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The International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation is a nationally refereed journal published annually in the Spring by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership.

Note from ICPEL Publications Director, Brad Bizzell

The International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation is ICPEL's contribution to the Open Education Resources (OER) movement. This contribution to OER will be permanent.

In August, 2005, NCPEA¹ partnered with Rice University and the Connexions Project, to publish our IJELP as open and free to all who had access to the Internet. The purpose of the NCPEA/Knowledge Base Connexions Project was to “add to the knowledge base of the educational administration profession” and “aid in the improvement of administrative theory and practice, as well as administrative preparation programs.” Our partnership continues but a new door opened for NCPEA Publications to join the OER movement in a more substantive and direct way. In March 2013, NCPEA Publications and the NCPEA Executive Board committed the IJELP to the OER movement.

What are Open Educational Resources (OER)?

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that you may freely use, adapt and reuse, without charge. Open Educational Resources are different from other resources an educator may use in that OER have been given limited licensing rights. That means they have been authored or created by an individual or organization that chooses to provide access to all, at no charge. ICPEL Publications is committed to providing access to all, while assuring author/s of full attribution as others use the material.

The worldwide OER movement is rooted in the idea that equitable access to high-quality education is a global imperative. To ICPEL, this is a moral/ethical responsibility and issue of social justice. Open Educational Resources offer opportunities for systemic change in teaching and learning through accessible content, and importantly, through embedding participatory processes and effective technologies for engaging with learning. The OER Commons project aims to grow a sustainable culture of sharing among educators at all levels.

What is the OER Commons?

The Institute for the Study of Knowledge in Education (ISKME) created OER Commons, publicly launched in February 2007, to provide support for, build, and make available to all, a knowledge base around the use and reuse of open educational resources (OER). As a network for teaching and learning materials, the web site offers engagement with resources in the form of social bookmarking, tagging, rating, and reviewing. OER Commons has forged alliances with over 120 major content partners to provide a single point of access through which educators and learners can search across collections to access thousands of items, find and provide descriptive information about each resource, and retrieve the ones they need. By being "open," these resources are publicly available for all to use.

What ICPEL OER is Not!

ICPEL open educational resources are not an open door at the ICPEL Publications submission and review stages. We have always insisted on and will continue to require very thorough peer reviews (double-blind). ICPEL Publications is fortunate to have a cadre of professional reviewers (university professors),

¹ In 2018 the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration changed its name to the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership

numbering over 300. Editors first consider a submitted manuscript, and if appropriate, selects/assigns two reviewers who also have the expertise/interest in the manuscript's specific topic. This process assures that reviewers will read an author's manuscript with expertise/experience in that area.

The "openness" of the IJELP OER comes at publication stage. Once the issues are published, they are formatted/published in an open access website, indexed by Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), catalogued as a "commendable journal" in the Cabell's Directory, and provided to the Open Educational Resource database. The IJELP is currently viewed and read by educators from over 72 countries and all 50 U.S. States (data provided by Google Analytics).

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The manuscripts in Volume 14, Number 1 (Spring 2019) have been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership as significant contributions to the scholarship and practice of school administration and PK-12 education.

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The Dynamic Transformation of a Principal Preparation Program: A University-District Collaborative

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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In order to better serve our nation's youth, educational leadership preparation programs must be willing to transform current preparation practices. This paper emphasizes the need to develop high quality school leaders to successfully create and sustain necessary changes in schools. The dynamic transformation of a principal preparation program, which stemmed from a university-district collaborative, is discussed in detail. Key areas of the transformation and partnership are shared, such as the foundational needs, the stakeholders involved, the course sequence redesign, the course and syllabi revision process, the co-teaching model, the internship, culminating experience, and current funding sources. Finally, conclusions and recommendations for transforming principal preparation program partnerships to support all children.

In the annual *Quality Counts* (2017) report, a hallmark report card on the quality of education for states and the nation, Nevada was ranked 51st among the nation's 50 states and the District of Columbia. Specifically, the state posted an overall grade of a D, while the average grade across the nation was a C. Moreover, although the index for K-12 Achievement had not been updated, it was reported that the state earned an F, and the average was a D across the nation (Quality Counts, 2017). Thus, continuous efforts to enhance Nevada's educational performance are critical. Educational changes must occur in order to better serve our nation's youth.

At the same time, the role of effective educational leaders continues to serve as a key factor impacting student learning and achievement (Wallace Foundation, 2016). Indeed, "leadership effects on student learning occur largely because leadership strengthens professional community; teachers' engagement in professional community, in turn, fosters the use of instructional practices that are associated with student achievement" (Wahlstrom, Louis, Leithwood, & Anderson, 2010, p. 10). Ultimately, high-quality school leaders are able to develop strong school cultures that support student learning and encourage teacher retention (Loewenberg, 2016).

A principal's ability to develop a strong school culture to impact learning and enhance teacher retention is particularly essential in Nevada, even more so with its ongoing teacher shortage crisis (State of Nevada Department of Education, nd). From an asset-based perspective, we argue that Nevada's unique circumstances have created an opportunity to intentionally and strategically enhance leadership preparation. Collectively, Nevada's needs for improvement, the critical role of the principal in student learning, and a redesigned program model serve as the rationale for the University of Nevada Reno's leadership preparation program, Nevada Leads.

Nevada Leads at a Glance

Nevada Leads is an innovative, university-district partnership designed to improve the preparation of effective educational leaders. Nevada Leads represents a revised sequence of coursework that is aligned with the Nevada Educator Performance Framework for Administrators and the national 2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (formerly ISLLC standards). It uses a cohort model, and a flipped-hybrid course format, with co-instructor teams of one faculty member and one or two current practicing principals teaching every course. Across the span of the two-year program, cohort students are also mentored by practicing principals outside of the students' own school setting. Furthermore, mentor principals engage in ongoing professional learning to ensure that internship experiences are aligned with each semester's course content and student learning objectives. Thus, the dynamic transformation of the principal preparation program will be discussed in detail, including its foundational needs, the stakeholders involved, the course sequence redesign, the course and syllabi revision process, the co-teaching model, the internship, culminating experience, and current funding sources. The purpose of this paper is to disseminate information about the dynamic transformation of our principal preparation program so that others may enact similar changes to more effectively prepare future school leaders to support *all* children.

Literature Review

The inconsistent quality of principal preparation programs reported across the county necessitates program improvement among higher education institutions (Wallace Foundation, 2016). Improvement efforts should occur through (a) a clear redesign of program models to reflect a current principal's job, (b) strong connections between universities and districts, and (c) state policymaker

structures to support and actively encourage the process (Wallace Foundation, 2016). Reed and Kensler (2010) cautioned that improvement for programs would remain intangible, however, unless total redesign efforts are undertaken. In these redesign efforts, it is also imperative that models reflect key characteristics of elite leadership preparation programs that successfully develop high-quality school leaders. Campanotta, Simpson, and Newton's (2016) work highlighted characteristics among the nation's five elite leadership preparation programs. The researchers concluded that successful programs included the following characteristics:

- Formal interviews, as a part of the selection process, provide a beneficial component in identifying the strongest candidates.
- Internships, up to one year, provide multiple opportunities for learning and leading during day-to-day situations.
- Effective principals serving as mentors and/or coaches provide beneficial support to the students.
- Coursework integrated with field experience, connecting research, theory, and practice, appears to better prepare principals to lead and impact change.
- Cohort models allow for powerful conversations among group members, bringing diverse experiences to the discussion.
- District partnerships appear to be beneficial to programs and districts.
- Visiting exemplar university programs could prove beneficial for leadership preparation programs (Campanotta et al., 2016, pp.16-17).

A school leader cannot simply meet licensure requirements to be effective; rather, principals must be able to “lead students to higher achievement levels” (Ash, Hodge, & Connell, 2013, p. 95). Their preparation for school leadership is essential to meeting the responsibilities of today's school leaders. Yet, the adequate preparation of principals is of frequent debate in the United States (Dodson, 2015). Consequently, there is a long-standing demand for the redesign of educational leadership programs. Since 2002, for example, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) highlighted universities with leading redesign efforts of principal preparation programs. The SREB (2002) reported successful programs as having a strong university-district collaboration, and a departure from a traditional model to an increased focus on specific strategies, such as problem-based learning, mentoring, and extensive, integrated field-experiences. Thus, the focus on meaningful field experiences has increased among leading preparation programs in order to showcase the role of the leader when preparing aspiring leaders. For the last decade, this focus has been captured in the literature, as well (e.g., Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill, 2005; New York City Leadership Academy, 2015). But while the relationship between these field experiences or internships and education quality remains vague (Dodson, 2015), such redesign efforts continue to be a prominent and critical feature among the principal preparation improvement process (Davis, 2016).

Improvements for effective or innovative principal preparation programs include a coherent program of study, embedded field experiences, cohort-selection models, connections between theory and practice, strong district-university partnerships, and effective principals serving as mentors or coaches (Campanotta et al., 2016; Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012). These improvements are essential because the course of study required in many programs, in particular, is often not reflective of the principal's job (Davis, 2016). The coursework should reflect what principals need to know under the guidance of faculty members who encompass research expertise and practitioner experiences. Indeed, Campanotta et al.'s (2016) findings on elite leadership

preparation programs affirmed that principals are better prepared for their roles when coursework integrates field experiences with research, theory, and practice.

Foundational Needs

While the current literature addresses a need for principal preparation program improvements and Nevada was well-positioned to pursue such changes, there were no particular initiatives or plans to drive the process for change within the Educational Leadership program at our institution. However, in the summer of 2015 the Associate Dean of the College of Education and the Director of Professional Learning for the local school district (Washoe County School District [WCSD]) arranged a casual lunch meeting to discuss administrator preparation. The Director of Professional Learning noted that incoming principals needed to participate in the district's principal academy to bring novice principals up to speed on current competencies required of building leaders and to understand district goals. Ultimately, the district needed to provide remediation for principals after they obtained their graduate degree from the university. From the university's perspective, this created some major concerns. Aspiring school leaders should clearly be prepared without the need for district remediation.

Moreover, a review of recent enrollment trends showed that approximately six students were being admitted to the master's program each year, which was not nearly enough to replenish the supply of administrators for a relatively large school district serving approximately 64,000 students. Also, in a general working group of graduate students in the program, one out of four students tended to state a true interest in plans to pursue the principalship. Thus, through that casual lunch conversation emerged the idea and commitment to redesign and dynamically transform the principal preparation program as a university-district collaborative.

Stakeholders

From the spark of an idea that ignited over lunch stemmed a partnership in which both entities' leaders also became committed to dynamically transforming the program. On the university end, the associate dean affirmed commitment from the dean to support the process toward change. Then, current professors were invited to join the change process. At first one senior faculty member committed to the process; however, after some deliberation, the professor decided to maintain current roles and responsibilities and not participate in the program revision. As a result, a junior faculty member who taught in the program was sought for program support and agreed to participate in the change process. On the district end, the director of professional learning assembled a team of three retired principals and a junior faculty member from the university to review state and national standards and provide a crosswalk of the current Nevada Educator Performance Framework for Administrators to those national standards. In the spring of 2016, the growing "design team" included various former school principals and current district leaders, as well as the university's junior faculty member. Upon completing a crosswalk of the national and state standards, the next was to review current course layout for standard- and curriculum-mapping.

Course Sequence Redesign

A consultant, who was a local, recently retired central office administrator from the school district, was recruited to support the course layout review and the potential standard- and curriculum-

mapping. That same fall of 2016, a full workday was organized for the design team, along with a select few mentor principals, two faculty members, and two college administrators. The day's agenda consisted of team/trust-building activities and an exercise to share hesitations, fears, and dreams about the change process. Participants reviewed the crosswalk of standards; then, in small groups, the standards were reviewed against each course and its original objectives. This provided an opportunity for standard and curriculum mapping, while comparing efforts against state licensure requirements. Four major changes occurred during this phase. First, the courses were re-sequenced to better mirror the principal's academic calendar and needs. For example, the course on data-based decision making and supervision and evaluation was scheduled for the fall semester to align with principals receiving testing results and other data outcomes, as well as to focus on the required teacher evaluation calendar. Second, a long-standing course (i.e., the Principalship) was removed from the curriculum with the understanding that every course would certainly encompass direct aspects of the principalship. Third, the removal of one course, allowed for three credits to be considered elsewhere in the program. Consequently, while the internship used to be a three-credit portion at the end of the program, this was extended to a six-credit embedded internship across each semester, including summer (one-credit internship for six semesters). Finally, as clarity was gained on the course sequence redesign (see Appendix), it was decided that each course would be co-taught with a current practicing principal (or appropriately experienced district personnel) to provide a stronger practitioner focus throughout the program.

Course and Syllabi Revision Process

To undertake the daunting task of course and syllabi revision and to incorporate a true co-teaching model, the consultant, along with the director of professional learning, faculty member and associate dean of the college, put small teams together to focus on the first two courses in the new course sequence, EL 700 Basic Principles of Education Administration and EL 703 Administration and Curriculum Improvement. Each course revision team met on many occasions for approximately 2-4 hours to review previously existing syllabi, texts, and assignments, and to consider new objectives, materials, instructional practices, and how to ensure that internship experiences supported course content. Each team collaborated using the activity, "Making Toast" (TED, 2015), to identify multiple objectives and efforts for the course and then narrow in on key themes and concepts, as well as specific needs and course objectives that directly aligned to the 2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL).

This course revision process has occurred every semester with two teams working on the two subsequent semester's courses. The process began in Fall 2018 and concluded in Summer 2018. Once the course and syllabi revision teams concluded their multiple meetings of approximately 4 four hours each, two or three of the current principals on the team volunteered to co-teach the course with a current faculty member. In some instances, all principals were interested in serving as co-instructors and, literally, a drawing of names occurred to choose a co-instructor. In other instances, two principals volunteered with one focusing on the elementary level and the other focusing on the secondary level; in those cases, it was decided that both principals could rotate teaching weeks to provide elementary and secondary perspectives within the course content. Once the selection of co-instructors was made, the faculty member and co-instructors (current principals) met individually to refine the weekly lesson plans and activities related to the newly revised courses and syllabi

The Co-Teaching Model

As co-instructors revised syllabi, the junior faculty member suggested the co-teaching model occur as a hybrid, flipped classroom. Having explored with multiple course structures, the aim was that such a model could align with aspiring principals' (i.e., current teachers') schedules more cooperatively. In doing so, many of the readings and some of the course content would be offered online for half of the credit hours, and the remaining half of the credit hours would occur in a face-to-face format. A further aim of the co-teaching model was that the in-person time could more strongly allow for strategic and intentional activities to take place with a theory-to-practice perspective.

The design team agreed to use this structure within the co-teaching model. Certainly, co-teaching has typically been part of K-12 education but has only recently reached higher education (Lusk, Sayman, Solkoski, Carrero, & Chui, 2016; Morelock et al., 2017). The co-teaching used in this model represents "two or more professionals delivering substantive instruction to a diverse, or blended, group of students in a physical space" (Cook & Friend, 1995, p. 2). Consequently, all components of the course were prepared, finalized, and carried out together among the faculty member and practicing principals (co-instructors).

The Internship

As the courses and syllabi were revised, the internship experience also required revision. The internship had traditionally been as three credits taken during the final semester of the program, with the experiences determined largely by individual principal supervisors, and often in the students' own schools. Because it was determined that a one-credit internship course would occur in conjunction with each semester's coursework, individual syllabi for the internship course were created with a per-semester focus. Therefore, the syllabus for each internship experience was directly aligned with coursework and objectives during each semester.

Mentor Principals

The professional learning director, in collaboration with other district leaders, identified effective mentor principals in the school district to support students' growth in the internship and across the two-year span of the program (e.g., Spring 2017 to Fall 2018, including summer sessions). The in-person recruitment efforts included inviting 13 highly respected principals to serve as mentor principals for approximately 25 potential students in the program, and yielded 12 who accepted the honor. All principals agreed to serve as mentor principals, despite not having been offered any specific monetary compensation for their service. Upon agreement to serve as a mentor principal, the mentor cohort participated in a one-day professional learning session to familiarize principals with the 2015 PSEL, the course and syllabi revisions, and overall purpose of the program redesign. Three additional support sessions occur with mentor principals across the span of the program and are led by the consultant and district's director of professional learning. These professional learning sessions ensure that fidelity and consistency exist among students' internship experiences, while also sustaining meaningful and embedded internship experiences that are aligned with each semester's course content.

To augment the meaningful internship experiences for students, the program requires that three substitute teacher days occur with the mentor principal's school each semester. This is essential, as the mentor principals are not located at the students' current school settings. As a result, students are exposed to a school setting different from their own and within a different educational level (e.g., teacher's own elementary school versus mentor principal's high school). To enhance the focus on the internship, a supervisor guides the students through the process, while also directly collaborating with all mentor principals. The internship supervisor supports and problem solves with students and mentor principals to strengthen the experience for everyone involved, ensure that experiences are aligned with coursework, and provide feedback to students regarding their learning reflections.

Funding

The involvement of individuals in the dynamic transformation of the principal preparation program, Nevada Leads, occurred in a synergistic manner. While the idea for the program redesign emerged over a casual lunch meeting, each subsequent planning meeting took place with specific intent to change the program. The initial efforts for the redesign occurred without any funding support. However, in the summer of 2016, the associate dean, junior faculty member, director of professional learning at the district, and the consultant collaborated to submit an application for the state department of education's Great Teaching and Leading Fund, to support the desired program changes. The funding was approved at approximately \$127,000 for one year and included financial support to: (a) hire co-instructors with Letters of Appointment for the program, (b) pay for \$500 in textbooks for each aspiring principal in the program, (c) provide a \$560 stipend for individuals involved in the course and syllabi revision process, (d) continue contracting with an educational leadership consultant during the change process, and (e) provide each student with the opportunity to attend a national educational leadership conference as a cohort. During their respective first semesters, both Cohorts I and II, along with key members of the design team, attended the annual ASCD Conference, formerly the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, as a kick-off in the leadership journey.

In the summer of 2017, another proposal was submitted to the state, which was funded for two years (through June 30, 2019), with approximately \$248,000 per year. The additional grant request as compared to the prior year, included \$1,000 stipends for the mentor principals, travel funds to disseminate program changes and related research, a second consultant to serve as a part-time university-district liaison to support ongoing planning needs for the program revision and candidate recruitment, and a faculty member overload contract for research time to focus on data collection and program research. Ultimately, with just a few visionary individuals involved, a small amount of financial support from the state, and an undying commitment to change the program in order to develop high-quality school principals, Nevada Leads was born. In the fall of 2018, the first cohort of 25 aspiring principals will graduate from Nevada Leads, followed by second cohort of 20 aspiring principals in the fall of 2019.

The Culminating Experience

The final component of the program that students will complete before graduating from Nevada Leads will be the culminating experience and a one-credit comprehensive exam. The exam will include the commonly known Praxis exam, *Educational Leadership: Administration and*

Supervision (5411), and the culminating experience will include several activities to further assess students' knowledge and skills related to each of the PSEL as a final stage of program completion. The culminating experience was developed by core design team (four individuals, including the WCSD's director of professional learning, the two consultants, the associate dean of the college, and the junior faculty member) over approximately 10 planning meetings that consisted of 3-hour sessions.

The team utilized the well-known *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) strategy of backwards planning by first identifying expected outcomes and their alignment with the 2015 PSEL and holistic program expectations and experiences. The next step was to brainstorm various activities that would meet the intended outcomes, address the standards, provide a unique modality, and be logistically possible to use to provide feedback to students, reasonably assess, and carry out effectively with minimal costs.

The team narrowed the list down to seven activities. Two of the activities will occur over the entire semester and include student reflections and an exit interview with their mentor principal. The five remaining activities will occur over a culminating experience day, and will include: (a) viewing a teacher's lesson and writing formative evaluation feedback; (b) providing a 30-minute presentation focused on a 90-day entry plan based on data analysis of a local school profile; (c) a writing activity with various scenarios presented that require differentiated responses; (d) a job interview with six interview questions from a panel of current school leaders and human resource representatives; (e) and an in-basket activity in which candidates will prioritize various school circumstances, provide a brief justification for their order, and provide extended explanations for two prioritized scenarios.

Throughout the culminating experience, students will rotate among activities and receive written and oral feedback from mentor principals and other educational leadership experts selected to review and assess students' progress using rubrics aligned to the 2015 PSEL. Mentor principals and participants will be provided professional learning specifically focused on the culminating experience activities to adequately assess and evaluate students in a way that is calibrated across activities and validated via a rubric for each activity. This culminating experience will serve as a rigorous opportunity to provide students with specific, timely, and meaningful feedback prior to concluding their program, while also celebrating accomplishments and program completion at the conclusion of the day's event.

Recommendations

The dynamic transformation of a principal preparation program with a university-district collaborative has served as a tremendous opportunity to better prepare aspiring school leaders for the current demands of the principalship, which in turn, is anticipated to strengthen K-12 students' academic achievement. This transformation is important, particularly as it has become increasingly "imperative that universities establish exemplary preparation programs that cultivate principals who feel prepared and who demonstrate competency" (Figueiredo-Brown, Ringler, & James, 2015, p. 37). This often leads to the establishment of district partnerships; Stearns and Margulus (2013) addressed the importance of partnerships but highlighted the need for professors to immerse themselves in districts system, remain flexible in understanding that the needs of educators must be met through curricular revisions, and be willing to build relationships, and use a team approach. Certainly, the Nevada Leads transformation faced a number of triumphs and challenges with the

partnership and change process that can also be useful for ongoing and future principal preparation program redesign efforts.

Several recommendations can be derived from the leadership program transformation. Primarily, the team leading the charge does not need to be large. In this case, approximately three to four individuals were involved in each key aspect of the dynamic transformation. What is necessary, however, is for each individual to have a true commitment to creating change for improvement. Also helpful is having people on the team who have sufficient authority to enact change. Both college-level and district-level administrators helped to ignite the change process, and demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the program.

Next, transparent communication is essential. For this process, daily communication has occurred among the leading change agents, along with frequent meetings to address specific purposes and needs. Along with that communication, a mutual willingness to change is critical. While the university's college has created a clear commitment to change, the district has also done so by recruiting mentor principals and co-instructors, while also re-imagining how their own principal academy (previously created to "remediate") will evolve to complement the skills and knowledge the students already gained through their six semesters in Nevada Leads. Indeed, school leaders have preferred district's job-embedded learned experiences over university preparation (Johnson, 2016). The district's support in recruiting and establishing mentor principals across the entire program experience has also been vital to the dynamic transformation. This is particularly noteworthy because aspiring principals want more time and interaction with mentor principals in order to improve their practice (Gray & Lewis, 2013).

Lastly, funding sources do not need to be exhaustive to enact change. For this dynamic transformation, its beginning occurred with no extra monetary support. The first set of state funding provided resources to jump-start the process for change and develop momentum. The ongoing funds helped to strengthen the program's sustainability, especially by providing stipends for mentor principals, funding to hire co-instructors, and financial support to have each candidate attend a leadership conference.

Each of the aforementioned recommendations has served to positively impact the dynamic transformation, but there is also much that has been learned through challenges experienced in the process. To begin, the time to plan and carry out design efforts has been incredibly challenging, particularly because the associate dean, faculty member, and director of professional learning at the district took the role of program redesign as an additional responsibility to existing work demands. In addition, while time for professional learning is provided for mentor principals, the internship supervisor must still work closely with students and mentor principals to problem-solve and ensure that fidelity across the internship experiences is consistent for each student. Furthermore, co-instructors, in most cases, need to further develop the unique skills involved with co-teaching a graduate-level class in a higher education setting, which requires increased support and guidance from the faculty co-instructor. The relationship between the faculty member and co-instructing principals must be trustworthy and fully collaborative to be effective. Finally, varying calendar schedules between the district and university and among schools within the district lead to challenging decisions about course offerings and times, especially during the summer months, which require students to take coursework together.

As students take courses and complete the program in a cohort format, the ability to gain funding to sustain the model and the program remains questionable over the long term. Moreover, the institution must still find ways to support all stakeholders and aspiring principals outside of the university-district collaborative. Consequently, the new model makes it challenging to admit

students from other urban and rural areas, as compared to those within the original university-district collaborative. However, because there is only one large school district with close geographical proximity, and because of the shared commitment of the innovators involved, the decision to first partner with this district was a logical one. Currently, efforts are underway to recruit mentors and students from other Nevada districts, as well. Cohort II, for example, includes five students and two mentors from a neighboring smaller district.

Conclusions

Innovative and successful strategies to adequately prepare all aspiring educational leaders remain paramount to the effectiveness and dynamic transformation of principal preparation programs. While only a few individuals worked to transform a traditional principal preparation program, each component focused on key aspects of effective programs. Even more, the hybrid, flipped classroom format with faculty and current principals as co-instructors is a unique and uncommon feature to this type of change effort. Therefore, as experienced in the creation of Nevada Leads, successful change is possible. But even more, change is necessary to help develop high-quality school leaders who are better prepared to support our nation's youth.

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Does Organizational Size Impact the Leadership Practices of School Leaders?

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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With the changing face of educational leadership, and the changes in programing for preparation programs, the question of the importance of developing specific leadership practices based on the size of districts served by the program arises. By looking at the relationship between leadership practices and the demographics of current leaders in school districts, programs can decide if a specific focus is required, or if there is a common need across various sized school districts. Two studies were conducted. One examined the leadership practices of 82 superintendents in Texas to determine if the size of their school district revealed any differentiation in how these superintendents behaved as leaders. The second study, utilizing a national sample, involved 646 school leaders, 1,581 of their direct reports, and 592 of their managers. Results from both studies tended to indicate that the leadership practices of school leaders do not vary systematically on the basis of any implicit contextual factors which might be associated with the size of the district or school system, although some differences by school size are noted by direct reports. The results have significance for designing programs that prepare secondary education leaders for leadership challenges. They also suggest that while leadership practices may be affected by scale and scope, the requirements for successful school leadership are fairly ubiquitous. Implications for transferring from systems of various sizes, larger or smaller, and for effectively recruiting school leaders are also considered.

Leadership practices of school leaders determine the effectiveness of the learning environment and the culture and climate of the institution. As the guiding force of a school, principals and superintendents provide the overarching atmosphere of the entire school and district. In preparing future principals and superintendents for leadership it is important to understand and appreciate whether there are behaviors that may vary across different size school campuses and districts. This study sought to first identify and benchmark the leadership practices of principals and superintendents and secondly to investigate the extent to which organizational size, among many possible demographic and institutional factors, has a significant influence on how secondary educational leaders behave.

The leadership practices of principals and superintendents can vary according to the various contexts in which they operate. As Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) explain: “Leadership success depends greatly on the skill with which leaders adapt their practices to the circumstances in which they find themselves, their understanding of the underlying causes of the problems they encounter, and how they respond to those problems (94).” The types of problems faced by school leaders can vary greatly and may be exacerbated by the size of their school system. Different leadership behaviors and actions may be required to meet those varied needs.

Little research has been conducted regarding leadership practices within specific contexts. Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008), for example, identified a core set of leadership practices for “turnaround schools,” although they did not look at specific context characteristics. According to Leithwood et al. (2008), “The ways in which leaders apply these leadership practices, not the practices themselves, demonstrate responsiveness to, rather than dictation by, the contexts in which they work (31).” Therefore, the question remains, are there specific leadership practices found to be more evident in districts of various sizes or does leadership simply reflect the skill of individual leaders, in spite of context?

Most scholars and practitioners alike would agree that how well principals and superintendents lead matters (Posner, 2015). For example, researchers have reported significant relationships between the leadership behavior of school principals and superintendents and teacher retention and morale (Branch, 2013; Rosenberg, 2013; Rowland, 2008; Steward, 2015), student performance (Dimke, 2011; Lambert-Knowles, 2013; Pringle, 2004; Merritt, 2016), school reform efforts, (Gaborik, 2011), school achievement (Groves, 1996; Hale, 2009; Hardoin, 2009; Hickey, 1995), parental involvement (Long, 1994), organizational culture (Howard, 2004; Quin, 2014; Stone, 2003), and, turnover (Forner, 2010; Kamrath, 2015). The principals of schools that received a state “distinguished” award were reported by their teachers to have engaged in significantly more leadership behaviors than did those from a comparable group of “non-distinguished” schools; and this relationship was independent of both gender and years of experience by the teachers Cavaliere (1995).

Still the question remains about how the school context might influence the specific and/or pattern of leadership behaviors employed. Moreover, the research findings provide mixed perspectives on these issues. For example, Bredeson, Klar, and Johansson (2011) found that superintendents indicate that the size of their district is the greatest contextual factor that impacts their leadership behaviors. For example, they found that in smaller districts that superintendents perform a variety of operational duties, interact directly with school community members, and develop personal relationships and trust with all community members. In contrast, superintendents in larger districts perform strategic roles, interact indirectly with school community members, and work through principals and leadership teams to establish trust. Howard (2004) found that teachers

in smaller sized schools viewed their principals as behaving less frequently as leaders than did their counterparts in medium or larger-sized schools.

Hentschke, Nayfack, and Wohlstetter (2009) determined that there was a relationship between the district size and leadership, and also that the size of the district had more impact on leadership practices than did the geographical location. Although the districts evaluated in the study were all urban, the practices of the superintendents in the smaller urban districts varied greatly from those of large urban superintendents. The leaders in the smaller districts were more hands-on and personally invested in the performance of faculty and students, resulting in a different skill set and different leadership practices than those in the larger districts. Fellows (2009) also found no relationship between leadership practices among superintendents in urban, rural, and suburban school divisions. Research with AASA superintendent of the year finalists and winners from 1988-2013 revealed no statistical significance between superintendents of various district sizes (Crawford, 2014).

The existing research does not clarify if, or to what extent, a relationship exists between leadership practices and school system size. Two studies were conducted to investigate this matter, varying along several sample characteristics. The first one involved only school superintendents (N= 66) and only from one state (Texas). The second involved a sample of school principals (N=xxx), from across the United States.

Superintendents Study

Study One: Participants and Instruments

The population represented in this study comprised all superintendents in Texas, which totaled 1102 districts. From a listing of superintendents on the Texas Education Agency website, leading traditional K-12 school districts, a random stratified sampling technique (based on the size of the district) was used to invite 918 superintendents. Sixty-six superintendents elected to participate and completed all of the survey instruments. In the sample there were nine females and 57 males. Nearly two-thirds of the sample were over the age of fifty, and almost all Caucasian (90%). District size was determined on the basis of the University Interscholastic League conference assignments, since this was a familiar designation for Texas superintendents, rather than assigning arbitrary numerical groupings. Thirty-three of the districts were small-sized (designation 1A), 12 were medium (designation 2A), and the remainder were considered large size districts (designations 3A, 4A; part of the reason for placing the latter two designations with 3A is because there provided only 10 cases). For the purposes of analysis, the 1A schools were compared to the 2A, 3A, and 4A groups.

Leadership was measured using the Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, xxx). Based on both qualitative and quantitative research Kouzes and Posner (2017) identified five practices (sets of behaviors and actions) taken by people when they were at their personal-best as leaders and their achievements were exceptional. The focus of this framework is on the behavior of leaders, not their intentions nor their attributes, and scores of studies with school leaders have been conducted using the LPI (Posner, 2015).

This is a brief summary of each leadership practice. *Model the Way* depends on the ability of the leader to clarify values and set an example for others to emulate. *Inspire a Shared Vision* depends on the ability of the leader to envision an uplifting future and enlist others in common aspiration. Leaders *Challenge the Process* by actively search for opportunities to improve, experiment, achieve small wins, and learn from experiences. Leaders *Enable Others to Act* by

empowering their followers through fostering collaboration, building trust, increasing self-determination, and development competence. *Encourage the Heart* involves the leaders tapping into the motivational power of reinforcement by genuine recognition of individual contributions and creating a spirit of community by celebrating the group's accomplishments.

The LPI contains 30 behavioral statements, six for each of the five leadership practices. Using a ten-point Likert scale, respondents indicate how frequently they typically engage in each behavior, with "1" indicating that "I almost never" engage in this particular behavior and "10" indicating that "I almost always" engage in the behavior. Previous studies have found that the internal reliability (Cronbach alpha) coefficients for the LPI are consistently above 0.75 (Posner, 2015).

Study One: Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the average score for each of the five leadership practices for superintendents by district size. ANOVA revealed no statistically significant differences for any of the five leadership practices based upon the size of the district, as measured by intercollegiate scholastic conference designations.

Table 1
Leadership Practices and District Size in Texas

	Small	Medium	Large
Model	8.45	8.39	8.34
Inspire	7.85	8.10	7.98
Challenge	7.89	7.89	7.69
Enable	8.75	8.81	8.79
Encourage	8.21	8.03	7.89

It is possible that this result may be due to the relatively small overall sample size, and especially the small sample sizes in the medium and large-size school districts. Another reason could be the lack of diversity in the characteristics of the school superintendents themselves (which was outside the scope of the current study); although if it were true that school superintendents are more similar in background than different it would argue that at least the contextual variable of district size is relatively unimportant in their selection and/or performance.

Principals Study

Study Two: Participants and Instruments

The sample population for this study came from an archival proprietary database generated from the online version of the Leadership Practices Inventory. There were 646 respondents, of which 359 were men and 283 were women, all with at least a college degree, and were mostly between 33-59 years of age (81%). More than one-third had been in their current position for ten years or more, with 22 percent having 5-10 years of tenure, 13 percent with 3-5 years, 19 percent with 1-3 years, and nine percent with less than one year in their current position. School size was categorized by their indication of how many employees there were in their organization: Small (less than 50 people, N = 120), medium (50 – 999 people, N = 99), large (100-499 people, N = 190), and very large (500 or more people, N = 237). Chi-square analysis revealed no significant differences between

organizational size and any respondent demographic characteristic (age, gender, education, or tenure).

In addition, this database provided access to the direct reports and supervisors of these school leaders. There were 2,438 direct reports, of which 1,581 were men and 809 were women, all with at least some college education. The age distribution was fairly flat with about 20 percent (plus or minus 2-3%) between the ages of 24-32, 33-40, 41-49, and 50-59 years of age. Tenure with their current employer was roughly equivalent to that of their school leaders: More than one-third had been in their current position for ten years or more, with 21 percent having 5-10 years of tenure, 12 percent with 3-5 years, 19 percent with 1-3 years, and 12 percent with less than one year. There were 592 respondents who indicated they were the “manager” of the individual initiating the survey, of which 284 were men and 296 were women, all with at least a college degree. These respondents tended to be older than either the school leaders in this sample or their direct reports, with nearly 46 percent aged 50 years or older and another 34 percent between 41-49 years of age. Similarly, they tended to have long tenure with their current employer, with 49 percent having ten or more years and another 18 with 5-10 years.

Study Two: Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows the average score for each of the five leadership practices for school leaders by the size of their organization. ANOVA revealed no statistically significant differences for any of the five leadership practices based upon the size of the school system, as measured by number of employees.

Table 2
Leadership Practices and School Size

	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Model	45.61	46.05	45.77	46.19
Inspire	42.05	42.96	42.93	42.89
Challenge	43.08	44.27	43.91	44.70
Enable	49.83	49.48	49.67	50.59
Encourage	45.63	45.43	45.49	45.49

However, some significant differences in the leadership practices were observed by the direct reports of their school leaders on the basis of the size of their school system (Table 3). ANOVA revealed statistical differences in the leadership practices of both Inspire ($F = 2.67, p < .05$) and Enable ($F = 3.56, p < .05$), and some suggested differences in both Model ($F = 2.10, p < .10$) and Encourage ($F = 2.21, p < .10$). Post-hoc analysis, using least square difference (LSD) analysis revealed that for Inspire, most of these were between school leaders in the very large school systems compared with their counterparts in the other three sized school systems. On Enable, the differences were between those in the small size school system and those in the medium-sized, and those in the medium-sized school system compared with those in the very large system. The major difference in Model was between medium and large sized school systems, and the major difference in Encourage was between medium sized school systems and their counterparts in small and large systems. The analysis from the perspective of the managers of the school leaders revealed no statistically significant differences in leadership practices on the basis of school system size (results not shown).

Table 3
Leadership Practices as Observed by Direct Reports and School Size

	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Model	48.23	47.06	48.37	48.12
Inspire	47.37	47.20	47.83	46.10
Challenge	47.16	46.06	46.70	46.08
Enable	51.14	49.82	50.72	51.62
Encourage	48.31	46.97	48.26	47.28

Analysis of the leadership practices of principals on the basis of the size of the school system, as measured by number of employees, does not indicate any significant differences. This suggests that the contextual challenges created by more or less employees (school size) does not, in turn, require the use, more or less, of any particular leadership. Rather, school leaders appear to make use of all five leadership practices fairly often, and this is as true, and necessary, for those leading a school system of less than 50 people as it does for leading a school system with more than ten times that number of employees. This claim is consistent with the perspective of the managers of these school leaders. However, somewhat in counterpoint to these assertions are the findings from the perspective of the “constituents” (that is, the people who work directly with these leaders). This analysis revealed some statistically significant, and suggestive, differences in the frequency to which the leadership practices are utilized by their school leaders due to the size of the school system.

Conclusions and Implications

The results from these two studies do not generally support the hypothesis that the size of the school district or school system significantly impacts the leadership practices of the school leader. The average score on the five leadership practices did not vary systematically as a function of district size for superintendents in Texas, with both Enable Others to Act and Model the Way ranking as the two most frequently used leadership practices. The rank order for the leadership practices was the same for superintendents in medium and large districts.

For school principals, their average frequency scores on the five leadership practices, as with superintendents, did not vary systematically across the four school-size categories. Indeed, the rank order for how often principals used the five leadership practices was the same across the school size classifications as well as the same as the rank order usage reported by the superintendents. School leaders view themselves as engaging most frequently in the leadership practices of Enable and Model, followed by Encourage the Heart, Challenge the Process, and Inspire a Shared Vision.

However, the perspective provided by the direct reports of the principals provides a somewhat more nuanced picture. First, their average score on each of the five leadership practices is significantly higher ($p < .001$) than the score generated by the principal; they view their principals engaging more in these leadership behaviors than do the principals themselves. Second, the size of the school system does appear to influence the Inspire and Enable leadership behaviors of school leaders as viewed by their direct reports; and possibly as well both Model and Encourage leadership behaviors. Looking at the rank order of the five practices, direct reports, like their school leaders, rated Enable as the leadership practice most frequently used, and Challenge and Inspire as the two least frequently used. Closer inspection reveals that the rank order from direct reports in small and

medium sized school systems are the same, while the rank order in large and very large sized school systems are the same.

The general conclusion is that leadership behaviors, and skills, are important to school leaders and that the size of the school system does not significantly change the requirements for leadership. While differences in context may change the nature of the actual leadership behavior, the impact of scale (increasing size) does not undermine the significance of engaging in leadership. In a small-sized school system, informal and verbal communications may be effective, while in a very large-sized system, communications will necessarily have to be more formal and written. Likewise, the visibility required of school leaders to Model the Way (set an example) may be achieved in a more person-to-person fashion than it can be in a system with hundreds of personnel, necessitating more formalized, and possibly group, interactions. The similarities in the leadership demanded of school leaders appears to far outweigh any differences due solely to the number of people (students, staff, and faculty) in the system.

Size is, obviously, only one contextual variable that differentiate between school systems and the requirements for effective leadership. Future studies could investigate other contextual factors which may impinge upon the demands and capabilities of school leaders. For example, funding, student performance, parental and school board involvement (politics), campus facilities, tenure, and the like. Researchers might also do more sophisticated analyses within the factor of school size; for example, looking at gender or years of experience. In addition, size is not a proxy for effectiveness and scholars might examine outcome data associated with schools, determining if size, or leadership, or some other factors have a significant impact on the performance of the school system. Qualitative investigations could be conducted with school leaders who have worked in school systems of various sizes to help identify possible similarities and differences in leadership responsibilities and challenges. Furthermore, in these studies school size was determined in two very specific fashions, which may make comparisons between them challenging, and other determinations of school size could be used in future investigations.

An important outcome of this research is that school size is not a significant consideration in the preparation and development of school leaders. For those educating future and current school leaders, the primary focus needs to be on developing their ability to comfortably and frequently engage in leadership behaviors generally, rather than emphasizing one particular set or pattern of leadership behaviors on the basis of school size. Likewise, in the recruitment and hiring (promotion) process of school leaders by school boards the concern should be foremost on scope (demonstrated leadership capability) and the candidate's ability to scale with changing circumstances (like size, as but one of many contextual factors). The five practices of exemplary leadership framework (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) can provide a useful framework for developing and strengthening the leadership skills of school leaders, providing them with a conceptual and practical understanding of how to lead most effectively to meet various organizational circumstances (Dimke, 2011).

