Constructing Collective Understanding in School: Principal and Student Use of Iterative Digital Reflection

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Principal preparation around the development of reflective practices has traditionally focused on the individual reflective practices of principals. Recently, reflective discourse between principals and students has facilitated principals' understanding of student perspectives regarding school policies and processes. We explore the use of digital video to facilitate principal and student reflection by recasting reflection as a collaborative process in which collective understandings are developed through reflective discourse. Specifically, this participatory action research (PAR) approach examined a case example of the Iterative Digital Reflection (IDR) process between a high school principal and a 9th grade student that focused on practices, processes, and programs that they perceived to facilitate student college preparedness and readiness.

The preparation of school administrators and leaders has increasingly emphasized the importance of reflection (Brooks & Tooms, 2008; Larrivee, 2000; Short, 1997). The emphasis on reflection is largely based on the notion that given the high degree of complexity involved in leading within educational systems, the theories and models that guide practice are often of limited value (Schön, 1983). The development of principal candidates' skills and capacities to reflect has been identified as a valuable goal for preparation programs in order to better prepare candidates to make meaning from the complexity often inherent in the ambiguous and idiosyncratic issues that arise in any school (Short, 1997). Notably, most conceptions and descriptions of reflection have positioned reflection as an intrapersonal process in which individuals make meaning from their experiences (Boud, 2001; Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983). While an array of practices have emerged from the various conceptions of reflection, we believe that collective reflective practices between pre- and in-service school principals

and students hold significant potential to inform the construction of more meaningful and effective school processes and experiences for students.

Along with the emerging emphasis on preparing school principals who are reflective practitioners, there is also growing recognition of the importance of preparation that equips principals to better engage students in order to create opportunities for instructive dialogue around school issues, policies, and pedagogical processes (Cook-Sather, 2007). Historically, school personnel have not made consistent practice of engaging students' perspectives on their experiences in schools (Gentilucci, 2004). Critical education theorists (Freire, 1990; Giroux, 1981; McLaren, 1989) have vigorously explored the political, cultural, and societal implications of excluding student voices regarding their own experiences in schools. Importantly, there is also a small, but growing, body of scholarly literature that has examined or identified, at least in part, the impact of positive principal interaction with students (Gentilucci & Muto, 2007; Rieg, 2007; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2004). Given the importance of preparing school principals to both engage in reflective practices and to listen more critically to student perspectives on their experiences in schools, we used a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach to explore the use of a collaborative reflection process, Iterative Digital Reflection (IDR), between a high school principal and a 9th grade student around their perceptions of the practices, processes, and programs that they believed to facilitate student college preparedness and readiness.

Reflection

Reflection has been defined and described in numerous ways. One consistent conceptual thread, though, is the notion that reflection involves taking the unprocessed, raw material of experience and making meaning from it (Boud, 2001). This conception has its origins in the work of Dewey (1938) who suggested teachers' beliefs regarding their practices must be a focus of reflection. In this view, reflection allows practitioners to increase the complexity of their understandings of their experiences and practices by examining the beliefs that mediate those understandings. When practitioners reframe their experiences beyond their initial, often unexamined beliefs, they begin to develop deeper, richer meanings from their experiences (Schön, 1983). The focus of reflection, though, does not need to be solely focused on practitioner experiences. For example, reflection has also been described as a mediator between practice and theoretical knowledge and content (Kolb, 1984).

Although reflection has often been characterized as an intrapersonal process in which individuals make meaning from their experiences (Boud, 2001; Dewey, 1938; Schön, 1983), reflection has also been positioned beyond individual meaning-making. For example, Kolb (1984) also emphasized that reflection serves to not only close the gap that inevitably exists between theory and practice, but also provides a mechanism to both enrich understanding of theory while simultaneously nurturing more effective professional practice. Similarly, Dewey (1933) also described reflection as a process that can instill purpose and intention in our actions by examining the impact or outcomes of those actions.

Later, Freire (1990) extended the conceptual movement, exemplified earlier by Dewey, toward including action as a central component of reflection through the development of the term *praxis*, which he described as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 47). In doing so, Freire positioned reflection as not simply a mechanism to integrate theory and practice, but included agency in the process. That is, reflection should serve as a foundation of transformative action. Argyris and Schön (1978) expanded the reflective gaze beyond the outcome of actions and practices, which they refer to as single-loop learning, to reflection on the reflective process itself. When engaged in the latter, individuals question and critically examine the underlying perceptions, assumptions, and values that initially led to the actions and outcomes in the first place. They referred to this type of reflection as double-loop learning.

