

Preparing Instructional Leaders

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C O N N E X I O N S

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Table of Contents

1	1. A Paradigm Shift in Preparing Instructional Leaders	1
2	2. Transitions	9
3	3. A Paradigm Shift in Preparing Instructional Leaders Revisited: An Innovative Program to Prepare Instructional Leaders	11
	Index	22
	Attributions	23

Chapter 1

1. A Paradigm Shift in Preparing Instructional Leaders¹



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1.1 Sumario en español

La facultad instruccional del liderazgo en el Colegio de la Educación en la Universidad de Alabama del sur en el Móvil, Alabama, trabajó con supervisores locales de distrito de escuela y otros tenedores de apuestas para volver a diseñar su plan de liderazgo para enseñar el conocimiento y las habilidades líderes instruccionales deben mejorar logro de estudiante. La experiencia del coronamiento del plan volver a diseñar fue un puesto de interno semestre-largo durante que residentes practicaron conductas de liderazgo bajo la supervisión de un director de mentor en una colocación de la escuela. Los residentes completaron 18 tareas auténticas durante el semestre; mentores ofrecieron reacción formativa en cada uno de ellos. El nuevo plan fue evaluado con Las Prácticas de Liderazgo Inventaría, el PRAXIS examen II, y las inspecciones completadas por mentores y residentes. Los resultados son conclusivos: aspirando a administradores de escuela aprenden a llegar a ser líderes cuando practican conductas de liderazgo en una colocación de la escuela bajo la supervisión de un mentor por un espacio de tiempo prolongado.

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1.2 About the Author

Dr. David L. Gray is an Associate Professor of Education in the College of Education at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Alabama. Before joining the Instructional Leadership faculty at USA in 1997, Dr. Gray was an elementary school principal in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, for 17 years. He is married, the father of three children, and resides in Spanish Fort, Alabama.

1.3 Introduction

Schools are under tremendous pressure to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Test preparation receives so much emphasis that teachers have had to reduce or eliminate instruction in subjects other than those to be tested. Abrams & Madaus (2003) discovered that “in some states, 80% of the elementary schools spend 20% of their instructional time preparing for end-of-grade tests” (p. 32). (Author) (2009) summarized research by Klein (2005) which found that students “are coached on how to take standardized tests, subjected to pep rallies to get them revved up to do their best on high-stakes tests, treated to breakfast at school on the day of testing, given sugar snacks just before testing, and presented with gift certificates to stores in the local mall when they do well on the state tests” (p. 51-52).

All students are required to make AYP by 2014 in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Guilfoyle (2006), however, found that “over 19,000 schools nationwide failed to make AYP in 2002-2003; more than 11,000 were identified as being in need of improvement” (p. 10). Hoff (2008) added that “almost 30,000 schools in the United States failed to make adequate yearly progress. . .in the 2007-2008 school year,” and “half of those schools missed their achievement goals for two or more years, putting almost one in five of the nation’s public schools in some stage of federally mandated process to improve student achievement.”

Unintended consequences of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, which includes the AYP mandate, are its *de facto* redefinition of the principal’s role as an instructional leader and the amount of time and collaboration required from school leaders to help teachers improve their teaching skills. Gaziel (1995) reported “A serious discrepancy between the amount of time principals spend doing important tasks and the time they think they should spend on them” (p. 184). Making AYP, the end-product of data analyses and detailed planning, means that principals must have the knowledge and ability to make decisions about curriculum, instruction, and professional development, a unique requirement for administrators who were trained as managers, not as instructional leaders.

Changing the principal-as-manager paradigm begins with a vision of the knowledge and skills instructional leaders should have. Jazzar and Algozzine (2006) advised those considering change that “it is difficult to define the role of a principal as the instructional leader” (p. 106), but “the educational reform movement of the last two decades has focused a great deal of attention on that role” (p. 104).

1.4 The Winds of Change

As pressure increased on schools to make AYP, state boards of education focused their attention on principals as curriculum specialists and discovered that few of them had been trained as instructional leaders. Alabama’s governor, responding to recommendations to change the way in which principals were being prepared in the state, commissioned a task force of teachers, civic leaders, and community representatives in 2004 to identify the knowledge and skills an instructional leader must have to increase student learning. The task force, working closely with the Southern Regional Education Board, presented its recommendations in 2005 to the State Board of Education (SBE), which approved the findings and created new standards for educational administration programs throughout the state.

The SBE also directed colleges of education to use more rigorous admission requirements to instructional leadership programs and to evaluate each applicant’s leadership potential during an interview. Representatives from local school districts were to become active participants in the student selection process.

A new state code that included strategic guidance about instructional leadership meant that educational administration programs stocked with large numbers of tuition-paying students were no longer practical.

Improving student achievement in K-12 schools became a cornerstone for planning in a state that traditionally stood near the bottom of national rankings in academic achievement and per-pupil expenditures.

1.5 Program Redesign at the University of South Alabama

Instructional leadership faculty at the University of South Alabama began planning for change by addressing two important issues: (a) closing the admission pipeline to the soon-to-be defunct educational administration program, but permitting students still enrolled under its provisions to complete their studies, and (b) designing an experience-based curriculum for students who would be admitted to the redesigned instructional leadership program. Additional faculty would not be available for the stand-up, stand-down phases of program change, which meant that both programs would be offered concurrently for a time. This phase of planning was linked with setting firm dates for discontinuing one program, beginning another, and disseminating information to students and university offices (i.e. Graduate School, Admissions, Student Services) to ensure consistent and accurate communications.

1.6 Conceptual Planning

Key meetings involving local superintendents and other stakeholders were aimed at creating an advisory committee to help with course and program redesign. The committee, encouraged to limit its thinking to curriculum development and not resources that might be required, decided that a one-semester internship, or residency, would be the most effective training vehicle for aspiring school leaders to observe, participate in, and lead teachers in activities to improve student achievement. The SBE's guideline requiring a ten-day internship was deemed inadequate.