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Our Future is in Our Minds and Hearts

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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The title of this paper comes from a quote from Senator William Fulbright, sponsor of legislation that resulted in the American Fulbright Scholar program. The Fulbright Program is based upon a shared commitment by American leaders post World War II who believed everything possible should be done to prevent the horrific tragedy and destruction of that conflict [Fulbright, J.W. (1989, p. xi]. The purpose of the paper is to invite consideration by those who prepare future school leaders to seriously contemplate what future school leaders will need in order to successfully navigate what promises to be increasingly tumultuous conditions. School leaders of the future will need to be “aware of, and find ways of coping with new and often complexifying trends” (Gardner, 2011, p. 286). Future school leaders will need preparation that helps them develop their own minds to meet their futures.

Keywords: habits of mind, future thinking, and educational leadership

Admiral Carlisle Trost, former chief of naval operations (who knows something about leadership) opined, “The first responsibility of a leader is to figure out what’s going on...That is never easy to do because situations are rarely black or white, they are a pale shade of gray...they are seldom neatly packaged” (as cited in Bolman and Deal, p. 36, 2013). In the context of contemporary complexities of globalization, which includes widespread poverty, misuse of the environment and violent conflict, and so much more, societies at all levels need leaders who can think beyond current conditions to leadership that is grounded in moral principles or “behavior connected to something greater than ourselves that relates to human and social development” (Fullan, 2004). School leaders from around the world, including professors who prepare them, can benefit from developing greater capacities to successfully address the challenges of the future.

The purpose of this paper is to invite others who prepare future school leaders to seriously consider what future school leaders will need in order to successfully navigate what promises to be increasingly tumultuous conditions. School leaders of the future will need to be “aware of, and find ways of coping with new and often complexifying trends” (Gardner, 2011, p. 286). School leaders of the future will need vision grounded in firmly held ethical foundations (NELP standards, 2018).

The title of this paper comes from a quote from Senator William Fulbright (1905-1995), an American senator who represented Arkansas from 1945 til 1974. His comment refers to the Fulbright Scholar program that he sponsored which was created from a shared commitment by American leaders post World War II who believed everything possible should be done to prevent the horrific tragedy and destruction of that conflict. Fulbright said,

Our future is not in the stars but in our own minds and hearts. Creative leadership and liberal education, which in fact go together, are the first requirements for a hopeful future for humankind. Fostering these--leadership, learning, and empathy between cultures--was and remains the purpose of the international scholarship program that I was privileged to sponsor in the U.S. Senate over forty years ago. It is a modest program with an immodest aim--the achievement in international affairs of a regime more civilized, rational and humane than the empty system of power of the past. I believed in that possibility when I began. I still do." [Fulbright, J.W. (1989, p. xi].

My interest in other cultures stems from many influences in my life, both early and recent. I have had the privilege and opportunity to represent my country twice through Fulbright Scholar grants in Ukraine (2012) and most recently in Latvia (spring 2018). I returned home both times with conflicting feelings of intense patriotic pride in my country and equally intense sense of discomfort that we as Americans should be doing more with the overwhelming advantages we receive over others to address issues both home and abroad.

The Latvian grant was a research (80%) teaching (20%) grant. My research project followed the International School Leaders Development Network (ISLDN) protocol to interview locally recognized social justice school leaders about their work. I interviewed three Latvian, 1 Lithuanian, and 1 Estonian school principal about their work. Each story was unique, but each person revealed powerful commitments to all their students. The transition from Soviet times to current day educational practices has not been simple. As one principal said, “We were totally isolated. We had no idea what the rest of the world was doing.” Simane, personal communication, June 27, 2018). Principals who received glimpses of what education might be “post-Soviet” were left to deal with teachers and others who yearned for the comfort of “the way things used to be.” The struggles have been and continue to be, significant. And yet each principal I talked to inspired and humbled me. They understood the contexts of their schools and worked within the formal laws and rules, but their

calling was to higher principles to serve all students. I can only hope that the graduates of our programs follow the same path.

The paper begins with the concept of globalization sharing wisdom from those who have considered global change and its effect upon humankind. From there I explain ways of thinking or habits of mind necessary to create a positive future for humankind. Finally I conclude with the invitation to all readers who prepare future school leaders to join in learning and acting intentionally in ways that demonstrate leadership, learning and empathy across all cultures and disciplines.

Three premises that may at first appear simplistic, but on deeper consideration, have profound implications provide the foundation for this paper. First, how and what we think affects our actions. What is meant by this assertion goes much deeper than simple positive thinking to include the nature of cognitive activity of all sorts. “Cognitive perspectives remind us that what administrators do depends on what they think – their overt behaviors are the result of covert thought processes” (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995, p.7). Second, the past is over, which may seem obvious, but when considering appropriate actions into the future, those advocates who claim we need to go back to what worked in the past fail to comprehend what will be needed for the future. The degree, rate, and unpredictability of change in societies worldwide will continue and very likely increase for the foreseeable future. We study the past not to discover our destiny but to master it, to gain hints and perspectives and insights on how we can improve upon the performance of our ancestors” (Fulbright, 1989, p. 228). The third premise is that all societies will be dependent upon leaders of social institutions, including schools, or perhaps, especially schools, for wisdom and cognitive capacities to create and implement conditions that successfully navigate globalization. Fulbright referred to what he termed the nuclear age, which of course, humanity can never escape, when he said, “The nuclear age calls for a different kind of leadership- a leadership of intellect, judgment, tolerance, and rationality, a leadership committed to human values, to world peace, and to the improvement of the human condition” (p. 232).

Globalization

While the truth conveyed in Fulbright’s quote about our futures being in our hearts and minds remains, the reality is also that the world has changed dramatically since the end of World War II. Fulbright spoke of a time post World War II of unprecedented societal upheaval. More than seventy years later, contemporary societies face new global trends—economic, cultural, technological, and environmental shifts that are part of a rapid and uneven wave of globalization. Interdependence across cultures, governments, and business calls for a generation of individuals who can engage in effective global problem solving and participate simultaneously in local, national, and global civic life. Preparing students to participate fully in today and tomorrow’s world demands conscious development of global competence as “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance” (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011, p. xiii).

Gardner (2008), the American psychologist who revolutionized thinking about human intelligence, identified four unprecedented trends of globalization: (1) movement of capital and other market instrument around the globe, (2) movement of human beings across borders, (3) movement of information across cyberspace to anyone with access to a computer, and (4) movement of popular cultures. Gardner speculates that human beings are engaged in what may be the “ultimate, all-encompassing episode of globalization.” (p.16).

Gardner contends that education worldwide prepares students more for the world of the past than for the potential worlds of the future. He identifies important obstacles to global ways of

thinking (Gardner foreward in Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). First, the vast majority of educators and policymakers concerned with education have not thought about the implications of education on global terms, nor have educators engaged in the necessary preparation for effective action. The second point Gardner makes is that a lack of deep motivation exists, whether individually or on a societal level, to understand how innovative education differs from past practice. At most, innovations are tolerated as long as they lead to adequate performance on traditional measures. Assessments are almost all geared for classical subject matter and rarely offer the means to assess the flexible, cooperative thinking required for interdisciplinary thought. Finally, Gardner identifies what he terms a “pernicious” and deep distrust towards education, particularly in the United States. “Cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and globalism are often considered dangerous concepts or even “fighting words” (p. x). “What is needed more than ever is a laser-like focus on the kinds of human beings that we are raising and the kinds of societies—indeed, in a global era, the kind of world society— that we are fashioning” (p. xi).

Put another way, many educational and policy leaders are “stuck” in mindsets of the past that do little to allow for effective engagement for the future. Educators and policy makers engaged in school leadership preparation/development, should seriously consider ways to rethink the purpose and end product of future programs and delivery. Gardner poses a powerful question, “What kinds of school leaders do schools throughout the world need?” (as cited in Mansilla & Jackson, 2011, p. xi). The answer will require simultaneous local and global consideration of conditions likely to be faced by future school leaders.

Leaders by definition, see reality in ways that others, for whatever reason, do not. Looking specifically at performance and environment in top companies, Collins and Hansen (2011) conclude, “We cannot predict the future. But we can create it” (p.1). Collins and Hansen (2011) elaborate further,

The best leaders we studied did not have visionary ability to predict the future. They observed what worked, figured out *why* it worked, and built upon proven foundations. They were not more risk taking, more bold, more visionary, and more creative than the comparisons. They were more disciplined, more empirical, and more (productively) paranoid (p.9).

As the world changes, leadership must also change. Flowers states, “In a world of global institutional networks, we face issues for which hierarchical leadership is inherently inadequate.... For networks of (shared) leadership to work with real awareness, many people will need to be deeply committed to cultivating their capacity to serve what’s seeking to emerge” (Senge et al, 2004, p.186).

Friedman & Mandelbaum (2012) explain “the merger of globalization and the Information Technology (IT) revolution that coincided with the transition from the twentieth to the twenty-first century is changing everything- every job, every industry, every service, every hierarchical institution....this merger has raised the level of skill a person needs to obtain and retain any good job, while at the same time increasing the global competition for every one of those jobs” (p. 121). Their prediction is as relevant for schools, school leadership preparation/development, and universities as it is for other segments of society. Figuring out effects upon a particular profession, in this case school leadership preparation/development, require understanding the fundamental restructuring that is occurring in global economies, communication, the environment, and so on.

Apple (2011) explains education’s role in internationalization this way:

It has become ever more clear that education cannot be understood without recognizing that nearly all educational policies and practices are strongly influenced by an increasingly integrated international economy that is subject to severe crisis..... all of

these social and ideological dynamics and many more are now fundamentally restructuring what education does, how it is controlled, and who benefits from it throughout the world. (pp. 222-223)

Minds and Hearts for the Future

So what do school leaders who have “figured out what’s going on” to use Trost’s terminology, look like? Surely they have a hunch that American preoccupation with test scores and frantic searches for the next big silver bullet in the form of new initiatives does little if anything to prepare students for the future. Howard Gardner writes, “The world will not be saved by high test scores” (Gardner in Mansilla, V. & Jackson, A. (2011, p. xi), which seems only more obvious when stated so simply. School leaders needed by societies worldwide have figured this out. Knowing what not to do is a start, but certainly nothing more. “The organizations (and their leaders) that best adapt to change a changing world first and foremost know what should *not* change. They have a fixed anchor of guiding principles around which they can more easily change everything else. They know the difference between what is truly sacred and what is not, between what should never change and what should be always open for change, between what we stand for” and how we do things” (Collins in Hesselbein, 2002, p. xv).

Gardner (2008) identifies five minds or ways of thinking necessary to thrive in the future: (1) the Disciplined Mind, becoming an expert in an individual area of expertise – educational leadership is the discipline considered in this paper, (2) the Synthesizing Mind, the ability to put together different sources of information in ways that make sense to the synthesizer and others, (3) the Creative Mind, having capacity for new ideas and ways of doing, (4) the Respectful Mind which notes and appreciates differences between humans, and (5) the Ethical Mind which considers the nature of one’s work and in the context of the needs and desires of society in which one lives. “With these ‘minds,’ as I refer to them, a person will be well equipped to deal with what is expected, as well as what cannot be anticipated. Without these minds, a person will be at the mercy or forces that he or she can’t understand, much less control” (Gardner, 2008, p.2).

Daniel Pink (2005) offers another framework on habits of mind necessary for the future. “We are moving from an economy and society built on the logical, linear, computer like capabilities of the Information Age to an economy and a society built on the inventive, empathic, big-picture capabilities of what’s rising in its place, the Conceptual Age” (p. 2). Pink organizes his ideas into what he calls the six senses: (1) design, meaning that creations must go beyond function to be beautiful, whimsical, or emotionally engaging, (2) story, explaining that the essence of persuasion, communication, and self-understanding is embraced in the ability to fashion a compelling narrative, (3) symphony, seeing the big picture, crossing boundaries, and being able to combine disparate pieces into an arresting new whole, (4) empathy, understanding what makes others tick, to forging relationships and care for others, (5) play, appreciating the benefits of laughter, games and humor, and (6) meaning, the human desires for purpose, transcendence, and spiritual fulfillment (p. 65-67).

While Gardner’s “minds” and Pink’s “senses” have some similarities (creative mind and design, synthesis and symphony, empathy and respect), there are aspects where one framework touches on concepts the other does not. A comparison of these two broad concept ideas for the future should begin with their backgrounds. Gardner born in 1943, the Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is the developmental psychologist who is most well known for his groundbreaking work on multiple intelligences. Pink born in 1964, graduated from law school at Yale, but then decided not to practice law. Pink worked in several

positions in politics and economic policy. Each author's ideas must be considered in the context of their professional training and also their age. Both are prolific authors, but of course, Gardner has 19 years' head start on Pink. Both frameworks have merit and expand upon Fulbright's contention that our future is in our hearts and minds. In a comparison of their books, Five New Minds for the Future and A Whole New Mind, Rao (2007) concludes that both authors think with complex concepts, employ conceptual metaphor and narratives. Gardner is more comfortable with taxonomies and he has a knack for rules and aphorisms. Gardner has an instinct for theories and meta-theories. Rao gives Pink more credit for evolved aesthetic sensibilities and design instincts. Gardner writes to influence policy (Sawyer, 2008) and Pink's audience is aimed at business (Conrad, 2008). Each enriches understanding of how leaders can expand repertoires of thinking.

Returning to Fulbright's original contention that our future lies within our minds and hearts, Gardner and Pink both address relationships that can be applied globally. Gardner's *Respectful and Ethical Minds* and Pink's sense of empathy capture leadership qualities of the heart necessary for the future. Noddings (2005) terms a global citizen as one "who can live and work effectively anywhere in the world. A global way of life would both describe and support the functioning of global citizenship" (p. 2-3). Mansilla and Jackson (2011) define global competence as "the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance" (p. xii). Global citizens display affection, respect, care, curiosity, and concern with the well being of all human kind (McIntosh, 2005). Each attribute (affection, respect, care, curiosity, and concern) relates to the other concepts. Leaders who display respect develop capacities to understand human tendencies to identify with and value members of their own group while simultaneously accepting and living with differences, and most importantly valuing those from other socio-economic, racial, ethnic, groups (Gardner, 2008). Leaders for the future recognize that respect is not passive (Issacs, 1999) and caring is being in relation with others, not a set of specific behaviors (Noddings, 1992). Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee (2004) describe leaders with empathy as capable of attuning to a wide range of emotional signals, allowing them to sense the emotions of a person or group. Such leaders listen attentively in order to grasp the perspectives of others. Empathy enables leaders to get along well with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Universal well-being, or progress towards it, includes the elimination of poverty, concern for the environment, and world peace (Noddings, 2005). Other conceptions of global competency include the ability to work effectively in international settings; awareness and adaptability to diverse cultures, perceptions, and approaches; familiarity with the major currents of global change and the issues they raise; and capacity for effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries (Brustein, 2007). School leaders need to grasp the importance of creating learning cultures designed to help students understand the worldwide circulation of ideas, products, fashions, media, ideologies, and human beings on a much deeper level than is currently included in most curriculums worldwide. These phenomena are real, powerful, and ubiquitous. School leaders coming up through the ranks today need preparation to tackle a range of pervasive problems from human conflict, climate change, poverty, the spread of disease, and the control of nuclear energy (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

In order to think and act differently, individuals and societies must come to grips with the attitudes, perceptions, and cultures that may inhibit learning. Hunter, White, & Godbey (2007) caution that while there may be some similarities in the definitions or conceptions of global competence, there is limited commonality and, in almost all cases, these definitions are American derived. Walker, Bridges, & Chan, 1996 (as cited in Crow et al., 2010) contend that preparation and development of educational leaders be constructed and delivered within knowledge and

understanding that embrace both local and global considerations. Americans in general are not as familiar with other cultures and so have a need to intentionally develop more globally focused perspectives. College-bound students in other countries know far more about the wider world, including the United States, than American students. Stearns (2009) commented, “Our parochial gap is not only striking, but dangerous, depriving us (Americans) of the knowledge we should have to operate effectively” (p. 9). Americans may tend to assume other professionals eagerly await opportunities to learn from our practices, when indeed, that may not be the case. Americans who are open to learning practices from other cultures will in many cases gain far more knowledge and understanding than they impart.

All school leaders including those who prepare them in graduate school must become more fully aware of the need to develop capacities of understanding and acting in ways that value and respect other cultures and societies. This is as true for the school leader of an isolated rural homogeneous school community in any country as it is for a school whose students represent languages and cultures from around the world. The school leader whose heart looks into the future will cultivate the practice of developing capacities within themselves as well as others, for respect for difference and in particular for those who hold opposite points of view (Gardner, 2008; Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, Damon, 2002; Issacs, 1999; Noddings, 2005).

There is no corollary of Gardner’s Disciplined Mind in Pink’s senses. Gardner’s Creative Mind and Pink’s Design Sense overlap as do Gardner’s Synthesizing Mind and Pink’s Symphony Sense. One clear distinction between the Information Age of the past (when knowledge workers employed information in specialized ways) and the Conceptual Age (where creators and empathizers’ distinctive ability is to recognize patterns and seek meaning) (Pink, 2005, p. 49) is the necessity to shift from discrete bodies of knowledge or information to capacities that organize, prioritize, create, and empathize. “Today facts are ubiquitous, nearly free, and available at the speed of light” (Pink, 2005, p.102).

Gardner’s Disciplined Mind involves the cultivation, over time (at least ten years) of a distinctive way of thinking in line with a scholarly field or professional realm. For instance, a physicist not only knows and understands physical properties, but also comes to see the world and behave in a way that reflects the guiding principles of this science. While development of a Disciplined Mind requires diligence and perseverance that results in steady improvement over time, Gardner’s definition extends beyond this idea of a dedicated work ethic to include an actual framework, or lens, through which a scholar and/or professional approaches decision-making and problem-solving.

A Disciplined Mind is necessary to effectively improve and innovate in any field. Gardner (2008) argues that the pool of expertise that becomes accessible through a collective cultivation of a Disciplined Mind will be necessary to meet challenges that are currently unforeseen. A Disciplined Mind holds the capacity to generate new information, both by delving deeper into a given area of research and by making horizontal connections between other fields of thought in ways that first requires advanced knowledge and skill in one’s field of focus. Shifting into Gardner’s description of the Ethical Mind, which he along with his colleagues, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and William Damon, term the Good Worker, one whose work incorporates excellence in the technical sense, engaging, and ethical in that it serves the greater good, even or perhaps especially when decisions go against the immediate best interests of the worker (Gardner, Csikszentmihaly & Damon, 2002).

The cultivation of a Disciplined Mind requires investment of the time and attention necessary to develop this depth of knowledge and experience. Developed over a lifetime, a Disciplined Mind

continues to learn by both deepening knowledge and expanding toward interdisciplinary treatment of real-life applications. Falling short of a Disciplined Mind is one that mechanically follows the rules of his/her field without the wisdom to discern possibilities for change, creativity, or an amended approach. Likewise, the acquisition of knowledge and skills in one's field, but inability to apply this expertise in complex problem-solving that spans multiple disciplines, falls short of the Disciplined Mind as described by Gardner (2000, 2008). In the specific case of school leadership, "Pedagogically centered leadership is a performance based requirement that clearly communicates to the education profession, business community, parents, and professors of educational leadership that leadership requires a fundamental understanding and knowledge of teaching and learning" (English, Papa, Mullen & Creighton, 2012, p. 15).

Gardner's Synthesizing Mind and Pink's Symphony Sense bring us to consideration of the next way of thinking. While there are differences in the two authors' conceptions, Pink (2005) captures them both, "Symphony, as I call this aptitude, is the ability to put together the pieces. It is the capacity to synthesize rather than to analyze; to see relationships between seemingly unrelated fields; to detect broad patterns rather than to deliver specific answers; and to invent something new by combining elements nobody else thought to pair" (p.130). Gardner's definition is more succinct "The ability to knot together information from disparate sources into a coherent whole" (p. 46).

Gardner (2008), in explaining the Synthesizing Mind, crosses over into Pink's Storytelling Sense, when he states "Those individuals who can generate several representations of the same idea or concept are far more likely to come up with potent syntheses than those who are limited to a single, often attenuated representation of that idea" (p. 69). "We live in a time where our most talented minds know more and more about increasingly narrow spheres" (Gardner, p. 74). Pink (2005) explains, "Stories are easier to remember- because in many ways, stories are *how* we remember" (p.101). The critical capacity is to place facts in context and to deliver them with emotional impact (Pink, 2005).

Creativity is highly valued in the Conceptual Age. Both Gardner (2008) and Pink (2005) address these capacities, although Gardner sets creativity apart from his other minds while creativity is more of a thread throughout Pink's (2005) Design, Symphony, and to some extent Play Senses. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1997), the psychologist who termed the state of being he called "flow," a state of consciousness when "what we feel, what we wish, and what we think are in harmony" (p. 29). Creativity, according to Csikszentmihalyi (1996) is never simply the accomplishment of an individual, or even a small group.

Gardner and Pink provide valuable insights into how effective leaders of the future can conceptualize their own thinking and ways of approaching their work. Neither is absolutely correct for future school leaders but the comparison between them offers glimpses of consideration beyond even the most recent batch of standards (NELP, 2018).

Conclusions

Returning to quotations about leadership, let's consider the implications of ways of thinking related to educational leaders. Admiral Trost stated, "The first responsibility of a leader is to figure out what's going on...", Gardner asked, "What kinds of school leaders do schools throughout the world need?" and Fulbright entreated cultures to join in learning and acting intentionally in ways that demonstrate leadership, learning and empathy across all cultures and disciplines. (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 36; Gardner in Mansilla & Jackson, 2011, p. xi; Fulbright, 1989, p. xi).

Responding to Admiral Trost's statement about the first responsibility of a leader to figure out what is going on, as societies worldwide shift from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age, educational leaders must consider the extent to which we are preparing students for a world that no longer exists. Traditional subject matter, delivered in familiar ways will not prepare today's students for the futures ahead for them. The reality is that education around the world is solidly bureaucratic and resistant to change. In the United States and elsewhere, the political process will continue to impose trends in the form of initiatives and reforms. That's what's going on.

Gardner asked societies to seriously consider what kinds of leaders are needed to navigate existing conditions. School leaders prepared for the future, which is already upon us, consciously expand their abilities as global citizens to develop capacities of understanding and acting in ways that value and respect other cultures and societies. They are masters of their discipline (teaching and learning) and continue to learn by both deepening knowledge and expanding toward interdisciplinary treatment of real-life applications. School leaders prepared for the Conceptual Age are creators and empathizers' whose distinctive ability is to recognize patterns and seek meaning and understand the necessity to shift from discrete bodies of knowledge or information to capacities that organize, prioritize, create, and empathize (Gardner, 2008; Pink, 2005).

After the global tragedies of World War II, Fulbright was looking into the future in hopes of preventing the horrors of the recent past when he talked about "creative leadership and liberal education" as "the first requirements for a hopeful future for humankind." His concept of leadership, learning, and empathy between cultures seems fitting. Fulbright is as correct in 2019 as he was in 1948. All societies need leaders focused on preparing others in their corners of the world to create hopeful futures for mankind.

How we think makes all the difference. Educators whose minds and hearts are focused ahead can anticipate that effective schools for the future will abandon preoccupation with test scores that purport to improve schools, but actually measure classical subject matter. Effective or innovative schools of the future will turn instead to focus on the flexible, interdisciplinary thinking that global societies so desperately need. At a very basic level, then it is incumbent upon American school leadership preparation faculty to understand in different ways what is going on in rapidly changing environments. We can choose to wait for the next round of standards and mandates or we can decide to figure out how future school leaders need to think in order to more adequately prepare future school leaders for the roles they will accept upon completing our programs. The choice lies before us.

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Principal Self-Efficacy and Learning Organizations: Influencing School Improvement

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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One key characteristic of high-performing schools is how they function organizationally, enabling them to enact reforms effectively and to deal with regular organizational ambiguity and chaos. The principal plays a pivotal role in developing a school culture that supports high-performing schools. This research studies the relationship between principal self-efficacy and a principal's perception of her school as a learning organization. We examined specific subcategories of learning organization attitudes and behaviors to determine whether principals consider distinct organizational behaviors a proxy for indicators of a learning organization, and whether that was related to their self-efficacy. The findings indicate that principals must be highly efficacious to persuade others to perform at high levels, and must have a strong belief in teachers and the organization as a whole to pursue the types of school improvement efforts and research-based organizational learning mechanisms that can improve student performance.

Keywords: principal self-efficacy, learning organization, high-performing schools, school culture

There is clear consensus on the role of leadership on student achievement (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Goddard, Goddard, Sook Kim, & Miller (2015). Leadership effects studies suggest that school leaders' influence on student achievement is indirect, with more direct influence on teachers and the school organizational structure and functioning (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). At the same time, we see more effort placed on assessing principals' work using a variety of indicators including creating a positive culture, maintaining high standards, and rigorous curriculum (Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliot, & Cravens, 2009; Deal & Peterson, 2016). These two distinct bodies of work, research on leadership effects and leadership assessment, incorporate dimensions of organizational functioning as critical aspects of school leaders' professional responsibility and regular work. Indeed, one key characteristic of high performing schools is how they function as an organization (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015), specifically the way they share knowledge and information across the organization, which enables them to enact reforms effectively and efficiently, and deal better with organizational chaos and uncertainty (Thompson, 2017). We know that the school leader plays a central role in cultivating a school environment that supports and enables the type of organizational learning that yield high performing schools (Klar & Brewer, 2013).

While the notion of a school as a learning organization seems like common sense (Senge, 2014), a clear definition of a learning organization remains somewhat elusive. The idea of a learning organization is one in which knowledge and information gets shared and utilized across the school community (Senge, 1991). Yet, scholars continue to work to determine whether to define a learning organization as the presence of certain structures, cultures, or processes that enable organizational learning, or whether these same features emerge because of organizational learning. However, amid this conceptual dilemma, Senge (1995) supports the contention that the principal bears some responsibility to create an environment wherein teachers collectively interpret knowledge and information that shapes organizational values, future organizational functioning, and organizational outcomes.

It may not be enough that principals recognize their role and responsibility to create and restructure organizations for learning and for improvement. Efficacy beliefs are key determinants of human agency, as people must believe they have the power to produce the desired results to attempt to make it happen (Bandura & Wessels, 1997; Takahashi, 2011; Kleinsasser, 2014). Bandura contends that perceived self-efficacy expands the options that leaders consider when they need to make a decision. Conversely, if leaders feel particularly inefficacious regarding some innovation or reform, then they likely disregard it as an option when making decisions. Further, he argues that leaders' beliefs that the environment can be controlled or changed are a means of creating resilient leader self-efficacy (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011; Abuzid & Abbas, 2016). In other words, when leaders view the organization as changeable, it increases their self-efficacy to manage it, whereas viewing it as unchangeable undermines their efficacy. At the same time, principals' self-efficacy may play a mediating role influencing the principals' interpretation of the organizational context and their problem solving processes, and affect the nature and effectiveness of principals' practices.

This paper discusses a study that explores the relationship between principal self-efficacy and principals' perceptions of their schools as a learning organization. Our basic premise is that principal performance is a function of principal self-efficacy and principal perceptions of the school environment, specifically whether they view their own school reflective of the behaviors and attitudes consistent with a learning organization. For this study, we do not aim to determine the direction of the relationship. Rather, our purpose is to examine whether principals view certain organizational behaviors and attitudes as indicative of a learning organization, possibly relating to

their principal self-efficacy (Calik, Sezgin, Kavgaci, & Cagatay Kilinc, 2012). We posit that organizational attitudes, behaviors, and functioning contribute to the overall organizational efficacy. Further, we believe that it is important for principals to possess positive judgments about their own self-efficacy, as well as organizational efficacy, to effectively enact school policies, reforms, and innovations and deal with organizational chaos and uncertainty (Donnell & Gettinger, 2015). In addition to examining the relationship between principal self-efficacy and learning organization behaviors we examine some specific subcategories of what we believe to be part of learning organization attitudes and behaviors to determine their relationship to principal self-efficacy.

Conceptual Framework

Organizational Learning

The significance of organizational learning to school reform receives support from a broad area of researchers inside and outside of education, and from national and international arenas, even as its meaning continues to be debated and reconceptualized. According to Fiol and Lyles (1985), there are two approaches to learning organizations. First, organizational learning has been described as the development of new insights and understandings that have potential to influence behavior (Fiol & Lyles, 1985; Huber 1991; Sinkula 1994; Sheng & Chien, 2016). Marsick and Watkins (1999) identify several key components of learning organizations, including systems-level, continuous learning that generates and manages knowledge outcomes, and outcomes that lead to improvement in the organization's performance and value. They describe a learning organization as, "one that learns continuously and transforms itself . . . where learning is a continuous, strategically used process" (p. 13).

These definitions situate learning as a dependent variable, meaning that learning as an outcome can be detected or is implied in the shared mental models, causal maps, strategies, etc. which then lead to behavioral outcomes like changes in such things as routines and standard operating procedures (Schechter, 2008). Promoted by Senge in the business literature (Senge, 2014), we also see some application in the education literature that apply this conceptual understanding. For example, organizational learning has been defined as the social processing of knowledge (Marks & Louis, 1999; Hubbard, Mehan, & Stein, 2006) or the sharing of individually held knowledge or information in ways that construct a clear, commonly held set of ideas. In addition, others (Borgatti & Cross, 2003) suggest that organizational learning is more than the collective learning of individuals. Sharing and collaboration, developing a shared vision, and collective processing promote organizational learning.

Another conception of organizational learning suggests that learning is reflected in the structural elements and social arrangements of the organization. In his study, Schechter (2008) views learning as an independent variable, examining the mechanisms that support structural-social arrangements, which promote organizational learning. These organizational learning mechanisms may be seen as the instruments that gather and organize information and put it to use (Schechter, 2008). Evaluation reports, professional development, meetings, curriculum and other concrete structures or processes represent the instruments or mechanisms through which the sharing and the flow of information occurs, hence leading to organizational learning. Indeed, this continues to be a promising approach for the continuing study of organizational learning.

The theoretical model for this study is based in part on Senge's (1990) construct of a learning organization. While this model has been used widely in business contexts, there is significantly less

evidence of its application to school systems. In this study, Senge's model allowed us to frame organizational learning as organizational behaviors and attitudes that may be assessed and judged by school principals. We examined principal self-efficacy along with principals' perceptions of their schools as exhibiting attitudes and behaviors consistent with Senge's construct of a learning organization. We were interested in the degree to which principals believe their faculty work together, share a collective vision, accept innovation and change easily, and recognize the need to improve upon their own skills and competencies. We adapted and operationalized Senge's framework, including mental models, team learning, collective mastery, shared vision and systems thinking, into attitudes and behaviors that could illuminate these elements of a learning organization. Our focus is on the principal's cognitive processing of her own ability to lead and improve schools, relative to her perception of the school's ability to behave in ways that support improvement across the school. We contend that principal self-efficacy and the principal's view of school organizational efficacy has implications for principal performance and ultimately school performance.

Operationalizing Senge's Five Disciplines of a Learning Organization

Kofman and Senge (1993) assert that individuals in learning organizations find personal commitment and a sense of community and demonstrate a high degree of efficacy about people and their potential to effect change in the environment (Beer & Eisenstat, 1996, 2000). Some of the common features described in the literature on learning organizations include purposefully organized conversation, including intense communication (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012), reflective dialogue (Bryk, Camburn, & Louis, 1999; Seashore Louis & Lee, 2016), persistent inquiry (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Rusch, 2005; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 2017), and reflective thinking (Leithwood, Leonard & Sharratt, 1998; Sharratt & Fullan, 2009). Senge (1990) offers five learning disciplines that characterize learning organizations and suggests that together, these disciplines enhance the collective capacity of a group of individuals to collectively pursue organizational goals and outcomes. We use them to help us conceptualize the ways in which the principal might perceive the faculty's collective thinking and functioning, which can be viewed as important characteristics of school environment and organizational efficacy, and which likely mediate principal self-efficacy. In the section that follows, we define each of these components, and discuss how they may be operationalized as features that exemplify schools that function as learning organizations.

Senge (1992) describes mental models as an individual's set of assumptions and mental images that influence one's understanding of the world, as well as the actions taken as a result. Learning which changes mental models is immensely challenging. He suggests that these models are indelibly woven into who we are as individuals, complete with a full complement of our own personal experiences (Senge, 2000). They are often hidden securely from view in schools, often being among the "undiscussable" topics. Mental models must undergo significant change to accomplish systemic institutionalized change, not simply the reorganization of the framework and the structure. A learning organization works to develop a productive conversation about such previously uncomfortable topics. At the school organizational level, mental models may be thought of as tacit, taken-for-granted assumptions and knowledge that reflect what teachers and administrators think about their teaching practice and school functioning. In this study, we conceptualize a school's use of mental models by determining whether the faculty functions in ways that acknowledge the tension between what they do and what they know they should do. In other words, we assume that principals can perceive whether teachers acknowledge the potential discrepancy between some notions of "real" and "ideal" educational practice.

Shared vision is the ability to hold a shared image of the future, which a group seeks to create collectively. It involves “unearthing shared ‘pictures of the future’ that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance” (Senge, 1990, p. 9). The idea is that a school or school system should develop a shared vision against which all decisions are measured. This notion of shared vision is consistent with other literature that situates its development as part of the school leader’s role and responsibility. It seems reasonable that the degree to which the principal perceives that the faculty members share a vision would reflect on her ability to develop the vision with faculty and communicate it across the school community. Shared vision suggests some acknowledgement of agreement on collective beliefs about the challenges and goals for what could be accomplished in the future.

The discipline of learning together is referred to as team learning. Through such strategies as skillful discussion and dialogue, small groups of individuals begin to transform their collective thinking, using their energies to achieve common goals with an ability to finesse greater than the sum of the individual members’ talents (Senge, 2000). “Dialogue” refers to the capacity of members of an organization to suspend assumptions and enter into genuine “thinking together” (Isaacs, 1999; Howe & Abedin, 2013; Howe, Hennessy, Mercer, Vrikki, & Wheatley, 2019). While it seems that is the principal’s job to develop structures that enable team learning, the degree to which they receive district support or resistance would be an important factor. Further, principals need to convince faculty of the value of collaboration and professional community to effectively foster an environment for team learning. For this study, we asked principals to conceptualize team learning based on whether teachers work together, share information and knowledge, make decisions together, and develop new strategies that lead to innovation.

According to Senge (1990), systems thinking refers to “...a shift of mind from seeing ourselves as separate from the world to connected to the world, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something ‘out there’ to seeing how one’s own actions create the problems we experience” (p. 12). We conceptualize systems thinking as the way in which a faculty considers the interconnectedness between themselves and various components of the school community, as well as organizational functioning. In other words, we asked principals to assess whether teachers view themselves as part of the broader system, and how what they do influences school functioning as a whole, as well as the future of the students and communities they serve. Systems thinking is related to both shared vision and team learning (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, & Dutton, 2012; Stalter, Phillips, Ruggiero, Scardaville, Merriam, Dolansky, & Winegardner, 2016), either as a prerequisite or consequence.

Finally, collective mastery describes the development of a faculty’s capacity to learn and perform. Senge sees personal mastery as a cornerstone of the learning organization, since an organization’s capacity for learning can be no greater than that of its members (Senge, 2014). Others suggest that organizational learning does not represent the collective learning of individuals; rather it is collective processing of knowledge that promotes organizational learning (Schechter, 2005). For the purposes of this study, we asked principals to assess the collective knowledge and skills of their faculty as a whole, and whether the faculty work together to improve their collective capacity for leadership and teaching.

Taken together, principals develop some notion of their school organization’s capacity and willingness to learn via their perception of these disciplines (or attitudes and behaviors). We contend that they represent, at least in part, the principal’s view of organizational efficacy. Along with principal self-efficacy, the principal’s view of her school as a learning organization may be a powerful indicator of principal performance, which may subsequently affect student performance

and school improvement. Principals must assess themselves and their schools as capable and able to enact the necessary structures, policies, and practices to support the improvement of teacher and student learning. These judgments directly impact principal decision-making and performance. In this study, we examined the construct of principal self-efficacy and its importance to principal performance and organizational learning.

Self-efficacy - A Critical Factor in Principal Performance

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between principal self-efficacy and principals' perception of their school as a learning organization. While this relationship is likely reciprocal in nature, we suggest that principals' views of their schools as learning organizations may provide some indication of whether they see their schools as changeable and adaptable, which then affects principal self-efficacy and subsequently, principal performance. In other words, principals who work in adaptive school environments likely deem themselves as more capable or efficacious in dealing with school complexity. Bandura (1986; Stajkovic, Bandura, Locke, Lee, & Sergent, 2018) contends that an individual's self-efficacy includes beliefs about one's own capabilities, which then shape thoughts, emotional states, and actions in response to challenging situations. Further, individuals possess and receive information from the environment that shapes their efficacy beliefs. For example, researchers Wang, Hall, and Rahimi (2015) suggested that causal attributions significantly contribute to perceived self-efficacy. According to Chwalisz, Altmaier, & Russell (1992), individuals evaluate events based on their general beliefs about the locus of control. Their beliefs about internal locus of control (events depend upon one's own behavior) or external locus of control (events depend upon factors such as luck, fate, or other people) affect their primary appraisal and the subsequent causal attributions assigned to events. A secondary appraisal involves an individual's evaluation of their own interaction with events and the environment; this shapes both self-efficacy and behavior. If a person or the group decides that the causes of events or features of the environment they face are beyond their control, then such an appraisal affects their efficacy, which in turn affects their response to these events.

Bandura (1993; Stajkovic, Bandura, Locke, Lee, & Sergent, 2018) listed sources of information that shape self-efficacy, in addition to causal attributions. The first source of efficacy information, mastery experience, refers to the enactive experiences that people have, representing their successful or unsuccessful performance. It is important here to note that it is not the actual successful or unsuccessful performance that affects efficacy. Rather, mastery experience shows not only whether individuals have the requisite skills to perform, but also indicates their perception of control in the use of those skills. Mastery experience is the most influential source of efficacy information because, "[successful acts] provide evidence of whether one can muster whatever it takes to succeed" (Bandura & Wessels, 1997, p. 80). For this reason, past success tends to persuade people that they have what it takes to succeed, thus raising their efficacy. Conversely, perceived failure tends to undermine efficacy. A second source, vicarious experience, refers to what schools learn from other schools or what teachers learn from other teachers. As Bandura (1997) suggests, "There are no absolute measures of adequacy" (p. 86) and therefore, people must judge their performance in relation to the norm or to similar organizations. He suggests that vicarious experience can often override the direct experience of failure, since the modeling may convince people of their power and ability to overcome challenges, even in the face of repeated failures.

The affective state (Hoy, Sweetland, & Smith, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015) describes another source of efficacy-shaping information which includes the way schools respond

to or tolerate crises or pressures. Referring to self-efficacy, Bandura (1993; Stajkovic, Bandura, Locke, Lee, & Sergent, 2018) suggested that people who believe they can exercise control over potential events and situations do not conjure up calamities and frighten themselves. Conversely, people who perceive conditions as unmanageable view the environment as fraught with danger. He argues that such inefficacious thought constrains and impairs their level of functioning (Bandura & Wessels, 1997). As a person's sense of efficacy grows stronger, she becomes more courageous and confident in dealing with difficult circumstances, recasting them in ways that appear more manageable. Finally, social or verbal persuasion pertains to the training, talks, workshops, faculty lounge conversations, leadership, and other types of information that teachers may receive about their collective abilities, potential, and performance. Verbal persuasion occurs when significant others express faith in one's abilities and capabilities (Bandura & Wessels, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Thus, the more believable the source, the more probable efficacy judgments are likely to change.

Along with attributions and the sources of efficacy information, a perception of self-efficacy also involves an analysis of the task at hand. Included in this task analysis is some judgment of what the task requires, the factors that constitute "success" or could inhibit success, and the context, materials, and resources required for success. It is feasible that a person can perceive herself to be efficacious with certain tasks or with certain students and feel completely inefficacious with other tasks and other students. This analysis includes an appraisal of one's own or others' collective knowledge, skills, training, and the potential to receive necessary training (Bandura & Wessels, 1997; van den Berg, 2002).

Why Principal Self-efficacy Matters to Principal Leadership and Organizational Learning

The principal is in the position of having the view of the school organization as it currently is, and for what she ideally would like it to become. Both assessments require her to make several judgments. First, principals must view the school organization as changeable; they must believe that with certain organizational structures, personnel, beliefs, values, and culture, the school organization can facilitate high achievement in students and teachers. Second, they must see school improvement and student achievement as their professional responsibility, even as schools face multiple internal and external demands, understanding that the characteristics and conditions of students, families, and communities can significantly influence school and student outcomes. Finally, principals must view themselves as capable of facilitating the needed changes. In other words, they must view themselves as having the requisite skills, knowledge and dispositions needed to lead an organization towards the improved functioning that supports improved student learning.