While some have emphasized the importance of reflection moving beyond individual meaning-making toward transformed and transformative action, others have recognized the value of situating reflection in a collective practice. For instance, Zeichner and Liston (1996) critiqued the traditional emphasis on teacher reflection as a "solitary affair," and instead promoted reframing teacher reflection as a "collaborative social practice" (p. 77). Likewise, Joyce and Showers (1995) recommended collaborative reflective practices within teacher preparation programs. Shireen Desouza and Czerniak (2003) operationalized three behaviors that characterized collaborative reflective practices for teachers working with diverse students: (a) collaborative inquiry into student needs and abilities, (b) collaborative development of student instructions, and (c) collaborative peer performance evaluation (p. 77). Notably, the literature on collective reflective practices is based partially on the assumption that such practices can serve to empower those participating in it to assert more autonomy as educators, while enhancing both the teaching process and learning outcomes (Nicholson & Bond, 2003).

Learning From Our Students

School staff members rarely solicit student perspectives on their school experiences (Smith, Petralia, & Hewitt, 2005). The omission of student voices extends beyond the school walls to educational policy and reform (Kozol, 1991). Perhaps, then, it should not be surprising that we could find only one article (Rieg, 2007) in the professional literature that focused on student relationships with principals from the perspective of students. The lack of literature and information we encountered was consistent with Rieg's experience searching for similar literature to frame her description of twelve recommendations for principals to build relationships with students.

There is, however, literature on the importance and impact of listening to students' perspectives. Student perspectives have been identified as "an untapped source" of ideas for improving pedagogy and building deeper student involvement and participation (Smith, Petralia, & Hewitt, 2005, p. 28). Levin (1994) suggested that strategies aimed at school reform are more robust when they incorporate students in meaningful ways and enlist their participation and support in developing school goals

and instructional strategies. Furthermore, listening to the views of students can also give principals and teachers insight toward designing more effective curriculum (Cook-Sather, 2007) and improving other school practices (Dyson, 2007).

When school personnel invite student engagement and reflection regarding their school experiences, there are also positive outcomes for the students, themselves. Through her analysis of previous literature on student engagement, Cook-Sather (2006) identified and described three ways that such engagement generates positive outcomes for students. The first is that it changes the "dominant power imbalances between adults and young people" (p. 366). In order to engage in genuine discourse, adults in schools need to renegotiate their power with their students in order to allow more egalitarian conversation. Second, such collaborative engagement causes students to feel respected and this often produces higher levels of student involvement in both their learning and the school. Third, the constructionist nature of collaborative conversation and inquiry among school personnel and students allows for students' lived experiences to be voiced to staff, creating powerful opportunities for transformative experiences for students and teachers alike. Cook-Sather (2007) also discussed negative aspects to student involvement found in the literature. She found that dangers exist when student perspectives are concentrated to one monolithic view. Additionally, she maintained school personnel must resist oversimplifying the expressed needs and viewpoints of only a chosen few students while neglecting the more difficult perspectives held by students who challenge the pre-existing paradigms and values school staff members hold.

Iterative Digital Reflection (IDR)

Iterative Digital Reflection (IDR) is a process that utilizes educator and student individual reflections and reflective discourse between them in order to facilitate the development of collective understandings around school practices, processes, and programs. From a procedural standpoint, IDR is a process in which digital video is used to capture individual and discursive reflective artifacts that can then be used as objects of reflection themselves. Each iteration of the reflective process builds from the previous one, and in doing so provides participants with opportunities to generate deeper meaning and collective understandings of a topic. The IDR process is constructionist in nature because participants inform their understandings of the topic at hand through their own individual reflections, through viewing the digital reflections created by the other participant, and through a reflective conversation with the other participant. The emphases on collaborative inquiry among youth and adults, privileging the lived experiences of both youth and adult participants, and shared meaning-making between youth and adults all position IDR within the framework of PAR.