A provision to remove teachers from their classrooms while paying their salaries for a four-month residency to practice instructional leadership was significant. The advisory committee raised questions about recruiting and paying long-term substitute teachers, especially for advanced placement courses in high school math and science. Other concerns included the selection of mentor principals, their compensation for taking on the additional responsibility of supervising residents, and identifying the tasks that should be accomplished during the residency.

1.7 More Planning

Program redesign requires timely coordination and communication among people who make decisions about allocating resources. The Dean of USA's College of Education, advisory committee members, and program faculty wrote a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to identify 12 distinct items that would require joint efforts by local school districts and the College in planning, implementing, and evaluating the new program.

Joint selection of applicants was a key MOA proviso. Aspiring leaders submitted a portfolio of information to the committee and completed a structured interview with teams comprised of local school district administrators and USA program faculty. Applicants interested only in earning an advanced degree and a salary increase and those with minimal leadership potential were denied admission.

Next, faculty developed new courses and assigned each of the SBE's 96 *knowledge* and *ability* statements to them. The semester-long residency was weighted with tasks requiring authentic assessments, and the redesign team created a sequence of courses that would bring students to the residency in either a fall or spring academic term.

The redesigned curriculum consisted of six campus-based courses and the residency. Faculty agreed to offer only one course each semester with the exception of the summer term, when two would be required. Students were told at their orientation session to take courses in a prescribed sequence. Consequently, an adequate number of faculty was available to teach the old and new curriculums concurrently.

Further, the joint selection of students gave school district representatives an accurate count of the number of substitute teachers who would be needed during the residency. Superintendents in USA's service

area who had not signed the MOA had no way of knowing when or how many of their teachers might apply to the program, so the leadership faculty agreed to contact them *prior* to interview sessions with that information and to discuss residency requirements. The first cohort, which began its campus-based course work in January, 2007, and completed its residency in December, 2009, consisted of 16 students from three local districts. Two superintendents approved substitute teachers for their aspiring administrators. One superintendent approved professional leave, but declined to pay the resident's salary or provide other benefits during the term.

1.8 Mentor Training

Mentoring has its origin in Greek mythology, and the idea that the *best* people should train the neophytes in an organization makes sense. Superintendents of school districts represented in the first cohort of students wanted their aspiring administrators to practice leadership skills both in elementary and secondary settings. They chose mentors for their ability to improve student achievement and for their emotional intelligence. Regrettably, funds were not available to reward mentors for this added responsibility.

Mentors were oriented to USA's redesigned leadership program six weeks before the first cohort began its residency. They were asked to work collaboratively with residents to select activities at their schools that would give them opportunities for leadership. They also were asked to complete a Resident Performance Evaluation that included each of the 18 authentic *ability* statements in the residency and to use those evaluations for formative discussions with residents about instructional leadership. Mentors completed an evaluation of the redesigned program near the end of the semester. The mean scores of their responses are included in Table 1.

The survey included space for written comments. A. Rainey (personal communication, September 1, 2009) wrote, "This was an excellent experience. I am excited about the quality of leaders that will be working in our district as a result of this new preparation program." Others were equally encouraging. Some offered suggestions related to improving the orientation and identifying tasks to satisfy resident performance requirements.

1=unacceptable, 2=acceptable, 3=area of strength, improvement needed, 4=area of strength, no improvement needed, 5=not applicable

Mentor Principals' Evaluations of the Redesigned Instructional Leadership Program

Statement	Mean Score
1. My orientation session to the program was helpful. I left the meeting at USA with a reasonably clear idea of my responsibility as a mentor.	3.87
2. Program requirements (knowledge and ability statements) were clear.	3.96
3. I met with my resident often enough to evaluate his/her performance while he/she was assigned to my school.	3.96
<i>continued on next page</i>	

4. I was satisfied with the frequency of visits to my school by the USA program supervisor.	3.91
5. The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) seems to be a helpful formative assessment of Residency performance.	3.81
6. My assessment of the residency?	3.79

Table 1.1: Note: N = 33

1.9 Program Evaluation

USA's redesigned leadership program is unique, with the semester-long residency being its distinguishing trait. All other state post-secondary institutions opted for the minimum of 10 consecutive days in schools to define their internship.

Residents' leadership skills were evaluated with The Leadership Practices Inventory® (LPI), a series of on-line surveys that includes a self-assessment, a manager/principal evaluation, and 360 degree feedback from one to as many as five observers. Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner created the LPI in 2003 to “dispel two popular myths about leadership: First, that leadership is an innate quality people are born with, and second, that only a select few can lead successfully” (p. 3). Instead, the authors “concentrated on people in middle management whose daily lives were on the front lines, leading community and school projects, managing departments, running programs, starting small businesses, opening new sales territories, and expanding product lines” (p.3).

Kouzes and Posner identified Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) to support their belief that “leadership has absolutely nothing to do with your position or your status and everything to do with your *behavior*. “Leadership is an *observable set of skills and abilities* that both experienced and novice leaders can use to turn challenging opportunities into remarkable successes” (p. 3-4).

Each resident completed the LPI once during the first two weeks of the semester and again near its conclusion. Program faculty used LPI results to guide formative discussions with residents about their leadership skills and performance during the semester. Interestingly, first-administration LPI results revealed that the mean score for 15 of 16 residents was lower on the 30-item, Likert-type scale used to assess each of the Five Practices than either their mentors' or observers' mean scores. Further, residents believed that their abilities in all five practices diminished during the term; mentor principals and observers, however, noted improvement during the same period of time for each resident in all of the practices except Encourage the Heart.