Central to these three judgments, however, is the matter of autonomy and control. The complexity of schools as organizations and institutions place a variety of environmental demands on schools and the principals who lead them. While principals exert direct control over many aspects of schools, they do not have direct control over teaching. The degree to which they feel autonomous will vary, based on district and school organizational structures. In any case, school goals can only be achieved through the concerted, collective efforts of individuals other than the principal. This means that many of the decisions that principals must make involves ways to utilize others' knowledge and talent, and how to guide, motivate, persuade and coerce them to perform. Additionally, they must determine when and when not to relinquish control to others (Bandura & Wessels, 1997).

Bandura & Wessels (1997) offer some perspective on the importance of leader self-efficacy. First, they suggest that leaders with low self-efficacy may be unable or ineffective to persuade others to perform in certain ways and that they may exhibit faulty judgment on when to relinquish control. Further, low principal self-efficacy may lead them to use teacher autonomy as an excuse for the principal failing to exercise personal control when she should. Finally, Bandura & Wessels (1997) suggest that people who judge themselves inefficacious in managing the school environment and its multi-faceted, complex demands may be more self-diagnostic than task diagnostic. This leads principals to think more self-protectively and less strategically. Conversely, those who consider themselves efficacious in managing their school are likely to continue to be more analytic in their thinking. This analytic or self-protective thinking leads to a particular mode of decision-making, in part because self-efficacy affects the type of information collected, how it gets interpreted and how it is converted into strategies for managing school challenges. Effective leadership requires receptivity to innovation and change that can improve the quality of the organization. High self-efficacy helps principals to override the variety of disincentives that can discourage the implementation of innovation (Bandura & Wessels, 1997). Factors that influence self-efficacy beliefs, including causal attributions, mastery experience, affective state, and verbal persuasion, all point to the context-specific nature of self-efficacy. In other words, the degree to which principals judge their self-efficacy depends on the context in which they work, the tasks they need to perform, and the goals they need to meet.

Several studies show that elements of the school environment can affect the efficacy beliefs of school principals (Dimmock & Hattie, 1996; Osterman & Sullivan, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Osterman and Sullivan (1996) and Scheurich (1998) found that the structural and cultural characteristics and role descriptions of new principals in urban schools influenced their leadership practices. Essentially, principals' self-efficacy played a mediating role, influencing their interpretation of the organizational context and their problem solving processes, and affected the nature and effectiveness of principals' practices. At the same time, these studies also suggest that high- and low-efficacy principals differ in their perception of the school environment. While school socioeconomic status, academic performance, or school size did not influence principal self-efficacy, variations in personal and organizational experiences did influence efficacy. The high-efficacy principals viewed themselves as part of an extensive support network within and outside the district. Conversely, low-efficacy principals did not see themselves as part of a collective effort, and were less clear about expectations. In addition, high-efficacy principals believed that organizational climate facilitated their efforts. They viewed teachers and others in the school as supportive. Other scholars (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Paglis & Green, 2002; Carleton, Barling, & Trivisonno, 2018) analyzed a number of possible antecedents to leader self-efficacy. Paglis & Green (2002) showed that job autonomy and subordinates who are open to change influenced leader self-efficacy.

In summary, there appears to be a relationship between an individual's organizational perceptions and self-efficacy judgments. While we traditionally think of the principal's influence on the school organization, these studies show that the school organization also affects the principal, thereby altering the principal's perceptions of the organization and ultimately affecting her ability to lead. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) found that principal self-efficacy was highly correlated with principal behavior. They found that principals' perceptions of their own abilities influenced their behavior relative to developing people within the school, setting the direction of the school, managing instruction, and redesigning the organization. They also found weak but significant effects of leader efficacy on one indicator of student learning - the proportion of students meeting

or exceeding standards. This study and others (Imants & DeBrabander, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Garies, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Jacob, Goddard, Kim, Miller, & Goddard, 2015) support the idea that principal self-efficacy may be an important aspect of school and student performance.

Self-efficacy is context-specific (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007; Carleton, Barling, & Trivisonno, 2018). Studies suggest that external factors, such as those in and pertaining to the school organization, interact with mental processes and the cognitive state of leaders to affect the nature and effectiveness of principal practice (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Osterman & Sullivan, 1996). It appears that the principal's assessment of organizational efficacy, including her perception of the school as a learning organization, influences principal self-efficacy and their subsequent performance. An assessment of organizational efficacy suggests to the principal that the school values, culture, structure, and collective behaviors and attitudes will enable the school to reach its goals. To effectively manage and improve schools, principals must believe not only in their own ability and capability, but also in their teachers' and organizational efficacy.

High self-efficacy enables principals to lead and facilitate organizational learning by assisting teachers to perform their various tasks and facilitating the exchange of ideas between the various systems in the school. Researchers (Silins, Mulford & Zarins, 2002; Li, Hallinger, & Ko, 2016) examined the nature of organizational learning and the leadership practices and processes that foster organizational learning in Australian high schools. They characterized organizational learning as a trusting and collaborative climate where individuals take initiatives and risks, share and monitor vision, and actively engage in professional development. They determined that organizational learning was related to the total level of leadership in the organization, which included a principal's transformational leadership and distributed leadership. Leithwood, Leonard & Sharratt (1998) and Hallinger and Heck (2010) found that among all conditions that support organizational learning in schools, transformational principal leadership was most impactful.

Rusch (2005) discussed the difficulty in forging the necessary networks and complex professional talk needed to support organizational learning in school systems, particularly at the district level. In this study, she found that principals who participated in engaged network and professional talk with other administrators showed increased efficacy about their teachers' learning capacity, though it did not translate into principals' changed beliefs about organizational learning across the school district, which was viewed as a potential barrier to school-level learning. Due to the interrelatedness of school systems and subsystems, both communication and social networks must be purposefully in place in order for organizational learning to occur (Jenson & Moller, 2013). For this study, we examined principal self-efficacy and aspects of learning organizations that focused on the degree to which principals believed their faculty displayed the requisite behaviors and exemplified the necessary attitudes and values that support the exchange of knowledge and information deemed to be important to organizational learning.

Methods

This study investigated the relationships between school principals' self-efficacy and their view of the school as a learning organization. Approximately 3,300 PK-12 school principals from across geographic and urbanity designations in a midwestern state were invited to participate in this study. They were asked to respond to a form of the *Principal Self-Efficacy Survey* (PSES) (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis, 2004), and the *Learning Organization Inventory* (LOI) (Author, 2001). Respondents completed the *Principal Self-Efficacy Survey* (PSES), an 18-item instrument used to

measure self-reported self-efficacy. This instrument, adapted with permission from Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004), assesses a principal's judgment of her own ability to manage the school organization, lead instruction, and establish a learning environment. The instrument also measures three subscales identified by Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2005) that are elements of principal self-efficacy: efficacy for moral leadership, efficacy for instructional leadership, and efficacy for management.

The *Learning Organization Inventory* (LOI) (Author, 2001) is based on behaviors that reflect each of Senge's (1990) five disciplines as components of a learning organization. This 25-item survey was designed to generate responses that indicate the degree to which a principal perceives the presence of learning organization behaviors and attitudes ("disciplines") in the school. In the initial part of the LOI survey, statements reflect characteristic behaviors of individuals or teams in learning organizations. The participants responded to a 5-point Likert scale, rating responses on a continuum, with 1 being "strongly agree" and 5 being "strongly disagree." We examined the five subscales based on the integral components of learning organization behaviors and attitudes, specifically mental models, team learning, collective mastery, systems thinking, and shared values. The study was guided by the following research question:

What is the relationship between principals' self-efficacy and their perception of the school as a learning organization, as framed by Senge's five disciplines?

Data Collection and Sample

In response to a Freedom of Information Act request, the state board of education provided email addresses for every school principal in the state. We emailed an introductory letter to each principal, explaining the study and asking for their voluntary participation. In a follow-up email, we provided each principal with the web link to the online survey, which included a consent form. Because this was an electronic survey, we took special steps to minimize human subject risk to the respondents. A participant could freely discontinue the protocol at any time, without fear of repercussions. If a participant elected to skip any question, the survey indicated that as a non-answer. They were assured in writing that their responses would be confidential; an explicit confidentiality statement to this effect was made in the cover letter that was attached to the survey.

Following the completion of the PSES-LOI survey questions, we requested (but not did not require) personal and school-specific demographic information, including the participant's gender, race and years of experience as a principal, student demographics and standardized test scores in math and reading for the participant's school. Each was asked to provide school-level, aggregate student achievement data from the most recent three years of standardized state tests. These data are received annually from the state board of education, and are also publicly available on various state, district, and school websites. Participants were given the option of providing identifying information such as their name, email address and/or school name and address. If provided, this information was used to link their responses to their school's publicly accessible academic data. This information allowed us to aggregate and analyze by school type (e.g., urban, suburban, rural; elementary, middle, or high school) and other information (e.g., school size, student demographics). Individual data were not used. All data were collected using the online instrument; data accessibility was limited to the researcher and kept confidential.

Results

Our data analysis includes a sample of 778 principals who completed and submitted the assessments. After we determined the descriptive statistics (Table 1), we conducted Cronbach's alpha reliability tests (Table 2), seeking possible relationships between the data sets. Tests were run on the Principal Self-Efficacy Scales composite (PSES) and its three subscales (Efficacy for Management, Efficacy for Instructional Leadership, and Efficacy for Moral Leadership), as well as the Learning Organization Inventory composite (LOI) and its five subscales - Mental Models (MM), Shared Values (SV), Collective Mastery (CM), Team Learning (TL), and Systems Thinking (ST). While both composites for PSES and LOI were found to be reliable (.885 and .887 respectively), several of the subscales were less reliable. This suggests the need to more closely examine the survey instrument for possible issues in wording or meaning (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Respondent Principals (n=778)

Gender	N	Percentage
Male	357	46
Female	415	53
School Type		
Elementary Principals	515	66
Middle School Principals	131	17
High School Principals	122	16
Principal Race		
African American	96	12
White	631	81
Hispanic	31	4
Asian	6	0.7
Other	6	0.7
School Locale/Urbanicity		
Urban	147	19
Suburban	317	41
Rural	116	15
Mid-sized city	86	11
Small town	108	14

Table 2
Reliability tests on the Principal Self-Efficacy Scales composite (PSES) and its three subscales, Learning Organization Inventory composite (LOI) and its five subscales (n=778)

	Min.	Max.	M	SD	A
<i>PSES composite score</i>	3.28	6.00	5.0574	.47	.885
Efficacy for Management	2.00	6.00	4.7811	.68	.81

Efficacy for Instructional Leadership	2.50	6.00	5.1590	.55	.85
Efficacy for Moral Leadership	3.00	6.00	5.2322	.51	.79
<i>LOI composite score</i>	2.32	4.92	4.0133	.38	.887
Mental Models	1.60	5.00	3.6147	.39	.60
Shared Vision	2.20	5.00	4.1406	.51	.77
Collective Mastery	2.80	5.00	4.0586	.38	.55
Team Learning	2.20	5.00	4.1550	.53	.66
Systems Thinking	2.00	5.00	4.0974	.48	.89

Correlations were conducted on PSES, LOI and all subscales of both instruments (Table 3). There was a significant relationship between principal self-efficacy and their perception of their school as a learning organization ($r = .584$). This finding suggests that the way in which a principal judges her own abilities and capabilities relates to the ways in which she perceives their school organization as exhibiting behaviors and attitudes consistent with a learning organization. No causal direction can be determined, though other studies suggest that organizational efficacy and/or school environment serves as an antecedent to principal self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2007). In those studies, principals' self-efficacy is mediated by how they interpret their school and its subsystems and its organizational efficacy. Conversely, if principals are unable to view their organizations as changeable, this may lead to low principal self-efficacy, which then leads to failure to innovate, to implement reform, and may result in ineffective management. In addition, we found significant relationships between principal self-efficacy and systems thinking ($r = .551$) and shared values ($r = .552$), team learning ($r = .443$), and collective mastery ($r = .455$), and a significant but weaker relationship between principal self-efficacy and mental models ($r = .375$). It is reasonable to assume that principals may be better able to judge such features as shared vision or team learning more readily than they can judge the use of mental models among their faculty.

Table 3
Correlations

	PSES	LOI	MM	SV	CM	TL	ST	Eff_Man	Eff_Ins	Eff_Mor
PSES composite score	1.000	0.584	0.375	0.552	0.455	0.443	0.551	0.808	0.829	0.803

LOI composite score		1.000	0.747	0.897	0.760	0.823	0.856	0.455	0.636	0.359
Mental Models composite score			1.000	0.612	0.493	0.475	0.562	0.202	0.443	0.294
Shared Vision composite score				1.000	0.595	0.661	0.761	0.367	0.574	0.423
Collective Mastery composite score					1.000	0.554	0.547	0.284	0.488	0.356
Team Learning composite score						1.000	0.600	0.244	0.518	0.346
Systems Thinking composite score							1.000	0.361	0.568	0.434
Efficacy for Management								1.000	0.453	0.419
Efficacy for Instruction									1.000	0.618
Efficacy for Moral Leadership										1.000
**All correlations were significant at $p < .01$ level (2-tailed).										

The LOI composite was significantly correlated to the subscales of principal self-efficacy. Specifically, it is more strongly related to their self-efficacy of instruction (.636) and less strongly related to their self-efficacy related to managing the school (.455) and moral leadership (.359). We hypothesize that if a principal views her school as exhibiting attitudes and behaviors of a learning organization, this is likely to support her view of the school as changeable, which would support and enhance her efforts as an instructional leader. We looked at the relationship between demographic indicators and these measures through analyses such as correlations and ANOVA. While there were no significant differences between elementary, middle school, and high school principals in terms of principal self-efficacy, the LOI mean for high school principals was significantly different than means for both the elementary and middle school principals. Overall, high school principals tended to give lower ratings to the items than the elementary or middle school principals.

Principals with more years of experience scored higher means on PSES and LOI and their subscales. The latter suggests that a principal's self-efficacy and her perceptions of the school as a learning organization improves with experience, as these principals develop mastery experience which indicate their ability and confidence to lead a successful school. Another possibility could be that experienced principals may be more socialized by their school context, thereby normalizing their perceptions of themselves and their schools. Finally, these data suggest that novice principals with relatively lower self-efficacy may not have such rosy perceptions of their schools or may be realistic about the school's challenges and expected outcomes.

Discussion and Recommendations

From these findings, it appears that the degree to which principals perceive their schools as exhibiting behaviors and attitudes consistent with organizational learning affects the ways in which they judge their own abilities to perform. This may be explained by the fact that principal self-efficacy would likely be higher because they see the school environment as changeable and adaptable, and that they perceive that they actually have some control over it. The findings also indicate that high principal self-efficacy may be associated with a collaborative school climate and shared vision, which enhances the quality of interactions in school and facilitates resource exchange, particularly information needed in learning organizations (Osterman & Sullivan, 1996). We know that self-efficacy beliefs are malleable, and information can alter efficacy perceptions (Bandura & Wessels, 1997; Osterman & Sullivan, 1996; Lee, Patterson, & Vega, 2011). If the school faculty enacts the appropriate behaviors and attitudes within the necessary structures and mechanisms, the school organization embodies the capacity to learn.

This study reflects the need to consider the significance of schools as places of work for principals. So much emphasis and attention is placed on what principals need to do with, in, and for schools, yet little attention is placed on how schools and districts affect the ways in which principals perform. This study shows that principals need not only networks of support and communication inside the school with teachers as part of a professional community, but as Rusch (2005) suggests, they also need similar professional communication and supports at the district level. This study clearly demonstrates that principals must operate through others to accomplish personal and school-level goals. They must be highly efficacious to persuade others to perform at high levels and must have a strong belief in teachers and the organization as a whole to pursue the types of school improvement efforts and research-based organizational learning mechanisms that can improve student performance.

We recommend two strands of research on principal self-efficacy and organizational learning for future study to expand upon these findings, as principals' beliefs, attitudes, and judgments mediate their perceptions of organizational efficacy (and visa versa) and principal performance. Further research might include an analysis of student learning outcomes, as principal efficacy, teacher efficacy and organizational efficacy all are presumed to impact the educational experiences and learning outcomes of students. Disaggregating such a study by urbanicity may provide important learning for context-specific leadership preparation. More research that examines organizational learning mechanisms (Schechter, 2008; Amitay, Popper, & Lipshitz, 2005; Kurland, Peretz, & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2010) would be useful to identify those frameworks needed to enable the exchange and applicable utility of information. We believe that efficacy at all levels would ensure the effective and efficient use of these organizational learning mechanisms, which support a school's ability to improve teaching and learning.

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An Analysis of Factors Which Influence High School Administrators' Readiness and Confidence to Provide Digital Instructional Leadership

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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School leaders are to be instructional leaders within a digital environment, just as they are expected to do in the non-digital environment. The purpose of this study was to analyze the factors which high school administrators perceive to influence their knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital school environment. Findings suggest that administrators should seek professional development opportunities, knowledgeable and confident colleagues, and opportunities to supervise others to increase knowledge and confidence.

Keywords: digital instructional leadership readiness, principal preparation, digital leadership, digital school culture

In the second decade of the 21st century, most of the research on technology and training has focused primarily on preparing teachers to utilize technology in the classroom, rather than on administrators' preparation, skill, knowledge, and related leadership. Continuation of teacher-focused research, though beneficial, has left a research gap concerning the skills and preparation needed by administrators to become digital instructional leaders (McLeod & Richardson, 2011; Schrum, Galizio, & Ledesma, 2011). To adequately support instructional practice and student achievement, digital instructional leadership should be examined further to discern future potential for improved effectiveness (Machado & Chung, 2015).

Despite research showing that administrators' leadership is critical for promoting use of technology, there remains a gap in research surrounding administrators' readiness to lead in such a digital learning environment (McLeod, Richardson, & Sauers, 2015). To this end, administrators need to be among the most well-versed individuals within a school so they effectively model and support technology initiatives (Dexter, 2011; Jones & Dexter, 2018; Schrum & Levin, 2016; Williams, 2008). It is important for administrators to recognize effective instruction and settings within a digital environment, just as they are expected to do in a non-digital environment (Keengwe & Onchwari, 2011; Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010). Further, if administrators lack comprehensive understanding of information and communication technology (ICT) capabilities, they will not be prepared to provide the assistance needed for their schools to maximize student learning (Warschauer, Zheng, Niiyam Cotton, & Farkas, 2014). The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE, 2018) echoed this sentiment by stating that administrators have so much influence within the school that their thoughts and opinions regarding the school's integration of technology is of vital importance. Therefore, it is essential that administrators are sufficiently prepared to be digital instructional leaders and act accordingly to ensure that technology integration permeates all aspects of the teaching and learning process (Schrum & Levin, 2016).

The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze those factors which high school administrators in a large urban school district of approximately 200,000 students, perceived to influence their knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital school environment. Prior to 2016, the school district had not implemented digital technologies as the primary method of learning in all 19 high schools. Researchers examined high school administrators' perceptions related to particular factor(s) that influenced their knowledge and confidence prior to the start of the first year of district wide high school implementation of digital technologies as the primary method of learning. At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, high school administrators were asked to re-examine the same factors and indicate which factor(s) they perceived to influence their knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital environment. While there was no specific experimental intervention, the experience of leading in a digital environment was the intervening variable.

Findings from this study may assist school district-based administrators, school-based administrators, and educational leadership programs in supporting and preparing others to collaborate in building digital environments that develop and maintain a high quality and rigorous educational program. Educational leadership programs may benefit from the findings for continuous program improvement of coursework and practice experiences. Additionally, the lack of literature on preparation of administrators to be digital instructional leaders supports the significance of the findings.

To this end, two research questions are addressed in this article.

1. What factors do high school administrators perceive to have influenced their knowledge and confidence in their ability to lead in a digital school environment?

2. What factors are perceived as being stronger influences for development of high school administrators' knowledge and confidence?

Review of the Literature

Organizations that use digital technologies will likely rely on its leaders to ensure that programs and initiatives are well-designed, effectively implemented, completed on time, and incorporated into an operational process in such a way that guarantees success with the intended goals. An array of researchers (Green, 2010; Howell, 2010; Korrapati, 2010; Oren, 2009; Thompson, 2010) note leadership behaviors that can improve the success rate of a technology initiative, (e.g., the ability to effectively identify and assess the impact a technology can bring). Leaders who exhibit digital instructional leadership behaviors create success by fostering a culture that is carefully developed, supportive, and encouraging for individuals to trust in the technology process and the organization's knowledge base (Green, 2010; Ismail, Khairuzzaman, Nor, & Marjani, 2009; Scott-Young, 2009). Understanding how to most effectively be a leader in digital environments remains a relevant topic for creating successful digital high schools (Eveleens, 2010; Oren, 2009; The Standish Group, 2011; Warschauer, Zheng, Niyam Cotton, & Farkas, 2014).

Instructional Leadership

To effectively lead a school's instructional program, an instructional leader possesses knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Jenkins, 2009). As instructional leaders, administrators review curriculum plans and perform frequent classroom observations to evaluate and enhance the curriculum, analyze teachers' instructional practices, and evaluate the classroom environment (Francera & Bliss, 2011; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Halverson, Grigg, & Thomas, 2007). Instructional leaders lead by modeling behaviors and actions for teachers, conversing with teachers and other educators about instructional practices, analyzing the quality and practice of teachers, and seeking out new curriculum and teaching practices (Andrews, Basom, & Basom, 1991; Francera & Bliss, 2011; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Halverson et al., 2007; Mendel, 2012; Smith & Addison, 2013).

Given the accountability in educational organizations and the relationship between instructional leadership practices and student achievement, instructional leadership is imperative (Goldring, Cravens, Murphy, Porter, & Elliott., 2012; Hattie, 2009; Leithwood & Louis, 2012; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Instructional leaders work to promote collaboration, professional development, teacher empowerment, and enhanced leadership (Fink & Resnick, 2001; Smith & Addison, 2013; Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008). They may create an atmosphere of professional collaboration within the school environment by establishing professional learning communities or collaborative structures (Halverson et al., 2007; Smith & Addison, 2013). Within their school they foster leadership and empower others by mentoring, creating leadership teams, conversing with stakeholders about school issues, and providing professional development to enhance teachers' specific knowledge about teaching, learning, or subject matter (Fink & Resnick; 2001; Smith & Addison, 2013).

Digital Instructional Leadership

Digital instructional leadership is a term based on the research-supported notion of instructional leadership and findings from school-based technology initiatives and one-to-one studies (Bendickson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012; Orphanos & Orr, 2014; Fox, Gong, & Attoh, 2015). One of the main challenges in becoming a digital instructional leader is for administrators themselves to have a solid knowledge base of what technology can do (Berret, Murphy, & Sullivan, 2012; Schrum & Levin, 2016). Effectively incorporating technology requires administrators to have knowledge and skill over a broad range of complex issues (Anderson & Dexter, 2001; Beytekin, 2014; Flanagan & Jacobsen, 2003; Schrum & Levin, 2016; Warschauer, Zheng, Niiyam, Cotton, & Farkas, 2014). However, Beytekin (2014) wrote that few administrators would consider themselves to be leaders of digital technologies within their schools. And yet, administrators are expected to be digital instructional leaders in the utilization of information technology and practices (Aksal, Mukhametzyanova, & Gazi, 2017; Beytekin, 2014; Schrum & Levin, 2016; Stuart, Mills, & Remus, 2009; Wang, 2010).

Organizational Change. Integration of technology requires that administrators understand the changes taking place, as well as the change process (Anderson & Dexter, 2005; Beytekin, 2014; Jones & Dexter, 2018; Warschauer et al., 2014). Purposeful and deliberate change leadership does not take place without a full understanding of the desired change and the potential results of that change (Davies, 2010). Digital instructional leaders understand the organizational dynamics and anticipate how individuals will react, particularly when introducing new technology (Beytekin, 2014). Understanding personal change, organizational change, culture change, and how technology will play a role in influencing those aspects in others is within the knowledge needed for digital instructional leaders.

Vision. One such way to accomplish successful change is by instilling a shared vision, which incorporates technology in the school's culture (Dexter, 2011; Machado & Chung, 2015; Richardson & Sterrett, 2018). Administrators have the role of defining and explaining the purpose of technology integration and what its function will be within the community. To successfully lead a technology integration movement, administrators seek to incorporate multiple view points and perspectives to create a shared vision that conveys an uplifting message for the future (Moos, Krejsler, & Kofod, 2008). This shared vision within a digital school environment is more likely to take place when administrators inspire, lead, and implement technology integration to promote excellence and support a culture change within an organization (Beytekin, 2014). A shared vision is easily understood and within the context of a digital school environment inspires stakeholders to maximize their technology resources and knowledge to promote a positive instructional change. Digital instructional leaders advocate for and promote technology efforts by committing resources and time to help further support change to achieve the shared vision (Beytekin, 2014).

Professional Development. Digital instructional leaders understand the organizational culture and know how best to inspire teachers to learn and use innovative technology approaches in curriculum design, instruction, and assessment (Dexter, 2011). Machado and Chung (2015) noted that administrators consider teacher willingness and professional development to be the most influential factors in determining the success of a one-to-one initiative. Further research by Richardson & Sterrett (2018) supports the value of professional development in one-to-one initiatives, particularly as professional development programs continue to adapt to the changing technology climate and infrastructure of schools. Continuing to revisit and revise how professional development is planned and implemented is more vital than ever due to variables associated with

teacher integration of technology in instruction, particularly those which may require a unique pedagogical approach (Machado & Chung, 2015; Richardson & Sterrett, 2018). With consistently new implementations within digital environments, the digital instructional leader is a model for digital citizenship within the school setting (Isin & Rupert, 2015).

Administrators have the power to take an active role in the oversight and in the problem-solving process (Cakir, 2012; Davies, 2010). Thus, when they are directly involved in the technology implementation process, teachers and students are more likely to be engaged in the teaching and learning process (Schrum & Levin, 2016). Sharing their digital technology beliefs can act as an effective tool for aiding in the creation of a digital environment (Davies, 2010). In summary, administrators who are digital instructional leaders provide teachers with opportunities for professional growth in incorporating technology by promoting a shared vision focused on technology in the classroom and encouraging new learning experiences (Abdullah, DeWitt, & Alias, 2013; Jones & Dexter, 2018).

Methods

The aim of the study was to observe how high school administrators' self-perceived knowledge and confidence changed over the course of a school year and to examine the factor(s) administrators perceived to be most influential in furthering their own knowledge and confidence during the period of the study. During the 2016-2017 school year, all school administrative personnel who supported teachers with the implementation of the one-to-one digital environment were invited to take part in this study.

This study examined the extent to which high school administrators perceived that particular factors influenced their knowledge and confidence prior to the start of the 2016-2017 school year in which all high schools in the school district began implementing digital technologies as the primary method of learning. At the end of the same school year, high school administrators were asked to re-examine the same list of factors and indicate what factor(s) they perceived to have influenced their knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital environment. During the 2016-2017 school year, the school district provided support and feedback to high school administrators; however, no formal intervention was in place to be tested. Hence, the design included two administrations of the same instrument, Digital Instructional Leadership Readiness Instrument (DILRI)[®], to determine the administrators' perceptions of factors of influence from their experience in leading in a digital school environment (e.g. supervising teachers, observing students, collaboration with teachers and other administrators, and professional development) and not to measure the result of a single or formal intervention.

To this end, this study was designed through the lens of a quantitative case study approach to analyze the self-perceived factors of influence, knowledge, and confidence of high school administrators in a large urban school district to lead in a digital school environment.

Instrumentation

This quantitative case study contains data derived from the researcher-created Digital Instructional Leadership Readiness Instrument (DILRI)[®]. Creation of the DILRI[®] was necessary because the researchers found no other scales or instruments that measured knowledge and confidence, thereby inferring readiness, that had been created exclusively for high school administrators leading in a digital school environment. Sixty-two items in the DILRI[®] were derived from the literature and

included seven components. The components were:

- identification of factors of influence on knowledge and confidence,
- rank order of factors of influence on knowledge and confidence,
- recognition of effective standards-based instruction and assessment that incorporate technology,
- knowledge and confidence in ability to develop a digital school's culture and norms,
- knowledge and confidence in providing feedback to teachers regarding their incorporation of technology into standards-based instructional practices and assessment,
- participant demographics, and
- participant comments.

Although the DILRI[®] has 62 items, this article only addresses findings from these components: identification of factors of influence on knowledge and confidence, rank order of factors of influence on knowledge and confidence, participant demographic variables, and open-ended items. It does not address the remaining DILRI[®].

Two separate reviews of the DILRI[®] were completed by a panel of doctoral candidates, local school district leaders, and knowledgeable university faculty who validated the content of the survey to ensure the relevance of the individual items within the instrument. Reliability coefficients were evaluated based on the guidelines by George and Mallery (2016) who suggested that coefficients of .7 or greater indicate acceptable reliability. During this review, the construction, coherence regarding question clarity, and the progression of the DILRI[®] items and instructions was examined.

Additionally, the DILRI[®] was piloted with school district leaders for content validity and clarity of communication. Feedback from the pilot was incorporated in the final form used in this study. The DILRI[®] is presented in its entirety in the Appendix.

Items one and two ask the participants to select all that apply from a list of factors that may have influenced their knowledge and/or confidence. Those factors are: Colleagues, Experience Supervising Others, Graduate Course Work, Instructional Coaches, Professional Conferences, Professional Development, Professional Practice, Readings, Supervisors, Workshops, and Others.

Participants were then asked to rank the same factors for items 3-13 on a scale from 1 to 11 with 1 being the most influential and 11 being the least influential in their development of knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital environment. Ranking had the purpose of distinguishing strength among the factors of influence to answer the second research question.

There are also open-ended items (56, 57, and 62) which solicit deeper responses and provide additional detail and confirmation of the quantitative findings. DILRI[®] item 56 reads, "Provide an example that demonstrates your knowledge and confidence in providing coaching feedback to teachers regarding their use of technology in standards-based instructional practices and assessment." DILRI[®] item 57 asks participants, "What is your plan for continuing to build your confidence and expertise in providing feedback to teachers, staff, and other administrators within the digital school environment?" Finally, DILRI[®] item 62 asks participants, "Relating to your preparation and experience in building your knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital school environment, is there anything you would like the researchers to know that may assist others in the digital environment implementation process?"

Population and Sample

The population of administrators in the large urban school district included those in elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, special schools, and in various school district and school

district area positions. A purposive sample was selected that included all administrators in the 19 high schools within the school district during September 2016 and June 2017. Purposive sampling was based on the premise that specific individuals were selected “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 713). For this purposive sample participants were chosen based on the criteria that they were currently employed as school administrators (male and female, grades 9-12) who were leading in a digital high school environment, excluding charter and special schools. At the time of the study there were 19 high schools with a sample of 125 high school administrators during the first administration and 119 high school administrators during the second administration. Some high schools had two principals, one of whom was responsible for an off-site 9th grade campus. Table 1 represents the individuals within the school district who qualified to take part in this study.

Table 1

Potential Participants' Job Titles and Instrument Administration Months

Job Title	September 2016 (N)	June 2017 (N)
Principal	20	21
Assistant Principal	90	84
Other Administrative Personnel	15	14
Totals	125	119

High school administrators within the target school district were requested to anonymously complete the DILRI© at two separate points in time: September 2016 and June 2017 by the Area Superintendent for High Schools. The expectation was that the high-level advocacy would increase response rates (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). During the September 2016 survey window, the school district employed 125 high school administrators. Of those, 76 high school administrators voluntarily took the anonymous survey. The total response rate for the September 2016 survey administration was 61%.

On the second survey in June 2017, there was a total sample of 119 high school administrators employed by the school district. From that group, 69 high school administrators took the anonymous survey, which gave the June 2017 survey administration a response rate of 58%. Individual participant responses for the two administrations could not be matched due to the anonymous nature of the survey administration.

At the beginning of the September 2016 school year, 34 of the participants had less than one year in being an administrator in a digital school environment, while 19 participants had more than one year of experience. Position titles were categorized as Assistant Principal, Principal, or Other Administrator.

For the demographic information relating to the participant’s time leading in a digital school, a category of More Than One Year (1+) was created to incorporate item responses of 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years, and more than 10 years, since there were few participants in each of the individual groups. Table 2 displays aggregated data of the range and mean of participant reported years of experience for administrators who completed the September 2016 DILRI© administration. As previously noted, this was the first year for the target school district to utilize digital technologies and resources as the primary source for student learning. Examination of Table 2 highlights the

minimal experience for high school administrators who were leading in a digital school environment during the September 2016 DILRI© administration.

Table 2

September 2016 Participant Years of Experience by Job Title (n=76)

School Administrator Position	Range in Current Position	Mean in Current Position	Range in a Digital School Environment	Mean in a Digital School Environment
Assistant Principal	0 to 11	4.0	0 to 2	0.9
Principal	0 to 5	2.5	0 to 2	1.5
Other Administrator	0 to 11	2.8	0 to 5	1.4

Analysis

To answer Research Question One, frequency of responses and percentages were computed for DILRI© items one and two. These items relate to the 11 factors that may have influenced their knowledge and confidence: Colleagues, Experience Supervising Others, Graduate Course Work, Instructional Coaches, Professional Conferences, Professional Development, Professional Practice, Readings, Supervisors, Workshops, and Other.

To answer Research Question Two the same 11 factors were then ranked by participants to determine their perception of the most and least influential factors. Factors were ranked from 1 to 11 with 1 being the most influential and 11 being the least influential. An overall rank across the school year's two survey administrations was also calculated by combining ranks from both DILRI© administrations.

Open-ended responses from items 56, 57, and 62 on the DILRI© were categorized according to the knowledge and confidence factors of influence relating to school administrators' ability to lead in a digital school environment. These responses were read and analyzed by the researchers and assigned a unique alpha numeric code. Similar responses were placed in groups to highlight the factors and how they directly or indirectly influenced the readiness level of school administrators to lead in a digital environment.

Upon analysis of the data derived from items 56, 57, and 62, Creswell's model of concurrent methodological triangulation (2003) was used to promote credibility. This model was used to compare the results of both quantitative (items 1-13) and open ended item data (items 56, 57, and 62), alongside the current body of literature, to determine if a single understanding emerged related to high school administrators' self-reported readiness to lead a digital school environment. Additionally, member checking and negative case study analysis were used to further promote credibility for the study's findings. Nested data were integrated into the larger data collection process to help analyze the data and respond to the research questions.

Results

Research Question One

Research Question One examined the factors that high school administrators perceived to have influenced their knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital environment. Participants could select all that applied, so the frequencies and percentages exceeded the number of participants. The factors were: Colleagues, Experience Supervising Others, Graduate Course Work, Instructional Coaches, Professional Conferences, Professional Development, Professional Practice, Readings, Supervisors, Workshops, and Other.

Knowledge. The factors perceived to have influenced the knowledge of high school administrators ($n = 76$) on of the September 2016 administration resulted in the most frequently noted factor of colleagues ($f = 60$, 79%). Professional development and professional practice were both perceived as being influential by 42 or 55% of participants. Experience supervising others was perceived to have an influence by 39 or 51% of the participants. Instructional coaches were recognized by 36 or 47% of participants as a factor of influence.

Then, nine months later in the June 2017 administration of the DILRI©, the factors perceived to have influenced the knowledge of high school administrators ($n = 69$) had changed. Like in fall 2016, the most frequently noted factor was colleagues ($f = 44$, 64%). Experience supervising others was observed to have an influence with an $f = 40$ or by 58%. Professional practice was noted by 36 (52%) participants as having influence, while professional development was recognized by 34 (49%). A complete list of the response frequencies (f) and the overall percentage for each factor are presented in Table 3.

Confidence. Similar to influences on knowledge, the most frequently noted factor influencing confidence on the September 2016 administration was colleagues ($f = 52$, 68%). Experience supervising others was observed to have an influence by 36 or 47% of the participants. Both instructional coaches and professional practice were recognized equally by almost half of the participants ($f = 34$, 45%) as a factor of influence. Supervisors were noted by 30 (39%) participants as being influential. Professional development was recognized by 25 (33%) participants as having influence.

The factors perceived to have influenced the confidence of high school administrators ($n = 69$) on item two of the June 2017 administration of the DILRI© revealed that the most frequently noted factor was experience supervising others, which was observed to have an influence by 41 (59%) participants. The second most noted factor was colleagues which was observed to have an influence by 40 (58%) participants. Instructional coaches and professional practice were both recognized by 34 or 49% as a factor of influence. Professional development was recognized by 27 (39%). As with the knowledge data, frequencies (f) and percentages for each factor perceived to influence confidence are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Factors of Influence on Knowledge and Confidence in Leading a Digital School

Influence Factors	<u>Knowledge</u>		<u>Confidence</u>	
	<i>f</i>	%		%
Colleagues				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	60	79	52	68
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	44	64	40	58
Experience supervising others				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	39	51	36	47
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	40	58	41	59
Graduate coursework				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	16	21	12	16
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	12	17	10	14
Instructional coaches				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	36	47	34	45
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	32	46	34	49
Professional conferences				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	16	21	11	14
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	18	26	12	17
Professional development				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	42	55	25	33
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	34	49	27	39
Professional practice				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	42	55	34	45
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	36	52	34	49
Readings				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	21	28	13	17
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	28	41	17	25
Supervisors				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	25	33	30	39
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	25	36	19	28
Workshops				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	24	32	21	28
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	24	35	20	29
Other				
September 2016 (<i>n</i> = 76)	2	3	4	5
June 2017 (<i>n</i> = 69)	3	4	3	4

Note: Participants were requested to only select those factors that applied, thus the frequencies may not equal *n* of 76 and the total percent value may not add up to 100%.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two examined the perceived strength of each factor that influenced high school administrators' knowledge and confidence. The means and standard deviations for the rank of each of the 11 factors was used to determine the strength and rank assigned.

On the September 2016 administration of the DILRI©, 50 out of the 76 participants completed this ranking that had a potential range of 1 to 11 with 1 being the greatest perceived strength and 11 being the lowest perceived strength. The factor perceived to have had the most influence was colleagues ($M = 3.02$). The second most influential factor noted was experience supervising others ($M = 3.52$), followed next by professional development ($M = 4.10$), professional practice ($M = 4.36$), and instructional coaches ($M = 4.62$).

As in September 2016, at the end of the first school year of all high schools using digital technologies as the primary method of learning (June 2017), 55 out of 69 participants ranked these 11 factors on the DILRI©. The factor perceived to have had the most influence was experience supervising others ($M = 3.24$). The second most influential factor noted was colleagues ($M = 3.78$), followed next by professional development ($M = 4.09$), instructional coaches ($M = 4.62$), and professional practice ($M = 4.69$). Means and standard deviations for all factors are presented in Table 4.

Additionally, Table 4 displays the overall rank and mean created by combining scores from both the September 2016 ($n=50$) and June 2017 ($n=55$) administrations of the DILRI©. If two factors had the same rank, then the next rank was skipped. It was observed that the overall lowest mean, and thus most prominently ranked factor, was experience supervising others with an overall mean of 3.38. Ranked second was the factor, colleagues, with a mean of 3.40. Third ranked was the mean of 4.10 for professional development. The fourth and fifth ranked factors were professional practice ($M = 4.53$) and instructional coaches ($M = 4.62$) respectively. All other factors carried an overall mean of greater than 6 on the 11-point scale.

Table 4
Rank Order and Mean of Factors of Influence on Knowledge and Confidence

Factors of Influence	September 2016 ($n=50$)					June 2017 ($n=55$)		
	Overall Rank	Overall Mean	Rank	M	SD	Rank	M	SD
Experience supervising others	1	3.38	2	3.52	2.4	1	3.24	1.99
Colleagues	2	3.40	1	3.02	1.9	2	3.78	2.60
Professional development	3	4.10	3	4.10	2.3	3	4.09	2.56
Professional practice	4	4.53	4	4.36	2.4	5	4.69	2.54
Instructional coaches	5	4.62	5	4.62	2.2	4	4.62	2.19
Workshops	6	6.76	7	6.94	2.5	7	6.58	3.07

Professional conferences	6	6.76	8	6.96	2.1	6	6.5 5	2.3 8
Supervisors	8	6.96	6	6.74	2.6	9	7.1 8	2.4 3
Readings	9	7.05	9	7.16	1.9	8	6.9 3	2.1 2
Graduate coursework	10	7.68	10	7.74	2.8	10	7.6 2	2.7 5
Other	11	10.79	11	10.84	1.0	11	10.7	1.4 1

Open-ended Responses

Using Glaser's (1998) approach to grounded theory methodology, open-ended responses for items 56, 57, and 62 were analyzed for similarities. Those with similar words and phrases were grouped together to form categories. An independent review was conducted by a qualitative researcher to confirm these findings. Based on the responses, groups were created, and similar responses were placed in groups to highlight the factors and how they directly or indirectly influenced the readiness level of school administrators to lead in a digital school environment. Other insights were analyzed to identify emerging themes and patterns.