The IDR process begins with an educator or educator candidate and a student using digital video to record individual reflections around a focus area or topic. Once recorded, these artifacts of reflection are then exchanged and the two reflect on them in order to
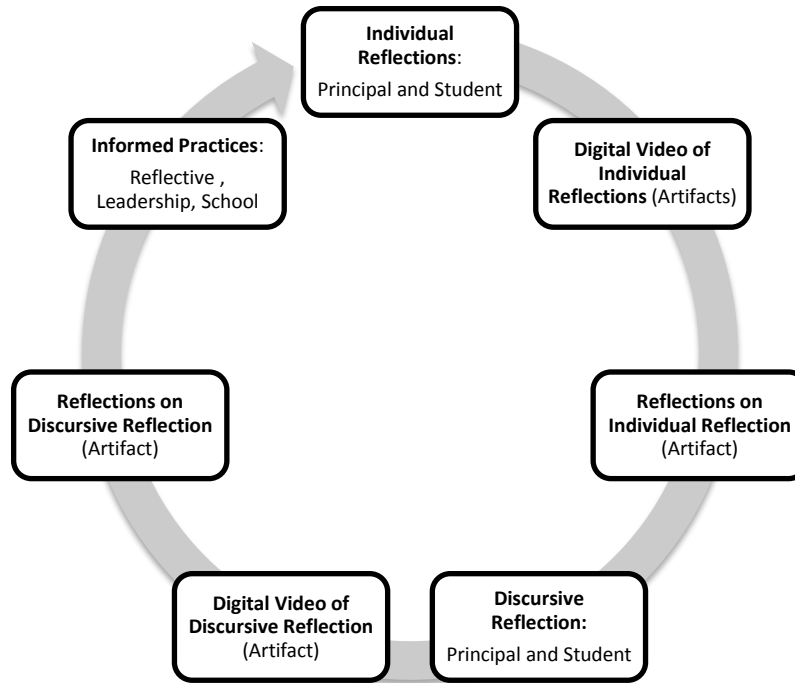
Figure 1. Iterative Digital Reflective Process.

better understand the other's perspective on the focus area or topic. Next, the two engage in conversation, or reflective discourse, around the focus area or topic and their emergent understandings of it informed by the other's perspective as expressed in the individual reflection.

Each iteration of reflection is intended to further inform both the educator's or educator candidate's and the student's understanding of the focus area or topic in the following order: (1) through more traditional intrapersonal reflection, (2) by learning more about the focus area or topic from the perspective of each other, (3) through the constructed meanings and understandings that emerge from the collaborative conversation or discursive reflection, and finally (4) from examining both the content and process represented by the digital artifact that captured the discursive reflection. Practicing educators can use IDR in their schools, but it also could be used as a pedagogical or supervision tool within preparation programs. Prior to a more detailed description of the IDR process as seen through the case example engaged in by two of the authors, James Young and La'Von Fudge, we believe it is important to briefly identify and describe how this process evolved from the other two authors' efforts to develop more powerful reflective practices within our own preparation programs and how these efforts contributed to developing the IDR process.

Moving toward Iterative Digital Reflections (IDR) in Practice

Iterative digital reflection (IDR) evolved from our (Janson and Parikh) use of other modes and models for developing reflective practitioners within the school counselor and educational leadership programs in which we teach. We believe the narrative behind the development of IDR is instructive because it parallels some of the

concepts and values that we believe this process both embodies and supports. Through collaborative reflective inquiry into our own supervision and pedagogical approaches, and in collaboration with our students, we gradually developed reflective practices and methods that eventually evolved into what we now refer to as IDR.

Like faculty in numerous other programs (McCollum, 2002; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991; Tsangaridou & O'Sullivan, 1997), we have been utilizing written reflective journals in our school counseling and educational leadership content and experiential courses for a few years. Initially, our use of written reflective journals developed from our intention to encourage candidate development toward being more reflective practitioners. Our use of reflective journals was also motivated by the knowledge that reflective insights often occur outside of the contexts of either the classroom or supervision sessions.

As a result of the positive candidate response to the use of written reflective journals and the high level of engagement they demonstrated using digital video for other tasks, we began to explore the use of digital video as a mode for reflective journaling. We also wanted to explore the use of alternative media for reflection because of challenges posed by written reflective journals. Some candidates told us that they often perceived written reflective journals as "just another written assignment," and we recognized that too many journal responses contained limited depth. Also, some candidates discussed that they felt they focused more on language use than on deep reflection, even though faculty emphasized the content and quality of reflection over language craft.

These disconnects some candidates were experiencing between the intended purpose of written reflective journals and the actual practice of writing them compelled us to introduce the use of video reflective journals into our school counselor candidates' practicum and internship experiences. Our candidates enthusiastically embraced the use of video reflective journaling and their preference for the use of video as a mode of reflection was described in a qualitative study we conducted in which some of the findings were that candidates perceived greater benefits to verbal reflections captured by video (Parikh & Janson, In Press)). While reflecting with our candidates on the use of these video reflections, the idea of transforming the video reflection process in order to capture reflective discourse on the counseling process between our school counselor candidates and students emerged, and this idea then was applied to educational leadership courses as well.

From this collaborative reflection with our candidates on our reflective processes, we developed a method that we call Discursive Digital Reflection (DDR) in which a discursive reflection on the counseling process between a school counselor candidate and a student was converted into a digital artifact that was then used as a focal point of further reflection within the context of supervision. DDR moved reflection from being a purely intrapersonal experience to a collaborative learning experience that seemed to further enrich and deepen our candidates' understandings of not only the counseling process and relationship, but also the reflective process through which understandings are developed. In some ways, this layered reflective process bears similarities to

Argyris and Schön's (1978) double-loop learning. Just as double-loop learning is learning about single-loop learning, the method of DDR provides opportunities for our students to reflect on the collaborative discursive reflective process itself.