Table 2 includes survey data for Residents (S=Self), Observers (O), Co-Workers (C), and Mentor Principals (M).

Leadership Practice Inventory Ratings for Cohorts 1-3 by Mentor Principals of Residents'

Leadership Skills during a One-Semester Residency

First evaluation			
Practice	Evaluator	Mean score	SD
Model the Way	S	48.8	6.5
	O	55.6	4.0
	C	54.3	5.7
	M	54.9	4.9
Inspire a Shared Vision	S	45.1	8.2
	O	52.3	6.7
	C	50.2	9.2
	M	51.2	9.8
Challenge the Process	S	45.4	8.2
	O	53.1	5.2
	C	52.2	6.9
	M	51.3	7.1
Enable Others to Act	S	50.3	5.5
	O	55.9	3.1
	C	54.6	4.8
	M	54.6	4.3
Encourage the Heart	S	47.9	7.3
	O	53.5	5.3
	C	52.2	7.8
	M	52.9	7.7

Table 1.2: Note: N = 28 Residents and 59 Mentor Principals

The redesign team was also interested in residents' perceptions of the program and the residency. USA faculty logged nearly 2,500 miles traveling to each of the schools to which residents had been assigned for the semester to talk with them about the tasks they had been asked to complete and to reflect on the leadership skills they had used in the process. These meetings were opportune times to review residents' daily entries in their reflective journals.

Student Cohort Evaluation of the Redesigned Instructional Leadership Program

Statement	Mean score
<i>continued on next page</i>	

1. My orientation to the residency was helpful.	3.42
2. Classes prior to my residency gaveme a good foundation for instructional leadership.	3.50
3. My administrators had reasonableKnowledge of what I was supposedto accomplish during my residency.	3.25
4. I received helpful feedback frommy mentor principals during myresidency.	3.42
5. I was given opportunities to perform leadership tasks during my residency.	3.75
6. USA program faculty visited meoften enough during my residency.	3.92
7. The Leadership Practices Inventorywas used as a formative assessment of my leadership skills.	3.92
8. I was supported by my school districtduring my residency (payroll, etc.)	3.58

Table 1.3: Note: N = 16

The discrepancy between mentors' responses to item 3 in Table 1 and residents' responses to item 4 in Table 3 warrants further investigation. Both statements required respondents to evaluate the effectiveness of formative feedback from mentor principals on an ordinal scale. The mean score for item 4 for residents, 3.42, was tied at 5.5 as the next-to-lowest rank-ordered survey item. The mean score for mentor ratings for item 3, 3.96, was tied in rank at 1.5.

Further, residents lacked confidence that their mentors understood what was to be accomplished during the residency. The mean score for item 3 in Table 3 was 3.25, the lowest item in rank order. The mean score for principals for item 2 in Table 1 was 3.96; this item tied for first in rank order.

Three formative assessments were used to guide residents through leadership experiences. The SDE, however, requires anyone seeking certification to pass a discipline-based PRAXIS II examination. The PRAXIS is a rigorous, norm-referenced, timed test on which students must earn at least 610 points of 900 possible to become eligible for certification in educational administration.

Several students purchased practice tests and the cohort met for study and discussion sessions. Fifteen of sixteen students passed on their first attempt and the cohort's mean score was 660. The only member who did not pass scored 590, but was successful on a second attempt. The cohort's 94% first-time passing rate was greater than the national average of 85% for educational administration programs.

1.10 Lessons Learned

The complexity of program redesign, the number of people involved in planning for change, and the novelty inherent in using untried procedures and assessments came with opportunities to change plans that had seemed viable in conference room discussions, but paled during cumbersome or inefficient application. Among them:

- Notify superintendents when a teacher from their district seeks admission. Program requirements are abstract until paying a substitute teacher becomes an issue.
- Designate a member of the program faculty to manage and collate data (i.e., admissions, surveys, leadership inventories, PRAXIS results). If superintendents are hesitant about paying for substitute teachers, data about the leadership qualities of the residents returning to their classrooms are persuasive.

- Encourage mentor principals to provide formative feedback to residents soon after each leadership task is complete. Reconciling principals' and residents' perceptions about the urgency of feedback was an ongoing challenge.
- Principals and residents must meet early in the semester to identify school activities that will satisfy the state's *ability* requirements. Hasty assignments were not as meaningful as those made through deliberate planning.
- Celebrate success when the program is complete. A faculty-student dinner or social activity is welcomed by everyone and is an important reward for residents.
- Invite superintendents and key staff to formal, data-sharing sessions so they understand what their residents have accomplished. School leaders should know what they are getting for the money they spent.
- Encourage principals chosen as mentors to attend the orientation session prepared for them. The learning curve for those who did not attend had a much greater slope than for those who did.
- Remind school district representatives to assign residents to learn from the *best* principals they have. Several assignments were marginal. Two were unproductive.

1.11 Challenges Ahead

Evidence gathered through multiple assessment instruments, site visits by USA faculty, feedback from district central office staffs, resident reflections, mentor principals' surveys, the LPI, and the PRAXIS are conclusive: the most effective way to train aspiring school leaders is through extended assignments in schools, where they experience the intensity of the principal's day and the complexities of leadership that come with working with students, teachers, and parents to improve student learning. USA's instructional leadership program includes authentic assessments of leadership behaviors and guides residents through the initial stages of *survival*, which is the first challenge they will face as instructional leaders.

Finally, the greatest threat to program survival is its reliance on school district resources to pay substitute teacher salaries during the residency. At an average cost of slightly more than \$17,000 for each substitute, superintendents are faced with a choice of paying to train aspiring leaders or using those funds either to reduce the impact of teacher layoffs or to support other curriculum initiatives. Presently, Alabama's schools are in the throes of the most severe proration of funds in the state's history and the viability of all non-essential programs is threatened. USA's redesigned program is precisely what the schools in Alabama need, but its survival depends on the ability of state legislators and local superintendents to look further into the future than the current fiscal year.