Open-ended responses were provided by 43 participants on the September 2016 DILRI© administration and 45 participants on the June 2017 DILRI© administration. Given that the participants were anonymous to the researcher the same of different administrators may be in both groups. In total, among the 88 participant responses, 75 were identified as influences on knowledge and confidence. These comments created two categories: collaboration with colleagues and professional development. Table 5 contains sample comments to substantiate the emergence of each category.

Category: Collaboration with colleagues. Responses in this category expressed a need for increased collaboration with colleagues, such as professional learning communities, professional conferences, and workshops. When considering collaboration with colleagues, 47 (63%) of the 75 open-ended responses noted collaboration with colleagues as being useful for creating and sharing knowledge within the digital school environment. Assistant principal AP2.6 stated, "Continuation of professional development, workshops, and collaboration with colleagues". Another assistant principal voiced his opinion about the importance of collaboration with colleagues by stating how he/she will, "Continue to seek out professional development for administrators regarding digital school environment and seek out peers with this expertise" (AP6.1).

Category: Professional development. The topic of professional development was mentioned in 28 (44%) of the 75 open-ended responses. Responses in this category consisted of comments by administrators who noted a need to invest time in individual learning pursuits, through observations, and general statements for increased professional development. AP1.3 stated, "I'm going to continue reading literature about the instructional framework." While others focused on observations commenting, "I plan to continue to develop my knowledge base through teacher observation and asking both teachers and students to describe how they are using technology for different learning activities" (AP7.3).

Table 5

Category and Sample Quotes (f = 75)

Category	Sample Quotes
Collaboration with colleagues (f= 47)	Continuation of professional development, workshops, and collaboration with colleagues (AP2.6). Continue to seek out professional development for administrators regarding digital school environment and seek out peers with this expertise (AP6.1).
Professional development (f= 28)	I'm going to continue reading ... instructional framework (AP1.3). Continued professional development (AP16.6). ...continue to develop my knowledge through teacher observation and asking both teachers and students to describe how they are using technology for different learning activities (AP7.3).

Discussion

Although the range of years reported (0-5) for leading in a digital environment reflected that most administrators were novices, their survey responses indicated that the perceived level of digital expertise for high school administrators who participated in this study steadily increased. As they gained more experience with technology, they perceived their ability to recognize digital school instructional factors increased as well. This increased expertise led to higher, more targeted, and specific feedback for teachers who utilized digital technologies as their primary method of instruction.

Results from this study reveal that administrators may have knowledge and yet lack confidence in leading in a digital environment. Perceived lack of confidence was particularly evident during the beginning of the year when all high schools first began using digital technologies as the primary method of learning. However, with learning from colleagues and from experience supervising others their perceived knowledge and confidence both increased. Each of these factors was noted by at least 47% of the participants and, the lower confidence relating to experience supervising others (47%) was due to the September 2016 administration, but then increased by 7% for knowledge and 12% for confidence by June 2017. This change in perceived confidence was the greatest percentage increase for any factor between the two DILRI© administrations. Given that 2016-2017 was the first school year for 34 of the 75 participants to be in a completely digital school environment, the notion that participants gained experience over the course of the school year increased their perceived knowledge and confidence further supports these results. Experience supervising others is a result of many leadership actions such as facilitating classroom walkthroughs, conducting teacher evaluations and lesson plan reviews, and other interactions in which high school administrators were engaged. This thought was echoed by AP3.9 who said, "It is a learning curve".

Open-ended responses mentioning collaboration with colleagues and professional development varied greatly in terms the thoroughness of the response, but never-the-less, both categories were mentioned 75 times among the 88 respondents. Some responses were minimal, such as from AP4.3 who simply stated, “PD” for his/her response on item 57. However, there were also other more detailed responses which clearly emphasized the importance of observing others and taking advantage of professional development opportunities.

I plan to continue to improve through personal reflection and continued professional development. I learn best by doing and the more I get into the classroom and personally reflect the better I will become at giving productive feedback. (AP14.3)

This finding emphasizes the importance that these participants placed in gaining new knowledge for themselves, as well as for others in their schools. Further, this finding reiterates what Grady (2011) and ISTE (2018) emphasize: school administrators should be engaged in professional development alongside teachers and that they should work to provide frequent professional development opportunities for teachers that emphasize use of technology and that facilitate integration of technology within the digital school environment.

The most frequently cited comments center around the notion of collaboration with colleagues. Thus, this result is noteworthy because it further supports, and is supported by the quantitative results of Collaboration with Colleagues as being the most perceived influential factor. Triangulation of data from the open-ended responses, item analysis, and current research and literature all aid to confirm and support the results of this study.

Triangulating the open-ended and quantitative responses, with relevant literature reveal that growing professionally within the digital school environment can be accomplished by conversing frequently with other knowledgeable and confident colleagues, observing and having discussions with teachers within the digital school environment, participating in relevant professional development, and through consistent and conscientious professional practice. These methods suggest that growing professionally within the digital school environment can best be accomplished through reciprocal learning between colleague administrators, and between administrators and teachers. As an example, administrators learn effective digital instructional leadership practices by observing teachers and from instructional coaches; teachers learn how to continually improve their practice from the coaching provided by administrators. Reciprocal learning in this way enhances the entire learning environment and helps to foster a healthy digital school culture (Taylor & Chanter, 2019).

The importance of these findings cannot be overlooked as Stokes (2012) noted that technology does not “have any impact on its own-- it all depends on how we use it” (p. 8). Therefore, there is a need for continual professional development for administrators to become digital instructional leaders with skills and knowledge to be successful within the digital school environment (Jones & Dexter, 2018; Robinson, 2011; Schrum, Galizio, & Ledesma, 2011).

Conclusions and Implications for Professional Practice

With the seemingly, ever increasing use of technology by teachers and students for educational purposes, it is no longer possible for administrators to remain detached from these developments, solely maintaining the status quo of traditional education management (Akcil et al., 2017). Digital instructional leaders focus on integrating technology into their leadership processes and take a stance as 21st century leaders by effectively modeling the use of digital communication tools (Akcil et al., 2017). Even with the growing utilization of technology and shift towards an increase in digital

resources, it continues to be stated by researchers that some principals are not adequately prepared to take on instructional leadership roles within the digital school environment (Metcalf & LaFrance, 2013). Schools, school districts, educational leadership programs, and organizations striving to excel in the 21st century will develop leaders who poses a clear vision for incorporating technology in learning and are familiar with their potential to improve standards-aligned learning (Chang, 2012; Ray, Laufenberg, & Bjerede, 2016). For educational technologies to directly affect a student's academic success within the digital school environment, effective digital instructional leadership is required (Beytekin, 2014).

The findings from this study support approaches to facilitate preparation of digital instructional leaders in graduate educational leadership coursework and application experiences, as well as in professional experiences provided by schools and school districts. Over nine months it was revealed that the overall means for perceived knowledge and confidence increased for all components of the DILRI© during the first year of digital implementation. Given that this was the first year for 31% of the high school administrators to lead in a digital school environment, this increase in perceived knowledge and confidence suggests that high school administrators need time to practice digital instructional leadership and to receive feedback. Further, over the course of this study, administrators perceived a shift in their ability to transfer their instructional leadership from a non-digital to a digital environment.

Educational leadership preparation programs may benefit from this research. With the increased emphasis on digital technologies, future educational leaders will need adequate preparation to ensure they are prepared to lead within the digital school environment. Programs that incorporate the research (e.g. 11 instructional factors and the 10 culture factors) that ground this study combined with professional practice may prove beneficial in developing knowledge and confidence for future administrators. Such a deliberate emphasis would ensure that administrators perceive themselves to be prepared and to have confidence to act as instructional leaders within their schools.

Based on the data from this study, high school administrators leading within a digital school environment should reflect on their current knowledge and confidence to act as digital instructional leaders, as both perceived knowledge and perceived confidence are important. Current and aspiring administrators should seek out opportunities ranked as most influential: professional development opportunities, knowledgeable and confident colleagues, and opportunities to supervise others. Digital school environments do not carry any innate impact on their own, rather they must be paired with effective pedagogy to be digital instructional leaders who are knowledgeable and confident in the role.

APPENDIX

Digital Instructional Leadership Readiness Instrument (DILRI)[®]

Shepherd, A. & Taylor, R. T. (2016)

Please read each item carefully and select the options that most closely resemble your self-perception and experience related to leading in a digital school environment.

1. Select all factor(s) that apply which have influenced your knowledge to lead in a digital school environment.

- ☐ Colleagues
- ☐ Experience Supervising Others
- ☐ Graduate Coursework
- ☐ Instructional Coaches
- ☐ Professional Conferences
- ☐ Professional Development in Leading a Digital School Environment
- ☐ Professional Practice
- ☐ Readings
- ☐ Supervisors
- ☐ Workshops
- ☐ Other, please write in _____.

2. Select all factor(s) that apply to influencing your confidence to lead in a digital school environment.

- ☐ Colleagues
- ☐ Experience Supervising Others
- ☐ Graduate Coursework
- ☐ Instructional Coaches
- ☐ Professional Conferences
- ☐ Professional Development in Leading a Digital School Environment
- ☐ Professional Practice
- ☐ Readings
- ☐ Supervisors
- ☐ Workshops
- ☐ Other, please write in _____.

Rank each of the factors that follow as to how they have influenced your knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital school environment with 1 being the most influential and 10 being the least influential. If a factor does not apply select N/A.

- 3. ☐ Colleagues
- 4. ☐ Experience Supervising Others
- 5. ☐ Graduate Coursework

6. ☐ Instructional Coaches
7. ☐ Professional Conferences
8. ☐ Professional Development in Leading a Digital School Environment
9. ☐ Professional Practice
10. ☐ Readings
11. ☐ Supervisors
12. ☐ Workshops
13. ☐ Others, please write in _____.

Please read each item carefully and select the level of knowledge you have to recognize the following instructional factors within a digital school environment.

Item	1 Not Knowledgeable	2 Somewhat Knowledgeable	3 Knowledgeable	4 Extremely Knowledgeable
14. Student Engagement				
15. Student Problem Solving				
16. Student Multi-media Projects				
17. Student Collaboration				
18. Student Writing				
19. Student Use of Digital Resource Tools				
20. Teacher Use of Digital Resource Tools				
21. Teacher's Construction of Standards-based Instructional Plans				
22. Teacher Provided				

Feedback				
23. Formative Assessment via Digital Tools				
24. Differentiated Instruction				

Please read each item carefully and select the level of confidence you have to recognize the following instructional factors within a digital school environment.

Item	1 Not Confident	2 Somewhat Confident	3 Confident	4 Extremely Confident
25. Student Engagement				
26. Student Problem Solving				
27. Student Multi-media Projects				
28. Student Collaboration				
29. Student Writing				
30. Student Use of Digital Resource Tools				
31. Teacher Use of Digital Resource Tools				
32. Teacher's Construction of Standards-based Instructional Plans				
33. Teacher Provided Feedback				
34. Formative Assessment via Digital Tools				
35. Differentiated Instruction				

Please read each school culture factor carefully and select your level of knowledge for developing the school culture within a digital school environment.

Item	1 Not Knowledgeable	2 Somewhat Knowledgeable	3 Knowledgeable	4 Extremely Knowledgeable
36. Community Support				
37. Motivating Stakeholders				
38. Resource Allocation				
39. Learning Communities				
40. Leadership Teams				
41. School Improvement Teams				
42. Knowledgeable About the Feature Set (e.g. hardware, software, systems)				
43. Leading by Example with Technology				
44. Empowering Teachers				
45. Shared Vision				

Please read each school culture factor carefully and select your level of confidence to develop the school culture within a digital school environment.

Item	1 Not Confident	2 Somewhat Confident	3 Confident	4 Extremely Confident
46. Community Support				

47. Motivating Stakeholders				
48. Resource Allocation				
49. Learning Communities				
50. Leadership Teams				
51. School Improvement Teams				
52. Knowledgeable About the Feature Set (e.g. hardware, software, systems)				
53. Leading by Example with Technology				
54. Empowering Teachers				
55. Shared Vision				

56. Provide an example that demonstrates your knowledge and confidence in providing coaching feedback to teachers regarding their use of technology in standards-based instructional practices and assessment.

57. What is your plan for continuing to build your confidence and expertise in providing feedback to teachers, staff, and other administrators within the digital school environment?

58. What is your current position?

- ☐ Principal
☐ Assistant Principal
☐ Senior Administrator
☐ Program Coordinator
☐ Digital Dean
☐ Academic Dean
☐ Dean
☐ Other _____

59. Select the timeframe that best represents how long you have been in your position in your current school.

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 - 3 years
- ☐ 4 - 6 years
- ☐ 7 - 9 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

60. How long in total have you been working in an administrative position (senior administrator, program coordinator, assistant principal, principal, digital dean, academic dean, dean)?

- ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ 5 - 10 years
- ☐ 11 - 15 years
- ☐ 16 - 20 years
- ☐ 21 - 25 years
- ☐ 26 - 30 years
- ☐ More than 30 years

61. Select the response that best represents how long you have been leading in a digital school environment.

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 - 3 years
- ☐ 4 - 6 years
- ☐ 7 - 9 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

62. Relating to your preparation and experience in building your knowledge and confidence to lead in a digital school environment, is there anything you would like the researchers to know that may assist others in the digital environment implementation process?

Thank you for your time and participation in this study. If you would like to receive summary results of this research, please provide your name and e-mail address. Your responses will remain confidential.

Name:

e-mail:

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Performance Assessment of Aspiring School Leaders Grounded in an Epistemology of Practice: A Case Study

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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There is increasing interest in the field of leadership preparation about the opportunities that robust performance assessments may provide to capture and evaluate the complexity of school administrators' work. Heretofore, the conversation about administrator performance assessment in leadership preparation has mainly centered on the development and impact of large statewide assessments that grow out of a Cartesian epistemology of individual knowledge possession, in which individuals must demonstrate mastery of a set of static knowledge and skills. We analyzed the characteristics of a performance assessment system that deliberately accounts for the organizational complexity of practice and knowledge generation in its design. Candidates are assessed by faculty and coaches on state-wide and program standards, but instead of producing evidence of their practice as individuals, they are assessed within simulated practice-based scenarios that require them to both draw on their extant individual and collective knowledge and build and act on new knowledge as they move through the simulation. Our analysis enables us to dimensionalize issues related to state mandated performance assessments and their implementation by preparation programs.

There is increasing interest in the field of leadership preparation about the opportunities that robust performance assessments may provide to capture and evaluate the complexity of school administrators' work. For example, major efforts have been invested into the development and adoption of tools designed to measure the effectiveness of practicing school leaders such as the Vanderbilt Assessment for Leadership in Education (Val-Ed) and Comprehensive Assessment of Leadership for Learning (CALL). Both the Val-Ed and the CALL are quantitative tools that collect anonymous, evidence-based feedback from multiple stakeholders. The Val-Ed allows results to be organized according to a leadership framework and/or evaluation standards while the CALL focuses on providing actionable, formative feedback including customized strategies and action plans for school improvement (CALL, 2018; IOEducation, 2018). These and other valid and reliable assessments have been integrated into the fabric of principal evaluation throughout the nation.

Related to this practice, several states, such as California, Connecticut, Florida, and Massachusetts, have adopted or begun the process of adopting performance assessments, often called administrator performance assessments or APA, to measure the competence of aspiring school leaders in preparation programs. This trend follows a long-standing practice in teacher education, particularly the relatively rapid adoption of the edTPA by multiple states to assess the readiness of novice teachers to enter the classroom, performance assessments are being used to provide accountability for teacher licensure (Au, 2013; Sato, 2014; Price, 2016). Through these new performance assessments, states seek to assess leadership candidates' preparedness for domains such as vision for student achievement, instructional leadership, observation and mentoring of teachers, and engaging parents and other stakeholders. Understandably, these policy decisions have resulted in deep and significant psychometric and assessment design investments related to how performance assessments can be designed for accountability purposes in a valid and reliable manner (Cizek & Bunch, 2007; Meherens, 1992; Messick, 1995).

The leadership preparation field has long utilized assessments that help them determine how well their candidates are able to engage in leadership behaviors that will lead to successful outcomes for their schools. And, performance assessments have been used within programs to measure the capacity of leadership candidates for many decades (Wendel & Uerling, 1989; Wendel & Sybouts, 1988). Generally speaking, a performance assessment can assess the performance of any skill or area of knowledge across a range of less authentic to very authentic contexts (Palm, 2008; Haertel, 1999). For example, a culinary student might be asked to prepare an egg souffle in a test kitchen where he or she will be scored on the quality of the souffle he produces. Such a performance assessment would help a scorer know whether or not the student had acquired the skills to effectively prepare souffles. At the other end of the spectrum, a student could be assessed on his ability to work with an entire kitchen staff to prepare and serve an egg souffle for multiple customers at a busy restaurant. Under those conditions, the student's ability to prepare the souffle under the unpredictable and complex circumstances of a restaurant kitchen would also be assessed. Similarly, performance assessments of educational leaders can range from assessing important, but discrete, tasks, such as creating a meeting agenda, to assessing how well a principal leads a meeting amidst systemic pressures, in spite of organizational constraints, and within a network of human relationships. In this way, authenticity in a performance assessment is not dependent on whether or not it happens in a school setting, but, rather, on the degree to which it surfaces complex organizational conditions under which leadership tasks must be performed.

Professional and vocational preparation programs regularly use formative and summative performance assessments to determine how well their candidates perform discrete and integrative tasks under varying levels of uncertainty. For example, a medical professional's ability to perform

a physical exam can be assessed using a simulator or visual inspection (Johnson, 2007, Rose, 1999), architects are assessed as they learn to account for the slope of the land on which they are building (Schön, 1987), and nurses are assessed on their developing sense of salience, or ability to pay attention to the important aspects of a patient's care (Benner et al., 2012). School leadership candidates, like these professionals, can be assessed in the field by their field supervisors or leadership coaches as they are becoming leaders through observations and conferences, and are also assessed within their course and program structures through various methods such as traditional papers and projects. In addition, it is common for candidates to make presentations, a form of performance assessment. Thus, what is new about statewide performance assessments is not that leadership candidates are being assessed or that performance assessments are being used to conduct the assessment. Instead, it is the external nature of the assessment, which calls for students to provide evidence of their practice to an external and blind scorer who is not familiar with the candidate's school context or their program that is new, as well as the high stakes use of the assessment in the licensure process.

Purpose and Context

The central question of this paper centers on the design of state-mandated administrator performance assessments (APA) for licensure. Specifically, what are the assumptions and orientations that affect performance assessment design for aspiring leaders? And, how do those assumptions and orientations manifest in the development and goals? We will focus on the California administrator performance assessment (CalAPA), the first statewide standardized measure of readiness for aspiring administrators in California that will be fully implemented in 2019. The recent decision in California to introduce an APA was strongly influenced by the rapid adoption of the edTPA and its proponents. Building from the theory that a performance assessment of teachers could ensure a baseline of quality in the workforce, policymakers advocated to extend this type of assessment to burgeoning school leaders (Fensterwald, 2012). In fact, the California Teacher Credential Commission, the agency in the executive branch of the California state government serving as the official accrediting body charged with overseeing all of the licensing and credentialing of professional educators in the state, specifically stated that one of the intents of its new California administrator performance assessment (CalAPA), is “to ensure a minimum threshold of leader readiness rather than to define exemplary practice” (CTC minutes, 2015).

The CalAPA is structured around tasks situated in three leadership cycles that are completed at three different periods during a candidate's preliminary credential program. Each task focuses on the roles and responsibilities of today's education leaders, using an investigate, plan, act, and reflect leadership sequence. Completion of each task requires that candidates either be in a school site-placement or have access to a school site where they can complete the work necessary for the CalAPA. The assessment comprises the following three leadership cycles focused on school site level work:

- Cycle 1: Planning School Improvement — Conducting data-based investigations, and planning and facilitating collaborative data inquiries that support equity and school improvement.
- Cycle 2: Facilitating Professional Learning — Facilitating collaborative learning among a small team of teachers to improve student learning.
- Cycle 3: Supporting Teacher Growth — Coaching an individual teacher to improve teaching and learning.

Emphasis on multiple modalities for evidence across these three leadership cycles allows candidates to submit evidence in various formats: annotated video, written plans for implementing academic priorities, observation notes and feedback on teaching practice, and narrative responses and reflections about practice. Elements requiring video must be directed, specific, and annotated (Kearney et al, 2018; CALAPA, 2018).

First, we will describe the impact of different epistemologies on performance assessment design. Then, we will describe the nature of leadership enacted and the related implications for assessment design. Finally, we provide performance assessment examples from UC Berkeley's Principal Leadership Institute that illustrate how assessments can be grounded within an epistemology of practice and discuss implications for preparation programs in the context of mandated state assessments.

Epistemologies of Organizational Learning

Scott Cook and John Brown's theory of organizational learning (1999) distinguishes between an epistemology of possession and an epistemology of practice. Specifically, Cook and Brown argue that organizations, and individuals within organizations, learn as a system. They see the Cartesian perspective as limited by its individualistic approach to understanding knowledge creation, and argue that to fully investigate how individuals and organizations learn, one must account for individual knowledge *and* group knowledge, as well as explicit *and* tacit forms of knowledge. According to Cook and Brown, there are four types of knowledge: explicit individual knowledge, explicit group knowledge, tacit individual knowledge and tacit group knowledge. Individual knowledge is what one person personally possesses, while group knowledge is what people know together. Moreover, explicit knowledge is what we know that can be named, while tacit knowledge is what we know that is not easy to communicate to others but is vital to the enactment of complex practice.

They further argue that while none of these types of knowledge can be transformed into the other, they do work in what they label a "generative dance" to produce new knowledge. They call that "knowing." In the moment, individuals, who are part of larger organizations, draw upon what they know individually and collectively to respond to problems of practice. School leaders, for example, likely draw from explicit knowledge of theoretical perspectives, school data and state standards, while at the same time drawing on their tacit knowledge of how to navigate collegial relationships, or how to enact authority given their gender or racial positioning within a particular school context. The way moment-to-moment decisions are enacted are then a result of what the leader knows about, what he or she knows how to do, and what that leader knows about how to lead within his or her school at a particular time and place. In assessing readiness for school leadership, then, it may be more important to assess new leaders' capacity for "knowing," than to find out what they "know."

Cartesian perspectives dominate many assessment designs. Examples include multiple choice exams, short answer responses, and the individualized nature of the assessments themselves. Like most traditional tests, statewide administrator performance assessments such as the CalAPA grow out of a Cartesian epistemology of individual knowledge possession, in which individuals must demonstrate mastery of static knowledge and sets of skills. While the CalAPA requires candidates to engage with their colleagues at a school site, the submission items are artifacts submitted after the fact. Meaning, while they ask candidates to capture their practice in

organizational settings, the content of the assessment tasks rely entirely on the individual being assessed to select a video clip or clips, provide analysis and present that to the scorers. Scorers then rate individuals for both their performance and their individual ability to respond to the tasks within the assessment. Within the current design, the CalAPA largely replicates the traditional multiple choice and constructed response exams by substituting video evidence for information that previously would have been collected in writing. In essence, many of the limitations that traditional paper-and-pencil tests have posed for assessing leadership behaviors are replicated albeit with expanded menus of artifacts. To summarize, although performance assessments such as the CalAPA place a clear value on practice, they are generally built from an epistemology of possession, partly because they rely on materials, videos and artifacts filtered by the candidate, which he or she curates to meet the given standards. For example, there is strong potential for the selection of non-representative video clips, inadequate explanation or consideration of contextual factors, and the inability for scorers to see the practice in the video clips they are presented as part of a larger system of practice, embedded in specific organizations and communities (Haertel, 1999). This approach privileges individual knowledge and explicit knowledge, such as written reflections on practice, rather than the enactment itself.

Performance assessments designed to capture discrete individual knowledge and practice do not sufficiently take into account the complexity of leader practice. Because school leaders are embedded within multiple organizational layers, including the district, the school and various other professional groups, assessing their development as individual leaders should account for how they build and use knowledge in interaction with those organizational layers.

What do performance assessments grounded in an epistemology of *practice* look like? How do they benefit candidates and programs differently? We provide an example in use at the University of California, Berkeley. Developed by the Principal Leadership institute, their Assessment Center model deliberately accounts for the organizational complexity of practice and knowledge generation in its design. [Important Note: the PLI has been refining its performance assessment practices over two decades. Through this time, they have continued to use the name Assessment Center. We ask the reader to suspend assumptions about the term that may be related to earlier iterations of performance assessment in the field.] In this system, the assessment process that leaders-in-training experience looks quite different from the newly developed Cal APA. Candidates are assessed by faculty and field supervisors (called coaches) on state-wide and program standards, but instead of producing evidence of their practice as individuals, they are assessed within simulated practice-based scenarios that require them to both draw on their extant individual and collective knowledge and build and act on new knowledge as they move through the simulation. Assessment Center is a case worthy of analysis because it illuminates how an assessment constructed from an epistemology of practice, rather than an epistemology of possession, can work in the service of candidate and program learning, as well as for the development of the larger field of school leader preparation. Specifically, Assessment Center reflects an epistemology of practice for three reasons: 1) its focus on “approximations to practice” simulations (Grossman et al., 2009), which require candidates to engage in enactment of leadership, drawing on both tacit and explicit knowledge, 2) the emphasis that it places on practicing distributed leadership (Spillane, 2012), in which group knowledge, not solely individual knowledge, is assessed (this reflects a recognition of professional knowledge as embedded in the organizational relationships of the school and educational context); and 3) the orientation to ongoing program and professional learning that the assessment embodies.

University of California, Berkeley Principal Leadership Institute Assessment Center

Founded in 1999, UC Berkeley's Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) has three areas of work: preparation, induction, and leadership outreach. All programs are designed based on the principles of equity and social justice and focus on improving education for the most vulnerable and historically underserved public school students. In 19 cohorts, Berkeley PLI has prepared over 600 educational leaders who are 50% students of color, 95% working in public education, and 88% working in the Bay Area. The preparation program is a rigorous 15-month MA program for working teacher leaders who are interested in pursuing formal leadership as a school administrator that includes the preliminary licensure requirements.

One of the hallmark practices of the program are day long performance assessment events, known as PLI Assessment Center. Unlike many performance assessments or earlier models of assessment centers, the current PLI Assessment Center does not rely on artifacts of practice, but, rather, creates opportunities for candidates to simulate deliberate aspects of practice to demonstrate individual and group knowledge. Specifically, Assessment Center consists of two major performance events, during which candidates participate in simulated scenarios - that are embedded in an overarching case of a fictional school - that approximate the real work of school leaders. The first Assessment Center occurs at the halfway point of the 15-month program and requires candidates to work individually and in teams on scenarios related to instructional leadership and interpreting data for the purpose of school improvement. The second Assessment Center occurs at the three-quarter point of the program and centers on a mock expulsion hearing as well as analyzing school wide strengths and needs from the perspective of a new principal, in which candidates must demonstrate multiple competencies related to legal and policy content as well as systemic analysis. Both events also require them to showcase individual and group-related skills and knowledge aligned to the coursework they have completed up to that point in the program.

Table 1

PLI Assessment Center Map

PLI Assessment Center			
Semester	Leadership Competencies	Activities	Assessors
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional Leadership Supervision and Evaluation of Teaching Interpreting Data for School Improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual and group case analysis Group analysis of instructional coaching Group presentation of a plan of action Individual analysis of teaching Post observation teacher conference simulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors Field Supervisor/Coaches Peer Observation Selected Outside Guests
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational Law related to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group presentation for mock expulsion hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors Field

	expulsion hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreting Data for School Improvement • Organizational/Systemic Analysis • School improvement planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and group case analysis • Integration of analysis into specific leadership strategies (i.e. Professional development plan development or interview protocol) • Group presentation 	Supervisor/Coaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Observation • Selected Outside Guests
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We conducted a year-long descriptive study of the PLI Assessment Center system that analyzed the stated purposes, the design of the Assessment Center model, and the experiences of students, faculty and staff during Assessment Center activities. We highlight three findings that demonstrate the affordances of a performance assessment based in an epistemology of practice. First, Assessment Center creates opportunities for candidates to demonstrate tacit knowledge of leadership, which is difficult to surface in traditional written exams and papers, and perhaps, even through written reflection on aspects of one's own practice. Second, Assessment Center accounts for group knowledge as an essential element of leadership, by creating both group activities and group assessments. Third, Assessment Center creates opportunities for program learning and refinement, because instructors, coaches and the director of the program are closely involved in the creation of the scenarios, and are expected to make adjustments to the individualized education of candidates, as well as the program overall, as a result of participating and collecting data from the assessment.

Data and Methods

Case Selection

We used an explanatory case study methodology to study an example of an exemplary leadership assessment practice (Yin, 2018; Creswell, 2014). Berkeley PLI's Assessment Center was selected as a case of authentic administrator performance assessment based in an epistemology of practice because of the deliberate construction of "approximations to practice" which Pamela Grossman and her colleagues defined as "opportunities to engage in practices that are more or less proximal to the practices of a profession," (2009) as well as the emphasis on group knowledge generation embedded throughout Assessment Center (Cook & Brown, 1999). Specifically, we set out to understand how Assessment Center approached eliciting candidate knowledge for the purpose of assessment. We believed that an assessment concerned with authenticity would be designed with rich opportunities for candidates to display professional "knowing," which would be visible through the assessment activities themselves, and the interpretations of those activities by the participants, including candidates and assessors. Our goals were to explain how this exemplary program approaches performance assessment, and how that assessment works to both evaluate *and* build candidate, coach and program-level knowledge.

Research Questions

We asked three research questions:

- 1) How is Assessment Center designed to assess students' individual tacit leadership knowledge?
- 2) How is Assessment Center designed to assess the group knowledge of leadership candidates?
- 3) How does the design of Assessment Center help the program respond to individual and programmatic needs?

Data collection

Our data consist of interviews before and after each Assessment Center with four PLI candidates/students ($n=7$) as well as three coaches ($n=6$)² Additionally, we observed and took field notes during each Assessment Center cycle and collected artifacts, including assignments, coach feedback forms, and video clips to contextualize our understanding of the process.

Leadership candidate participants were selected based on a range of factors, including gender, race, experience level and performance in the program, in order to gather a wide variety of perspectives. The coaches we selected as participants had several years of experience with Assessment Center, so their answers would reflect a perspective developed out of deep familiarity with the authentic assessment. Leadership candidates participated in semi-structured interviews to elicit their understanding and experience of Assessment Center. The interviewer asked the following questions, but followed up with probing questions to help her better understand the perspective of the interviewee:

- How did Assessment Center go for you?
- Choose a moment that was meaningful. Tell us about it and explain what you took from it.
- What will you take away from Assessment Center, if anything, as you proceed in your development as a leader?

Coaches were asked to ground their answers in their work with specific candidates, in order to elicit the most specific information possible,. The interviewer followed up with appropriate probing questions as they responded to the following prompts:

- Please think about one coachee in particular and what experiences and observations from the Assessment Center, if any, you will use in your coaching with that student.
- Since Assessment Center provides a different environment from the one in which you usually observe your coachee, how, if at all, does your participation in Assessment Center inform your understanding of your candidate's leadership development?

Data Analysis

We analyzed our data in four phases, which enabled us to attend to emerging themes related to our theoretical frame. In our first stage, we organized our interview transcripts, field notes and documents into three categories: evidence of assessment of tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge, and group knowledge. We used our video footage to help contextualize our other data, and as a

²Coaches are experienced educators who, as part of PLI, are assigned four to five PLI candidates/students for the duration of the program to guide them in applying theory to practice in their work sites and contribute to assessing their progress along with the instructors.

reference point to clarify questions that arose during our analysis. In our second phase, we coded for evidence of the stated purposes of Assessment Center, its design, and the experiences of the candidates and coaches (who served as scorers). In our third phase, we analyzed our interview transcripts for the meaning participants made of the process as they experienced it. We triangulated our data across multiple participants (candidates, coaches and program staff) and across methods (interviews and document analysis) to ensure accuracy of our results (Patton, 1999; Yin, 2018). In a final stage, we integrated our analysis of these categories to present a holistic picture of Assessment Center in response to our research questions.

Findings

Our analysis enables us to dimensionalize the aspects of Assessment Center that demonstrate its strength in assessing individual candidates in authentic scenarios, and its focus on assessing tacit, as well as emerging group knowledge as it unfolds in these scenarios. We were also able to see how Assessment Center contributed to ongoing program development and individualized feedback and support for leadership candidates.

Eliciting Tacit Knowledge

It is clear that Assessment Center requires candidates to put into practice explicit and tacit knowledge to grapple with the leadership scenarios with which they are presented. Candidates are often required to use explicit knowledge that they have gained during courses by citing texts and data that they have encountered. They also draw on school law and appropriate procedures and protocols for interacting with colleagues and students during Assessment Center. How they use these pieces of explicit knowledge, however, requires them to draw on tacit knowledge for enactment of leadership in the moment.

Cook and Brown's conception of tacit knowledge is helpful here. They describe it as knowledge that is gained through the generative dance of knowing, but which the individual retains in order to enact it again. They give an example of the knowledge needed to ride a bicycle to illustrate their point. When a person learns to ride a bicycle, they argue, they have explicit knowledge of how a bicycle works. However, it is not until they actually get on and learn to ride that a tacit understanding of how their own body feels and works while riding is developed. While a bicycle rider is only "knowing" how to ride a bicycle in the moment of riding, a tacit knowledge of how to enact bicycle riding is retained by the rider for use at a later time.

For leadership candidates, it is hoped that tacit knowledge of leadership is gained through course assignments that require approximations to practice, fieldwork experiences, and elsewhere in the program. These experiences are designed to cultivate tacit knowledge in the candidate, which is then called upon during Assessment Center. We see this through the candidates' reports that the activities feel authentic and require immediate action, thereby necessarily calling upon both explicit and tacit knowledge for leadership enactment. We also see evidence that tacit knowledge is required by the activities in Assessment Center through the coaches' comments about what they are able to learn about their candidates' development, by assessing their enactment of leadership competencies in real time.

Candidates demonstrate tacit knowledge through realistic leadership experiences. Leadership candidates remarked on the authenticity and relevance of the Assessment Center experience during all of their post-Assessment Center interviews we conducted with them except

for one. We coded notes for words such as “real” or phrases that otherwise indicated simulation of leadership practice such as “doing something we would do as leaders.” In the interviews that mentioned authenticity and relevance, candidates mentioned this between one and sixteen times during each interview, averaging five mentions per interview. We also coded for places where the candidates judged the experience to be meaningful learning for their leadership development. Candidates described Assessment Center in such terms in nearly every interview, totaling eighteen times in all, averaging two times per interview. Using data triangulation (Patton, 1999; Yin, 2018), we confirmed this finding through coach interviews: a there were a total of sixty mentions of authenticity of the Assessment Center experience across all coach and candidate interviews, and a total of twenty-four descriptions of it as a meaningful learning experience across that interview set.

Moreover, the candidates reported feeling concerned about how well they would perform, indicating that the experience felt consequential to them, despite it being program-embedded and not conducted by a standardized purveyor of professional assessments, such as Pearson or Education Testing Service. Before Fall Assessment Center, most of the candidates we interviewed expressed nervousness about the event, while prior to the Spring Assessment Center, those nerves had primarily been channeled into thorough advanced preparation. More than one candidate discussed having felt quite anxious before Fall Assessment Center, but less nervous and more interested in availing themselves of the learning opportunity during the spring. Mentions about nervousness numbered six across the interviews, while mentions of working to thoroughly prepare numbered ten. One coach also mentioned this phenomenon, stating: “With the initial assessment that we do in the fall, students...go into that one a little more, let’s say, apprehensive. They’re nervous, they go to it with a different mindset...The comment I heard from a lot of them was, we’re ready for this [Spring Assessment Center], we are prepared for this.” On the other hand, some participants also said that they were unable to prepare as much as they would have liked, given their work schedules and job searches. However, we believe this further confirms the finding that those candidates understood the importance of the assessment, despite feeling somewhat underprepared.

Table 2
Candidate interview response tabulations

Interview code (n=9)	Total number of codes	Lowest occurrence within an interview	Highest occurrence within one interview	Average across all interviews, fall and spring
Real/Authentic (Parent code, no child codes)	49	1	16	5
Meaningful Learning Experience (Parent code, no child codes)	18	0	3	2
Approach to preparation (Parent code)	18	0	3	2
<i>Nervousness in</i>	6	0	2	.7

<i>anticipation of AC (child code Atp)</i>				
<i>Thorough preparation for AC (child code Atp)</i>	10	0	3	1.1
<i>Unable to prepare as much as desired because of other obligations (child code Atp)</i>	2 (spring only)	0	1	.2

The “realness” of the experience for candidates helped us see that Assessment Center requires candidates to call upon and create tacit knowledge as they accessed it during enactment. One student described it in this way:

...I do really think that in a lot of ways I appreciate Assessment Center because it is authentic, it is an authentic assessment, and it feels real. It feels like you're doing the work of a site leader, you're doing the work of an administrator, and it's not that theoretical piece.

Another candidate discussed the value of enactment during Assessment Center as a means of eliciting knowledge she may not have otherwise tapped into. Her comment is reflective of many of the interviews with students, coaches and instructors who again and again explained the value of the realism of simulation exercises in which they participated.

I just can't say enough about how much our work as leaders in education rely on our ability to take information and quickly do something with it, and to present things in a way that makes people feel calm and empowered at the same time, and we have lots of different types of people and expectations and responsibilities, and you can't get that from taking a test. You just, you can't. You can't just be given something and write down what I would say or whatever, because you're always going to sound better on paper than you are when you're having to talk to someone out loud and go through and respond to somebody and be quick on your feet. So I think it's incredibly powerful to do the assessments this way and to give us real experiences that we can take with us into leadership. You couldn't do that any other way. So that would be an add-on to me, just to take that away.

Here the student points out the value she sees in the simulated experiences of Assessment Center. Her comment that “having to talk to someone” and “be quick on your feet” is preferable to being asked to “write down what I would say,” shows that candidates are required by Assessment Center to demonstrate their knowledge through their behavior, not just their written reflections, in real time. This student, like many of the others we interviewed, saw this as both an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge in a challenging performance environment, as well as a learning experience that helped her become a better leader. In other words, candidates saw Assessment Center as a moment of “knowing,” in which they called upon tacit and explicit forms of knowledge and created new knowledge through the “generative dance” in which Assessment Center required them to engage.

Coaches see aspects of practice that were invisible before. Another theme that emerged from our interviews with coaches about the Assessment Center experience was an identification of

simulations as an opportunity to witness tacit knowledge in action, or identify tacit knowledge that was lacking in candidates. The tables below illustrate that while coaches highlighted different aspects of the Assessment Center experience in their interviews, they all emphasized the unique opportunity Assessment Center provided to witness candidates whom they were coaching (their “coachees”) perform aspects of a school leader’s role in a purposeful, but realistic context. This context enabled them to learn about their coachees, and attend to their leadership development through coaching. They stated in multiple ways that Assessment Center helped their students surface knowledge that they were unable to access through courses or even site visits, and that the constructed scenarios highlighted both strengths and weaknesses in candidates’ leadership skills that otherwise would have remained hidden from view. Interestingly, they often mentioned the importance of both the contingent and collaborative nature of the Assessment Center process, noting what they were able to learn about coachees as they related to their peers throughout performative group activities, such as the mock expulsion hearing and the case study discussion.