It was within this context of our construction of more complex methods of reflection that we began to conceptualize IDR. Specifically, we wanted to explore how an iterative approach to using collaborative reflective processes might facilitate principal and student collective construction of meaning around a focus area or topic relevant to their school. Ultimately, it was our hope that the IDR process would not only facilitate richer meanings for both the principal and student, but that these emergent collective meanings might lead to changes in school procedures or policies. In order to further enrich our unique and shared understandings of the IDR process, we collectively determined that we should dissolve the boundaries between researchers and participants through a youth PAR approach.

Collaborative Inquiry Approach

We believed that a youth PAR approach would best frame our exploration of the use of the IDR process focused on the college-readiness culture at Trojan High School. We recognized there were distinct parallels between core elements of youth PAR and the IDR process emphases on collective reflection and the importance of eliciting and amplifying student voice. For instance, PAR has been identified as an approach that can "renew the social capital of those practicing the inquiry" (Welton, 2011, p. 1). We believed the potential PAR held for enhancing the social networks that can empower individuals participating in it was congruent with the IDR emphasis on youth empowerment through the development of closer relationships with the educators with whom they are partnered. Likewise, PAR does not simply examine or critique school practices, policies, or programs from a detached, uniformed, or theoretical stance (Fischer, 2003), but instead emphasizes the power of participants' lived experiences to provide data related to the issue or research question at hand and inform solutions and answers to them (Ayala, 2009). We also believed that this acknowledgement of "insider knowledge that young people bring to an inquiry" (Galletta & jones, 2010, p. 341) within a PAR approach bore a symmetry to our intention that the IDR process might yield deeper educator understandings of school practices, processes, and programs by eliciting and strengthening student voices regarding those practices, processes, and programs.

When PAR approaches are applied to collaborations with youth, the potential for intergenerational agency and collective action emerges (Tuck, 2009). Youth PAR is often structured to bring together youth and adults in order for them to collaboratively collect and analyze data, report results, and take action based on the results (Galletta & jones, 2010; McIntyre, 2000). Although the design of IDR does not require definitions or modes of reflection that require resultant action, as described in the case below action that grows from the collective reflective process can emerge from the IDR process. Just as the emphasis on agency in youth PAR creates opportunities for youth participants to be placed in a position of "simultaneously challenging and changing educational policies that directly impact them" (Welton, 2011, p. 2), we believe that the IDR process

can also place youth in positions to challenge and change educational practices, policies, and programs. As a result of the philosophical, political, and structural principles they share, we chose to frame our exploration of the IDR process through a youth PAR approach.

IDR in Practice: A Case Example

Our exploration of the Iterative Digital Reflection (IDR) process in practice focused on the participation of two of the authors, James Young and La'Von Fudge. At the time of the exploration, Young was the principal and Fudge was a 9th grade student at Trojan High School (a pseudonym), which was located in a large public school district in the southeastern United States. Trojan High School is situated in a large public school district in the southeastern United States. Prior to the study, Young and Fudge had not shared significant interactions with each other. We approached Young and Fudge to be partners in our exploration of this process because we knew both of them through our work at Trojan High School through an after school program in which our own school counselor candidates developed their academic and career counseling skills and practices while mentoring students in the school. The IDR process and the data and artifacts collected from it, occurred during one semester of the academic school year. Before Young and Fudge engaged in the IDR process, all four of us met and together decided on the focus question for reflection and inquiry: What is the college-readiness culture at Trojan High School?

Individual Reflections

As per the IDR process, Young and Fudge first recorded individual reflections regarding their perceptions of the practices, processes, and programs that they believed to facilitate student college preparedness and readiness at Trojan High School.   These recorded individual reflections then became the first reflective artifacts and data sources in the IDR process. The individual reflections by both Young and Fudge were each viewed and analyzed by all four of us independently. However, it was only following the completion of the IDR process that all four of us discussed together our respective perspectives and understandings of these individual reflections. As per the IDR process, Young and Fudge shared with each other their perceptions and understandings of their own perceptions and understanding of the reflections before engaging in the discursive reflection with each other. The two faculty researchers, Janson and Parikh, also discussed their own perceptions and understandings of these individual reflections with each other prior to Young and Fudge engaging in the discursive reflection.   The following analysis of these individual reflections was developed from the conversations that occurred among all four of us following the IDR process as well as from the prior conversations that occurred between the faculty researchers, Janson and Parikh.