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Chapter 2

2. Transitions¹

2.1 Transitions

Seventy seven percent of Alabama's public schools failed to attain Adequate Yearly Progress in 2004. Alarmed by the failure of the state's schools to provide an adequate education for their students, the Governor directed the State Department of Education to discard existing standards for undergraduate teacher education programs and to replace them with a more relevant curriculum. He also wanted an *instructional leader* in each of the state's 1,400 schools, not a *building manager*.

Instructional leadership faculty at the University of South Alabama designed an experience-laden curriculum for aspiring school leaders between 2005 and 2007. Detailed planning and sound reasoning were hallmarks of the process. Seven of eleven district school superintendents signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the College of Education that prescribed functional responsibilities in Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating the redesigned leadership program. Its capstone experience is a full-semester residency in a local school working under the supervision of an effective mentor-principal.

The residency gives aspiring school leaders an opportunity to see leadership in action and to reflect upon differing styles of leadership. Students in the most effective settings were oriented to the school and the principal's expectations and were engaged in leadership tasks within a brief time.

The second year, post-program redesign, was as successful for cohort groups three and four as the first year had been for their predecessors. Program faculty, with survey input from residents, mentor-principals, and multiple administrations of the Leadership Practices Inventory® (LPI) for each resident, made slight procedural adjustments to the program. As an example, we determined through analyzing LPI data that residents made statistically significant gains in performance in the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) from the beginning of the residency to its conclusion. We affirmed what we believed to be true: the best place to learn to become an instructional leader is in a school, sharing the responsibility for student achievement with teachers and students.

Finally, funding for schools in Alabama continues to be a pressing problem. Superintendents face the unenviable choice between grooming tomorrow's school leaders or meeting today's operational requirements. We hope they can stay the course long enough to see the differences well-trained school leaders will make in leading teachers and students to a brighter future.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38501/1.1/>>.

Chapter 3

3. A Paradigm Shift in Preparing Instructional Leaders Revisited: An Innovative Program to Prepare Instructional Leaders¹



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3.1 About the Authors

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3.2 Sumario en español

Los propósitos de este estudio son de describir el programa instruccional volver a diseñar de liderazgo en la Universidad de Alabama del sur y para evaluar su eficacia a preparar futuros directores para llegar a ser líderes instruccionales.

¹This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/1.2/>>.

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3.3 An Innovative Program to Prepare Instructional Leaders

Instructional Leadership became a catchphrase in 2001 when the 107th United States Congress passed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Almost immediately, the statute's requirement for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on measurable learning outcomes for students brought public attention to underachieving public schools.

The suddenness with which NCLB was implemented and its mandate that students make AYP in reading, mathematics, science, and social studies by 2014 gave pause to many state and local boards of education. They were uncertain about how to help struggling schools, and the failure rate climbed rapidly. Guilfoyle (2006) found that "over 19,000 schools nationwide failed to make AYP in 2002-2003; more than 11,000 were identified as being in need of improvement" (p.10).

Despite emphasis on increased student achievement to comply with federal regulations, a large number of schools succumbed to the pressure of high-stakes testing. Hoff (2008) discovered that "almost 30,000 schools in the United States failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress. . . in the 2007-2008 year," and "half of those schools missed their achievement goals for two or more years, putting almost one in five of the nation's public schools in some stage of a federally mandated process to improve student achievement" (p. 36).

Efforts to stem the number of failing schools prompted state and local boards of education to assess the quality of their school leaders, curriculums and teaching standards, and performance expectations. NCLB's language was unambiguous about its requirement that schools use research-based best practices in classrooms, but made no mention of principals as instructional leaders. Despite a lack of clarity over the principal's role as instructional leader or building manager, the federal government prescribed standards that students were expected to meet. State and local boards of education were to decide how they would comply with NCLB's requirements. Consequently, the purposes of this paper are to describe instructional leadership program redesign efforts at the University of South Alabama (USA) and to present data obtained from four distinct assessments of the program's efficacy.

3.4 Redesign at the USA

3.4.1 Developing New Courses

Thelbert L. Drake and William H. Roe (1994) reviewed job advertisements for principal vacancies in 1992 and found that they rarely emphasized the managerial side of the principalship by using vague and effusive phrases, such as "a catalyst for program improvement; an outstanding instructional leader and team builder" (p. 27). They concluded, however, that the dichotomy in terminology between instructional leader and school manager was framed clearly in board of education and central office practices by giving "top priority to handling of management detail, discipline, and evaluation" (p. 27).

Alabama's governor, upon learning that nearly 77 percent of the state's public schools failed to make AYP in 2004-2005, convened a Congress on Education in 2005 to garner suggestions about improving Alabama's schools from civic and business leaders, educators, and the public. After several months of deliberation, the Congress offered several recommendations, including a suggestion that the State Board of Education (SBE) adopt new Quality Teaching Standards designed to improve pre-service teacher preparation programs in the state's colleges of education.

The Congress also recommended revamping Alabama's educational administration programs. Its members had begun to realize that one of NCLB's unintended consequences was its implicit restructuring of "the principal's role as an instructional leader and the amount of time and collaboration required from school leaders to help teachers improve their teaching skills" (Gray, 2010, p. 2). The state's principal-preparation programs were mired in 1980s principal-as-manager methodology and largely ignored the paradigm shift to instructional leadership and improved student learning.

Through collaborative planning with the SBE and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the Congress identified eight areas in which principals must be skilled. Those areas, later to become standards, were sub-divided into 96 knowledge and ability requirements that would serve as the foundation for revamped instructional leadership programs.