Table 3
Pre-Spring Assessment Center Coaching Interview Response Tabulations

Pre-Spring AC Coach Interview coding (n=3)	Total number of codes	Lowest occurrence within an interview	Highest occurrence within one interview	Average across all interviews, fall and spring
Anticipated learning something specific about candidates during AC	8	1	5	2.6
Anticipated being able to “see” something new about a candidate during AC	5	2	3	1.7
Anticipated AC being an authentic learning event	8	1	5	2.6
Anticipated AC being an opportunity for candidates to learn important leadership skills	5	1	3	1.7
Anticipated AC being an opportunity for candidates to work collaboratively with others	7	0	5	2.3

Anticipated AC being an opportunity for candidates to contribute individual strengths to the whole group	2	0	2	.7
Anticipated AC being an opportunity to build candidate confidence	4	0	4	1.3
Anticipated using AC as a means of reflecting on coaching and to help the candidate reflect	4	0	4	1.3

Table 4
Post-Spring Assessment Center Coaching Interview Response Tabulations

Post-Spring AC Coach Interview coding (n=3)	Total number of codes	Lowest occurrence within an interview	Highest occurrence within one interview	Average across all interviews, fall and spring
Mentioned learning something specific about candidates during AC	11	2	5	3.7
Mentioned being able to “see” something new about a candidate during AC	21	5	8	7
Mentioned AC being an authentic learning event	3	0	3	1
Mentioned AC being an opportunity for candidates to learn important leadership skills	1	0	1	.3
Mentioned AC being an opportunity for candidates to work collaboratively with	6	0	4	2

others				
Mentioned AC being an opportunity for candidates to contribute individual strengths to the whole group	2	0	2	.7
Mentioned AC being an opportunity to build candidate confidence	10	2	5	3.3
Described using AC to inform developmental coaching approach	12	3	5	4

In pre-assessment interviews, coaches described wanting to know more about their coachees through the process of Assessment Center, and in post-Assessment Center interviews, they described new insights they had gleaned about their leadership development. One coach described Assessment Center as a “different venue” in which you see candidates in a “different light.” This same coach had worried about a candidate’s ability to keep up with the coursework in the program saw her enact leadership knowledge during Assessment Center that hadn’t been visible to her before. After observing her performance during the mock expulsion hearing, she remarked:

I was particularly struck by a... coachee, who is struggling in terms of keeping up with PLI, for a lot of reasons. A lot of extremely valid reasons... But she was just sort of at the top of her game, and she did the closing statement in the expulsion hearing, and she was terrific. She also took over facilitating her group when they were working on this case study. And so it's very re-affirming to see what incredible talent she has.

An example from another coach pointed to Assessment Center’s power to assess tacit knowledge for leadership. The candidate was not struggling with coursework, but, rather, excelled in the traditional academic sense. Spring Assessment Center provided this coach with an opportunity to see this candidate’s leadership knowledge in action, rather than to rely only on her written expression of knowledge.

It's interesting that watching her in small groups and what have you in my class, she contributed but she wasn't very outspoken when it came time to, let's share out. She didn't do a lot of that. And I was really impressed... She's a good student, don't get me wrong. She does really well on her paperwork et cetera, but watching her in her element, because she is the lead PD, and the way she handled it, she was confident, there was some humor there, she did an outstanding job. She's another one that stood out for me in that sense, because I was really impressed with the way she came across.

However, codes were remarkably less frequent, perhaps because interviews focused more on the coaches’ experience of the event and how they used it for their own practice, for demonstrating

candidates' individual strengths in a group context (.7) and as a learning event for candidates (.3). If isolating particular leadership skills is a sole purpose of performance assessment, it will be important to tease out the elements of events such as these that facilitate program, coach and candidate "knowing," and those which demonstrate "knowledge."

Eliciting Group Knowledge

Another aspect of Cook and Brown's organizational theory of knowledge accounts for the way in which individual and group knowledge work together to inform "knowing" of organizational actors. They argue that knowledge lives within organizations that is larger than individual knowledge that any one person possesses. School leaders do not work in isolation, but, instead, build knowledge for practice with those with whom they work and in the context of the organizational and professional expectations of their role. Assessment Center attends to group knowledge through both the design and the enactment of the activities. Candidates are required to work with others, by design, and are assessed as individuals and as a group. Candidates report growth in their leadership skills and perspectives through these activities.

Group knowledge as a design element. Though all activities in Assessment Center are designed to elicit and create group knowledge, group discussions and presentations are perhaps the clearest examples of this. During group discussions and presentations, candidates are expected to build and demonstrate knowledge for leadership as a group. Below is a description of a "Case Study Discussion Protocol." Candidates use this protocol in a group setting to discuss a case study of a leadership dilemma in order to surface the issues and challenges of school leadership in a particular context.

The purpose of this case discussion is to provide an opportunity for your group to have an initial dialogue about the challenges faced by Ms. Violet and Franklin School. First, you will hear a short report of each group member's initial thoughts about the case as you were instructed identify in the preparation directions. Then, there will be time for open discussion. During this time, we urge you to continue to focus on the underlying issues and leadership challenges.

Each individual will have 3 minutes (12 minutes total) to identify the 2-3 most important issues at play in this case, relating them to the course concepts & literature. In order to ensure that each person has the opportunity to share their thoughts, the 3 minute limit on the "whips" will be firmly enforced.

The group will have 12 minutes to continue to discuss the case as a group, focusing on the underlying issues and leadership challenges. This open discussion will be left to your group to manage.

The instructor/s will have 5 minutes to share feedback and insights into the group's performance

Figure 1. Assessment Center Case Study prompt

In this activity, candidates have the opportunity to both demonstrate their own knowledge of leadership and the literature they've encountered through coursework, and they are also being

assessed on their interactions with others and their capacity to build knowledge for leadership with others. Unlike some assessments or pedagogical activities that require candidates to discuss their individual knowledge in order to see what they know as individuals, this activity, by design, assesses the group's ability to organize itself for learning, and to build knowledge for leadership as a group.

After an initial share out, the group has several minutes to discuss the case with which they are presented. This is an open discussion, which is "left to your group to manage." Leaving the group to manage itself is not only a way to assess organizational skills, but also to see how would-be leaders position themselves in relation to other adults to create relationships oriented for group learning. After the discussion, the group is then given feedback from observers about how they worked as a group, not as particular individuals who are there to share individual knowledge.

Moreover, throughout student and coach interviews, several participants mentioned the critical role that the program director played not only in designing and requiring such exercises, but in creating the group configurations, as well. Students and coaches understood that the program director often grouped students who needed to work on a particular skill or who needed support or a push from a certain group within the cohort. Across the interviews, two students and two coaches described the program director's deep knowledge of her students and her purposeful approach to designing learning opportunities for each student. One student discussed her understanding that the program director had intentionally matched her with a fellow student whom she found intimidating during fall Assessment Center:

So...we found out we were going to do...a role-play, so I found out that the person that was going to pretend to be the teacher while I was the administrator and had my planned conversation, the person who I had been set up with to be the disgruntled teacher was actually someone I had admitted to my program director that I am intimidated by, because she's really well-spoken... I admire her, but I definitely feel a little... Yeah. Worried around her that I'm going to mess up or say something... yeah.

Our program director, is amazing at making sure we have learning opportunities. She put us together, of course. So she was pretending to be the teacher who was disgruntled. She did a really good job of it. She called me judgmental at one point and a bunch of other things. But I just had to work through it. This kind of thing actually happens as a principal, and it happens in meetings with other teachers and it happens in life, so it was really good to have to remember to stay calm.

Further, coaches reported that an important aspect of Assessment Center was being able to determine how well candidates were able to collaborate with others in authentic scenarios, which was an aspect of their practice that was difficult to see in the field or during coursework. They mentioned this thirteen times across their interviews.

Students learn from one another during group activities. The group activities also present opportunities for candidates to build knowledge with others in the moment and to demonstrate group and tacit knowledge for leadership during Assessment Center. Students see their own knowledge as situated within a larger body of group knowledge, which is greater than them, but which they can access by working successfully within a group. For example, one student said:

I think the one task that sort of stood out to me was the, when we had our group conversation surrounding the case study, I think the one thing that stood out, and it was mostly just that

we were, everybody sort of came in with their own perspective, and once we were sitting around the table and talking to each other about the case study, it was hard to imagine us having missed anything. Like, everybody brought up something that really meant something to them, and it created a really holistic image of what was going on. I was just impressed once we got rolling, how much people picked up on from the case study, and how many different pieces there were. Yeah. I was very impressed, because there was stuff that I missed, but somebody in the group had picked up on it clearly.

Here the student describes the value in working on the case study with others because “it was hard to imagine us having missed anything.” He goes on to explain that within what appears to be a fairly well-organized discussion, building group knowledge is greater than the sum of its parts. As with many of the activities in Assessment Center, the process both unearthed candidates’ knowledge and helped them create new knowledge. Group activities such as these placed a value on what could be created from carefully orchestrated sharing, listening and reflecting together, by providing feedback on both content and process.

Coaches saw this, as well. In one interview, a coach thought about the Assessment Center as a place for her coachee to recreate his self-presentation within the context of the group activity. She said,

I think that the groups are, the group responsibilities are where my coachees will be able to interact and engage with their fellow cohort members. And so in this dynamic, I’m hoping that they will be able to express themselves, articulate their ideas, and of course merge those in the group setting, so that it becomes a holistic presentation. Because I think [to] the path that they’re doing, the expulsion hearing and also the case study presentation, will allow them to present themselves in a way that they are more confident, and then I’ll be able to sense that their contributions are part of the entire group’s presentation. A couple of my, one of my coachees in particular, I know is a little bit shy about maybe asserting himself in a group, so I’m curious as to what his role will be in the group presentation, because there are some roles that are more prominent, others that are tangential, so I’m wondering how he’s going to surface in this group dynamic when they’re combining the two work groups and producing their presentations, where he stands in that setting.

In her anticipation of the activity, she imagines how her candidate might “merge” his ideas and expressions with others to make a holistic presentation, and wonders how he will “surface” in the group dynamic, which indicates that the Assessment Center is opportunity is not only an opportunity to demonstrate what one knows, but to build what one is learning as one participates in the assessment, which happens within a group setting. Both the authenticity of the scenario and the group dynamics allow this tacit knowledge to build in the moment, and the knowledge that is both created and demonstrated in contingent on those factors.

Assessment for Organizational Learning

Another way in which Assessment Center reflects an epistemology of practice is the built-in design for organizational learning. As candidates enact leadership through Assessment Center, knowledge is constructed by the program and its staff alongside the candidates. By interacting with candidates as they respond to the leadership scenarios with which they are presented, coaches and

instructors build knowledge about the candidates, and about their own coaching and teaching. Additionally, the program and Assessment Center, itself, learn from the experience and adapt.

Assessment Center helps coaches and instructors develop their practice. Assessment Center is designed to both assess learning and to simultaneously create opportunities for learning. Coaches and instructors almost unanimously report that Assessment Center helps them learn about their students and their own teaching and coaching. For instance, one instructor noted that Assessment Center helps him prioritize particular aspects of leadership knowledge in his course during an interview after Fall Assessment Center:

The activities are all collaborative and they require multiple task management and time management... And all of those skills are essential to high-quality educational leadership. And it reinforces my practice in the classroom to be spending time on those things.

Then, again, this same instructor described a similar sentiment after Spring Assessment Center:

I find Assessment Center to be incredibly valuable as an assessment tool for me to assess my practice, and again, the course design, and the structures that we use to guide the students in a very short time, in 14 months, from being teachers to being credentialed, authorized, practicing administrators. You know? It's a scary responsibility.

Another instructor discussed the value in meeting with other coaches and instructors to discuss the candidates' progress during Assessment Center. This meeting is built into the design of Assessment Center, in order for the coaches and instructors to calibrate for the assessment activities themselves, and for them to hone their approach moving forward as individuals and as a program. She said,

I think I would just underscore the value that I as an instructor gain from the feedback session with the field supervisors that we do during our lunch break. Getting the thematic feedback from the other people who are involved in the process is just, I mean, I've never had that experience as a teacher before, and it's really meaningful for me and my practice.

Assessment Center informs program development. Assessment Center not only informs the individual practice of coaches and instructors, it also feeds into a cycle of group learning by the entire program. Over time, the program and Assessment Center itself are changed in response to the organizational learning that happens by various constituencies within the Principal Leadership Institute. For example, a few years ago, instructors were disappointed in the number of students who did not use open-ended questions in the simulated post-observation conference. The curriculum was subsequently revised to include more practice and coaches followed up with the individuals directly to ensure more practice in their questioning strategies. The next year, instructors noted improved rates of questioning strategies.

Discussion and Implications

Our findings have important implications for the development of state mandated administrator performance assessments and the programs mandated to implement them. First, this study expands our thinking about the nature of authentic performance tasks and assessment experiences. Using the epistemology of practice frame allows us to see how deliberately designed approximations to practice may have some advantages for assessing candidates' "knowing" over the more widely-used practice of assessing video slices of practice and accompanying candidate reflections. Distinguished

from the individualized nature of typical state performance assessments, Assessment Center affords the program the ability to generate scenarios that require candidates to draw upon individual and group knowledge, and the enactment of practice that is visible to assessors is not mediated through the lens of the candidate who may select the slice of practice to submit. While these approaches both attempt to capture authentic practice, it may be paradoxically true that intentionally designed approximations during which candidates must enact leadership competencies in the presence of coaches and instructors are more suited to revealing a candidate's tacit knowledge for practice than a video of his or her practice in a live setting. Our findings indicate that it would be interesting to compare the dimensions of knowledge for leadership enactment that are visible in a live performance assessment such as Assessment Center and those which are visible through a documented experience upon which a candidate reflects.

Second, the case of Berkeley's Assessment Center raises questions about how current state mandated administrator performance assessments account for group knowledge. Though video clips and descriptions of fieldwork, which are common artifacts required by larger scale assessments currently in use, are reflective of the type of work done with and among other organizational actors, the value that Assessment Center places on both leadership knowledge for working within groups, as well as the knowledge created together by groups, seems difficult to replicate outside a simulated or real-time administrator performance assessment. Because organizational knowledge is key to administrator knowledge and successful leadership, it would be useful to consider the extent to which APA models embrace an epistemology of practice or possession. Given the professional knowledge that is needed for leadership, which draws on both tacit and group knowledge, it may be useful to consider accounting for these in the designs of new APAs.

Third, because Assessment Center is not only a powerful learning tool for candidates, but for their instructors and field supervisor/coaches, as well, it is crucial that the relationship between the administration of an APA and the principal preparation program are closely examined. For example, Assessment Center is embedded into the life cycle of a preparation program, which allows program leadership, instructors and coaches to learn and respond during the program to benefit the learning of candidates. In the CalAPA, for example, each of the three tasks will be scored by separate scorers. In that configuration, the assessors do not have the ability to see growth over time. However, within the Assessment Center model, it is only natural to see the progression of performance over the course of the day. Furthermore, candidates benefit from having assessors who evaluate their performance in Assessment Center and develop their leadership practices during the course of the program. They have more meaningful feedback that is aligned within their program and triangulated to other program assessments. While the CalAPA uses the use of blind external scoring to limit assessor bias, it may also limit the ability of the assessor to give deep, meaningful, and timely feedback.

Fourth, using standardized performance assessments across multiple programs statewide (in California, there are over 60 programs serving extremely different contexts), that is administered by a national testing company, requires the developers to decontextualize and genericize the assessment in ways that can preclude programs, instructors, coaches and students from a more authentic, seamless and inclusive feedback loop. Unlike standardized administrator performance assessments, Assessment Center does not narrow feedback to a numerical score on a specific standard that is provided approximately 6-8 weeks after submission (of course, the submission can be written with a large delay after the actual activities have taken place). In the end, the biggest constraint in creating truly authentic assessments might be the goal of efficiency and attempting to do it "at scale," rather than supporting and building the capacity of individual programs to design and implement

assessments based on an epistemology of practice. As Cohen and Ball elaborate in their paper *Educational Innovation and the Problem with Scale* (2007), “To solve the problem of ‘scaling up’ requires ‘scaling in’- by this we mean developing designs and infrastructure needed to support effective use of an innovation. That, in turn, requires consideration of the problems that have made some sorts of innovation difficult...Scale is relative not just to the universe of possible implementers, but to the scope and depth of what must be done to devise and sustain change.”

Fifth, leadership preparation programs bear the ultimate responsibility to manage and balance the various mandated and non-mandated assessment strategies for their candidates. In the case of Berkeley’s PLI program, they continue their Assessment Center practices alongside the required CalAPA activities. If, in fact, the trend to institute APAs continues and more states use statewide exams to provide minimum competency accountability for the field, what investments do leadership faculty need to make to ensure the inclusion of assessments that more authentically approximate practice in their preparation programs? What are the differences in preparation between those who meet the minimum standard of the APA and those who enroll in programs that engage in more authentic assessment practices?

Finally, unlike other professional fields such as medicine, statewide assessments in education are expensive endeavors for programs and practitioners without the potential of substantial salary increases after licensure. They are costly to aspiring leaders (typically \$350-500/per exam) who are already personally responsible for their licensure expenses and potentially redirect resources from programs given the high stakes nature. In the worst case scenario, external performance assessments raise the stakes, while adding costs and potentially burdening individual school leadership candidates and their preparation programs. How can policy makers and programs work together to ensure that external performance assessments effectively improve the preparation of aspiring leaders, build the capacity of preparation programs, and ensure a stronger leader workforce that all children, especially vulnerable and historically underserved youth, deserve?

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Becoming an Assistant Principal: Mapping Factors that Facilitate or Hinder Entering the Role

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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The phase of entering the role of assistant principals and the coping strategies assistant principals use upon entering their role have barely been studied. Most studies that dealt with assistant principals focused mainly on the role of the assistant principals and their readiness to advance to the position of school principal, while the study dealing with the transition from teaching to the position of assistant principal is extremely limited. The available studies indicate that it is a complicated transition having an emotional, social and professional effect, described in terms of "shock" and an "unpleasant surprise". This article presents the assistant principal role at school and the challenges at the induction to this role. It offers a model for mapping the factors that influence the process of entering the role. This model can enable the education system to trace beforehand assistant principals who experience difficulties in entering office, so as to provide them with support and proper preparatory training procedures.

Keywords: assistant principalship role, entrance to a role (induction phase), transition to management.

The common assumption in the education system is that the transition from the role of classroom teacher to that of assistant principal does not involve a change in professional identity, since the assistant principal remains in the same organizational space and continues to work with the same team toward the same objectives. And yet, the scant research on the transition from the role of teacher to that of assistant principal testifies to its being a complex one, carrying broad effects – emotional, social and professional, described in the literature in terms such as "shock" and "unpleasant surprise" (Armstrong, 2015; Spillane & Lee, 2013). The transition often takes place with no prior preparation, no suitable induction for this unique role, no orderly training nor tools for assessing the processes of change involved (Armstrong, 2015; Lattuca, 2012).

The majority of studies dealing with school assistant principals – mostly quantitative – have focused mainly on their tasks and on their preparedness to be promoted to the role of principal (e.g., Cranston, Tromans, & Reugebrink, 2004; Oplatka & Tamir, 2009). However, the research dealing specifically with the stage of entry into the role of assistant principal, which is an essential phase shaping one's managerial career (Lattuca, 2012), is limited in scope (Armstrong, 2015; Oleszewski, Shoho, & Barnett, 2012).

The first part of this article presents the role of assistant principal and the challenges involved in entering this role. Further, we present a circular model that maps the main factors affecting the level of difficulty that new assistant principals experience as they enter their new role. The model includes three levels of relating variables: variables relating to the school principal, variables relating to the professional staff and variables relating to the assistant principal. The purpose of the model is to allow the education system to identify in real time assistant principals who might encounter difficulties and objections while entering their role and even beforehand, in order to allocate them specific resources and tools for coping.

Assistant Principals: Mapping the Role and its Challenges

The Assistant Principal – "The Forgotten Leader"

In contrast to the large number of studies relating to the principal's role and its contribution to school performance, research on the assistant principal's role and its significance is insufficient (Barnett, Shoho, & Oleszewski, 2012; Bukoski et al., 2016; Morgan, 2014). There is limited research providing a "conceptual framework of understanding assistant principalship" (Lee, Kwan, & Walker, 2009, p. 188) and there is almost no formalized job description covering their roles and responsibilities. Thus, the assistant principal acts with low functional visibility (Barnett et al., 2012) and is referred to in the literature as the "forgotten leader" (Cranston et al., 2004, p. 224).

Though no direct link has been found between student achievements and the assistant principal's role (Tillio, 2015), the latter is still seen as playing a significant role in the school's success. The assistant principal's role is becoming increasingly more complex due to the constant demand for student-achievement improvement, and to the assistant principal's being an integral part of the school's leadership team (Morgan, 2014; Oleszewski et al., 2012). In addition, assistant principals are major providers of personal and professional support to principals (Hohner, 2016).

The Assistant Principal's Tasks

The assistant principal's multiple and often vaguely defined tasks vary from one school to another according to the specific needs of the school, the teachers, and mostly those of the principal (Mertz,

2006; Morgan, 2014). As the academic and pedagogical requirements from the school grow higher, so does the assistant principal role change from the traditional one of attending to disciplinarian and administrative matters to that of management of various tasks and responsibilities.

According to Barnett, Shoho and Oleszewski (2011), who survey the assistant principal's tasks, the assistant principal's role comprises two main tasks: a) managing student needs, regarding mostly discipline and welfare issues; and b) instructional leadership.

Managing student needs. Dealing with student management and taking care of student welfare include aspects such as dealing with discipline problems, taking responsibility for equipment, administrative matters, coordination with out-of-school factors (such as school transportation) and logistics (Bukoski et al., 2016). According to a study on assistant principals in New York, 90% of the participants testified that most of their time was spent on dealing with students' disruptions and parents' complaints, organizing meals and transportations, handling teacher replacement in the school schedule and doing administrative paperwork (Glanz, 2004). Similarly, a study on assistant principals in Maine indicates that assistant principals allocate most of their time to student management (Hausman, Nebeker, McCreary, & Donaldson, 2002). A study conducted in Hong Kong also found that assistant principals devoted a disproportionate part of their time to dealing with student needs, although they considered this as less interesting and less important than their other various school tasks (Kwan & Walker, 2008).

Instructional leadership. This kind of leadership deals with shaping school vision and goals, teacher assessment, the development and management of teaching programs, keeping in touch with subject coordinators and making use of information received from them to decide on student learning contents and processes (Loren, 2015). However, research indicates that most of the assistant principals do not deal with this sphere in the framework of their role (Arar, 2014; Cranston et al., 2004; Morgan, 2014). Most of their time is devoted to administrative tasks, attending to student needs and discipline (Loren, 2015; Morgan, 2014;).

The Transition from Teaching to Assistant Principalship – "An Unpleasant Surprise"

According to Ashforth (2001), entering any new role entails the need to redefine one's personal identity deriving from the role and reconstruct meaning, control and a sense of belonging. Many consider the transition from teaching to assistant principalship as an insignificant change, given that the organizational space, the professional staff and the common goals remain unchanged. In addition, in many cases the assistant principal continues to perform as a teacher for a few hours a week. Yet, research indicates that while entering their role, most assistant principals undergo a difficult emotional, social and professional process without proper preparation (Armstrong, 2015; Spillane & Lee, 2013). The "unpleasant surprise" includes the following factors:

Heavy Overload, Task Ambiguity and the Challenge of Home-work Integration

Studies attempting to map assistant principals' tasks at school testify that the main challenges facing them are significant work pressure, as well as balancing between work and their personal life. The ambiguity of the role along with the task overload lead to emotional and mental fatigue and low functionality (Celik, 2013), in addition to a lack of role satisfaction and reduced willingness for promotion to higher management positions (Morgan, 2014). Moreover, the multiplicity of tasks leads to the phenomenon of "putting out fires", that is, assistant principals are required to carry out more tasks, in order to provide response to ongoing situations beyond their assigned tasks. The

overload and the mental pressure involved grow higher, especially for assistant principals who are new in the system and wish to prove themselves at the beginning of their way, but are also common among senior assistant principals (Barnett et al., 2012).

The Transition from Working with Students at Micro level to Working with the Grownups at the Macro Level

Another key challenge found among assistant principals was that of dealing with central factors within and outside the school system: teachers, subject coordinators, managerial staff, parents and the community. The position of assistant principals entails an inherent difficulty stemming from its placement in the system and its mission of balancing between various groups that have differing and sometimes even contradictory needs within and without the system (Celik, 2013; Morgan, 2014). A study conducted in Texas found that 30% of new and senior assistant principals mentioned the field of managing the teaching staff, and in particular, conflicts with the teachers, as a challenge second in the order of importance. These difficulties arise especially when dealing with issues of low motivation among staff members, senior teachers opposing change, and anger and other harsh emotional reactions from the staff. Although assistant principals spend a great deal of their time dealing with conflicts within the teaching staff, many of them report that they do not feel adequately prepared to cope with such situations involving stress, anger and conflict (Barnett et al., 2012).

The Transition from Pedagogical Homeroom Teaching and Education to Administrative Work

The transition to the role of assistant principal often involves the new role holder with bureaucratic, administrative work and with discipline problems. Research in the US, Europe and Hong Kong indicates that most of the assistant principals complain that a large portion of their time is devoted to dealing with discipline problems, student transportation and meal, and paperwork, and less time is left for instructional leadership (Loren, 2015; Morgan, 2014; Vick, 2011). Moreover, these administrative tasks hold potential for conflicts and confrontations with the staff, with no prior preparation for complex issues of human resources, imposing authority, attendance reports etc. Furthermore, primarily focusing on administrative work affects the assistant principals' wish to proceed further into managerial roles (Lee et al., 2009).

Changes in the Staff Attitude to the Point of Social Isolation and the Absence of Support Group

New assistant principals entering their role often cope with the difficulty of leaving the familiar, safe collegial peer group and moving to a solitary role in the school system, up to the point of feeling socially isolated (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Hasson, 2011). This difficulty is compatible with evidence from new and veteran school principals about a sense of deep loneliness in the principal's role. While entering the new role, the loss of colleagues and friends that are no longer socially close is an unpleasant emotional experience. The loneliness stems both from the high and solitary position in the organizational hierarchy, and from the nature of the role that involves dilemmas, conflicts and continuous struggles, side by side with the expectations to provide a containing response to students, parents and the community (Oplatka, 2001).

The Lack of Preparation or Prior Understanding of the Nature of the Role

Many new assistant principals report a lack of appropriate preparation for the complexity of their role, as well as a lack of prior understanding of its actual nature and requirements (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). According to Marshall and Hooley (2006), despite the importance of this role in the school system, research indicates that induction for assistant principalship is insufficient. Where it does exist, it is designed for principal training and not for the unique needs of the assistant principal (Armstrong, 2015; Morgan, 2014; Vick, 2011), especially in the stage of entering the role and regarding issues related to daily coping with the role challenges. Respectively, both research and policy makers devote little attention to processes of assistant principal training (Lattuca, 2012).

A Model for Mapping Factors that Facilitate or Hinder Entering the Role of Assistant Principals

Based on the literature on entering the role of assistant principals, we present a model that maps the main factors that might affect the level of difficulty that new assistant principals experience as they enter their role. The model's objective is to identify in real time, and even before entering their role, assistant principals who might encounter difficulties and objections while entering the role, in order to allocate special resources to them, such as a mentoring senior assistant principal, or a close accompaniment of an organizational counselor and tools for coping.

The model contains three levels of reference: affecting variables regarding the school principal, affecting variables regarding the professional staff and affecting variables regarding the assistant principal. The model has a circular structure, since the factors affect one another, as will be demonstrated below. Thus, for example, the measure of support the principal provides for the new assistant principal affects the staff attitude. Or, the circumstances of an assistant principal's leaving the role (mainly when dismissed from office) might lead to a divided teachers' room, and to intense emotional difficulty for the new assistant principal, a difficulty in exercising authority and being acknowledged as having authority by the staff.

Figure 1 delineates the model mapping the factors that facilitate or hinder the process of entering the role. Following are explanations of the factors mapped by the model.

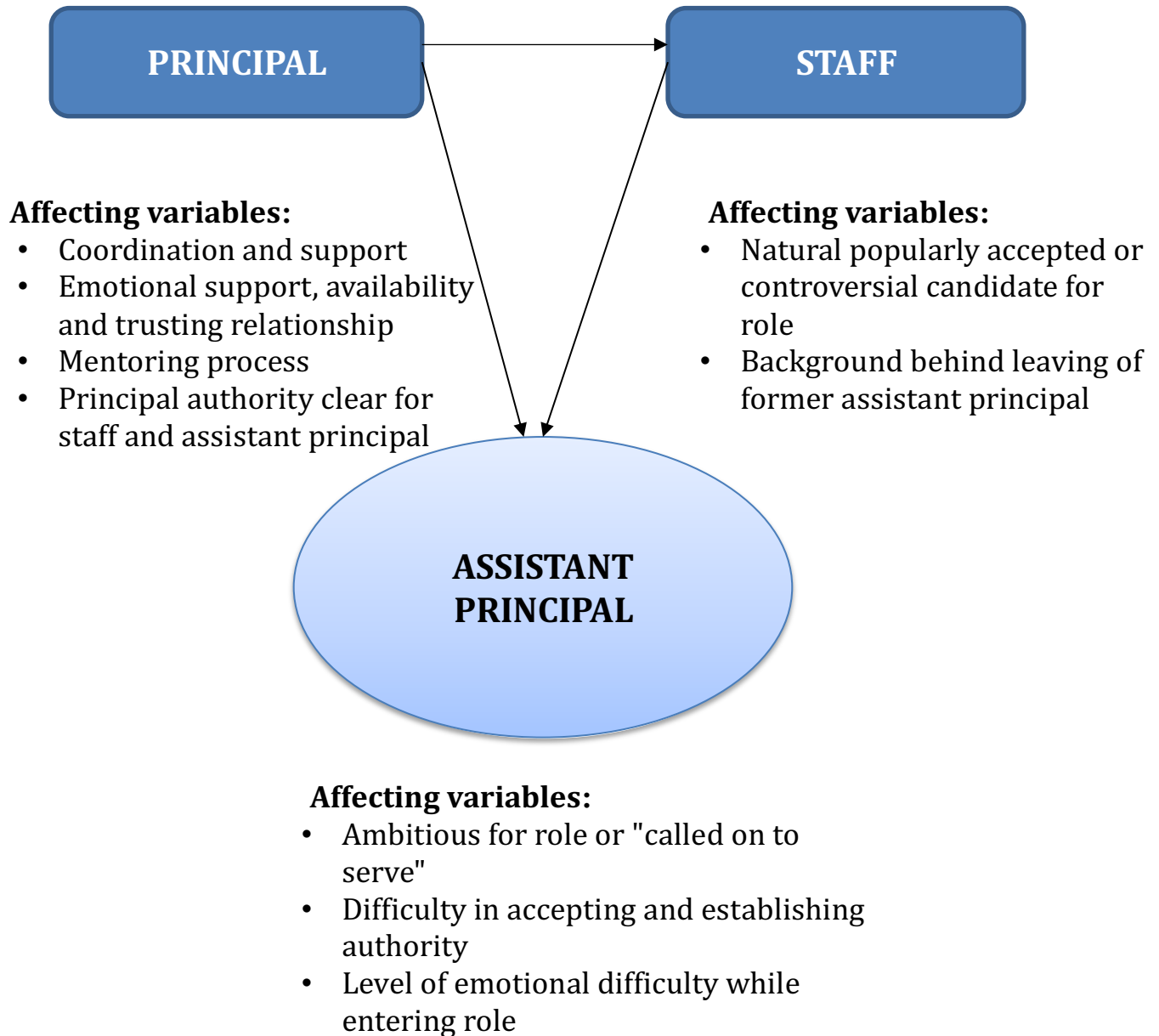


Figure 1. Main factors facilitating or hindering the process of entering the role

Mapping the Variables Affecting the Process of Entering the Role of Assistant Principals concerning the School Principal

The Level of Principal Support and the Measure of Coordination between the Principal and the New Assistant Principal

Deprived of the principal's status and authority, the assistant principals' rank of number two in the organizational hierarchy puts them in a problematic position vis-à-vis inner and outer factors (Vick, 2011). Assistant principals derive their professional and managerial authority and their power over the staff from the level of support they get from the principal and the measure of coordination between them. The literature considers the principals to be chief agents of socialization, due to their ability to influence and determine the assistant principals' tasks, assess them and their functioning and sponsor their future career promotion (Matthews & Crow, 2003). Principals can affect the process of socialization by providing skills, and serve as a source of psychological support and a model for conduct and expectations (Mertz, 2006). The staff learns fast whether they can override the assistant principal's authority and what the measure of coordination between the assistant principal and the principal is. In other words, the lower the measures of support and coordination between the principal and the assistant principal are, the harder it would be for the assistant principal to establish his or her authority over the managerial and professional staff (Hasson, 2011; Author 1, 2017).

Emotional Support, Accessibility, Emotional Availability and Trusting Relationship with the Principal

Coping with the absence of supporting collegial peer group and the transition to a solitary role often breed emotional and social difficulty (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Hasson, 2011). For the new assistant principal, the knowledge that there is a professional figure who is accessible and emotionally available for the sharing of feelings, difficulties and doubts and even mistakes, and that would nonetheless offer emotional support and a sense of safety, is important for the development of a sense of professional capability. Moreover, the typical sense of social loneliness that assistant principals experience is enhanced when the relationship with the principal is not close and there is no emotional support, or when there are differences of opinion between the assistant principal and the principal. The principal serves as a central figure in the process of socialization by means of offering mentoring, providing skills and presenting a model for imitation and a source of emotional support (Mertz, 2006).

Principal's Authority Should be Clear to Both Staff and Assistant Principal

As stated above, one of the main challenges assistant principals cope with is the difficulty of dealing with staff overt or covert objections (Barnett et al., 2012). Though assistant principals are required to manage and motivate the professional and managerial staff, they do not share the principals' decision-making authority and power resources (Vick, 2011). The principal's level of professional authority as perceived by the staff determines the assistant principal's level of authority. Assistant principals derive their authority from that of the principal; when it is undermined or, inversely, too

dominant to allow the assistant principal authority, it might affect his or her authority over the staff and the ability to impose his or her managerial and professional authority (Author 1, 2017; Lattuca, 2012).

The Mentoring Process

The mentoring process for new assistant principals is usually carried out by the principals, and has been found to be a major factor aiding the assistant principals to develop a sense of high professional efficacy and the ability to cope with problems and conflicts that arise from the field. Principals are an almost exclusive source of helpful knowledge that can be of help (Armstrong, 2015; Hoffert, 2015). The absence of a proper process of mentoring might affect the level of difficulty that new assistant principals would face when entering their role. This is especially important as research indicates that training processes of assistant principals in teacher colleges and universities are unsatisfactory or incompatible with the unique needs of new assistant principals (Armstrong, 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Lattuca, 2012; Morgan, 2014).

Mapping the Variables Affecting the Process of Entering the Role of Assistant Principals Concerning the Staff

A Natural Candidate for the Role or a Controversial One

The way the staff perceives the candidate to the role affects the level of their objection to the new assistant principal. The staff might perceive the new assistant principal as a natural candidate, given his or her experience, seniority and previous roles in school, or might consider others as more suitable candidates. When the staff sees the new assistant principal as a novice, given his/her age or seniority, or view his/her promotion as based on wrong considerations, difficulties and overt or covert objections might be expected. The assistant principal might encounter difficulties in exercising authority over the staff, and the staff, especially senior teachers or ones who had applied for the role and had been rejected, might find it difficult to accept this authority (Hasson, 2011).

The Background and Circumstances of the Former Assistant Principal's Leaving

The background and the circumstances of the former assistant principal leaving is a factor that affects the process of entering the role for the new assistant principal. This is true whether the former one was a senior and appreciated assistant principal who retired, or one who was dismissed from the role. In the case of a former assistant principal dismissed from the role, the difficulties are more enhanced, for three main reasons:

- a) In such cases the teachers' room is usually divided, and the assistant principal has to establish authority over the teachers who supported the leaving assistant principal;
- b) Such a case is characterized by the absence of a proper process of mentoring by the leaving assistant principal;
- c) The entering new assistant principal is aware of the transience and lack of stability in his/her new role, and of the fact that lasting in the role depends on the principal's satisfaction with him or her.

This major social and personal difficulty does not contribute to the sense of security and self-efficacy of the assistant principals at the start of their professional career. It enhances their sense of

dependence on the principal, and strengthens their fear of failure and the emotional difficulties typical to assistant principals at the beginning of their career (Armstrong, 2015; Hasson, 2011; Lattuca, 2012).

Mapping the Variables Affecting the Process of Entering the Role of Assistant Principals Concerning the Assistant Principals

Have the Assistant Principals Undergone a Professional Socialization Process?

Assistant principals who reached the role at the call of the principal or some other authority have not undergone preceding professional socialization processes suitable for managerial roles. Therefore, they have not developed an identification with the managerial profession and the behavioral patterns that accompany it (Weindling & Dimmock, 2006). The absence of a process of professional socialization preceding the entrance to the role raises the new assistant principals' level of apprehension, and consequently renders harder the coping with the difficulties awaiting them at the start.

Difficulty in Establishing Managerial and Professional Authority over the Staff

The new assistant principals' ability to establish authority over the staff relates to three different perspectives of their role:

- The principal's perspective: the assistant principal's authority derives from the level of support he or she gets from the principal, from the level of authority of the principal as seen by the staff and the nature of the process of mentoring that provides the assistant principal with a sense of security and self-efficacy in the role.
- The staff's perspective: the authority of the assistant principal derives from the staff perception of the assistant principal's entrance to the role as a natural, appropriate process, as well as from their perception of the circumstances of the former assistant principal's leaving office.
- The assistant principal's perspective: the issue of having and exercising authority is related to his or her ambition, or lack of ambition for managerial roles.

As this is a principle variable in the relationship between the assistant principal and the professional staff, it should be addressed as being of major importance. The principal should empower the assistant principal, provide efficient training and mentoring processes and supply tools and strategies for coping with staff objections (Armstrong, 2015).

The Level of Assistant Principals' Emotional Difficulty at Entering the Role

The school system tends to see the role of assistant principalship as a continuity of other roles that the assistant principal performed prior to her entering this role, and disregards the emotional aspects of the transition from teaching to assistant principalship and the change in organizational status. The transition often causes an emotional turmoil and emotional difficulties that are surprisingly intense in strength and in their scope of effect on the assistant principals' personal lives (Armstrong, 2015; Hasson, 2011; Lattuca, 2012; Author 1, 2017). This variable affects the assistant principals' sense of self-efficacy and their success at the beginning of the way, being at the same time affected by

other variables in the model regarding both the principal and the staff, whose relationship with the new assistant principal would determine the intensity and scope of the emotional difficulties.

Recommendations for Facilitating the Transition from Teaching to Assistant Principalship

According to the model presented, based on the literature viewed so far, this section of the article offers recommendations for facilitating the transition to assistant principalship.

A Structured Mentoring Process

Apparently, preparation for the role of assistant principal is the name of the game. The education system invests in processes of learning and mentoring for principals and for novice teachers. The field of assistant principal mentoring in the system, however, is neglected. Moreover, the process of mentoring is not formalized and is unstructured, depending on the will and level of emotional availability of the principal. There are various forms of mentoring by principals. Some include regular, formalized mentoring meetings, while other principals do not offer any kind of mentoring or emotional availability. The process of training alongside the leaving assistant principal does not necessarily take place and depends on the circumstances and the reasons for leaving. Unlike principals who are usually members of a principals' forum, assistant principals have no such forum, though it could support, help and lead to exchange of views and ideas. Since the assistant principal's role is usually a solitary one in the school, there is no peer group of colleagues that could help, support and offer sources of information or a model to follow.

We recommend the setting of a formalized, structured process of mentoring for new assistant principals. If the principal is not available for such a process, or the leaving assistant principal does not offer an appropriate process of mentoring, the new assistant principal should have a colleague from another school in the region as a mentor, who would respond to his/her needs in the first year in the role. Experienced, senior assistant principals can also help by serving as guiding mentors. According to Hasson (2011) and Mullen (2005), the most suitable person for mentoring, guidance and emotional support is an assistant principal with three years of experience who has just finished the process of entering the role. It should be noticed that although the principals are logically the most recommendable mentors, according to a number of researchers they are not suitable for this mission, due to time constraints and lack of emotional availability (Sigford, 2005).

Continuing-education Programs and Courses Designed for Assistant Principals

The education system can construct continuing-education programs for principals, concerning the process of mentoring new assistant principals and its importance. In addition, together with the institutions that train assistant principals, the education system can define syllabi for training and continuing-education courses designed for new assistant principals. These courses should emphasize preparation and readiness for entering the role, including coping with emotional difficulties and other difficulties mapped here, and provide tools for coping strategies. Moreover, these courses should provide beginning assistant principals with tools and knowledge concerning issues of human resources, reporting in the system, designing school timetables, and dealing with teacher absences etc.

Assistant Principal Forum

Superintendents can establish a regional forum for assistant principals that would include both senior and new assistant principals, and would convene regularly for a period set ahead of time. The forum would discuss singular issues with which assistant principals cope. The discussions might provide practical response to problems arising from the field, along with an emotional response of help and support in the framework of collegial group.