Although the individual reflections created by Young and Fudge were focused on the same topic, the approaches they took to reflect on them were very different. Young focused on descriptions of programs and staff practices the school had in place in order to encourage and support college readiness, whereas Fudge discussed college readiness through the very personal lens of his experiences and observations. During

these individual reflections, Young and Fudge each seemed to reflect within the context of his prescribed role, specifically that of either administrator and student.

Fudge reflected loosely around his perceptions of the practices, processes, and programs that he believed facilitated student college preparedness and readiness. Among the specific topics he discussed during his reflection were his perceptions of the supportive atmosphere created by staff and students in the school, the safety he felt within the school, his belief that the staff was approachable, and the importance establishing himself academically with clear focus in order to be college ready when he graduated. Fudge discussed each one of these areas in very personal ways, and his reflection included both cognitive and affective content. Through his reflection he demonstrated significant and accurate understandings of the impact of the college-readiness strategies and programs within the school, namely the relatively high rate at which graduates from Trojan High School attend college. However, aside from his discussion of the one college readiness program that he was currently participating in, he did not mention any of the other college-readiness programs that the school provided. Notably, the program that he referenced and that he also participated in was designed specifically for 9th graders in the school, whereas most of the other programs, described in great detail by Young in his reflection, involved mostly 11th and 12th grade students.

In contrast to Fudge's personal focus on his experiences and observations in the school, Young's individual reflection consisted of detailed descriptions of the procedures, programs, and staff practices related to college-readiness. He mentioned school practices such as test preparation workshops, tutoring, an early graduation program, and also the professional practices of specific staff members. For the most part, Young described college-readiness without commentary on his personal perceptions of the practices, processes, and programs designed to facilitate student college preparedness and readiness or the beliefs students hold about it. He seemed to maintain an objective stance of the principal as program manager and his reflection was almost exclusively cognitive without the inclusion of affective content. Aside from the different styles of reflection demonstrated by Young and Fudge, there was common or shared content around the high expectations school staff held for students, and the emphasis the school placed on all students having the goal of attending college.

Discursive Digital Reflection

Following the recording of the individual reflections, Young and Fudge were each given copies of both reflections, and they reviewed them prior to engaging in the discursive digital reflection (DDR), or collaborative reflective conversation (Janson & Parikh, In Press). The discursive reflection was recorded and subsequently viewed, reviewed, and analyzed by all four of us on two separate occasions. Additionally, the two faculty researchers, we discussed their respective perceptions and analyses between the two data analysis sessions among all four researchers. We developed the following analysis of the DDR based on our notes from all three of these aforementioned data analysis sessions.

The DDR between Young and Fudge is remarkable in how it differs from the individual reflections. For instance, the nature of Young's reflections is substantially different than those in his individual reflection. There is substantially less expository descriptions of programs and practices, and instead Young engages Fudge with acknowledgment and encouragement, paraphrases from Fudge's individual reflection, and questions about his perspectives regarding school processes and practices. Young also makes his first personal disclosure during the entire IDR process about his own pathway to college. There are also noticeable differences in the nature of Fudge's reflection. His focus is much more closely aligned with the area of college-readiness, centering less on his experiences and observations and more on the practices and programs related to college-readiness in the school. Fudge also assumes a noticeable assertive stance in his interactions with Young. Fudge relates the importance of college-readiness strategies and programs being extended down to the 9th and 10th grades and provides a meaningful rationale for it. The purposefulness he displayed in doing so can be understood in terms of multi-tiered advocacy for himself and his 9th grade peers.

When viewed from a chronological standpoint, the power dynamic between Fudge and Young during the discursive reflection develops increasingly toward an egalitarian relationship in which they appear to be authentically co-constructing understanding toward transformed action. In our view, Young demonstrates significant generosity in opening reflective space for Fudge, and this facilitates development toward critical discourse. At the beginning of the reflection, Young appears to facilitate the process. He skillfully models the acknowledgment of Fudge's perspective represented in his individual reflection. This is followed by Fudge posing questions to Young regarding information related to the percentage of students who had gone into college from the school. It is after Young says he learned from his reflection that the school should emphasize college-readiness practices more with the lower grades that the dynamic seems to shift. Young asks Fudge for his suggestions about what else the school might do to better prepare students for college and Fudge quickly responds with concrete and constructive ideas that were immediately affirmed by Young. Shortly after that point, following Young's description of the college fair hosted by the school, Fudge asks a striking question: "For this college fair, what is the outcome you're expecting or hope to have?" It seems at this point that the traditional boundaries between principal and student are dissolved, allowing Fudge to shift from the role of student, to the role of constructive program evaluator. It is after Young responds to the inquiry that he then discloses a piece of his own personal narrative—his pathway to college. The discursive reflection ends soon after that point with each affirming the other, but not before Fudge once again advocates for the extension of more college-readiness strategies to him and his fellow 9th grade students.