The governor appointed a liaison team to help post-secondary institutions understand what should be accomplished through program redesign and to oversee the process from inception to completion. The SBE offered \$50,000 to four institutions that were willing to accelerate their redesign rate and serve as consultants to other colleges engaged in the process.

The College of Education at the USA was chosen as a lead institution by the SBE in 2005 and given 18 months to redesign its educational administration program. A review team from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) was scheduled to visit the USA campus in the fall of 2006 with authority to recommend program approval to the SBE at its next meeting. The visiting team was comprised of the governor's liaison for leadership program redesign, a member of the SREB who had held principal and superintendent positions, the state's Principal of the Year, and the ALSDE's Director of Certification and Licensure.

3.4.2 Community Collaboration

Initial planning at the USA centered on the ways and means of change rather than its end. The Dean of the College of Education encouraged instructional leadership program faculty to form a redesign team comprised of local superintendents and principals to identify specific issues inherent in creating a new program. The team quickly evolved into a Leadership Advisory Council. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between local school districts and the USA that included tasks associated with Planning, Implementing, and Assessing a redesigned program became the Council's signature work product.

The MOA served several purposes. First, it gave superintendents perspective about the redesign process and its goals. It also empowered local districts to participate in selecting students for the program. Third, the document included a provision for districts to pay for substitute teachers for residents who would complete a full-semester practicum in schools as their capstone experience under the supervision of an effective mentor principal. Identifying *effective* instructional leaders was a task for each district, but the agreed-upon criterion was that residents should practice leadership with the district's best administrators, not those who needed extra help in the office.

3.4.3 Participants

The process of selecting applicants for the redesigned program was a departure from the USA's tuition-driven, credit-hour production model. In its heyday during the late-1990s and early years of the 21st century, more than 300 students had been enrolled in the educational administration program. Many of them, however, sought a Master's Degree to gain a salary increase and had no intention of becoming school administrators.

The SBE's revised code for leadership programs required applicants to submit portfolios that included a statement of purpose for entry into a leadership program, professional references, Graduate Record Examination scores, and a recent classroom performance appraisal as part of the admissions process. The Leadership Advisory Council reviewed each applicant's portfolio as a prelude to a structured interview.

Two trends quickly emerged: (a) the number of program applications decreased sharply, and (b) the cognitive qualifications of the applicant pool improved significantly. Seventy six percent of applicants to cohorts one through six were admitted. The interview panels felt that those who were denied admission needed more experience as teachers or had only marginal knowledge about school leadership and a principal's responsibilities.

The MOA also called for applicants to take instructional leadership courses in cohort groups, a decision that permitted program faculty to phase the existing program in educational administration out while beginning a new one in instructional leadership. Students enrolled in the soon-to-be obsolete program were contacted by letter and e-mail and given a reasonable amount of time to complete its requirements.

Admitting students in cohort groups offered other benefits, too. First, local superintendents were entitled to know how many of their district's teachers enrolled so they could allocate funds to pay each resident's substitute teacher for a one-semester residency. Second, cohort groups were admitted twice each year and took campus-based courses for five terms in a prescribed sequence so they would reach the residency requirement in a fall or spring semester rather than during the summer.

Thirty-eight of forty nine applicants admitted to the redesigned program in the first six cohorts had already earned a Master of Education (M.Ed.) Degree in elementary, secondary, or special education. They sought only certification in instructional leadership. The remaining 11 wanted a M.Ed. Degree, which meant that in addition to core courses in leadership, they would register for nine additional credits of educational psychology, research methodology, and educational foundations to satisfy college requirements for that degree. Inter-departmental coordination ensured that courses needed for degree-seeking students were available at appropriate times.

3.4.4 Mentor Training

Mentoring has its origin in Greek mythology, and the idea that the *best* people in an organization should train neophytes makes sense. Superintendents of the three districts represented in the first cohort wanted their prospective administrators to practice leadership in both elementary and secondary settings. They chose mentors with demonstrable abilities to improve student achievement and for their emotional intelligence. Regrettably, funds were not available to reward mentors for this added responsibility. Mentors were oriented to the redesigned program during the summer and six weeks before the first cohort began its residency. They were asked to identify activities at their schools to give residents opportunities to practice leadership.

3.4.5 The Residency

USA's redesigned leadership program is unique, with the semester-long residency as its distinguishing trait. Residents work under the supervision of experienced, effective principals to observe, participate in, and lead teachers to improve student achievement. All other post-secondary institutions in Alabama opted for the ALSDE's recommended ten consecutive days in schools to define their internship.

3.5 Method

3.5.1 Instruments

Residents' leadership skills were evaluated with the Leadership Practices Inventory® (LPI), a series of on-line surveys that includes a self-assessment, a principal's evaluation, and feedback from one to as many as five observers. Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner created the LPI in 2003 to "dispel two popular myths about leadership: First, that leadership is an innate quality people are born with, and second, that only a select few can lead successfully" (p. 3). Instead, the authors "concentrated on people in middle management whose daily lives were on the front lines, leading community and school projects, managing departments, running programs, starting small businesses, opening new sales territories, and expanding product lines" (p.3).

Kouzes and Posner identified Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) to support their belief that "leadership has absolutely nothing to do with your position or your status and everything to do with your *behavior*. Leadership is an *observable set of skills and abilities* that both experienced and novice leaders can use to turn challenging opportunities into remarkable successes" (p. 3-4).

The Five Practices were validated through studies with resident advisors, officers of fraternities and sororities, student leaders, and leadership program participants. The framework exemplifies statistical significance in professional student populations and on the impact these practices have on individual leadership development.

3.5.2 Procedure

Mentors were oriented to the redesigned program during the summer and six weeks before the first cohort began its residency. They were asked to identify activities at their schools to give residents opportunities to practice leadership. They also were asked to complete a Resident Performance Evaluation (see Appendix A)³ for each of the 19 *ability* statements (see Appendix B)⁴ included in the residency and to use those evaluations in formative discussions with residents about instructional leadership.