Constructing a System of Recruitment for the Role of Assistant Principal

The phenomenon of a call to the role by an authority in the system only when a vacancy is due is unadvisable. The system of education should develop a system of recruitment for tracing, fostering and training excellent teachers in a prolonged process for the role of assistant principal. Yet, when assistant principals arrive at this role responding to a call from principals with no prior preparation or ambition for a managerial position, the system of education and the principal should provide them with a process of close, formalized mentoring along with emotional response to the apprehensions and doubts expected to arise.

The Process of Transition to Assistant Principalship: Recommendations for Principals

Principals should be aware of the extent to which their role is central and dominant in the process of professional mentoring and in providing the emotional support that new assistant principals need. The principal's mentor their assistant principals by guiding and supporting them, providing them with opportunities to prove themselves, offering feedback and reflection. Therefore, the relationships between principals and the assistant principals are critical for the latter's success in their new role. Moreover, principals play an important role not only in teaching and providing skills, but also in inspiring and developing a professional identity (Marshall & Hooley, 2006). On the other hand, the absence of mentoring relationship might lead to a sense of paralysis, fatigue, exhaustion, dissatisfaction and low morale. This means that principals should not ignore the process of mentoring, nor expect it to occur naturally through work (Mullen, 2005).

In addition to coordination of expectations on both sides, principals should allocate mentoring time regularly for the new assistant principals and supply other sources of information. If the principals do not have the time or information required, they should send the assistant principals to on the job education, initiate meetings with assistant principals from other schools or alternatively ask for help from outside. They should also make sure that the new assistant principals get emotional support in a way that allows them to pose questions, express their feelings and sometimes make mistakes without fearing that they might not get tenure or be dismissed at the end of the year.

Further Explorations and Summary

The field of education management lacks research on assistant principals in general, and on the transition to the role in particular (Mertz, 2006; Oleszewski et al., 2012; Vick, 2011). Global research indicates a shortage of principals and assistant principals throughout the world today (Read, 2011), in addition to the phenomenon of assistant principals who have no wish to be promoted to school principalship (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009). Furthermore, findings show that the stage of entering

the role also has a great influence on the assistant principal's ambition to advance in the future into higher management positions (Oleszewski et al., 2012). In view of the importance of the role of the assistant principal in the school system, extant research on this role should expand to include its unique challenges, as well as the process of entering the role. Such studies might add theoretical and practical knowledge that would facilitate the assistant principals in coping with the unique challenges they face in the school. Moreover, research on the stage of entering the role, which is, as stated above, a critical stage for a managerial career, would add knowledge about the processes of entering the role, which might have ramifications on building the next generation of principals.

Unlike school principals, assistant principals are not required to go through processes of learning and training as a precondition for the role. Thus, most of them do not experience proper processes of training, preparation or mentoring for the transition to their new role, or, alternatively, a formalized process of mentoring by a helping mentor (Oleszewski et al., 2012). In addition, the literature sees the existing processes of induction as not suited to the role of assistant principals and to the processes of socialization unique to their role and to their position in the organizational hierarchy (Barnett et al., 2012). Research in the field, then, might aid decision makers in the ministry of education and the institutions for principal training in constructing a program of theoretical and practical training for assistant principals, which should respond to their singular needs.

The article presents the role of the assistant principal in the school and the main challenges new assistant principals cope with as they enter their new role. Relating to these challenges, we have presented a model mapping the factors that facilitate or hinder the process of entering the role of new assistant principals. This model adds to the theoretical and practical knowledge on the process of transition from teaching to assistant principalship, to prepare new assistant principals for what they should expect in their new role, and to recommend efficient coping strategies. The model might thus contribute to the success of new assistant principals in their new role, and affect their readiness to advance to higher managerial roles in the future. Examining the factors that facilitate or hinder the process of entering the role of assistant principals might help policy-makers, the institutions for principal training and the principals themselves to recognize the unique needs and challenges facing new assistant principals. It might help toward a redefinition of the role of assistant principal, for constructing a suitable recruitment system for the role, and for designing training, mentoring and support programs for new assistant principals.

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A South African High-Needs School: A Case of Context Driven by History

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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High needs schools in South Africa are characterized by student populations living in hazardous environments coupled with extreme poverty and language disparities, resulting in challenges that are interwoven with cultural and societal norms. This paper presents characteristics of leadership that enable student success in school from one high needs, high-performing school in Cape Town, South Africa, utilizing a case study methodology following the International School Leadership Development Network (ISLDN) research protocol. Literature reviewed highlights the context specific to high needs schools in South Africa, including historical context, leadership characteristics, instructional considerations, and implications for school culture. This study utilized a qualitative approach coupled with analysis framed through the High Needs Schools Leadership model. Data were collected from personal interviews with educators including school leaders and assistant school leaders as well as site-based observations, and concurrent archival document analysis, revealing the importance of several key themes: 1) Community Understanding, 2) Value-Based Decision Making, 3) Equity, and 4) Persistence. By considering the findings of this study, system and school leaders can enhance their awareness of factors with the greatest potential to significantly and positively impact educational settings for students in high needs schools.

Keywords: *high needs schools, transformational leadership, social justice leadership, inclusion, equity, contextual understanding*

High needs schools in South Africa are characterized by student populations living in hazardous environments coupled with extreme poverty and language disparities, resulting in challenges that are interwoven with cultural and societal norms. This research presents characteristics of leadership that enable student success in school from one high needs, high-performing school in Cape Town, South Africa, utilizing a case study methodology following the International School Leadership Development Network (ISLDN) research protocol. The ISLDN protocol was and appropriate tool the goal of this study was to explore critical aspects of leadership in one high needs school (Baran & Berry, 2015). As the purpose of the High Needs School Strand (HNS) of the ISLDN is to determine various qualities of leadership critical to leading high needs schools focused on learning, leadership, and context, the guiding research questions were:

- What fosters student learning in high needs schools?
- How do school leaders enhance individual and organizational performance in high needs schools?
- How do internal and external school contexts impact individual and organizational performance in high needs schools?

Literature reviewed highlights the context specific to high needs schools in South Africa, including historical context, leadership characteristics, instructional considerations, and implications for school culture. This study utilized a qualitative approach coupled with analysis framed through the High Needs Schools Leadership model. Data were collected from personal interviews with educators, including school leaders and assistant school leaders, as well as site-based observations, and concurrent archival document analysis, revealing the importance of several key themes: 1) Community Understanding, 2) Value-Based Decision Making, 3) Instructional Considerations and Equity, and 4) Persistence. By considering the findings of this study, system and school leaders can enhance their awareness of factors with the greatest potential to significantly and positively impact educational settings for students in high needs schools.

Literature Review

High Needs Schools in South Africa

Schooling conditions are closely linked to social contexts and manifest in inequitable access to pedagogical, institutional, economic and social opportunities in South Africa (Robinson, 2014). Spaull (2013) claims that there are, in effect, two different public-school systems in South Africa based on the analysis of several educational attainment databases. The smaller, better performing system accommodates the wealthiest 20-25% of students who achieve much higher scores than the larger system, which serves the poorest 75-80% of South African students. “These two education systems can be seen when splitting pupils by wealth, socio-economic status, geographic location and language” (Spaull, 20013, p. 6).

South Africa issued its most recent education law, the South African Schools Act (SASA) in 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996). According to the SASA, all school governing boards of public schools must supplement government funding, by charging school fees and conducting other reasonable forms of fundraising. The option to eliminate school fees is limited to the schools that have been declared no fee schools (Department of Basic Education, n.d.). Under this act, according to the Department of Basic Education’s recent update, national statistics of targets for school allocation reveal that the no fee threshold for 2017, 2018, 2019 is determined as ZAR 1243, which is the all learners in quintiles 1 to 3 (60% of the public-school learners nationally) in South Africa

(Department of Basic Education, 2017). These schools are labeled as no-fee based on their position in the economic scale and may also be considered as the high needs schools of South Africa. However, all high needs students do not attend no-fee schools (Shangase, 2018).

South Africa is ranked as the most unequal country in the world (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018). The disparities in distributions of power, resources, and wealth among groups of South Africans have their roots in history. These historically originated disparities, therefore, appear in South African education as in its many structured systems, and thus, generate unequal schooling conditions.

Racial and Class Segregation

Racial segregation of schooling was one of the most obvious *de jure* segregation practices in the historical context. Surprisingly, South African schooling was not initially racially segregated, and the 19th-century Cape mission schools admitted both black and white students (Morris & Hyslop, 1991). However, with the rise of racial and imperialist ideologies in the late 19th century, a segregated structure was established that continued through 1994 (Morris & Hyslop, 1991; Leonie, 1965). In 1953, The Bantu Education Act, which was a South African segregation law, legalized several aspects of the apartheid system passed by the Apartheid regime.

Tsoaledi (2013) defines Bantu education as “an inferior type of education that was designed to maintain the subordinate and marginal status of the majority racial group of the country” (p. 2). He further explains that while the stated divisions were between Bantu education for Blacks and an educational system for Whites, additional intermediate hierarchies in the educational system and general society existed. According to the Bantu Education Act of 1953, each ethnic and racial group had its own department of education. At the time of the apartheid regime, there were only four recognized racial groups which were Blacks, Indians, Coloreds, and Whites. Among these, the majority Blacks were at the bottom of the classification ladder. Apartheid education in South Africa, as an example of extreme internal colonization, sustained and strengthened hierarchical views of society and fostered an ideological consciousness of superior-inferior, master-servant, and ruler-ruled structure among all groups in South Africa. During the ruling of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, black students received about a fifth of the funding of white peers. In addition to limited resources, black students were taught almost no science or math, and the independent missionary schools providing high quality education to indigenous students were also shut gradually by government (Morris & Hyslop, 1991). In spite of the fact that *de jure* segregation in South Africa was eliminated in 1994, race remains a strong predictor of poverty in South Africa, with black Africans remaining at the highest risk of being poor (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018).

In the post-Apartheid society of South Africa, class inequality increasingly replaced racial inequality as a major obstacle to an equitable schooling system. As the black middle class moved into white suburbs, their children benefited from the better resourced schools found there (Abdi, 2003). After Nelson Mandela became president in 1994, he replaced the school system segregated by race with one divided by wealth. Regardless of this reform, the former racially separate education departments still remained important categories for the future of education. Besides the large performance gaps between former black schools and former white schools based on the analysis of former departments, the relationship between former education department classification and socio-economic status is also revealed from the comparison of these important categories (van Der Berg et al., 2011).

Mandela's government attempted to expand access to education by relocating state funding, yet poverty still has a persistent role in South Africa's education system as a demonstration of the eternal legacy of apartheid (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018). As is in most of the African countries, rural areas have the highest poverty concentration in South Africa with almost 60% percent of the poor living in rural areas when poverty measured at the national lower-bound poverty line of ZAR 758 per person per month. (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018).

Linguistic Inequity

Another educational issue in South Africa is the linguistic inequity which continues to be shaped by the historical legacy of colonial rule and apartheid (Brook Napier, 2011). English is still viewed as the language of power and access (Hunter, 2015), while African languages are perceived as offering little economic value in today's South Africa (Kamwangamalu & Tovaes, 2016). Statistical estimates reveal that African language speakers constitute 79.5% of the total South African population, which was estimated at 50.6 million in 2011 (Mbekwa & Nomlomo, 2013). Regardless of the fact that the majority of South Africans speak African languages as their native tongues, none of the African languages are used as languages of instruction after the third grade of schooling. Currently, most schools in which the majority of students are not English- or Afrikaans-speaking choose to use first language in grades 1, 2 and 3 and then transition to English as the language of instruction in the fourth grade (Taylor & von Fintel, 2016).

Violence

Hazardous conditions add an additional layer of complexity in South African schools. News reports reveal a surge in school violence, with a recent headline stating, "Schools in South Africa are becoming more violent" (Daniel, 2018). The Minister of Education called on law enforcement officials to come together to develop additional security measures. Videos depicting student-on-student violence are frequently posted on the internet. The African National Conference, the governing body responsible for oversight of education, has also called for increasing security in schools. Daniel (2018) emphasized that school violence is "especially apparent in impoverished areas whereby trauma manifests as a result of inhibitions and disillusionment" (para.9).

Mncube & Harber (2017) studied the contextual factors that contribute to school violence in South Africa by considering internal and external conditions. In addition to outside factors such as gang activity, drugs and weapons, they assert that internal factors play a larger than expected role in South African schools. Internal causes of school violence include corporal punishment, sexual harassment, and high rates of teacher absenteeism. Training for teachers and school leaders in restorative justice and other alternatives to corporal punishment are offered as suggestions for mitigating school violence. The authors suggest that educator preparation programs should include courses related to school violence in addition to school safety.

The National School Violence Study conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP, 2017) revealed that four-fifths of South African principals reported incidents of student violence against other students in 2016. Alcohol, drugs and weapons were reported as persistent and pervasive problems, even at the elementary school level. Students reported easy access to alcohol and guns in their communities, an external factor that aligns to the findings of Mncube & Harber (2017). Corporal punishment is common, both at home and at school. The CJCP (2017) asserts that a collaborative approach is needed to reduce school violence. The organization

calls on governmental agencies, community leaders, parents and educators to develop strategies to address societal issues that impact schools.

Instructional Considerations

Formal principal preparation was not common in South Africa until 2007, when the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) implemented an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (Bush & Glover, 2016). Mawdsley, Bipath and Mawdsley (2014) emphasized the essential leadership characteristics of principals in effective schools in South Africa, which the authors identified as functional. Successful school leaders demonstrated emotional intelligence and were skillful in casting the vision of the school by engaging the collaborative actions of faculty, staff and students in alignment with the vision and mission. A key suggestion was that principals of dysfunctional schools have opportunities to observe in functional schools with similar contexts and challenges to learn about effective instructional leadership and management strategies.

Bush and Glover (2016) posited that instructional leadership is the key lever for improving schools in South Africa. The successful instructional leader provides coherent and consistent expectations for teaching and learning that are clearly communicated to teachers, students and the school community. The authors recommend that principals routinely analyze data, engage in collaborative instructional planning with teachers, and monitor instructional practices in the classroom. Because of the challenging contexts of high-needs schools in South Africa, more directive leadership actions are needed until the school is in a functional state (Mawdsley et al. 2014).

Smit and Scherman (2016) examined the school as a social system and asserted that relational leadership and the ethics of care are leadership characteristics that can reduce school violence and enhance the instructional environment in South Africa. Relational leaders focus on students, teachers and the community rather than on themselves. Leadership is viewed as a collaborative endeavor with stakeholders, rather than a set of individual, directive actions by the principal.

Safety and order are essential foundational factors in the establishment of a functional school culture that focuses on teaching and learning. The Umhlali Project is one example of a current collaborative project in South Africa that includes the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, The University of Cape Town, and the Masifunde Learner Development. The project is funded through 2020 by the Human Dignity Foundation and Comic Relief. It is an early crime and violence prevention project that focuses on individuals, schools, families and communities. The school safety component provides training on the National School Safety Framework, mentoring and coaching for educators on the framework, and extra-curricular programs such as art and drama. Substance use and abuse workshops are offered for teachers, students and families. Child protection training is provided for faculty and staff. The goal is to implement the project in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, with the goal of replication in communities and schools throughout the nation (CJCP, 2017).

In their study of school leadership and management in South Africa, Bush and Glover (2016) emphasized the principal's primary role of ensuring school safety and securing the necessary resources for the school. Mawdsley et al. (2014) asserted that students are the priority of effective school principals, who organize the school around meeting the particular needs of students, such as hunger and poverty. The professionalism and attendance of teachers are concerns in dysfunctional schools in South Africa. Successful principals of high-needs schools demonstrate high expectations for faculty and a strong commitment to working with and for the community.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework selected for this study is the High Needs Schools framework, originally coined by Berry, Cowart Moss, and Gore (2019). The frame combines principles of both social justice theory and transformational leadership theory to offer a set of beliefs focused on contextualization, hyper-vigilance, and intentionality. According to Berry, et al. (2019), “Social justice leaders believe systems that provide separate programs effectively provide unequal levels of instruction, lead to the marginalization of particular students, and create situations where these students receive an inferior education.” Resultantly, successful leaders in high needs contexts work to create school climates and set goals focused upon providing an equity and inclusivity for all students (Theoharis, 2007). The theory also heavily relies on the work of Furman (2012) who conceptualized social justice leadership being as action-oriented, persistent, and transformative. This characterization led to the inclusion of transformational leadership theory as part of the High Needs Schools conceptual framework.

According to Leithwood and Sun (2012), Transformational Leadership theory assumes a small number of specific leadership practices increases both the commitment and effort of organizational members toward achieving group goals. These practices include setting directions, developing people, redesigning the organization, and improving the instructional program, and they dovetail with the operational definition of social justice to create the tenets of the High Needs Schools conceptual framework (see Figure 1).

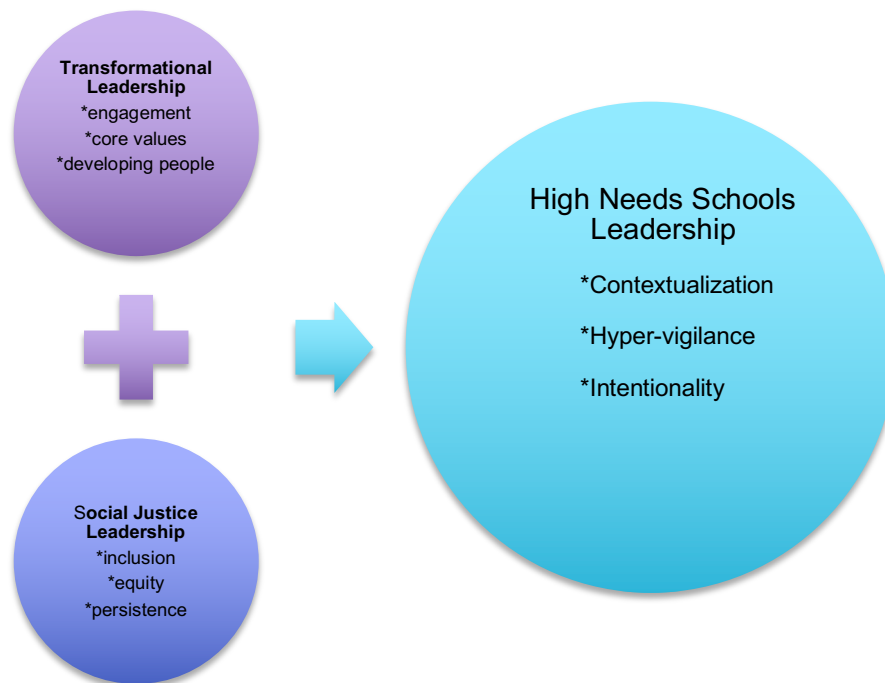


Figure 1. High Needs Schools Leadership

According to Berry, et al. (2019):

This model is more than combined principles from Transformational and Social Justice Leadership. Rather, it is a contextualization of the beliefs and behaviors of leaders in high needs schools. Without an intentional desire to understand the context of their schools and

communities, leaders in high needs schools may persistently pursue equity and inclusion, but they may not understand the core values that encourage students and communities to engage. Without this understanding, leaders will struggle to develop faculty and staff who can authentically connect with their students and communities.

Methods

Through the use of qualitative case study methodology, researchers are able to explore or describe phenomena in context using a variety of data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The benefits to utilizing thematic analysis include that it works with a variety of research questions, can be used to analyze multiple types of data, and can produce data-driven analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

This qualitative case study presents data from one high needs high school in Cape Town, South Africa, utilizing thematic analysis through the lens of the High Needs Schools Leadership model. The school was purposefully selected because it met the criteria for high needs schools related to contextual factors including socioeconomic status and external challenges including a high crime rate. Data collected from the school included multiple interviews with the school's leaders and assistant leaders and concurrent document analysis. The case was bound by time and setting with all data collection taking place in the school highlighted during the 2017 calendar year.

Sample

The Ganglands in Cape Town, South Africa

The roots of gang activity in the urban ghetto of Cape Town, South Africa, are deeply tied to the socio-historical factors that have shaped its communities and illustrate the challenges of a socially, economically, and racially fragmented city. The area known as "The Ganglands" was earmarked as a relocation center for those forcibly removed from their communities by the legislation of the Group Areas Act of 1950. The communities from which people were removed were then declared to be 'white areas' and included communities such as Lower Claremont, Windermere, Newlands, Plumstead, Simon's Town, Tramway Road and District Six (Field, 2001). In addition to uprooting nuclear families from their homes virtually overnight, this legislation also decimated extended families, neighborhoods, and thus, entire societies.

While so called 'street gangs' existed in the original communities during the pre-apartheid era, as a result of the relocation, those gangs developed into sophisticated, violent crime rings which preside into the current day over various illegal activities including drug running, extortion, money laundering, robbery, and prostitution rings (Kinnes, 2000). Because these relocated communities, also known as "coloured" communities as a result of the demographics of the residents who inhabit them, remain at a distinct socio-economic disadvantage in the post-apartheid era, gang activity runs rampant within them. According to Wilson and Ramphela (1989) these gangs continue to wield great power because of the constant struggle individuals face between trying to provide for their families and the lack of legal resources available to them to do so within the relocation communities.

Gang members are able to appeal to families and young people, especially young boys, through seemingly harmless initial interactions. For instance, according to Bowers (2005),

They exploit the situation and where they would offer people money to buy electricity, to pay rent and in favour they will ... just innocently ask the person 'Listen this is not

everybody's business, but can you keep this parcel for me?' And that is how gangs get that kind of hold.

Because these gang members are frequently the only individuals within the community with disposable income, they are viewed by young people as community leaders. As members begin their relationships with these young people in seemingly harmless ways, it is difficult to break free of the hold they have on their communities. By the time the magnitude of the criminal activity has been unraveled, it is often too late for the young people to turn back. Add this to the lack of legal means by which people can make a living in these communities, and the stage is set for continued gang proliferation. In these contexts, the gang leaders and members become powerful role models as they propagate the message that there is money and, thus, social power vested in these illegal activities (Bowers, 2005).

The Ganglands provide the backdrop for the Manenberg School and serve as the homeland for the school's leader, Mrs. Ashra Norton. What follows is the story of how she, The Leadership College's courageous leader, has made a difference in the high needs community of Manenberg, Cape Town, South Africa.

The Leadership College Manenberg School

The Leadership College opened in Manenberg in January, 2010, with forty learners (referred to as "leaders"). The school, also called TLC (The Leadership College) is a private school where leaders who are identified as showing academic promise are able to obtain an education inclusive of uniforms, books, and other materials free of charge. 100% of TLC's enrolled students receive financial aid to offset their schooling costs. Originally opened in a local Mosque, as the school grew, its leader, Mrs. Ashra Norton, began to look for alternative locations that could accommodate its growth. As a member of the Manenberg community, she knew that one key to the school's success was that it be located within the actual geographic footprint of the community, as previously, students who had shown strong academic promise were forced to attend schools in other areas of the city, often an hour or more away. In considering the best location for the school, she opted for a place that served as hallowed ground for the rival gangs in the community – the gangs' battlefield.

In deciding to place the school in this location, Mrs. Norton knew that she would have to gain the blessing of the local gang leaders if the school were to be successful. Over the course of several months, she met with each of them, one at a time, to obtain their support. Citing the need for a safe space for students to learn as well as the desire to honor the lives lost on all sides of the gang wars, Mrs. Norton plead her case. Ultimately, every gang leader agreed to allow her to build The Leadership College on the former battlefield. Currently, the school resides in this location and serves over 500 leaders.

TLC follows four core values which form the foundation of its educational program. These values include merit-based entry, leadership development, entrepreneurial training, and expertise in university and career placement. While the school was originally designed to address the needs of Muslim students, because the Manenberg community is now more diverse from a religious standpoint, students of faiths including Muslim, Christian, and non-denominational are currently enrolled in TLC.

Leadership development is a cornerstone of the student experience at TLC. This development includes modules throughout the curriculum as well as guest speakers and individual coaching sessions aimed at helping students internalize the school's core values and use them to

guide their matriculation. To this end, each student completes a Culminating Project during his or her final year at TLC, aimed at addressing an area of need within an African community.

Students also participate in entrepreneurial training throughout their time at TLC. Designed to give them the skills to create innovative solutions to challenging problems, this cornerstone aids students in developing the confidence required to succeed in entrepreneurial endeavors. It also introduces them to ways to motivate and lead that provides a strong counter narrative to the gang activity they encounter on the streets of their communities.

Finally, because students living in the Manenberg community have historically struggled with college and career placement beyond school, TLC offers students multiple pathways to success beyond their school experience. These include assistance with college application and scholarship processes and career counseling. TLC's career office maintains relationships with graduates in an effort to track student progress and give them ongoing support beyond their time at TLC.

Mrs. Ashra Norton, Founder, The Leadership College, Manenberg

Ashra Norton founded TLC in January 2010. A lifelong resident of Cape Town, South Africa, hers was one of the first families forcibly relocated to the Manenberg area in 1966 as a result of the Group Areas Act of 1950. The act divided South African residential areas along racial lines with designated areas for Blacks, Whites, Indians, and Coloureds, and as hers was a family of Indian descent, they were forced from their home. In sharing the story, she relayed,

As a young child, I can vividly remember the soldiers knocking on our family's door. We had only a short time to gather our belongings and load onto a box truck with other families from the area. We were a family of seven children, my mother, and my father. Before we were relocated, we lived in a house with a piano that was near a park. Afterwards, the government officials gave us the key to our new home, and we lived in a tiny, two bedroom flat. Ultimately, my father got ill, and our mother raised us on a disability grant.

Norton attended the Silverstream Primary and High schools. Although a strong student, she was not afforded the opportunity to attend university in her chosen field of pharmaceuticals, because in the 1980s, if an individual was non-white, his or her options were limited to the fields of education, social work, or nursing. Mrs. Norton ultimately opted to continue her studies in the field of education. At the time, the government offered scholarships or bursaries to coloured and black students for teaching.

During her studies, an early project on gangsterism and drugs solidified her resolve to use her platform as an educator to impact change in her community. As a part of that project, she had to interview all of the local gang leaders, leading her to better understand the contexts that lead individuals down that path. Additionally, the project showed her that many gang leaders were extremely intelligent and highly performing individuals whose skills had been directed in negative ways. While the initial outcome of her project lead her to obtain scholarships for promising students who were economically disadvantaged, there was an enormous shortcoming to the plan. Because it provided scholarships for strong students to attend high performing schools, this meant that those individuals were attending school outside their home communities. She ultimately determined that a more sustainable path to change was to create a school for high performing students within their own communities as doing so would both mitigate any barriers to attending the school and thus, the idea for TLC was born.

Findings and Discussion

Community Understanding

Perhaps one of the most fundamental elements of TLC's success is its leader has a comprehensive understanding of the struggles its students face in the community. The students living there face obstacles from poverty to cramped homes to lack of food and options to lack of professional role models. However, Norton leveraged these challenges as springboards for positive action. Norton shared, "Because I was bred in Manenberg I know about the yearning, especially by the children and the youth. We have brilliant children in this community and they have big dreams," (Arbarder, 2017). Because Norton grew up under similar circumstances, but at a time where even fewer options were available to people of color, she understands first-hand the impact that even simple graces can have on a student's trajectory. This empathic lens guides the decisions she makes on behalf of TLC's learners.

Value-Based Decision Making

In considering TLC's successes, one might look to student performance as one indicator of impact. In 2016, the entire Manenberg area of Cape Town received 71 subject area distinctions, and 68 of those came from TLC. Further, while the average matric pass rate in Manenberg was 71%, TLC saw a 92% pass rate. While these numbers are impressive, they are not simply attributable to a strong class of students. Rather, they grow out of a context that includes targeted decision making aimed at fostering student success. As one example, Norton shared that students frequently arrive at the school's gates at 7:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning. They will spend their days sitting under a tree in the school yard and studying because the school offers them a safe place to do so. She shared,

You must keep in mind; these students live in 2m x 3m houses where they can't even walk straight up into because it's too low. There's no food, there's no mom, no dad. They come here and feel tranquility and peace.

Her decision to open the school on a Saturday in order for students to have a safe place to study stems from her deep understanding of the challenges of trying to do so in the cramped homes that surround the school. Add to this a lack of parent support due to work schedules or absenteeism, homes that are overcrowded with multiple family members, and additional factors including the constant pull of illegal activity on the streets, and the decision to open the school on the weekend became an easy, low cost way to address a need with dignity.

Instructional Considerations and Equity

In creating the instructional environment for TLC, Norton worked to organize the school in such a way that it met the needs of the whole child while simultaneously addressing areas that might inhibit achievement, and in so doing, created an environment conducive to academic attainment. One of the school's core values, merit-based entry, ensures that each child educated at TLC has the academic ability to meet the school's rigorous instructional expectations. However, once a child is accepted into TLC, additional supports including a community-based teaching force, a tailored instructional day, and material aids are put into place to further ensure success.

Because of TLC's high academic achievement, staff turnover is not a significant issue. However, when openings do arise, Norton is committed to employing the highest quality staff to meet student needs. To this end, while vacancies are met with numerous applicants from throughout Cape Town, the majority of TLC staff members are lifelong Manenberg residents who both understand the unique challenges of the area and who are committed to the school's ongoing role in the community. By leaning heavily on staff members who are grounded in Manenberg, TLC offers the students role models beyond gang leaders. This model also affords staff members the opportunity to continue to live in the community while building their careers in a high-performing environment.

The school meets the instructional needs of students through an innovative organization of the academic day. TLC separates students by gender for the majority of their classes in order to mitigate any distractions that heterogeneous classes might foster. The school day also includes breaks for snacks and meals as well as features such as prayer breaks for students of the Muslim faith. The inclusion of each of these elements provides a structure for academic success by acknowledging and addressing the differentiated needs of the students.

Every TLC child receives a blazer, full school uniform, and school supplies at no cost to the families. Additionally, the school offers a feeding scheme and even includes social services such as mental health support, often facilitated through the pro bono work of professionals, as part of the school's educational package. However, Norton is quick to point out that among the most important elements of maintaining a strong school culture is ensuring that all supports are offered in a manner that affords the families' dignity. As one example of this, Norton shared how they provide for students needing extra assistance with feeding during the school day.

I insist that we maintain people's dignity. I don't like soup kitchens where people have to stand in line, because those strip people of their humanity. Therefore, we do it very discreetly. We make the sandwiches, give them to the class teacher and they'll know who the children needing help are. They'll slip the sandwiches into the children's bags as if it comes from home.

This commitment to helping students while maintaining their dignity grows from equity focused decision making that undoubtedly stems from Norton's own experience as a child. When one's dignity has been erased, there is much rebuilding that must be done in order to help that individual hold self-efficacy. By offering supports to students and families in a way that leaves their dignity intact, TLC is able to provide for needs while at the same time building a school and community structure that is grounded in the belief that every student is valuable and should be met with the specific supports he or she needs.

Persistence

Gangs and drugs are a daily reality for the children who attend TLC. For instance, one commonly shared story is that of a young boy who was walking to school when an adult was shot to death several feet in front of him as a part of the area's gang activity. The boy actually stepped over the man's dead body and continued onto school. This context stands in sharp contrast to the inner walls of the TLC campus where there is an air of calm. Norton shared,

I'll show you the spot that was the war zone for the two rival gangs, where the Americans and the Hard Livings fought it out. That is now where we have about 14 classrooms. These are places where students not only feel safe, but where they also understand the magnitude of the history that took place here. Now, they are making a new history for Manenberg on this same ground.

Norton's own persistence, both in her belief of the importance of providing a rigorous schooling option for high performing students in their home community of Manenberg and in working with the area's gang leaders in order to make this belief a reality, serve as a model for other leaders. Because she refused the idea that the best way to educate these students was to remove them from their community, she has been able to build and sustain a school that serves as a beacon of hope while at the same time, embracing the history of Manenberg.

Conclusion

This paper presented the characteristics of leadership that enabled student success attributed to one leader of a high needs, high-performing school in the Ganglands area of Cape Town, South Africa, utilizing a case study methodology following the International School Leadership Development Network (ISLDN) research protocol. Literature reviewed highlighted the context specific to high needs schools in South Africa, including historical context, leadership characteristics, instructional considerations, and implications for school culture. Findings revealed the importance of several key themes including: 1) Community Understanding, 2) Value-Based Decision Making, 3) Instructional Considerations and Equity, and 4) Persistence, and showed that courageous leadership, when coupled with contextualized understanding, can have lasting, positive impacts on students. By considering the findings of this study, system and school leaders can enhance their awareness of factors with the greatest potential to significantly and positively impact educational settings for students in high needs schools.

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Teacher Perceptions of School Culture after the Change from a Semester Schedule to a Trimester Schedule

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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The participants of this phenomenological study were employed at a school that previously was not performing on assessments at a level equal to schools in the state comparison group. Due to low student achievement, school leaders explored pathways to improve instruction and changed the school schedule from a semester schedule to a trimester schedule in hopes of improving student and teacher performance. The perceptions of 11 educators who participated in the organizational change of the school schedule were examined. Themes emerged following a review of the interview data. The teachers perceived that they were unprepared for the pace of the trimester. They believed that students who took ownership of their learning were academically successful on the trimester schedule, but that trimester scheduling hindered relationship development with students. The teachers perceived that a strong sense of teacher collaboration existed under both schedules, but was impacted negatively when planning and training times were not shared.

Keywords: Organizational change, trimester schedule

Under the state accountability practices guided by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 and the 2009 update “Race to The Top,” school systems had goals for success that were based almost entirely on student performance on state and federal standardized tests (Darling-Hammond & Plank, 2015). While the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 provided more flexibility for accountability and assessment systems (Dragoset et al., 2016), the premise of these laws was that schools were in crisis and the implementation of standardized tests was the way to fix them (Rose, 2015). In today’s era of school improvement, schools continuously adjust their best practices in an attempt to improve student performance on state and federal assessments (Perryman, Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2011).

Teachers are the most important variable in school reform (Berliner & Glass, 2014; Marzano, 2003) and are on the front lines of the implementation of change initiatives. To maximize effectiveness, teachers need time to master curriculum, collaborate, and plan effective lessons with colleagues (Berliner & Glass, 2014; Marzano, 2003). Out of frustration with multiple change initiatives, some teachers change schools or leave the profession of education altogether (Keigher, 2010; Lasagna, 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). While some teachers choose to leave the profession due to working conditions (Buchanan, 2010; Donaldson & Johnson, 2011), data on teacher working conditions are not generally considered by educational leaders seeking to improve student performance (DuFour & Marzano, 2015). The typical data pertaining to the effectiveness of school improvement initiatives relate to how students are performing in individual teachers’ classes on mock or authentic assessments (DuFour & Marzano, 2015). The answer to the question of what the experience of student preparation was like for the teacher can guide administrators in the implementation of other improvement initiatives. This study was conducted to explore those perceptions.

Purpose

School improvement often is based on student performance on state or federal assessments (Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Murnane & Steele, 2007). Frequently, the specific effectiveness of campus initiatives is evaluated solely on student test data (Loeb et al., 2005). The Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) includes information about individual schools and school districts as well as a comprehensive state record. The report does not include information about the meanings that teachers ascribe to their experiences of preparing students or working together alongside other teachers in professional learning environments.

This phenomenological study was conducted to examine the perceptions of educators employed at a school that experienced a schedule change. The students at the campus at which the participants in this study were employed underperformed on state and federal assessments. As a part of the campus plan to alleviate low academic performance, campus leaders chose to change the school schedule from a seven-period-a-day semester schedule to a five-period-a-day trimester schedule. The campus operated under the trimester schedule during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years with the goals of providing teachers with opportunities to collaborate professionally with peers and providing additional time for academic tutoring and interventions for students. The campus transitioned back to the semester schedule during the 2016-2017 school year. The goal of the study was not to evaluate the schedule, but to gain knowledge of teachers’ perceptions of the change.

Research Questions

Three research questions directed this study. The questions addressed the areas of professional development, student remediation, and the ability of teachers to collaborate with their peers:

1. How do teachers perceive a change to the trimester schedule impacted their ability to participate in professional development with their colleagues?
2. How do teachers perceive that opportunities for student remediation in a trimester schedule impacted student learning?
3. How do teachers perceive a change of schedule affected a school's culture of collaboration?

Significance

Principals newly assigned to a campus often begin their work by talking with staff, reviewing data, and evaluating the organizational structure with which they were entrusted (Daresh & Alexander, 2015). Common areas for review include the campus budget, student performance on state and federal testing, school bell schedules, cultures, and systems for communication (Daresh & Alexander, 2015). Principals use data sources to explain the progress being made toward campus improvement goals. These data sources often include student performance on campus common assessments and teacher-created assessments. Intervention plans are created based on the data received (Daresh & Alexander, 2015). Principals design action plans that they believe best fit the needs of the campus.

An action plan aspect frequently used by principals is the implementation of a new school schedule. The effectiveness of the principals' action plans often is based on quantitative student assessment data (Coburn, Hill, & Spillane, 2016). These data sets can be void of input from the teachers who are responsible for implementing the plans (Noddings, 2015). Leadership and support from fellow teachers are necessary to improve teaching and learning (Fairmen, 2015). There is a need for "a specific organizational structure within each school in order for shared decision making to be successful" (Sanzo, Sherman, & Clayton, 2011, p. 36). The relevance of this research lies in the ability to understand better how teachers experienced the change of schedule from a semester to a trimester schedule. This knowledge of how teachers experience change can assist in determining future areas of consideration for other leaders who may be contemplating a similar organizational change.

Background Literature

Teacher attrition has been a continual problem facing public education (Certo & Fox, 2002; Cherniss, 2016). Teachers have cited poor working conditions such as limited resources and the ability to collaborate effectively with peers as reasons for leaving the profession (Donaldson & Johnson, 2011). This situation has created a challenge for educational leaders who work to ensure student performance while retaining professional educators (Coburn et al., 2016). Student performance and teacher retention can be impacted by teacher workday, tutoring and remediation, learning communities, school culture, and campus schedule.

Teacher Workday

The workday of a teacher is filled with time-intensive requirements. Teachers often work long hours and feel underpaid (Quicke, 2018). The amount of time in teachers' workdays often remains unchanged while required tasks increase (Richardson, 2016). Teacher perceptions of their workday can impact their decision to leave their current school or exit from the profession.

Variables that impact teachers' feelings about their workload include sense of belonging, level of emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Hughes (2012) posited that more teachers would remain in the profession if the teacher workload could be altered to reduce the number of tasks or if extra time could be provided during the school day to accomplish responsibilities. Time spent facilitating tutoring and remediation impact the workday of teachers.

Tutoring and Remediation

Students have various levels of academic needs. It is common for them to need academic support to reach learning goals (DeVries, 2014). Serving numerous students across multiple class preparations presents a challenge for teachers as they attempt to provide students with academic interventions in the form of tutoring and remediation (Certo & Fox, 2002; Kelley, 2004; Lasagna, 2009). Remediation requires teachers to focus on the learner errors that led to incorrect answers (Skelding-Dills, 2013). Once the errors are identified, a tutoring plan can be implemented to address the issues.

In 1987, a legislative mandate required the Texas Education Agency to institute tutoring interventions for all school districts to address dropouts (Wixson & Valencia, 2011). This was done to help schools meet the 95% graduation rate goals for the 1997-1998 school year. Response to Intervention (RTI) and The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act were funded at the federal level in 2004 (Searle, 2010). The goal of RTI was for teachers to provide remediation and support for students in math and reading before the students fall behind their peers (Searle, 2010). RTI has a three-tier system approach (Harlacher, Walker, & Sanford, 2010). The first tier of instructional support occurs in the classroom where students receive differentiated instruction and support. In the second tier, students receive additional time for tutoring and remediation in smaller groups of six to eight students. In the third tier, students receive the most support in smaller groups of four to six students. Individual and small-group instructional support is a time-intensive endeavor for teachers.

Teachers have expressed that lack of collaboration time and insufficient planning time are barriers for the effective implementation of RTI (Isbell & Szabo, 2014). This lack of time for collaboration and planning can feed into the frustration teachers experience as they attempt to implement remediation plans for their students. Learning communities can be facilitated to support the learning needs of teachers.

Learning Communities

Teachers need support with pedagogy and curriculum on a regular, systematic basis. Teachers can better meet the needs of students when they collaborate and work together to develop best practices for instruction (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). However, proper implementation of effective professional learning communities (PLCs) take time. An environment must be created where all teachers' voices are heard (Gideon, 2002).

Both the semester and the trimester schedules were designed with opportunities for PLCs. Through the implementation of PLCs, teachers experience a shift in mindset and habits for daily operations regarding tutoring and remediation (Vescio et al., 2008). PLCs have a positive effect on the culture of a school (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008).