Faculty and Programmatic Considerations

The IDR process is heavily centered on collaborative reflective discourse between educators and students. This collaborative reflective discourse is very likely a departure from conversations principal candidates might be accustomed to having with students and so requires some initial preparation for both principal candidates and

students in schools. Within this case example, Young's work in distributing power to Fudge was both generous and highly skilled for a practitioner at any level. As faculty, we need to recognize that the skills and disposition that Young exemplified are developmental, and students will likely need some purposeful scaffolding in order to continue to develop those skills and dispositions. The IDR process will also likely demand that principal candidates shift their ways of interacting with the students. In doing so, faculty need to emphasize that it is imperative the nature of their interactions move toward collaborative reflective conversation rather than an interview.

We have generated a list of questions that might be used during the discursive reflection (see Instructional Guide). These questions are by no means comprehensive, nor should they be rigidly adhered to, but rather should provide a starting point for the reflective conversation. Additionally, faculty should work with principal candidates in order to prepare and train them to explain to their student partners not only each of their new roles, but also the nature and purpose of the reflective conversation or discourse. One approach that can be used is role-playing that can first be modeled by the faculty, and then rehearsed among the principal candidates.

Following this preliminary preparation, the principal candidates can better engage in reflective discourse with their students. If they haven't done so already, the principal candidates should first describe and discuss with their partnering students the shift in roles required for collaborative reflective conversation, as well the purpose of it. We suggest that in doing so, the principal candidates also provide their partnering students with their list of possible reflection questions in order to further emphasize the democratic and participatory nature of the reflective partnership they are about to form and enact through their discursive reflection. Through this reflective partnership, the principal candidate and student engage in conversation around the focus area or topic and with an openness to "teaching the other about the meaning of their interaction" (Kagan & Kagan, 1990, p. 439).

The digital video artifacts that emerge from the discursive reflection can be used as an instructional tool either individually with the principal candidate or as a group experience. The focus of this instruction should generally focus on the collaborative reflective practices represented in the discursive digital reflection. Our use of IDR within this exploration yielded a list of prompts and questions that could be used to encourage principal candidates' reflexivity around the discursive reflection artifacts (See Instructional Guide). However, this focus should also be flexible enough to highlight and explore any compelling content that emerges from each unique artifact. We suggest that faculty might also consider further enriching principal candidates' knowledge and perspectives on reflection before or during the IDR process by introducing pertinent models, concepts, or theories of reflection. Some examples could be Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom & Krathwohl, 1956), Boud's framework for reflection (1995), Gibb's Reflective Cycle (1988), or the Inquiry-Action Cycle (Militello, Rallis, & Goldring, 2009).

When the IDR process is used for enhancing principal candidates' reflective thinking and practices, it represents a challenging degree of cognitive complexity for all

involved – principal candidates, students, and faculty. By engaging in this process, we are nudging everyone involved beyond cognition to meta-cognition. In other words, we are encouraging reflection that is focused well beyond our own individual experiences to those experiences and perspectives of students, and even to the reflective process of thinking critically about our thinking. Given this substantial level of abstraction, faculty should consider the pedagogical scaffolding that some students might require. Within our preparation programs, we have found that when we engage in group (small or whole class) examinations and analyses of digital reflective artifacts multiple times through different perceptual lenses like Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom & Krathwohl, 1956) or the Inquiry-Action Cycle (Militello, Rallis, & Goldring, 2009) facilitates candidates' more nuanced understandings of these meta-cognitive processes.

Reflections on IDR

Student Researcher Perspective – La'Von Fudge

I started out in the IDR process worried and anxious. Would I say the wrong thing? With my personal reflection I just wanted to put some things out there. No one had ever asked me what I thought about the school before. After I reviewed the artifact created from it, I knew just how much I had to say. It also helped me to watch Dr. Young's reflection. It helped me understand how important it is to try to see issues and procedures in the school from other perspectives. The way Dr. Young sees things might be different from the way that I do. I better understand that there are reasons the school staff are doing what they're doing. It also helped me see that we are all in this together in the school. We are trying to figure out how things can work even better for kids in the school.

Dr. Young. I truly look at him differently now. It is easy to think that principals won't listen, but he truly cares. I know he's busy, but he takes time during each day to work with me and my fellow students. I notice that even more now. I feel like I have more of a connection with Dr. Young now. During the reflective conversation, it was almost like talking to a fellow student because he listened to my ideas and worked with them. It made me feel like I had a voice. He actually asked me questions about what I thought would help students here. I feel now after this that I could go talk to him or others and see what happens next because I believe that something will. That personal interaction, that one-on-one time, has made a big difference. He listened a lot and gave me truthful answers about how he was going to look into my suggestions. He'd respond to my questions without beating around the bush. He gave me feedback right away. I got to hear him personally tell me what he thought rather than just going off my own opinion. Doing this was a wonderful experience because I had the opportunity to talk face-to-face with my principal and hear what he had to think and he had to hear what I had to think. That was the real reflection – to me it means going back and thinking about what I could have done or will do differently if the opportunity comes back around to me.