Each resident completed the LPI (see Appendix C)⁵ twice during the residency, once near the beginning of the school term, and again two-thirds of the way through the semester. Program faculty used LPI results to guide formative discussions with residents about their performance. At the end of the program, mentor and resident feedback was collected (see Appendix D)⁶ and (see Appendix E)⁷

3.6 Results

Results from this study include the LPI, Mentor Principals' Evaluations of the Redesigned Instructional Leadership Program, Leadership Practice Inventory ratings for Cohorts 1-3 of Residents' Leadership Skills during a One-Semester Residency, Residents' Self-Assessments, Residents' Perceptions of their Growth in Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership during a One-Semester Practicum, and Student Cohort Evaluation of the Redesigned Instructional Leadership Program.

3.6.1 LPI Results

LPI results are distributed among six categories. Kouzes and Posner identified Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership[®] (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) that contributed to each resident's summative scores.

Paired samples *t* tests were conducted to evaluate the impact of the instructional leadership program on students' scores on each of the LPI's Five Practices. The results are:

3.6.2 Model the Way

There was a statistically significant increase in LPI scores under the Model the Way Practice from the pretest ($M = 47.20$, $SD = 6.16$) to the posttest ($M = 50.65$, $SD = 6.13$), $t(23) = 3.29$, $p = .003$ (two-tailed). The mean difference in LPI scores was 3.44 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.28 to 5.60. The value of Cohen's *d* statistic is .79.

3.6.3 Inspire a Shared Vision

There was a statistically significant increase in LPI scores under the Inspire a Shared Vision Practice from the pretest ($M = 42.17$, $SD = 9.03$) to the posttest ($M = 47.83$, $SD = 6.46$), $t(23) = 3.14$, $p = .005$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in LPI scores was 5.65 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.93 to 9.37. The value of Cohen's *d* statistic is .88.

3.6.4 Challenge the Process

There was a statistically significant increase in LPI scores under the Challenge the Process Practice from the pretest ($M = 43.17$, $SD = 8.96$) to the posttest ($M = 47.35$, $SD = 7.94$), $t(23) = 2.55$, $p = .018$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in LPI scores was 4.17 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from .78 to 7.56. The value of Cohen's *d* statistic is .66.

³See the file at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/latest/AppendixA.pdf>>

⁴See the file at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/latest/AppendixB.pdf>>

⁵See the file at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/latest/AppendixC.pdf>>

⁶See the file at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/latest/AppendixD.pdf>>

⁷See the file at <<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/latest/AppendixE.pdf>>

3.6.5 Enable Others to Act

There was a statistically significant increase in LPI scores under the Enable Others to Act Practice from the pretest ($M = 49.22$, $SD = 5.23.03$) to the posttest ($M = 51.74.83$, $SD = .56$), $t(23) = 2.26$, $p=.033$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in LPI scores was 2.52 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from .21 to 4.83. The value of Cohen's d statistic is .68.

3.6.6 Encourage the Heart

There was a statistically significant increase in LPI scores under the Encourage the Heart Practice from the pretest ($M = 46.39$, $SD = 7.32$) to the posttest ($M = 49.87$, $SD = 6.82$), $t(23) = 2.49$, $p=.021$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in LPI scores was 3.48 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from .58 to 6.37. The value of Cohen's d statistic is .67.

3.6.7 LPI Summative Scores

There was a statistically significant increase in LPI scores in the summative LPI score from the pretest ($M = 45.63$, $SD = 6.71$) to the posttest ($M = 49.49$, $SD = 6.06$), $t(22) = 2.95$, $p=.007$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in LPI scores was 3.85 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.15 to 6.56. The value of Cohen's d statistic is .81.

3.6.8 Evaluations

Mentors completed an evaluation of the redesigned program near the end of the semester. The mean scores of their survey responses are included in Table 1.

Statement	Mean Score
1. My orientation session to the program was helpful. I left the meeting at USA with a reasonably clear idea of my responsibility as a mentor.	3.87
2. Program requirements (knowledge and ability statements) were clear.	3.98
3. I met with my resident often enough to evaluate his/her performance while he/she was assigned to my school.	3.92
4. I was satisfied with the frequency of visits to my school by the USA program supervisor.	3.90
5. The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) seems to be a helpful formative assessment of Residency performance.	3.72
<i>continued on next page</i>	

6. My assessment of the residency?	3.89
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Table 3.1: *Mentor Principals' Evaluations of the Redesigned Instructional Leadership Program*

NOTE: N = 33. 1=unacceptable, 2=acceptable, 3=area of strength, improvement needed, 4=area of strength, no improvement needed

Table 2 includes composite survey data from two LPIs for cohorts one through four for Residents (S=Self, O=Observers, C=Co-Workers, and M=Mentor Principals).