School Culture

Faculty members working effectively toward improving student academic performance is part of a healthy school culture (Marzano, 2003). School leaders must study the culture of the school and plan with a purpose (Rhodes, Stevens, & Hemmings, 2011). It is the principal's responsibility to understand and address issues in a systemic manner for optimal success and for the retention of teachers (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2011). Principals' campus intervention plans commonly include how to organize the school day, but often do not include the experiences of teachers. True understanding of the effectiveness of a school's systems comes from conversations with everyone involved in implementing the systems in question (Brucato, 2005). Teachers and students require a school culture that fosters collaboration and a school schedule that can provide a systematic solution to the problems of teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007).

Campus Schedules

The semester schedule is the most commonly-used secondary school schedule (Gandara, 2000; Patall, Cooper, & Allen, 2010). With the semester schedule, teachers generally teach seven or eight periods a day, while under the trimester schedule teachers teach five classes a day (Brower, 2000). Under the trimester schedule, there exists an option for weekly, 70-minute professional development periods. Staff members can use this time for collaboration and planning. The semester schedule is designed with two semesters and the trimester schedule is designed with three trimesters. The major difference between the trimester and semester schedules is the number of classes per day.

The amount of instructional time is the same under both the semester and the trimester schedules. To earn one credit, students must either take two semesters or two trimesters of a course. On the trimester schedule, students can generally earn 7.5 credits each school year. Over four school years, students can earn 30 credits. The goal for most Texas students is to earn 26 credits to graduate. The extra four credits of a trimester schedule can provide students with an opportunity to retake classes they have failed. Time for tutoring also can be built into the regular school day. In the current study, teachers experienced a changed in the form of a shift in schedule.

Theoretical Framework

Lewin's change theory was used as the lens to examine the perceptions of the teachers who experienced a change of school schedule from semester to trimester. The theory consists of three parts: unfreeze, change or transition, and freeze. During the period of unfreeze, the organization must experience conditions that lead to the need for the organization to evolve (Burnes, 2004; Schein, 1996). The comfort level of the organization is stressed due to variables of change. Once the organization has experienced the stage of unfreeze, the system is ready for change.

The next evolution of the cycle requires the organization to change or adapt due to the conditions created during the unfreezing (Burnes, 2004; Schein, 1996). In the current study, the change experienced by the teachers was the shift from a semester to a trimester school schedule.

This shift occurred as a response to the stress put on the system that caused teachers to work collaboratively to ensure that students performed at higher levels. The stress in this case was the low academic performance of students on state and federal testing and the lack of adequate teacher preparation time. The final phase of Lewin's change theory requires the freezing of the organization in its new state of operation (Burnes, 2004). While the fluid nature of education requires constant change, the goal of freezing is for teachers to establish a formal routine and stability within the new systems implemented during the change or transition stage (Day & Leggat, 2015).

The campus at which the participants worked had a need to change. The school was underperforming on assessments compared to other campuses across the state and nation. The low performance of the school led to an unfreeze. Individuals were open to new ideas for school improvement due to the underperformance of the school. The freeze period of Lewin's change theory occurred after the school moved to a trimester schedule. During this time, the teachers were working within and adapting to the new schedule.

Research Design and Methodology

The qualitative tradition of phenomenology was used to explore teachers' experiences of change as they moved from working within a semester schedule to working within a trimester schedule. The areas of focus included campus culture, tutoring, and remediation of students. Transcendental phenomenology was used to study the meanings of the lived experience (Bernet, Welton, & Zavota, 2005).

Collection of Data

Data were collected via individual, face-to-face interviews with ten teachers and an associate principal. The participants were employed at a traditional high school in Texas. They had experience working with students who needed academic tutoring and remediation and had participated in professional development opportunities with colleagues during the change of schedule. The associate principal was responsible for curriculum and instruction for the campus and had knowledge of instructional, tutoring, and remediation challenges.

The teachers and associate principal were asked to share about their experience of changing from a semester to a trimester schedule, with a goal of gathering each participant's perceptions of the experience. Other questions for the teachers and associate principal centered on the topics of teacher collaboration and student remediation. Each interview lasted 60-90 minutes. Interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached (Creswell, 1998). Analytical memos were written after every third interview. Notes were made about areas in which previous experiences could play a role in the interpretation of the data.

Treatment of Data

There are three common stages for interpreting and reviewing data in phenomenological research: epoche, horizontalization, and imaginative variation (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Epoche is the process through which the researcher suspends or brackets prior preconceived feelings emotions or knowledge about the topic being researched. The researcher must understand the data as they are presented and process the information as new experiences. Using previous assumptions or presuppositions about the data can discredit the research (Finlay, 1999). In this study, personal experiences, biases, and preconceived notions about the research topic, including previous research

findings and theories, were set aside (Creswell, 1998). Each interview was transcribed verbatim (Creswell, 1998).

The transcribed interviews were reviewed, and inaccuracies were corrected (DeVault, 2016). The participants were asked to review their transcribed interviews and provide input if they felt that the transcriptions did not accurately capture their experiences (Giorgi, 2009). All of the participants expressed satisfaction with the transcripts.

Interviews were listened to repeatedly to help ensure deep understanding. Notes were taken based on the conversations from the recorded interviews. This phase required horizontalization of the data in search of significant statements (Giorgi, 2009). Horizontalization was continued as statements were combined to create an understanding of the themes present in the interview data (Creswell, 1998).

A point was made to remain receptive to each statement from each interviewee in order to facilitate the natural flow of the interview (Moustakas, 1994). Significant statements that provided clarity for the experiences of the participants were highlighted (Creswell, 1998). Similar significant statements were combined into common clusters of meanings. These clusters were used to support the writing of the structural description or the imaginative variation about the context and the setting of each participant's experiences. The process of coding the data was repeated multiple times, with each pass over the data resulting in the condensing of codes into themes (Creswell, 1998; Englander, 2012). The findings from each interview were compared repeatedly. The process was complete when it was believed that all combinations of themes from the information were understood (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Analytical memos were used to help to understand the data from the interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The memos were a collection of findings as well as reflections and observations. These summaries of thoughts about the interviews were created throughout the process. The relevance of the memos was to ensure focus on the volume of data.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research involves answering questions of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability (DeVault, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Trustworthiness involves presenting substantive information about the fieldwork so that the reader can find familiarity in the research. Credibility is established after prolonged exposure and triangulation of the data, thus ensuring that a true representation of the data is reported. Triangulation occurs when different study participants are asked the same set of research questions (DeVault, 2016; Shenton, 2004).

Transferability involves being able to take the findings from the research and apply them to different situations (DeVault, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Confirmability requires the presentation of the research findings in their purest form, void of any personal reflections (DeVault, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Researcher bias about the topic was bracketed to help ensure that the research findings were based on the data collected (Creswell, 1998).

Reflexivity was practiced to support the process of data coding. Personal bias and preconceptions were reflected on throughout the study (Berger, 2015; Englander, 2012). Dialogue was held with colleagues about the stages of the research, potential bias, experiences, and past knowledge that could have led to untrustworthy results (Englander, 2012).

Findings

The participants ranged in age from 30-49. Six of the participants were 30-39 years old. The remaining five participants were 40-49 years old. All participants had bachelor's degrees, and four had earned master's degrees. Three other participants were pursuing a master's degree. One participant had a master's degree and was pursuing a doctoral degree. Seven participants identified their race as African American, and four identified their race as White. Seven participants were female and four were male. The participants had between 5-26 years of experience as an educator. Subjects taught by the teacher participants included math (4), social studies (2), career and technical education (2), science (1), and English (1). None of the teacher participants had previously experienced a trimester schedule as a student or as a teacher (see Table 1). Rita, the associate principal, had 26 years of experience in education. She had worked under both semester and A/B block schedules. Rita served as an associate principal during the transition from the semester to the trimester schedule and then back to the semester schedule.

Table 1
Teacher Participant Characteristics

Participant	Years of full-time teaching experience	Teaching subject	Schedule experienced as a student	Previous schedule experience as a teacher
Brenda	16	Social Studies	Semester	Semester
Bridgette	5	CTE	Semester	Semester
Dwight	11	Math	Semester	Semester
Eddie	24	CTE	Semester	Semester, A/B Block
Janet	8	Science	Semester	Semester
Joe	12	Math	Semester	Semester
Pam	20	Math	A/B block	Semester
Rodney	25	Math	A/B Block	Semester
Sophia	24	English	Modified block	Semester
Tonya	18	Social Studies	Semester	Semester

Note. CTE is an acronym for Career and Technical Education.

Four themes emerged following a review of the interview data. The themes included: 1) teachers did not feel prepared for the pace of the trimester; 2) students who took ownership of their learning were academically successful on the trimester schedule; 3) trimester scheduling hindered relationship development with students; and 4) a strong sense of teacher collaboration existed under both the semester and the trimester schedules, but suffered when planning and training times were not shared (see Table 2). The themes were reinforced by the associate principal who was aware of the teachers' experiences. Representative quotes are included in the following sections to affirm each theme.

Table 2

Theme Representation by Participant

Participant	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Brenda	X	X	X	X	X
Bridgette	X	X	X	X	X
Dwight	X	X		X	X
Eddie	X	X	X	X	X
Janet	X	X	X	X	X
Joe	X	X	X	X	X
Pam	X	X	X	X	X
Rita	X	X	X	X	X
Rodney	X	X	X	X	X
Sophia	X	X	X	X	X
Tonya	X	X	X	X	X

Note. This table shows the representation of each participant's responses by theme.

Lack of Preparedness for Trimester Schedule

The first theme, teachers did not feel prepared for the pace of the trimester, was exemplified from the teachers' repeated descriptions of how they felt teaching under a trimester schedule compared to teaching under a semester schedule. The semester schedule was designed to provide teachers with 50-minute classes over 18 weeks, which equaled 4,500 minutes of instruction. The trimester schedule was designed to provide teachers with 75-minute classes over 12 weeks, which also equaled 4,500 minutes of instruction (Brower, 2000; Geismar & Pultease, 1996). Lesson pacing was a strong concern for all of the teachers. While the two schedules offered the same instructional time, all of the participants reported feeling rushed to cover the required curriculum under the trimester schedule. The teachers expressed the need to plan their lessons differently under the trimester schedule so that they could ensure that they covered the required course material.

Bridgette said that pacing seemed rushed under the trimester schedule, which limited her ability to assess and reteach students properly. While Bridgette perceived that the longer class times under the trimester schedule allowed for additional hands-on, project-related activities, she said that she could not adequately cover the material with the students before the end of the trimester. Eddie shared that teachers had additional time to plan and implement activities while on the trimester schedule. However, he perceived that teachers were not prepared to "take advantage of the time offered." Eddie appreciated the additional class time of the trimester schedule, but said that teachers needed additional support to plan effective lessons designed to capitalize on the schedule.

Professional development. Participants' perceptions varied regarding the effectiveness of professional development aimed at preparing teachers to work within a trimester schedule. Some of the teachers thought that the time spent was effective, while others said they believed that the professional development missed the mark. Sophia was appreciative of the professional development designed to support time management. She said that the sessions held during back-to-school training were designed to cover multiple variables of the trimester schedule, but felt that the sessions did not adequately prepare the teachers.

Brenda said that she appreciated professional development opportunities aimed at helping teachers understand the concept of the trimester. While she valued the professional development that focused on lesson planning and understanding a trimester pacing calendar, Brenda said that she felt that the curriculum pacing was fast because the teachers had to cover more material during the 75-minute blocks of class. Brenda said that sometimes the teachers did not feel that students could master 75-minutes' worth of content, so they shortened the lessons and students fell behind. According to Brenda, staff development designed to address this issue was the most beneficial.

Some of the participants had positive experiences with professional development opportunities that were held during the common planning periods. Dwight felt that campus professional development "aligned" him with other teachers who were experiencing success. Rita, the associate principal, agreed that the ability to collaborate with teachers during professional development was beneficial. Janet viewed the professional development she received prior to the implementation of the trimester schedule as sufficient.

Bridgette said that the professional development designed to prepare teachers for the trimester schedule was not specific enough. She wanted to know before the start of school how to organize classroom instruction time down to the "specific minute." Bridgette said that she would have appreciated a model to follow. Eddie believed that the time built into the trimester for professional development was not sufficient to meet his training needs. He said that he did not have common planning time with other teachers who taught similar subjects.

Adjustments by teachers. The implementation of the trimester schedule created a need for teachers without trimester schedule experience to adjust to the variables of the schedule in order to utilize the additional 45-minutes of class time each day. The traditional 45-minute class periods no longer existed.

Pam shared that a major adjustment after switching to the new schedule was the need to update all of her lesson plans to 75-minute class periods. She said that a challenge she experienced after the change to the trimester schedule was "maximizing the time of instruction in the classroom." Dwight believed that switching to the trimester schedule was a challenge for several of his peers who struggled with time management and pacing issues. Janet said that under the semester schedule she had a better understanding of how much content her students could absorb. On the trimester schedule, Janet felt that her students reached a "saturation point." During the times when Janet felt her students were overwhelmed with the volume of work, she would slow her pace of instruction. However, because of the slower pace, Janet fell behind the district scope and sequence.

Joe said that when the campus was on the semester schedule, teachers could slowly roll out their content, then as the year progressed teachers would finish strong by having "bell-to-bell" instruction with no breaks. He felt that the trimester required teachers to start off teaching fast, which led to the creation of an environment in which teachers felt rushed. Pam said that the trimester schedule required covering almost twice as much material in a trimester class period than in a semester class period. After mastering the new pacing, Brenda said that she preferred the trimester over the semester schedule because the trimester schedule provided additional time for in-depth learning. She did not have to stop instruction in the middle of a learning activity, as she sometimes had to do under the semester schedule. According to the participants, students had to be self-motivated in order to take advantage of the opportunities available.

Ownership of Learning

The participants perceived that students who took ownership of their learning were academically successful on the trimester schedule. Eddie, Tonya, and Pam believed that if students were not focused and did not set goals for themselves, they would not make appropriate decisions and fulfill their full potential for academic success. Eddie believed that his purpose as a teacher was to prepare his students for college success with no excuses. He did not see a school schedule as an impediment to learning. Eddie said, “The students are capable of making decisions for their own learning, and the students who made positive decisions were successful on [both] the semester [and] the trimester schedule.” Dwight agreed with Eddie. Dwight said that he felt that high school students who are focused and “control” their education will be successful after high school. Pam said that she could determine the level of ownership for students’ learning based on their notetaking. She believed that students had to “adjust to the trimester schedule by taking better notes during the extended class time.”

Janet was concerned with motivating students to succeed, regardless of the campus schedule. She approached the trimester schedule as if she was teaching college courses. In Janet’s opinion, the faster pace forced students to become more mature and focused. She said that students who failed to mature fell behind, but added that she encouraged students who felt rushed while on the trimester schedule to take advantage of her tutoring hours. Tonya shared that the students who were focused on their own success made time to come to tutoring under both the semester and trimester schedules. She felt that student focus was dependent on motivation to succeed rather than on the campus schedule.

Opportunities for in-class remediation. All of the participants acknowledged opportunities within the trimester schedule for students to earn additional credits or receive remediation. The participants shared that while on the trimester schedule their students were able to receive remediation during the school day in the classes in which they struggled. Rita said that having students in need of remediation as a captive audience “did not leave to chance a student showing up for tutoring before or after school.”

Saturday school and after-school tutoring were implemented at the campus under both schedules. Bridgette felt that her students needed less after school and Saturday school remediation when the trimester schedule was in place. Sophia experienced the benefit of students being able to retake classes during their senior year while under the trimester schedule. She said that doing so helped many of her senior students obtain the credits they needed to graduate. While credit attainment was viewed as a positive aspect under the trimester schedule, the impact on relationships was not.

Trimester Schedule Hindered Relationships

Almost all of the teachers perceived that trimester scheduling hindered relationship development with students. The perception that the trimester schedule hindered relationships was shared by all of the teachers except for Dwight. Dwight said that he appreciated the ability to work with more students during the school year. The teachers shared that they did not feel that they had time to get to know students’ motivations while on the trimester schedule. The teachers considered the development of relationships critical in the determination of students’ academic success and expressed the need for students to get to know them and for them to get to know their students.

McGrath and Van Bergen (2015) and Murray and Zvoch (2011) posited that at-risk students do best when they feel there is a positive teacher-student relationship. The school at which the participants were employed had a large population of students who were considered at risk. Joe, Janet, and Sophia said that they felt that the trimester schedule was not conducive for the development of positive teacher-student relationships. While Sophia said that having students in class every day during the semester offered an opportunity for a better mentoring relationship with students, some students did not experience consistency of teachers.

It was not uncommon for students on the trimester schedule to have two different teachers for Parts A and B of a subject. Sophia said that the teachers did not like losing students in the middle of a course, which occurred when a course was split between the first and third trimesters. When that happened, Sophia said that the teachers lost ground in positive academic relationships they had developed with students. She said that benefits of the trimester schedule included students having access to their teachers after school and students being able to retake classes in which they struggled within the same year. Joe said that some students on the trimester schedule chose to attend the tutoring of a teacher they “liked” after the first trimester of a two-trimester course. Rita, the associate principal, said that she felt that other academic benefits of the trimester schedule such as opportunities to earn additional credits and the ability to monitor instruction between teachers far outweighed any of her concerns. Classroom management was an additional item of conversation between teachers.

Classroom management. Several teachers said they shared best practices for discipline with each other during the second and third trimesters under the trimester schedule. Dwight considered this sharing of information among teachers extremely valuable. It was important for him to hear about other teachers’ successes with students. Rita and Janet did not experience the same benefits. Rita perceived that teachers continually had to reestablish classroom norms and procedures while working under the trimester schedule. She said that reestablishing classroom procedures every new trimester with a new group of students made classroom management more difficult. Janet struggled to maintain her students’ attention spans over 75-minute trimester class periods.

While the trimester schedule did not ease classroom management issues, there were some opportunities of the schedule design that many of the teacher participants (Bridgette, Dwight, Janet, Joe, Pam, Sophia, and Tonya) believed made a positive difference. Sophia expressed the benefit of not having a challenging class of students for 18 weeks, the length of courses under the semester schedule. She preferred 12 weeks, the length of the trimester schedule courses.

Bridgette divided the impact of the experience of changing from a semester to a trimester schedule into positive and negative experiences. She said that the “ability of students to switch to new classes more frequently to avoid restless behavior and classroom management issues” was a benefit of the trimester schedule. However, Bridgette shared, “having challenging students switch classes took away the opportunity to build a positive relationship.”

Strong Sense of Collaboration

A strong sense of teacher collaboration existed under both the semester and the trimester schedules, but suffered when planning times were not shared. The participants perceived that if the teachers did not have common planning times, collaboration suffered. When the teachers did not have common planning periods, they had to meet before or after school, making collaboration more difficult.

The teachers said that they valued opportunities to share ideas and work together for the benefit of students. Tonya recalled a “strong sense of collaboration among the teachers before the

trimester was implemented, after the implementation, and after the switch back to the semester schedule.” Eddie did not have built-in time for collaboration with his peers, but believed there was a need for it. Strong teacher collaboration is necessary for leaders to facilitate the turning of schools into effective, efficient learning organizations (Ronfeldt et al., 2015; Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, & Kyndt, 2015).

As the teachers’ conversations evolved while working within the trimester schedule, they shared best practices for student success. During the second and third trimesters, the teachers discussed the students they had in common. Rita felt that their familiarity with students from the previous trimester allowed the teachers to discuss topics such as students’ needs and academic strengths. They also had conversations about best practices for student motivation. She believed that this level of collaboration under the trimester schedule was different due to the teachers’ familiarity with additional students.

All of the core teachers acknowledged efforts made in the school before the implementation of the trimester schedule to ensure that teachers worked together to find best practices for educating students. Rita acknowledged that intentional efforts to ensure professional learning communities and academic cluster periods were a part of the school culture. Janet said that the science teachers intentionally worked as a team, so the transition to the trimester schedule was “as comfortable as possible” for teachers and students. Sophia shared that she felt that the teachers in her social studies department naturally collaborated on various projects; however, while on the trimester schedule, there was “deepened collaboration.” Sophia attributed this to the longer periods available for coaches to meet. In addition, Brenda felt that the trimester schedule promoted a culture of collaboration as the teachers worked together to develop creative activities to adjust to the pace of the schedule. She said that teachers better utilized professional learning communities and cluster planning times to develop lessons.

For Tonya, collaboration among the teachers remained the same after changing from a semester schedule to a trimester schedule and back again. She was complimentary of her fellow teachers and the efforts they put into planning and working as a team. Likewise, Rodney said that his teacher colleagues always had strong collaborative relationships. Teachers in his department sought ways to support each other with challenging students. During planning and collaboration time, Janet said that she experienced the same frustrations as other teachers who had the same level of experience as she had. However, she shared, “Teachers who had more experience, especially those who worked under different schedules like the A/B block schedule, were able to adapt to the trimester schedule’s 75-minute classes.”

While the core subject teachers enjoyed common planning periods and collaboration, the elective teachers said that they did not experience the same benefits. Because Eddie did not have a common planning time, he had to meet with colleagues before or after school. Dwight and Bridgette agreed that “collaboration was a school norm and expected,” however, because they did not have a common planning period, they had to work harder to see it materialize. Bridgette considered the lack of common planning time a serious concern. Instead of meeting to discuss the needs of individual students, planning time conversations centered on how to keep up the pace so that instruction would not fall behind.

Rita agreed that the lack of common planning time for the elective teachers was a concern of the administrators. She said that the administrators had a goal of building a trimester schedule that would include common planning time for the elective teachers. Due to the logistics of building the schedule, this did not happen. Rita said that the first and second year of building the master schedule for the trimester offered new learning opportunities. The goal for the third year was to do

a better job of supporting the elective teachers with common planning periods, however the schedule was changed back to a semester schedule before the third year of implementation.

Conclusions

The participants experienced the stages of unfreeze, change, and freeze at their campus. Due to the overall performance of the students on state assessments, the school leaders unfroze and rethought their practices. The intervention response of the school leaders was to change from a semester schedule to a trimester schedule. The school then had a refreeze and remained on the trimester schedule for two years before transitioning back to the semester schedule.

Critics of Kurt Lewin's organizational change theory cite its reliance on top-down leadership for decision making (Burnes, 2004; Schein, 1996). The participants in this study did not take issue with the top-down leadership approach, however additional conversations between school leaders and teachers may have impacted the concerns of teachers as they experienced the schedule change.

The participants agreed that true opportunities for success were not dependent on the trimester schedule, but rather the maturity of the student. They believed that each student had to place individual value on his or her education, personal goals, study habits, and time management. While the teachers sought positive relationships with their students, some of the participants perceived that the positive relationships were lost during the change to the trimester schedule. The amount of time teachers had with students was the same under both schedules, however the participants felt rushed to cover material under the trimester schedule. These concerns revealed an opportunity to revisit lesson planning and curriculum design for teachers on alternate schedules.

A strong professional development plan is critical to ensuring the systemic growth and productivity of effective school instructional practices (Keigher, 2010; Lasagna, 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Many teachers prefer to work in schools where there is a strong sense of professional collaboration (Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015). The core subject teacher participants believed that the school had a strong culture for professional development and felt that this culture for professional development continued after the change to the trimester schedule. However, the elective teachers did not experience the same level of professional development support for the implementation of the trimester schedule.

A goal for this research was to bring the voice of teachers to the conversation about school improvement, specifically in the conversation of changing school schedules. The inclusion of teachers in decision making with administrators can result in a better school climate and improved student achievement (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2014). While the data indicated that a difference existed between the experiences of the core teachers and the elective teachers regarding professional development, the participants had similar perceptions of student remediation and teacher collaboration.

Recommendations for Future Research

The implementation of organizational change theory is critical for school leaders who seek continuous improvement for their organizations (Hussain, Lei, Akram, Haider, & Ali, 2016). The data from the interviews indicated that the participants experienced the stages of unfreeze, change, and freeze when the school changed to the trimester schedule. The participants perceived that student performance on state assessments was a driving factor in the administrative unfreeze of the school schedule leading to the change. Further research could be conducted to identify variables

other from student performance that educators consider before making a decision to pursue alternate schedules.

The participants perceived a lack of time for relationship building with students when on the trimester schedule. Additional research could be conducted to determine if this feeling was also held by the students. Researchers could address the variables that comprise a healthy teacher-student relationship and how are those variables impact students and teachers on semester and trimester schedules. In addition, research should be conducted to address the difference of experiences had by core and elective teachers during the transition of schedules from the semester schedule to the trimester and back again. Researchers could also focus on how administrators define the variables they consider prior to making a change designed to improve student performance.

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Principal's Perceived Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership Throughout Their Career

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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Principals face many workplace stressors. Given these pressures, it is imperative that principals identify and strengthen their emotional intelligence, resilience, and resonant leadership. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine principals' self-perceptions of the relationship between emotional intelligence and resilience and how their perceptions of these concepts were applied to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership throughout their career. This study examined the ways in which principals demonstrated evidence of initiating, utilizing, and sustaining resonant leadership. The study also examined which skills of emotional intelligence and resilience principals drew on to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. The data was triangulated utilizing the tenets of Goleman's Four Quadrant Model of Emotional Intelligence, Reivich and Shatté's seven abilities of resilience, and Boyatzis and McKee's concept of resonant leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). The study revealed that depending on a participants' years of experience, principals demonstrated different skills of emotional intelligence and resilience to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. The study findings suggest Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as pre-requisite skills to support a leader's ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership, as opposed to a byproduct of emotional intelligence and resonant leadership originally proposed by Goleman (1995) and McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008).

Background

Current education reform has placed increased demands on school principals regarding accountability and student performance. In addition to meeting these reform mandates, principals must also provide leadership that cultivates an enriched learning environment that promotes a culture of trust and respect among all members of the school community (Moore, 2009). Given these demands, principals must identify and implement a comprehensive vision of fostering the academic, social, and emotional development of all members of the school community (Benard, 2004; Henderson, 2007; Seligman, 2009). In order to meet these challenging demands, principals must recognize and develop their own emotional intelligence, resilience, and resonant leadership (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005; Williams, 2008). Limited research exists regarding the relationship between the introspective concepts of emotional intelligence and resilience of educational leaders (Bumphus, 2008; Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, & Sparkman, 2012). The current research regarding the relationship between the resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership of educational leaders suggests a leaders' skills of emotional intelligence as a prerequisite skill of resonant leadership; while a leaders' skills of resilience as a byproduct of resonant leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). In addition to these connections, several of the skills specified in the current frameworks of emotional intelligence and resilience parallel each other. By engaging in the introspective process of identifying their emotional intelligence, resilience, and the relationship between both, educational leaders can assess their ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership.

Emotional Intelligence

Educational leaders face multiple challenges that threaten to erode their job performance, emotional competence, and resilience (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005). This is evidenced by the fact that nearly a quarter of the country's principals leave their schools annually and nearly 50 percent leave their schools after three years (School Leaders Network, 2014). Due to this concern, increased attention has been focused on the factors that positively influence the success of principals. While education, experience, and intelligence are important factors in determining leadership success, the emotional intelligence of principals is a critical factor in the success of educational leaders (Lam & Kirby, 2002; Moore, 2009; Potter, 2011).

There is prolific research regarding the topic of emotional intelligence. The field originated with the conceptualization of social intelligence by E.L. Thorndike in the 1920's. Thorndike (1920) defined the concept of social intelligence as the ability to "act wisely in human relations" (p. 228). Later in the century, Bar-On coined the term emotional quotient (EQ) to describe the distinction between cognitive and emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2006). Throughout this stage of the conceptual development, emotional intelligence was associated with personal competence, happiness, and success (Greenockle, 2010). In the 1990's, the term emotional intelligence was utilized to describe an individual's ability to recognize and regulate emotions within themselves and others (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Throughout the past two decades, researchers have focused on the developmental nature of emotional intelligence (Abraham, 2004; Goleman, 1995). This developmental emphasis has given rise to the notion of emotional competence. This concept of emotional competence stresses the ability to learn, develop, and enhance one's emotional skills over time (Nelson, Low, & Ellis, 2007; Wang, Young, Wilhite, & Marczyk, 2011). The abilities of emotional competence include the

awareness of emotions in one's self and others, tolerance, interpersonal skills, flexibility, self-management skills, resilience, conscientiousness, reliability, and motivation (Abraham, 2004; Wang et al., 2011). Due to its developmental nature, "emotional competence" has become an increasingly important concept in the study of the social and emotional development of leaders (Abraham, 2004).

The research throughout the field of emotional intelligence suggests that effective leaders have a high degree of emotional intelligence (Abraham, 2004; Goleman, 1995). Emotionally intelligent leaders foster success in themselves and their followers by recognizing and managing their emotions and those of others (Goleman, 1995). Additionally, emotional intelligence is a key component of resonant leadership (Goleman, 1995). Current research suggests that the emotional intelligence of leaders is two times more important than intelligence or expertise in predicting leadership success (Singh, 2008). This information places an invaluable importance on identifying and developing the emotional intelligence of educational leaders. By engaging in the introspective process of assessing one's emotional competence, educational leaders are better prepared to enhance their emotional competence and successfully navigate professional challenges (Gilio & Dorsey, 2016). This increased insight and leadership effectiveness is also related to the resilience of leaders (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005). This relationship is apparent as the tenets of emotional intelligence and emotional competence closely parallel the current developmental theories of resilience.

Resilience

The field of resilience research has undergone a consistent transformation throughout its existence. Due to this evolving construct, the term resilience has several definitions. When resilience research began almost 50 years ago, the construct of resilience originated from a risk-based perspective. In the 1990's, the movement of positive psychology influenced the field of resilience research (Seligman, 2009). The emphasis of positive psychology focused on classifying and nurturing human strengths directly impacted the construct of resilience (Seligman, 2009). This strength-based emphasis translated into a wellness model of resilience (Benard, 2004; Henderson, 2007). The seminal work by Werner and Smith (1992) provided additional support for this strength-based concept of resilience. This longitudinal resilience study reinforced a strength-based perspective of resilience by offering data that supported the successful development of individuals despite exposure to high risk environments (Werner & Smith). More recently, the field of resilience has focused on the importance of one's beliefs on their own resilience and that of others (Seligman, 2009; Shatté, Reivich, & Selgiman, 2000; Reivich & Shatté, 2004; Truebridge, 2014).

Within the research on educational resilience, there is a strong connection between the school's purpose, resilience-building factors, and educational change (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). The school's emphasis on teaching, curriculum, leadership, decision making, and assessment align with the frameworks for building resilience and creating educational change (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). This symbiotic relationship also highlights the interconnectedness of resilience, leadership, educational change, teacher effectiveness, and student success (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Additionally, connections between resilience, leadership styles, professional development, and teacher effectiveness also exists (Morrison and Allen, 2007). Educational leaders can promote a resilience perspective by creating opportunities for autonomy, a sense of purpose, social competence, problem solving, and achievement motivation among teachers (Morrison & Allen, 2007). They can individually integrate, reinforce, and model resilience building skills in their individual work with staff (Seligman, 2009; Truebridge, 2014). By utilizing a resilience-building

leadership perspective, principals have the unique opportunity to promote resilience in others by developing the belief that an individual has the capacity for resilience (Truebridge, 2014).

Resonant Leadership

The application of the emotional intelligence and resilience theories by educational leaders has the potential to enhance the emotional intelligence and resilience of all members of the school environment. Resonant leaders are individuals who manage their own and others' emotions in ways that drive success (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). They are attuned to the feelings of the people they lead and use this empathy to move the individuals in a positive direction (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). In order to demonstrate resonant leadership, principals must successfully integrate the interrelated theories of emotional intelligence and resilience into their leadership style and practice (Moore, 2009; Patterson & Kelleher, 2005). In order to achieve this goal, principals must first engage in the introspective process of identifying and cultivating their own emotional intelligence and resilience. By gaining insight into the symbiotic nature of these complimentary concepts, principals gain insight into their ability to develop and sustain their resonant leadership.

The tenets of resonant leadership align with multiple aspects of the models of emotional intelligence and resilience. Resonant leaders engage in the introspective development of their own emotional intelligence (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). They utilize their emotional intelligence to build and maintain trusting relationships and foster a vibrant work environment (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). Resonant leaders create a powerful collective energy that supports increased levels of productivity, creativity, unity, purpose, and results throughout the work environment (Teleos Institute, 2017). Finally, they engage those they lead in this insight-oriented approach to personal and professional development.

The conceptualization of resonant leadership demonstrates the complimentary nature of the models of emotional intelligence and resilience (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). For example, Boyatzis and McKee (2005) incorporate Goleman's four competencies of emotional intelligence (i.e. self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) into their conceptualization of resonant leadership. Furthermore, within these four competencies, many of the critical skills of resilience (i.e. emotion awareness/regulation, impulse control, optimism, flexible and accurate thinking, empathy, self-efficacy, and connection/reaching out to others) are present (Reivich & Shatté, 2002). Finally, some of the critical skills of resilience (i.e. emotional awareness, flexible and accurate thinking, optimism, and empathy) are also identified as crucial elements of a leaders' ability to sustain resonant leadership.

The Need for Emotionally Intelligent, Resilient, and Resonant Educational Leaders

Today's educational leaders encounter multiple daily stressors. These stressors result from external and internal sources. Given the emphasis on increased accountability measures in public education, principals experience pressures from external sources such as federal and state mandates. Additionally, local stakeholders often present additional challenges for principals. Furthermore, the increased emphasis on school safety has presented principals with further roles, responsibilities, and resulting stressors. These multiple external pressures present continually increasing challenges for principals in today's public education climate.

As instructional leaders, principals are responsible for creating and maintaining a safe, challenging, and supportive learning environment for an increasingly diverse student population. Given the collective demands of this learning environment, principals are faced with multi-faceted job duties and expectations. They are solely responsible for providing guidance, supervision, and support to teachers, students, and all members of the school community. In addition to supporting the academic development of students, principals are also expected to foster the social and emotional development of all members of the school community.

The multiple tasks and responsibilities of principals is compounded by the interpersonal and intrapersonal challenges that result from the demands placed on all members of the learning environment. The stress resulting from this high-pressure environment further compounds the complexity of the role of the principal. As an educational leader, principals experience personal and professional stressors and adversities. These stressors and adversities are associated with increasing principal attrition throughout public education (Lazaridou, 2009). To maintain their effectiveness and longevity, principals need to know how to effectively identify and maintain their own resilience (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005).

To successfully navigate today's multi-faceted professional and personal expectations, principals need to know how to develop and maintain a high level of emotional intelligence and resilience. These developmental skills are imperative to the success of the leader. They also enhance an educational leader's ability to demonstrate resonant leadership. Resonant leaders possess a strong desire to generate positivity and excitement among those they lead (Goleman, 1998). They can create an environment in which all parties are optimistic about the future and persevere through personal and professional adversities (McKee, Boyatzis, and Johnston, 2008). Resonant leaders utilize their self-awareness, awareness of others, empathy, and emotional intelligence to maintain and create resonance among those they lead (McKee, Boyatzis, and Johnston, 2008). Due to the multifaceted stressors faced by educators today, there is an increased need for resonant educational leaders.

What is Known About Principal Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership

The fields of emotional intelligence and resilience have evolved from deficit and trait-based conceptualizations to developmental conceptualizations (Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). More recently, these topics have demonstrated a relationship to each other and the theory of resonant leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Klocko & Wells, 2015; Goleman, 1995). Currently, these concepts have received increased attention in the study of leadership.

This inter-related nature of emotional intelligence and resilience is present throughout the current research. There is substantial information about external and internal resilience-building factors, social and emotional development, and leadership skills (Henderson, 2007; Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Morrison and Allen, 2007; Patterson & Kelleher, 2005). The current focus of resilience research discusses the use of one's social and emotional skills to educate and empower individuals to overcome adversity (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005; Reivich & Shatté, 2002; Truebridge, 2014). Resilience research also currently identifies the components of emotional intelligence as a necessary component for fostering resilience in one's self and others (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005; Reivich & Shatté, 2002).

Throughout the field of school-based resilience research there is a strong connection between resilience-building factors, educational change, leadership styles, professional development, and

teacher effectiveness (Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Morrison and Allen, 2007). Substantial information exists regarding the role that strong leadership skills play in effecting resilience-building change (Henderson, 2007; Morrison & Allen, 2007). In addition to strong leadership, emerging research suggests that educational leaders can integrate, reinforce, and model resilience building skills (Seligman et al., 2009; Truebridge, 2014). Current resilience research suggests that the examination of the role of one's beliefs in fostering resilience in one's self and that of others is an important step to fostering resilience (Seligman, 2009; Reivich & Shatté, 2002).

What We Need to Learn about Principal Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership?

This study fills the gap in research regarding the relationships between principal's beliefs about their own emotional intelligence, resilience, and their leadership style. Despite this interconnectedness between resilience and emotional intelligence, only recently has research focused on the relationship between the resilience and emotional intelligence of educational leaders (Bumphus, 2008; Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, & Sparkman, 2012; Patterson & Kelleher, 2005; Seligman, 2009). Despite the importance of this need, there is limited research regarding the factors that support and foster the resilience of principals (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005).

Morrison and Allen (2007) suggest that educational leaders should utilize a resilience perspective to empower and motivate members of the school community; however, there is limited information regarding the factors that support this type of leadership. There is also minimal research regarding the relationship between the leadership style that results when educational leaders engage in the introspective process of identifying and fostering their own emotional intelligence and resilience (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005). While limited research regarding the relationship of the emotional intelligence and resilience of educational leaders exists; additional research is needed regarding the introspective examination of these factors by educational leaders (Patterson & Kelleher, 2005; Seligman, 2009; Bumphus, 2008; Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, & Sparkman, 2012). Additional information is needed regarding the perceptions of educational leaders regarding emotional intelligence, resilience, and the relationship between the two concepts. Acquiring insight into this introspective process will provide principals with insight into the intrapersonal and interpersonal factors that foster their own emotional intelligence, resilience, and resonant leadership.

The significance of this study is to add to the limited existing literature regarding the resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership of principals. Throughout the past twenty years, resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership research has focused on business executives, soldiers, nurses, and/or teachers; however, the same emphasis has not been given to educational leaders (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Patterson & Kelleher, 2005; Shatté, Reivich, Seligman, 2000). While there is substantial research regarding the role of principals in fostering the social and emotional competence and resilience of other members of the school community; there is limited research regarding the development of the emotional competence and resilience of principals (Steward, 2014). The topics of emotional intelligence and resilience of educational leaders have been studied separately. However, research examining the relationship between the resilience and emotional intelligence of principals is largely unrecognized (Bumphus, 2008; Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, & Sparkman, 2012). Additionally, there is currently no research available regarding the interconnectedness of the resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership of educational leaders.

The knowledge of principals' perceptions of their resilience and emotional intelligence will offer information about the developmental process of identifying and developing the resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership of principals. This study will add to the limited research regarding the relationship between principal resilience and emotional intelligence (Bumphus, 2008; Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, & Sparkman, 2012). It will also initiate a discussion of the interrelated nature of the emotional intelligence, resilience, and resonant leadership of educational leaders. Information regarding the relationship of these insight-oriented concepts can serve as a model for the personal and professional development of school leaders. This study examined the ways in which principals demonstrate evidence of initiating, utilizing, and sustaining resonant leadership. The study also examined which skills of emotional intelligence and resilience principals draw on to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. It also offers an expanded conceptualization of McKee and Boyatzis's concept of resonant leadership by identifying the concentric nature of Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence and Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as key components of initiating, utilizing, and sustaining resonant leadership (Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002).

Methods

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative narrative inquiry approach to ascertain an extensive understanding of the way in which principals demonstrated evidence of initiating, utilizing, and sustaining resonant leadership throughout their career. Chase defines a narrative inquiry approach as "meaning making through the shaping and ordering of experience, a way of understanding one's own, or others' actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole or connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time" (Chase, 2011, p.421). Due to the introspective nature of this study's research questions, this study utilized Chase's *The Story and the Life* narrative inquiry approach. This narrative inquiry process focuses on the relationship between people's stories, their identity development, and personal well-being (Chase, 2011). This approach aligned with the study's purpose to examine principals' self-perceptions of the relationship between principal resilience and principal emotional intelligence and how their perceptions of these concepts were applied to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership throughout their career.

By utilizing a narrative inquiry approach, this study aimed to provide an "in-depth understanding of the contexts and behaviors" of the study participants (McMillan, 2000, p.252). The "thick description" that results from this qualitative research approach provided the researcher with interconnected meanings of the multi-faceted concepts of emotional intelligence, resilience, and resonant leadership (Holliday, 2002, p.77). Throughout this study, data was collected via a semi-structured interview. The interview data was analyzed using the tenets of Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence, Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience, and Boyatzis & McKee's Resonant Leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002).