I noticed other changes from doing this. It affected my work ethic. My schoolwork has improved because I have that college mindset. I always knew I wanted to go to college but doing this motivated me more to take advantage of opportunities in

college. He mentioned that he's going to try to give us more trips to colleges and universities in the city because there are still students who aren't familiar with what college opportunities there are right here in our county. Never stopping our education is what this is all about and we should take more advantage of the programming they have in place. After doing this, I see that there's a reason for why we are asked to do what we do. That has motivated me, too. You don't want to do something without knowing the outcome. It's like having a job without knowing how and what you're going to be paid.

I would recommend this reflection process to any principal. They all need to know what school is like for us. By not being a student and going to classes day-to-day, you can't feel our experience and know how we think about school and college goals. You have to hear our experience and point of view. Without kids, how are you running your school? It's all about us really, so people need to listen carefully to us. If you think about it, the state doesn't administer you all the test. We have to go through these tests, and you just administer it. You have to hear from us what that's like. Going through this process can help you develop the mindset of what we're going through. It can help the principal better the school and better themselves and the job they're doing.

Principal Researcher Perspective – Dr. James Young

The part of the IDR process that was most interesting to me was listening to La'Von and hearing him echo what we thought we were doing in terms of college readiness. We want to ensure that our kids are aware that life goes on after high school, and he made it clear through our reflective dialogue that our teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors have been effective in promoting college readiness. Engaging in this process with La'Von also brought about some questions for me. La'Von is a skilled and strong student. I am curious to know how effectively we have promoted college-readiness with students who do not possess that same level of initiative that La'Von demonstrated throughout the IDR process. I would be interested in knowing more about the perspectives of our students who are not performing well on our state assessment or maybe have been retained or failed a class or two. Overall, though, the process gave me an indication that we are doing a fairly effective job. I attribute some of our effectiveness to our relatively small student population. I am able to build more relationships with students in more significant ways. Also, the challenges our school has faced this past year have seemed to galvanize our collective spirits.

I try my best to be a student-friendly principal. I am visible within the school and during their extra-curricular events and I make a point to engage students in dialogue throughout the day. I have an open door policy with students because I want them to feel invited so they will be more willing to approach me about issues they might be experiencing in the school. Having the opportunity to sit with La'Von and reflect together provided insight that we need to have more dialogue between the staff and students. My assistant principals and teachers have to have more one on one dialogue with students. It reaffirmed that students tend to be more open in a one to one setting with a concerned and open adult. They also tend to be more comfortable with someone that they trust to be honest and upfront.

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Another area that was enlightening to me through my opportunity to learn from La'Von's perspective was the recognition that we need to focus more intentional college-readiness programming and practices on the 9th and 10th grades. La'Von stated it perfectly: "reaching students early is critical." This collective understanding has already had an impact. As a result of this process with La'Von, I have already met with my guidance counselors to start planning for next year to better integrate the college readiness portion with the 9th and 10th grade students. In fact, now that the testing window is over, we are going to use the remainder of this school year to integrate the college-readiness piece into those grades. In that way, the reflection process has lead to transformed action.

After engaging in this process, I believe principal preparation programs would be well-served to embed even more reflective practices into their training. I finished my program 15 years ago, and at that time in my program there was nothing on reflective practice. I learned it all from a mentor. My own use of collaborative reflection is deeply embedded in my daily practices. It is invaluable to involve others in reflection around all school operations. I find that these collaborative reflections add great value. It informs decision-making, builds leadership capacity, helps tap into diverse skills and talents within the school, and hopefully supports sustainability. More than anything it empowers other leaders in the school—staff and students. At a minimum, I believe preparation programs should infuse reflective practices within coursework, if not even as an additional course. The take away for me is that this was a powerful experience. I know this process changed my perspective and that change lead to what I believe will translate to improved work with our students to make them college-ready.

Faculty Researcher Perspectives – Chris Janson and Sejal Parikh

We would like to begin our reflection by first expressing our appreciation for James Young and La'Von Fudge. Our collaboration with them throughout the exploration of the IDR process, our collective reflections on their engagement with it, and the co-construction of this manuscript has been among our most rich and rewarding scholarly activities. The lives of high school principals and students are demanding, and we feel deeply honored by their willingness to partner with us in this participatory action research. Without question, their insights, reflections, and generosity will have a lasting impact on us personally and professionally.

