University's establishment of an advisory council, which was then organized into four working committees, helped create a structure that involved LEAs, the state department of education, and ultimately connected all to the knowledge base of the field. Conceived as a nested model, the relationship between partners in educational leadership preparation is characterized as synergistic and symbiotic, rather than as coordinated silos. Yet synergistic models are accompanied by endemic shortcomings.

There are at least two problems that the synergistic model we advance suggests. First, each sphere in the model is constantly changing. Faculty come and go, elected officials come and go,

school district administrators come and go, and the knowledge base of the field is forever changing. This protean aspect of leadership preparation means that as one aspect of the leadership preparation environment changes, all are affected. Second, if any one aspect of this model is not coordinated with others, or is particularly resistant to change, the whole solvency of the system is in jeopardy. These two points in tandem suggest the frailty of the system that supports educational leadership

preparation and exposes a reliance on individuals rather than systems. Indeed, it does seem like it takes a village to raise a leader. However, in an environment where the villagers are constantly moving and the nature of their work and relationships are constantly changing, developing synergy among educational stakeholders is a necessary, though extremely complex and ever-changing endeavor.

References

- Alabama State Department of Education. (2000). *The Alabama reading initiative*. Montgomery, AL: Author.
- Alabama State Department of Education. (2002). *Alabama accountability act*. Montgomery, AL: Author.
- Björk , L. G., & Ginsberg, R. (1995, February). Principles of reform and reforming principal training: A theoretical perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 31(1), 11-37.
- Brooks, J. S. (2006). *The dark side of school reform: Teaching in the space between reality and utopia*. Rowman & Littlefield Education: Lanham, MD.
- Brooks, J. S., & Miles, M. T. (2008). From scientific management to social justice...and back again? Pedagogical shifts in educational leadership. In A. H. Normore (Ed.), *Leadership for social justice: Promoting equity and excellence through inquiry and reflective practice* (pp. 99-114). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- English, F. (1998). Psst! What does one call a set of non-empirical beliefs required to be accepted on faith and enforced by authority? [Answer: A religion, aka the ISLLC Standards]. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 3(2), 159-167.
- English, F. W. (2001, April). The epistemological foundations of professional practice: Do they

- matter? The case for the ISLLC Standards and the National Exam for Administrative Licensure. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.
- English, F. W. (2003, Spring). "Functional foremanship" and the virtue of historical amnesia: The AASA, the ELCC Standards, and the reincarnation of scientific management in educational preparation programs for profit. *Teaching in Educational Administration*, 10(1), 5 -6.
- Firestone, W.A., & Riehl, C. (Eds.). (2006). *A new agenda: Directions for research on educational leadership*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hess, F. M (2004). *Common sense school reform*. New York: Palgrave-McMillan.
- Hughes, J. E., McLeod, S., Brahier, B., Dikkers, A. G., & Whiteside, A. (2005). School technology leadership: Theory to practice. *Academic Exchange*, 9(2), 51-55.
- Jackson, B. L., & Kelley, C. (2002). Exceptional and innovative programs in educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(2), 192-212.
- Jean-Marie, G., Normore, A. H., & Brooks, J. S. (2009). Leadership for social justice: Preparing 21st Century school leaders for a new social order. *Journal of Research on Leadership in Education*, 4(1): 1-31. Retrieved September 18, 2010, from http://www.ucea.org/storage/jrle/pdf/vol4_issue1_2009/Jean_Marie_Normore%20Brooks.pdf
- Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *Review of research: How leadership influences student learning*. New York: The Wallace Foundation.
- Levine, A. (2005). *Educating school leaders*. Washington, D.C.: The Education Schools Project.
- Lortie, D. C. (1998). Teaching educational administration: Reflections on our craft (1994 Mitstifer Lecture). *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 1(1). Retrieved October 11, 2004 from <http://www.ucea.org>.
- Marzano, R.J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B.A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.
- McLeod, S. (2005, November). *Leadership, change, and technology*. IBM Education Leadership Newsletter. Retrieved January 20, 2006, from <http://www.reinventingeducation.org/RE3Web/newsletters/20051101/article03.htm>
- Morton, J. (2005). *Interpretive guide: Alabama accountability system*.

- Montgomery, AL: Alabama State Department of Education.
- Murphy, J. (1990a). The educational reform movement of the 1980s: A comprehensive analysis. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *The reform of American public education in the 1980s: Perspectives and cases* (pp. 3-55). Berkeley: McCutchan.
- Murphy, J. (1990b). Improving the preparation of school administrators: The National Policy Board's story. *The Journal of Educational Policy*, 5(2), 181-186.
- Murphy, J. (1990c). Preparing school administrators for the twenty-first century: The reform agenda. In B. Mitchell & L. L. Cunningham (Eds.), *Educational leadership and changing contexts of families, communities, and schools* (pp. 232-251). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Murphy, J. (1990d). The reform of school administration: Pressures and calls for change. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *The reform of American public education in the 1980s: Perspectives and cases* (pp. 277-303). Berkeley: McCutchan.
- Southern Regional Educational Board. (2005). *SREBs leadership curriculum modules: Engaging leaders in solving real school problems*. Atlanta, GA: Author.
- Southern Regional Educational Board. (2002). *Goals for education: Challenge to lead*. Atlanta, GA: SREB.
- Southern Regional Educational Board. (2001). *The principal internship: How can we get it right?* Atlanta, GA: SREB.
- Sweet, R. (2006). *Reading success taskforce*. Phoenix, AZ: Author.
- Young, M. D., Petersen, G. J. Short, P. M. (2002). The Complexity of substantive reform: A call for interdependence among key stakeholders. *Educational Administration Quarterly* (38)2, 137-175.

Jeffrey S. Brooks is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri and a J. William Fulbright Senior Scholar alumnus. He has conducted ethnographic and case study research in the United States and the Philippines focused on high school leadership and reform, teacher leadership, ethics, and socio-cultural dynamics of leadership practice and preparation. Dr. Brooks' work has been published in *Educational Administration Quarterly*, the *Journal of Educational Administration*, and *Educational Policy*, and several other peer-reviewed journals. He is author of *The Dark Side of School reform: Teaching in the Space between*

Reality and Utopia (Rowman & Littlefield Education) and the forthcoming *Black School, White School: Racism and Educational (Mis)leadership* (Teachers College Press). He is editor of the *Journal of School Leadership*, 2008-2010 chair of the AERA Leadership for Social Justice SIG, and series editor of the Information Age Publishing Educational Leadership for Social Justice Book Series.

Tim Havard is director of special education for Auburn City Schools in Auburn, Alabama. His research interests include: professional learning communities in K-12 schools; building instructional leadership capacity; issues that impact student performance.

Karen M. Tatum is a doctoral student in educational leadership at Auburn University. She is a teacher in the Macon County School District in Tuskegee, Alabama. She was previously an administrator in Macon County working with human resources, professional development and school improvement. Her research interests focus on the policies, practices and paradigm shifts that occur in redesigning principal preparation programs.

Lynn Patrick is associate/clinical professor and program coordinator for the K-12 Instructional Leadership Preparation Program at Auburn University. Her research interests include instructional leadership, continuous school improvement, instructional leadership and student achievement, formative assessment and increased student achievement, NCLB and accountability, school culture, school climate, and efficacy.