Practice	Evaluator	Mean Score	SD
Model the Way	S	48.8	6.5
	O	55.6	4.0
	C	54.3	5.7
	M	54.9	4.9
Inspire a Shared Vision	S	45.1	8.2
	O	52.3	6.7
	C	50.2	9.2
	M	51.2	9.8
Challenge the Process	S	45.4	8.2
	O	53.1	5.2
	C	52.2	6.9
	M	51.3	7.1
Enable Others to Act	S	50.3	5.5
	O	55.9	3.1
	C	54.6	4.8
	M	54.6	4.3
Encourage the Heart	S	47.9	7.3
	O	53.5	5.3
	C	52.2	7.8
	M	52.9	7.7

Table 3.2: *Leadership Practice Inventory Ratings for Cohorts 1-3 of Residents' Leadership Skills during a One-Semester Residency*

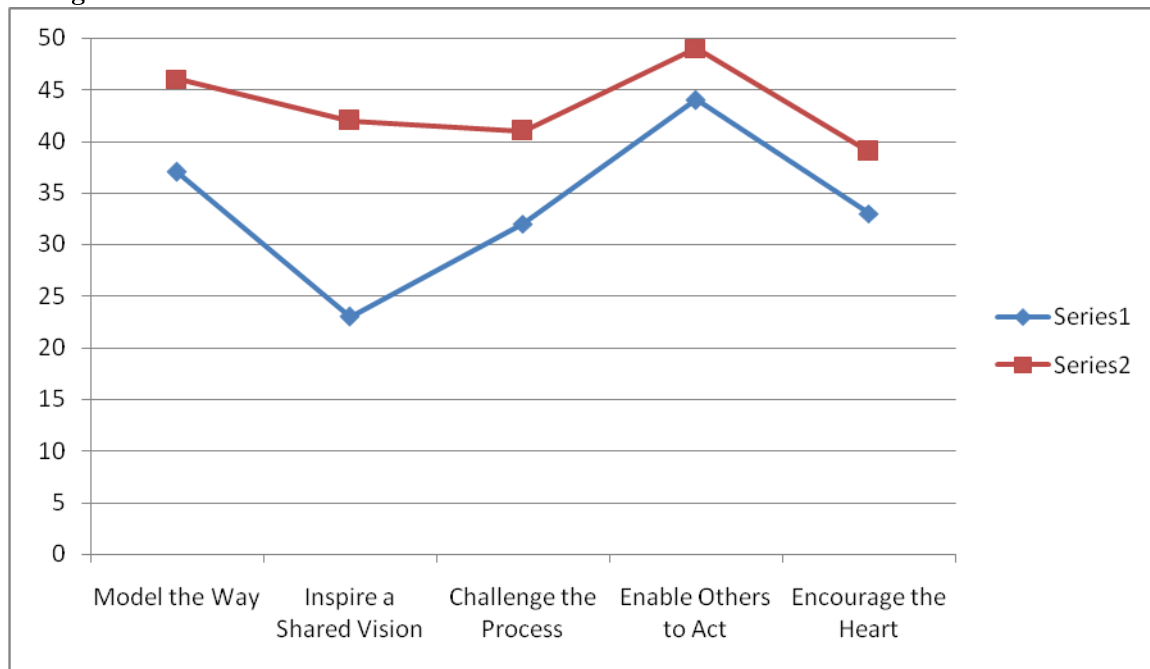
NOTE: N = 28 Residents, 59 Mentor Principals, 76 Co-Workers and Observers

The survey also included space for written comments. A. Rainey (personal communication, September 1, 2009) wrote, "This was an excellent experience. I am excited about the quality of leaders that will be working in our district as a result of this new preparation program." Other principals were equally encouraging. Some offered suggestions related to improving the orientation and identifying specific tasks to satisfy resident performance requirements.

3.6.9 Residents' Self-Assessments

Perhaps the most revealing data about the residents' performance and the value added component of the residency are found in Figure 1. Mean scores for the residents in each of the Five Exemplary Practices are lower on the first self-assessment (diamonds) than on the second (squares). Residents believed that they made the greatest knowledge and ability gains in learning to Inspire a Shared Vision, but did not achieve significant growth in skills related to Enabling Others to Act. As a practical matter, they were not expected to develop a vision for excellence for their schools, but were to observe the ways in which mentor-principals attended to that process.

Figure 1. Residents' Perceptions of their Growth in Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership during a One-Semester Practicum



NOTE: N = 23

The redesign team was interested in residents' perceptions of the leadership curriculum and the residency. USA faculty logged nearly 4,000 miles traveling to schools to which residents had been assigned to talk with them about the tasks they had been asked to complete and to reflect on the skills they had used in the process.

Each resident evaluated the Instructional Leadership Program. Table 3 provides the mean score on a rating scale (1 - needs immediate improvement to 4 - no improvement needed).

Statement	Mean Score
1. My orientation to the residency was helpful.	3.36

continued on next page

⁸<http://cnx.org/content/m38408/latest/figure1.png/image>

2. Classes prior to my residency gaveme a good foundation for instructional leadership.	3.43
3. My administrators had reasonableKnowledge of what I was supposedto accomplish during my residency.	3.13
4. I received helpful feedback frommy mentor principals during myresidency.	3.22
5. I was given opportunities to perform leadership tasks during my residency.	3.29
6. USA program faculty visited meoften enough during my residency.	3.94
7. The Leadership Practices Inventorywas used as a formative assessment of my leadership skills.	3.68
8. I was supported by my school districtduring my residency (payroll, etc.)	3.49

Table 3.3: *Student Cohort Evaluation of the Redesigned Instructional Leadership Program*

NOTE: N = 28

The discrepancy between mentors' responses to statement number three in Table 1 and Residents' responses to statement number four in Table 3 warrants further investigation. Respondents were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of formative feedback from mentor principals. The mean score for statement number four for residents, 3.22, was sixth in rank order. The mean score for mentor responses to statement number three in Table 1, 3.92, was second in rank order.

Further, residents lacked confidence that their mentors understood what tasks were to be accomplished during the residency. The residents' mean score for statement number three in Table 3 was 3.13, the lowest-ranked item. The mentors' mean score for statement number two in Table 1 was first in rank order at 3.98.

Multiple assessments helped to guide residents through leadership experiences. The ALSDE, however, requires anyone seeking licensure to pass a discipline-based PRAXIS II examination. The PRAXIS is a rigorous, norm-referenced and timed test on which students must earn at least 610 points of 900 to attain a passing score in the area of educational administration.