Our exploration of the IDR process Young and Fudge engaged in, especially regarding their perceptions of the practices, processes, and programs that they believed to facilitate student college preparedness and readiness at Trojan High School, resonated in many ways with professional literature on reflection. At the initial stage in which Young and Fudge created their individual reflections, the intended focus was to create an opportunity for them to take unprocessed and raw experiences and make individual meanings from them through a focused exploration (Boud, 2001) of the practices, processes, and programs designed to facilitate student college preparedness and readiness Trojan High School. Perhaps it should not be surprising then that Fudge's individual reflection seemed to demonstrate such reflection, while Young's did not. As Fudge described in his reflection on the process, he had never been invited to

share his perceptions of practices, processes, or programs in the school before, whereas it is part of Young's job to do so.

The discursive digital reflection between Young and Fudge exemplified the notion that reflection should be a "collaborative social practice," as expressed by Zeichner and Liston (1996, p. 77). Through their discursive reflection, Young determined that the school was not directing enough college-readiness programs and practices toward the 9th and 10th grades. His determination seemed congruent with Dewey's (1933) description of reflection as a process that can draw emergent purpose through the examination of outcomes of practices. Finally, the shifts in school college-readiness practices toward the 9th and 10th grades at Trojan High School as a result the IDR process seemed close to Freire's (1990) concept of praxis as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 47). Although it was Young and his position power as school principal that enacted programmatic change in Trojan High School as a result of the IDR process, it was Fudge's perspective, shared experiences, and advocacy that triggered the change. In this case, the IDR process seemed to position the student to be able to instigate systemic-level change. As described earlier, this positioning for political agency is a key attribute of youth PAR in that it can result in change at "the system level, in terms of activating forms of transformative change in institutions serving youth" (Galletta & jones, 2010, p. 342).

This case example of the IDR process also exemplified much of the literature on the importance of involving student perspectives in schools. As Fudge related in his reflection on the IDR process, "No one had ever asked me what I thought about the school before." This statement powerfully illustrates the belief that student perspectives are too often an "untapped source" of ideas (Smith, Petralia, & Hewitt, 2005, p. 28) that might inform school practices (Dyson, 2007).

The work of Cook-Sather (2006, 2007) regarding the importance of listening to student voices seemed to have particular relevance to this exploration of the use of IDR. For instance, each of the three ways that student engagement generates positive outcomes for students appears to be represented in this case study. The first positive outcome she identified was that student engagement shifts "the dominant power imbalances between adults and young people" (p. 366). As described above, during the discursive reflection, the interactions between Young and Fudge progressed steadily toward balance to the point that Fudge began asking Young to identify expected outcomes for the school's college fair. The second positive outcome Cook-Sather identified was that engaging student voices also leads to students feeling respected which, in turn, produces more substantial student involvement in their learning and schools. Also discussed above, in his reflection of the IDR process, Fudge seems to communicate not only feeling respected by Young during the discursive reflection, but also feeling more involved in the school when he writes, "It also helped me see that we are all in this together. We are trying to figure out how things can work better for kids in schools." Cook-Sather identified the third positive outcome as generating opportunities to transform the experiences for students and school personnel. As

evidence of this, Fudge wrote, "I noticed changes from doing this." Similarly, Young wrote, "I know this process changed my perspective."

As described above, we found tremendous congruence between our findings that emerged from our examination of this case example of the IDR process and the professional literature on both reflection and the value of including student voices to inform school practices. Specifically, in this case example, the IDR process exemplified strands of the professional literature on reflection regarding the power of reflection when it is engaged in collectively (Zeichner & Litson, 1996), aimed at generating purpose (Dewey, 1938), and results in action intended to impact community (Freire, 1990). Likewise, the IDR process seemed to invite student engagement in ways similar to those described by Cook-Sather (2006, 2007). During this case example, the IDR process seemed to facilitate a shift toward more balanced power between the youth and adult participants, generated a greater feeling of being respected among the youth participant, and showed the potential to generate change within the participating youth and adults (Cook-Sather, 2006, 2007). We believe that this congruence simultaneously supports many elements of this literature while also validating the usefulness of the IDR process for pre-service and practicing school principals and potentially other educators occupying other roles in schools. Well beyond the resonance we saw between the IDR process enacted between Young and Fudge and the professional literature on both reflection and student engagement, we were struck by the authentic transformations that seemed to occur for the principal, for the student, and for the school. Significantly, these transformations seemed to occur as the IDR process facilitated student and principal movement from isolated, idiosyncratic, and (in the case of the student) muted understandings to more public, co-constructed collective understandings of the schools' practices, processes, and programs that they believed to support student college preparedness and readiness. As a result, we found the IDR process to hold great promise as a pedagogical and advocacy tool for principal candidates or principals and the students with whom they work.

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