Several students in each cohort bought practice tests for group study and discussion. Fifteen of 16 students in cohort one passed on their first attempt and the cohort's mean score was 660. The lone member who failed scored 590, but was successful on a second attempt. The cohort's 94% first-time passing rate was greater than the national average of 85% for educational administration programs.

Four of six students in the second cohort received a passing score on the PRAXIS on its first administration. One of the remaining two passed on a second attempt; the other earned a passing score on a third attempt. The cohort's mean score was 720.

All six students in cohort three passed the examination on their first attempt. Their mean score was 710.

3.6.10 Limitations

The LPI was to be completed by each resident, his/her mentor principal, and as many as five observers twice during the residency. Its administration should be preceded by a workshop in which procedures, terminology, and use of the instrument are discussed. Instead, mentor principals and residents were informed about the LPI and its purpose during the summer orientation for mentor principals without clarifying descriptions of leadership skills included on the Inventory.

It was not possible to determine accurately which teachers would be asked to serve as observers in the LPI process. Transfers from one school to another and other administrative reassignments often were not decided until several days before schools opened for the year in August. Consequently, observers received no training in using the LPI or in understanding its terminology.

Finally, residents and observers use of the LPI was limited on occasion by local school systems' inability to remove firewalls that blocked delivery of the on line instrument. Further, observers and principals, despite reminders from residents, sometimes failed to complete their portions of the LPI in time to record their responses.

3.7 Discussion

Interestingly, first-administration LPI results revealed that the mean score for 28 residents was lower on the 30-item, 100-point Likert-type scale used to assess each of the Five Practices than either their mentors' or observers' mean scores for the same items. Further, residents believed that their abilities in all five practices diminished during the term; mentor principals and observers, however, noted improvement during the interval between assessments for each resident in all of the practices except Encourage the Heart.

3.7.1 Lessons Learned

The complexity of program redesign, the number of people involved in planning systemic change, and the novelty inherent in using untried procedures and assessments came with opportunities to alter plans that seemed viable in conference room discussions, but ineffectual or inefficient in their application. Among them:

- Notify superintendents when teachers from their district seek admission. This requirement was abstract until paying a substitute teacher became a reality.
- Designate a member of the program faculty to manage and collate data (i.e., admissions, surveys, leadership inventories, PRAXIS results). If superintendents are hesitant about paying for substitute teachers, data about the residents' leadership qualities are persuasive.
- Encourage mentor principals to provide formative feedback to residents soon after each leadership task is complete. Reconciling principals' and residents' perceptions about the urgency of feedback was an ongoing challenge.
- Principals and residents must meet early in the semester to identify school activities that will satisfy the state's *ability* requirements. Assignments made hastily were not as meaningful as those made deliberately.
- Celebrate success when the program is complete. A faculty-student dinner or social activity is welcomed by everyone and is important to residents.
- Invite superintendents and key staff to formal, data-sharing sessions so they understand what their residents have accomplished. They should see what they are getting for the money they spend.
- Encourage mentor principals to attend the orientation session each summer. The learning curve for those who did not attend had a much greater slope than the curve for those who participated.
- Remind school district representatives to assign residents to schools where the *best* principals practice their craft. Several sites were either not appropriate, or were at best of marginal value for residents.
- Local district leaders and principals must plan early for the absence of residents who teach high school Advanced Placement classes and special education teachers whose responsibilities include compilation of Individual Education Plans.

3.7.2 Challenges Ahead

Evidence gathered through multiple assessment instruments, site visits by USA faculty, feedback from district central office staffs, resident reflections, mentor principals' surveys, the LPI, and the PRAXIS are conclusive: the most effective way to train aspiring school leaders is through extended assignments in schools, where they

experience the intensity of the principal's day and the complexities and rewards of leadership that attend to working with students, teachers, and the school's community. The USA's instructional leadership program includes authentic assessments of leadership behaviors and guides residents through the initial stages of *survival*, which is the first challenge they will confront as instructional leaders.

Finally, the greatest threat to the redesigned program's survival is its reliance on school district funds to pay substitute teacher salaries during a residency. At an average cost of \$9,000 for each substitute, superintendents must choose between paying to train aspiring leaders or using those funds to reduce the impact of teacher layoffs or supporting other curriculum initiatives. Presently, Alabama's schools are in the throes of the third consecutive year of proration of funds and the viability of all non-essential programs is threatened. The USA's redesigned program is precisely what Alabama's schools need, but its longevity depends on the ability of state legislators and local superintendents to look further into the future than the current fiscal year.

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Index of Keywords and Terms

Keywords are listed by the section with that keyword (page numbers are in parentheses). Keywords do not necessarily appear in the text of the page. They are merely associated with that section. *Ex.* apples, § 1.1 (1) **Terms** are referenced by the page they appear on. *Ex.* apples, 1

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|---|---|
| E Educational Administration and PRAXIS Examination, § 3(11) | P Prescriptive Curriculum for School Leaders, § 1(1)
Principal Preparation Programs, § 3(11)
Principal Training, § 3(11) |
| I Instructional Leadership, § 1(1), § 3(11) | |
| L Leadership Curriculum Development, § 1(1) | S School Leadership, § 3(11) |
| M Mentor-Principal, § 1(1) | T Training Principals, § 1(1) |

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Preparing Instructional Leaders

This publication is a "collection" of three separate manuscripts: (1) A Paradigm Shift in Preparing Instructional Leaders (published in December 2010); (2) Transitions introducing the Revisited manuscript; and (3) A Paradigm Shift in Preparing Instructional Leaders Revisited (published in June 2011). The 2010 manuscript describes a innovative experience-laden curriculum for aspiring school leaders at the University of South Alabama developed between 2005 and 2007. The 2011 manuscript revisits the topic with a completed research study providing data related to responses from mentor principals, cohort members, co-workers and observers.

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