Setting

This study took place in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The participants were elementary and secondary assistant principals and principals in K-12 school districts.

Sampling

The researcher utilized convenience sampling methods in order to select study participants (Merriam, 2009). In order to identify the principals to be recruited for the study, the researcher sent the recruitment email. The recruitment email was sent to the district email addresses listed for all 551 assistant principals and principals listed on the websites of school districts throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania. The study sample consisted of the assistant principals and principals in Southeastern Pennsylvania who responded to the initial recruitment email, scheduled, and completed the interview.

Participants

The study included 26 assistant principals and principals that responded to the initial recruitment email, scheduled, and completed the interview. This was a response rate of five percent. All interviews were scheduled according to the participant's preferred time schedule and setting (phone interview or in-person). There were four secondary principals who scheduled an interview but cancelled and did not reschedule due to their schedule.

Instrumentation

In order to examine principals' perceptions of their skills in the areas of resonant leadership, emotional intelligence, and resilience, the researcher designed a semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview gathered information about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of principals. The interview process provided the researcher with a face-to-face opportunity to gather a "thick description" of each principal's perceptions of their resonant leadership, emotional intelligence, and resilience (Holliday, 2002, p.77). Due to the potential emotionality of these topics, the researcher established rapport at the beginning of each interview to create a language for the further narrative inquiry into these concepts (Johnson, Aiken, & Steggerda, 2005). The interview provided participants with the opportunity to reflect, share, and engage in an expanded narrative regarding these complex multi-faceted topics (Merriam, 2009).

The interview began with contained six demographic questions. The demographic questions included gender, years of experience worked in the field of K-12 education, level of participant education, number of years the participant had worked as a building level administrator, number of years that the participant had worked at their current administrative position, and level of the participant's current administrative position (elementary or secondary). These questions were included to determine if these factors impacted a principal's perception of their resonant leadership, emotional intelligence, and/or resilience.

Next, the interview included eight open-ended questions regarding challenging leadership scenarios. The challenging leadership scenarios utilized were adapted from the top-ranking stressors identified in research conducted by Klocko and Wells (2015) regarding the workplace stressors of principals. Each participant was asked to share a successful and less successful example of a challenging leadership situation from four domains of workplace stressors. These categories consisted of personal task management, instructional demands, professional task management, and handling conflict. Each participant was asked to share a successful and less successful example of their work/life balance, instructional leadership, managerial skills, and conflict management skills. The researcher utilized these examples to assess the ability of the study participants to initiate, utilize

and sustain resonant leadership using Boyatzis and McKee's (2005) framework of resonant leadership. These examples were also included to determine the emotional intelligence and/or resilience skills demonstrated by each participant using Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence and Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience.

Throughout the interview process, the researcher utilized a modified form of critical incident analysis (C-IA) format, or personal story, to engage in this interview process. The C-IA technique is an exploratory, qualitative method used to generate descriptive self-reported data regarding thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Flanagan, 1954). Following the descriptions of each participant's personal examples, the researcher utilized the semi-structure interview process to gather additional data, clarify the answers of the participant and/or respond with additional probing questions to gather a "thick" description of the multifaceted and introspective concepts of resonant leadership, emotional intelligence, and resilience.

The interview concluded with two questions regarding principals' perceptions of their emotional intelligence and resilience skills that were used during the leadership scenarios they shared. The participants were given a list of the 18 skills included in Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence and Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience. The participants were then asked to list the emotional intelligence skills and resilience abilities that they felt that they demonstrated during the scenarios. This information yielded data about participant's perceptions of their emotional intelligence skills and resilience abilities.

Data Analysis

The researcher identified trends and themes in the participants' interview responses. In order to efficiently and accurately analyze the data collected during this study, the researcher engaged in the dynamic and recursive three-step process of qualitative data analysis. The first step of this process was the data reduction process. This process involved the simultaneous reducing and transforming data to accurately and efficiently identify themes and trends throughout the data (Berg, 2009). For the second step, the researcher organized, analyzed, and presented the data (Berg). During the third step, the researcher drew conclusions and verified the data by spiraling back and forth between the themes and trends in the study data and the literature (Berg). Throughout this process, the researcher carefully reviewed the data analysis process and the conclusions drawn from patterns and themes in the data (Berg).

Findings

The study's findings revealed specific introspective, social, and behavioral qualities of leaders that are closely aligned with Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence, Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience, and Boyatzis & McKee's Resonant Leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). The findings showed that principals employ the skills of self-awareness, awareness of others, mindfulness, hope/optimism, and compassion/empathy to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. In addition, the data showed that depending on a participants' years of experience as a building level administrator, principals demonstrated specific skills of emotional intelligence and resilience. The study findings suggest Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as pre-requisite skills to support a leader's ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership, as opposed to a byproduct of emotional intelligence and resonant leadership originally purposed by Goleman (1995) and McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008).

Components of Resonant Leadership

Boyatzis and McKee's (2005) conceptualization of resonant leadership incorporates self-awareness, awareness of others, and the process of renewal including mindfulness, hope/optimism, and compassion/empathy. The data revealed that principals demonstrated these components of Boyatzis and McKee's (2005) conceptualization of resonant leadership.

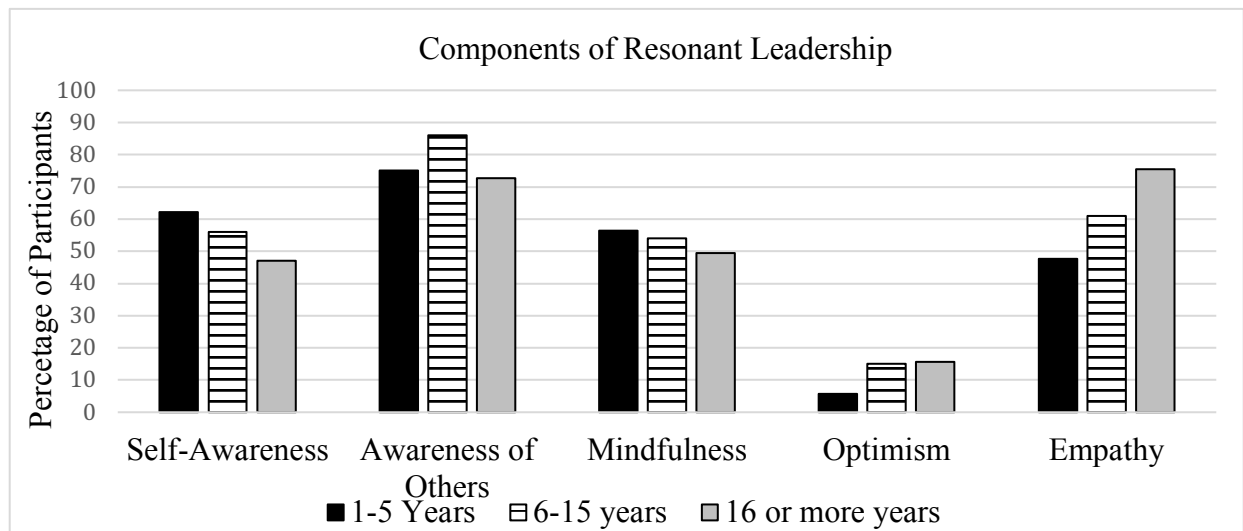


Figure 1. *Participants' Demonstrated Components of Resonant Leadership*
 Note. $n=26$ (1-5 years $n=8$, 6-15 years $n=13$, 16 or more years $n=5$)

Self-Awareness. The interview data revealed that principals employ the skill of self-awareness (Figure 1). They engage in the introspective process of understanding their own emotions and utilize this knowledge to act with authenticity and conviction (McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson, 2008). The data showed that participants with less experience demonstrated higher percentages of self-awareness. The data identified that 62% of participants with 1-5 years of experience as a building level administrator, 56% of participants with 6-15 years of experience as a building level administrator, and 47% of participants with 16 or more years of experience as a building level administrator demonstrated self-awareness.

Among principals with five years or less experience as a building administrator, examples of self-awareness included reference to their self-awareness of their strengths and weakness as they experience their role as a building administrator to initiate resonant leadership. A secondary building administrator with two years of experience said, "Being new to my role I think there's always a lot of doubt and uncertainties, so I think anytime I feel success certainly feels good and reassuring and just builds my confidence in other areas and pushes me to grow and be strong in other areas." Principals with 6 to 15 years of experience demonstrated self-awareness related the efficiency and effectiveness of their leadership performance to utilize resonant leadership. An elementary principal with seven years of experience explained, "You must put things in perspective and look at things from a balcony approach. Sometimes we get stuck into the minutia of things and it causes us to lose perspective. However, if you look at things from the balcony onto the dance floor, so to speak, it allows us a broader perspective and be able to see how the pieces may be fit together." Principals

with more than 16 years of experience demonstrated self-awareness related their values, beliefs, and authority as a leader to sustain resonant leadership. A secondary building administrator with 16 years of experience said, “the art of it is having an understanding of what your authority is and being comfortable, as I said before, being the boss but not in control of every single thing because you'll lose your mind.”

Awareness of Others. The interview data revealed that principals employ the skill of awareness of others (Figure 1). They engage in the observational and interpersonal process of identifying and understanding people, groups, and organizational cultures (McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson, 2008). Principals utilize this information to act in the interest of others. The data showed that 75% of participants with 1-5 years of experience as a building level administrator, 86% of participants with 6-15 years of experience as a building level administrator, and 73% of participants with 16 or more years of experience as a building level administrator demonstrated awareness of others.

Among principals with five years or less experience as a building administrator, examples of awareness of others focused on principals identifying and recognizing others to build relationships with staff, students, parent, and colleagues to initiate resonant leadership. An elementary principal with two years of experience as a building administrator said, “I think number one is building that relationship, building relationships with people. You have to spend the time to build those relationships and earn their trust.” Principals with 6 to 15 years of experience as a building administrator, expanded on the notion of building relationships by utilizing active listening and perspective taking to identify and understand the perspectives of staff, students, parent, and colleagues to utilize resonant leadership. A secondary principal with 12 years of experience as a building administrator said, “I was able to successfully manage the complex because essentially usually parents and school have the same goal, but they just see it from two different perspectives.” Principals with 16 or more years of experience as a building administrator identified maintaining relationships and perspective taking skills to develop staff, students, parent, and colleagues to sustain resonant leadership. A secondary principal with 19 years of experience said, “If you do not understand where the teachers are, you’ll never be able to move that person along to where you want them to be. You need to be able to have an idea of what you want them to be in the future, not just now, but in the future and how you're going to get them there.”

Renewal. The interview data revealed that all principals in the study engaged in some aspect of the introspective process of renewal. This process involves the leader fostering specific thinking styles and social behavior to counter the negative effects of stressors related to leadership. Throughout this renewal process leaders utilize mindfulness, hope, and compassion, to take proactive steps to overcome the inevitable stressors associated with their leadership role. This renewal process provides leaders with an increased ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership.

Mindfulness. The interview data revealed that principals utilize mindfulness to engage in the renewal process (Figure 1). In addition to the previously reported data regarding self-awareness and the awareness of others, mindfulness also includes a leader’s ability to reconnect with positive aspects of one’s self. The data showed that 56% of participants with 1-5 years of experience as a building level administrator, 54% of participants with 6-15 years of experience as a building level administrator, and 49% of participants with 16 or more years of experience as a building level administrator demonstrated mindfulness.

Across all study participants, the data revealed examples of mindfulness including caring for one’s physical and emotional health, engaging in guidance and reflection with colleagues,

implementing and maintaining a work/life balance, and accessing support from friends and family to engage in the renewal process. These mindfulness practices support the principals' abilities to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. While the data revealed mindfulness as a practice of principals regardless of years of experience as a building administrator, the degree to which principals integrated mindfulness practices into their life varied with experience. The data showed that principals with less experience relied on others to engage in mindfulness practices; while those with more experience were able to independently engage in mindfulness practices. A secondary principal with one year of experience as a building administrator described this reliance on others to engage in mindfulness practice, "If I'm walking towards the edge, they would not let me do that. I think we're all very supportive of each other to try to help manage the work/life balance." The data revealed that principals with 6 to 15 years of experience as a building administrator, identified more definitive and independent mindfulness practices. A secondary principal with eight years of experience as a building administrator said, "Boundary setting is a big one. You have to know when to shut it down." Similarly, principals with 16 or more years of experience as a building administrator demonstrated increased decisiveness and independence in mindfulness practices. An elementary principal with 21 years of experience as a building administrator said, "When I get home, I try to focus on what's there and I try to make sure that I really have downtime. I need to rest. I take care of me."

Hope/Optimism. The interview data revealed that principals utilize the practice of hope/optimism to engage in the renewal process. This data is illustrated the relationship between the interconnectedness of resonant leadership, emotional intelligence, and resilience. Hope parallels optimism as described by Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence and Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience (Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008) describes hope as the ability to look forward to a feasible and enticing future. Similarly, Goleman describes optimism as persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks. Finally, Reivich & Shatté define optimism as having hope for the future, belief that one can control the direction of one's life. The data showed that 6% of participants with 1-5 years of experience as a building level administrator, 15% of participants with 6-15 years of experience as a building level administrator, and 16% of participants with 16 or more years of experience as a building level administrator demonstrated hope/optimism.

Among participants that demonstrated hope/optimism, years of experience as a building administrator resulted in differing sources of optimism. The data showed that principals with five years of less years of experience as a building administrator demonstrated an internal source of optimism. A secondary principal with five years of experience as a building administrator said, "I do have a very positive personality, a positive outlook on everything that happens." The data revealed that principals with greater years of experience as a building administrator identified external sources of hope/optimism. A secondary principal with 11 years of experience as a building administrator said, "Understanding each day I'm coming and I'm trying to do it better than I did the day before." Similarly, an elementary principal with 21 years of experience as a building administrator said, "You can come tomorrow and make sure that the student gets what she needs."

Compassion/Empathy. The interview data revealed that principals utilize the practice of compassion/empathy to engage in the renewal process. This data is illustrated the relationship between the interconnectedness of resonant leadership, emotional intelligence, and resilience. Compassion parallels empathy as described by Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence and Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience (Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002). McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008) describe compassion as empathy in action. Similarly, Goleman

describes empathy as sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns. Reivich & Shatté define empathy as the ability to identify and understand the psychological and emotional states of others. Among participants that demonstrated compassion/empathy, principals with more years of experience as a building level administrator demonstrated more examples of compassion/empathy. The data showed that 48% of participants with 1-5 years of experience as a building level administrator, 61% of participants with 6-15 years of experience as a building level administrator, and 75% of participants with 16 or more years of experience as a building level administrator demonstrated empathy.

Overall, principals acknowledged utilizing the skills of compassion/empathy in situations with teachers, parents, student, school community members, and their family members. The data revealed that principals with five years of less experience as a building level administrator expressed compassion/empathy in the context of supervision of ineffective teachers and parent conflict; while principals with additional years of experience as building level administrators generalized compassion/empathy to all areas of their role. An elementary principal with six years of experience as a building level administrator said, "Understanding people and their personalities and their perspectives, you have to have that, you know, it's like a soft skill." A secondary principal with 16 years of experience as a building level administrator said, "I knew that I had to put my needs aside for the needs of the staff." Similarly, a secondary principal with 19 years of experience as a building level administrator said, "I try to move my personality with them to understand where they were going with it."

Skills of Emotional Intelligence

The interview data in Figure 2 shows the skills of emotional intelligence that principals in the study drew on to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. According to Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence, these 18 skills are essential components of emotional intelligence. Likewise, these skills of emotional intelligence are key components of resonant leadership. While differences exist across these skills, overall principals with greater years of experience as building administrators demonstrated more skills of emotional intelligence.

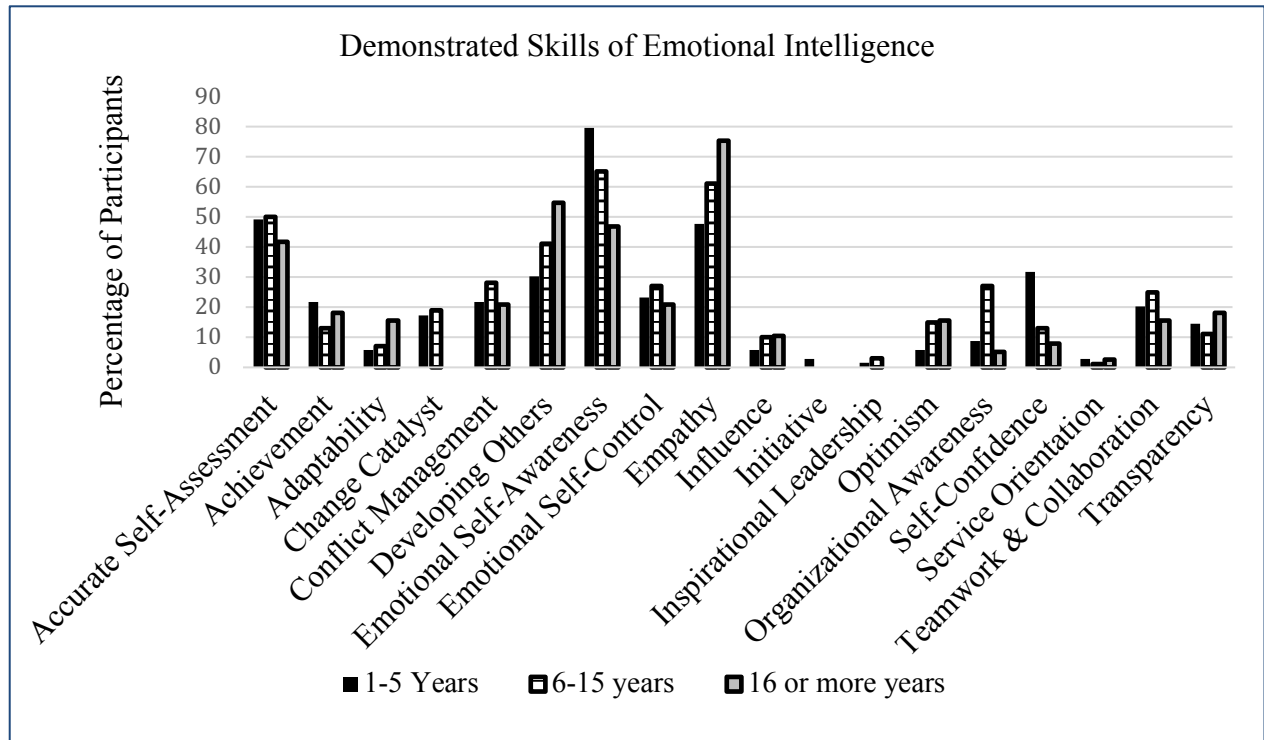


Figure 2. *Participants' Demonstrated Skills of Emotional Intelligence*
 Note. $n=26$ (1-5 years $n=8$, 6-15 years $n=13$, 16 or more years $n=5$)

Abilities of Resilience

The interview data in Figure 3 shows the skills of resilience that principals in the study drew on to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. According to Reivich & Shatté, these seven abilities are essential components of resilience. Likewise, some of these abilities of resilience are components of emotional intelligence. Thus, these abilities are necessary in order to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. While differences exist across these abilities, overall principals with fewer years of experience as building administrators demonstrated more abilities of resilience.

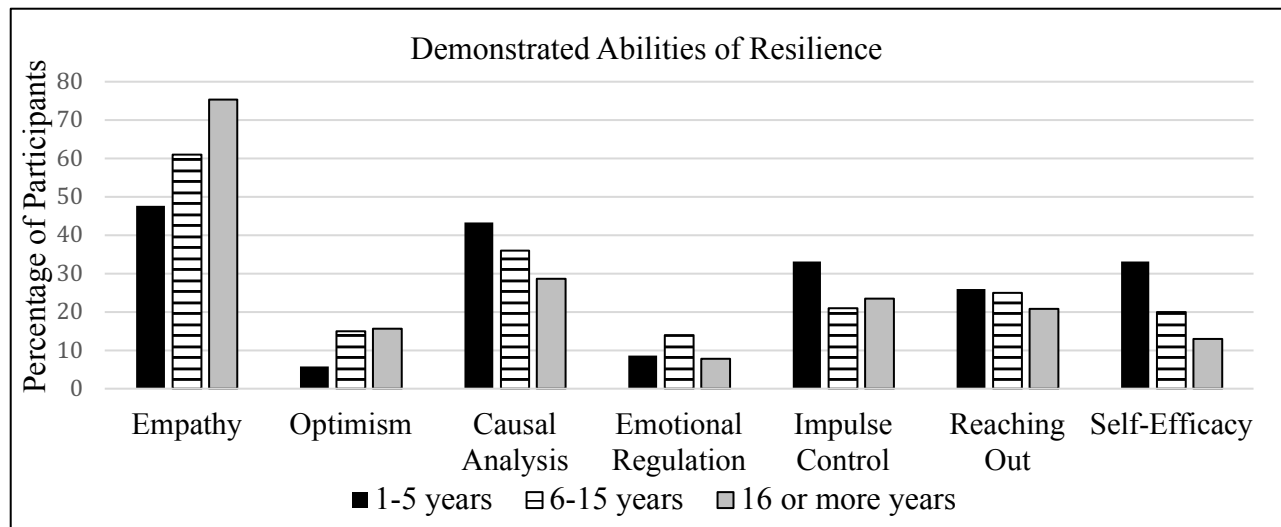


Figure 3. *Participants' Demonstrated Abilities of Resilience*
 Note. $n=26$ (1-5 years=8, 6-15 years=13, 16 or more years=5)

The Relationships between Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership

Overall, these findings are aligned with the existing interconnectedness of Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence, Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience, and Boyatzis & McKee's Resonant Leadership illustrated in Figure 4 (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002).

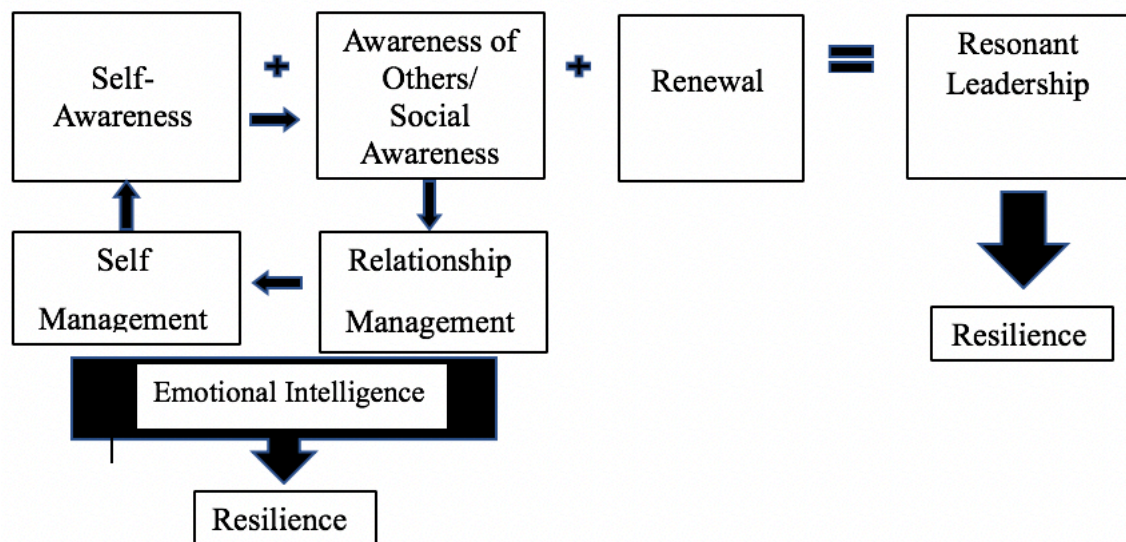


Figure 4. *Relationships of Current Theories of Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership* (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002)

The interview data revealed that depending on a participants' years of experience as a building level administrator, principals demonstrated different amounts of emotional intelligence skills and resilience abilities. The data revealed that principals with greater years of experience as building administrators demonstrated more skills of emotional intelligence; while principals with fewer years of experience as building administrators demonstrated more abilities of resilience. The study findings suggest Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as pre-requisite skills to support a leader's ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership, as opposed to a byproduct of emotional intelligence and resonant leadership originally purposed by Goleman (1995) and McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008). This finding is illustrated Figure 5.

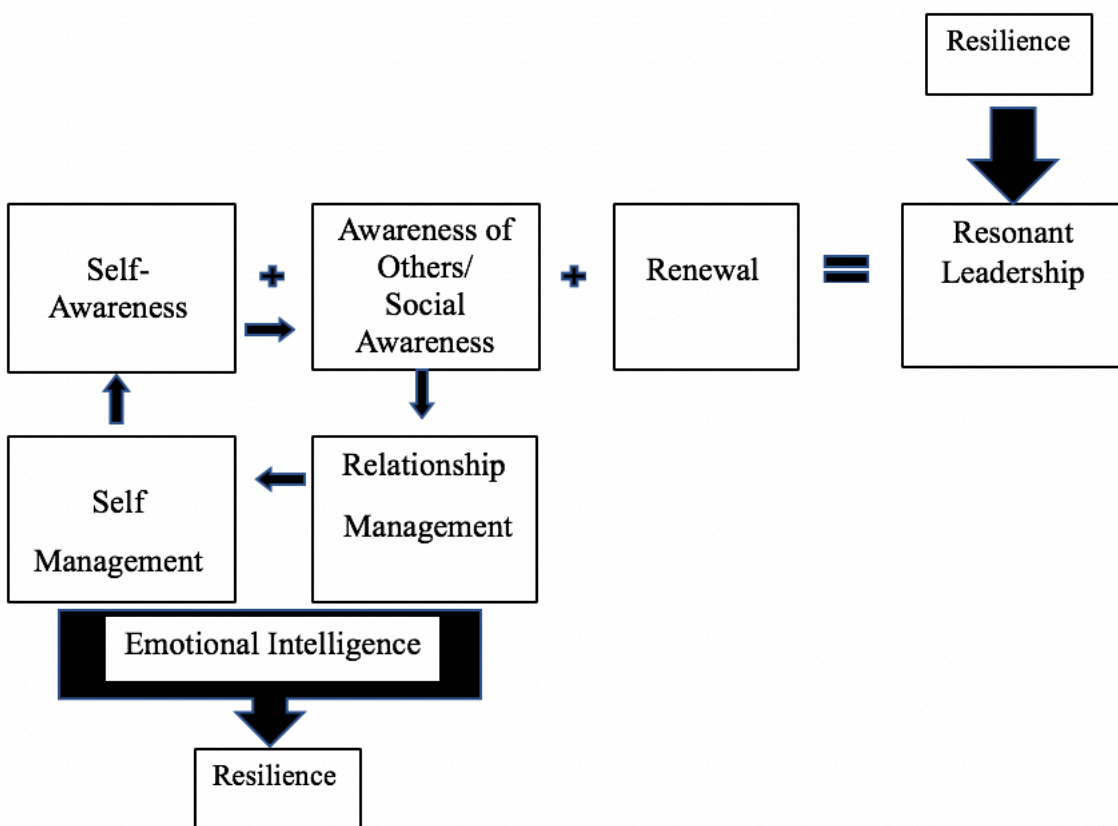


Figure 5. *Study Findings Related to the Current Theories of Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Resonant Leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1995; Reivich & Shatté, 2002)*

Relationship to Other Research

Principals Employ Self-awareness, Awareness of others, and Personal Renewal (Mindfulness, Hope/Optimism, and Compassion/Empathy) to Initiate, Utilize, and Sustain Resonant Leadership. This study's findings align with Boyatzis and McKee's conceptualization of resonant leadership. The study participants demonstrated Boyatzis and McKee's assertion that resonant leaders engage in self-awareness, awareness of others, and personal renewal (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). Most study participants, regardless of years of experience as a building administrator, demonstrated self-awareness and awareness of others. In the areas of self-awareness,

principals with 16 or more years of experience as a building administrator demonstrated a slightly lower percentage of these skills. This finding aligns with Boyatzis & McKee's (2005) research that leaders who consistently utilize their social and emotional skills to recognize, monitor, and reflect their emotions and those of others are considered resonant leaders.

Study participants also demonstrated engagement in the introspective process of renewal. This supports Boyatzis & McKee's (2005) theory that resonant leaders must engage in the process of renewal and take proactive steps to overcome the inevitable stressors associated with their leadership role. Throughout this renewal process, Boyatzis & McKee identify mindfulness, hope, and compassion as essential elements of the renewal process. The majority of study participants demonstrated engagement in mindfulness; however, principals with 16 or more years of experience as a building administrator demonstrated a slightly lower percentage of mindfulness. This finding supports McKee and Massimilian's (2006) belief that mindfulness as the first and most essential step of the renewal process.

Overall, a low percentage of study participants demonstrated hope/optimism. This finding offers limited support to study participants' evidence of ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. Despite the limited demonstration of hope/optimism, principals with less experience identified internal sources of hope/optimism; while principals with more experience identified external sources of hope/optimism. The percentage of demonstrated hope/optimism might be lower in this study due to the nature of the leadership scenarios discussed in the interview and the future-thinking emphasis of Goleman and Reivich & Shatté's definitions of optimism. During the interview, the participants were asked about their thought, feelings, and behaviors in specific scenarios. They were not asked to comment on how those scenarios affected their future thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. Therefore, much of the data collected did not include a discussion of principals' beliefs for the future. Despite the study findings, many of the participants demonstrated persistence in their discussion of leadership scenarios during the interview. This finding aligns with McKee and Massimilian (2006) assertion that fostering hope involves more than remaining optimistic in the face of adversity. As McKee and Massimilian (2006) suggest, the study findings revealed that participants assessed and implemented solution focused strategies to maintain their hope.

The majority of study participants with six or more years of experience as a building administrator demonstrated compassion/empathy. The study findings revealed that participants with five years or less experience as a building administrator demonstrated lowered percentages of compassion/empathy. This finding supports McKee and Massimilian's (2006) belief that compassion is an integral process for leaders to combat power stress and initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. Similarly, this finding supports McKee & Rotondo's (2007) belief that empathy is an essential element of building and sustaining resonant relationships. Likewise, the data also aligns with Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee's suggestion that "without a healthy dose of heart, a supposed leader may manage – but he does not lead" (2002, p. 21).

Principals Demonstrate Skills of Emotional Intelligence. Overall, study participants demonstrated numerous skills of emotional intelligence. This aligns with Boyatzis and McKee's (2005) assertion that resonant leaders have high levels of emotional intelligence. While the specific skills of emotional intelligence varied between study participants; many study participants demonstrated accurate self-assessment, conflict management, developing others, emotional self-awareness, emotional self-control, and teamwork and collaboration. These findings align with Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence that self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills positively impact a leader's work performance. (Goleman, 1995). The

findings also support McKee & Massimillan's (2006) belief that resonant leaders are highly skilled at utilizing their emotional intelligence to empathize with others, build trusting relationships, manage their own emotions productively.

Principals Demonstrate Abilities of Resilience. Overall, study participants demonstrated Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience. These findings support Coutu's (2002) and Patterson and Kelleher's (2009) assertions that resilient leaders demonstrate an accurate acceptance of reality, assessment of past/present reality, optimism, and self-efficacy. The study's findings also support existing research regarding the importance of thinking styles as a source of resilience (Reivich & Shatté, 2002; Korn-Ferry & Adaptive Learning Systems, 2016; Patterson & Kelleher, 2005). While the specific abilities of resilience varied across study participants; the findings revealed that principals with five years or less experience as a building administrator demonstrated higher percentages of four out of the seven abilities of resilience. These findings showed that less experienced building principals demonstrated higher levels of causal analysis, self-efficacy, reaching out, and impulse control. Similarly, all principals, regardless of years of experience as a building administrator, demonstrated similar percentages of the resilience ability of emotional regulation. These findings are also consistent with the study data that principals with five years or less experience as a building administrator demonstrated higher amounts of the complimentary emotional intelligence skills of emotional self-awareness and self-confidence. These study findings suggest Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as pre-requisite skills to support a leader's ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership, as opposed to a byproduct of emotional intelligence and resonant leadership originally purposed by Goleman (1995) and McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008).

Recommendation for Application in Current Practice

The present study revealed that principals demonstrated components of resonant leadership, skills of emotional intelligence, and abilities of resilience. While the data showed that principals engaged in the introspective process of renewal; the data showed that principals demonstrated lowered percentages of hope/optimism and empathy. The findings also suggest Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as pre-requisite skills to support a leader's ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership, as opposed to a byproduct of emotional intelligence and resonant leadership originally purposed by Goleman (1995) and McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008). The researcher offers the following recommendations for the application of this study's finding to current practice.

Preservice coursework on the topics of renewal, emotional intelligence, and resilience. The researcher's first recommendation is to incorporate the topics of renewal, emotional intelligence, and resilience into preservice educational leadership coursework. Due to increasing workplace stressors, it is imperative that principals are knowledgeable of the renewal process prior to beginning an educational leadership position. As Boyatzis & McKee (2005) maintain, leaders must engage in the process of renewal to assess and support their emotional well-being. Boyatzis and McKee identify the importance of accurately identifying the factors that contribute to sources of stress. In order to effectively engage in this introspective process, leaders must incorporate the competencies identified in Goleman's model of emotional intelligence and several of the abilities identified in Reivich & Shatté's resilience model (Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2002; Reivich & Shatté, 2002).

Professional development regarding renewal, emotional intelligence, and resilience. The researcher's second recommendation for applying this study's finding to current practice is to

offer professional development opportunities for principals on the topics of renewal, emotional intelligence, and resilience. Specifically, these professional development programs should include information regarding the tenets of the renewal process: mindfulness, optimism, and empathy. While Patterson & Kelleher (2005) and Steward (2014) suggest that currently there is limited emphasis regarding the factors that support and foster the resilience of principals; there is recent research identifying the importance of mindfulness practice for educational leaders (Murphy, 2011; Wells, 2015). Wells (2015) incorporates Boyatzis & McKee (2005) conceptualization of resonant leadership into her assertion of the benefits of mindfulness practice among educational leaders. She cites stress relief, improved leadership, and increased skills of emotional intelligence and resilience in the areas of optimism and empathy as potential benefits of the practice of mindfulness (Wells, 2015). Murphy (2011) also posits that mindfulness practice by educational leaders utilizes skills of causal analysis to increase a leader's ability to successfully recognize and persevere through stressful situations, thus fostering one's optimism and empathy.

Limitations

Qualitative research presents limitations that may influence the way in which data can be interpreted. The results of this study may not generalize to all conditions. Individuals should be mindful of this possibility when interpreting and/or applying the results of this study.

Generalizability. This sample of elementary and secondary assistant principals and principals restricts generalizability of the data. The small sample interviewed ($n=26$) were taken from the 551 principals and assistant principals in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The response rate was 5%. Despite the 5% response rate, Guetterman (2015) suggests a mean of 18 participants as an appropriate sample size for a narrative inquiry study.

The use of convenience sampling methods may have impacted the findings. The recruitment email was sent out via email to all assistant principals and principals in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Due to the personal nature of the interview process, participation in the interview was voluntary but not anonymous. The process of scheduling and interview required the participant to share contact information to participate in the interview. In addition to the lack of anonymity, participation in the interview process required participants to utilize their personal time to schedule and participate in an hour-long interview.

The demographic questions contained in the interview protocol did not ask participants to identify their race, ethnicity, or cultural values. These demographics could impact a principals' attitudes and beliefs about the multi-faceted concepts of resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership. This opportunity to gather data on the relationship between cultural values and the multi-faceted concepts of resilience, emotional intelligence, and resonant leadership was missed and should be noted as a limitation of this study.

Due to the interpersonal nature of the interview process and the emotional nature of the study's topic, participants might have demonstrated a self-reporting bias.

Due to the researcher's existing knowledge in the areas of emotional intelligence and resilience, researcher bias might have affected the internal validity of results. To decrease the likelihood of researcher bias, the researcher acknowledged prejudices and assumptions in order to ensure that these biases didn't influence the data collection and analysis process (Merriam, 2009)

Data Collection Tool. The data collection tool may have skewed the data as well. The nature of the semi-structured interview protocol to gather information about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of principals during challenging leadership situations elicited immediate emotional

responses from participants. The interview design to incorporate challenging leadership situation from each of the four domains of workplace stressors as identified by Klocko and Wells (2015) yielded data regarding a participant's perceptions of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of principals during challenging leadership situations. There were no participants who were not able to identify information about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of principals during challenging leadership situations.

For this study's findings to be generalized to a larger or more demographically diverse population, this study would need to be replicated with a sample from the population of interest.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine principals' self-perceptions of the relationship between principal resilience and principal emotional intelligence and how their perceptions of these concepts are applied to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership throughout their career. The study sample consisted of the assistant principals and principals in Southeastern Pennsylvania. Overall findings show that principals employ the skills of self-awareness, awareness of others, mindfulness, hope/optimism, and compassion/empathy to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. The study findings suggest Reivich & Shatté's seven abilities of resilience as prerequisite skills to support a leader's ability to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership, as opposed to a byproduct of emotional intelligence and resonant leadership originally purposed by Goleman (1995) and McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnson (2008).

Overall, the data revealed that principals demonstrated multiple skills of emotional intelligence, resilience, and resonant leadership. The study findings suggest that principals demonstrate many skills of emotional intelligence and resilience to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership. Due to the continually increasing demands placed on principals, these skills are imperative to the success and emotional well-being of principals. Consequently, additional preservice coursework and professional development in the topics of renewal, emotional intelligence, and resilience is needed for principals. Additionally, opportunities for principals to develop and maintain supportive professional relationships is needed to foster principals' abilities to initiate, utilize, and sustain resonant leadership and enhance their skills of emotional intelligence and resilience.

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Implementing the Change Process for Staff and Student Success: An Instructional Module

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership (ICPEL) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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Successful schools have a clearly defined vision for student success, usually measured by college and career readiness standards. They are able to articulate success indicators for student performance as well as success indicators for the staff performance needed to meet those student indicators. Successful schools are able to describe a theory of change, or change model, which drives their school improvement process to close the gaps between their current reality and their desired future state or vision. This article discusses change theory, describes the tenets of a change model, and illustrates those tenets describing a grant-funded change initiative in one school that has demonstrated sustainability.

Keywords: change model, continuous improvement, professional development, smaller learning communities, theory of change

Implementing sustainable change has eluded education practitioners for decades. This has been compounded by the perception of a divide between theories of educational leadership and practical application in the K-12 world. Offering both theory, field and research examples, this article helps to bridge this perceived gap by describing how a theory of change can manifest within a district and/or school system, regardless of the size or demography of that district. This article also offers support to both faculty and students in educational leadership preparation programs by showing it is possible to build stronger theorist/practitioner collaborations. Our intent is to help soon-to-be, as well as existing, practitioners in school leadership positions understand the “why” and “how” of change in order to stimulate more deliberative thought in decision making, thus circumventing the reactionary symptoms often present in the current education system. Implementing sustainable change requires closing the gap between theory and practice, as well as having a theory of change to bridge that gap.

This article has three proposed outcomes:

- Understand the structure of a research-based change model as an integral part of the continuous improvement process.
- Understand the importance of using a systematic, intentional change model.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the change model by applying field results based on personal experience during the past 10 years.

Background

Traverse City West Senior High is a large (1,800 students), ninth through 12th grade, comprehensive high school located in a primarily rural region of northwestern Michigan. Students at West Senior High have historically done well academically. However, in 2007 there was a desire to do more for those students who were not doing well. Specifically, the leadership at West Senior High wished to (a) increase the opportunities for all students, (b) reduce the number of failed courses in the ninth grade, (c) increase personalized interactions between staff and students, and (d) close the achievement gap within a diverse socioeconomic landscape.

The school had the opportunity to become part of a five-year federally funded Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) Consortium, which represented a collective commitment by four different geographic areas in Michigan to create successful, personalized learning environments for every student as a pathway to college and career readiness. It was hoped that change would result in acceptable, equitable achievement and success for all following graduation.

The Michigan Smaller Learning Communities Consortium was formed with the assistance of the Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools (MCES), and the grant was authored by Sharalyn Brandell and Jim Bodrie from MCES (Brandell and Bodrie, 2007). The grant outlined four milestones which the Consortium needed to accomplish. These milestones included the following: English Language Arts and Mathematics Catch-Up; Comprehensive Guidance and Academic Advising, Interdisciplinary; Data-Driven Core Teaching Teams; and Advance Placement, Dual-enrollment Opportunities (Brandell and Bodrie, 2007).

The grant application proposed a third-party evaluator. Evaluators, Dr. Susan Printy and Dr. BetsAnn Smith, from Michigan State University (MSU) evaluated the progress of the SLC grant implementation. Traverse City West Senior High was one of the schools in the Michigan Smaller Learning Communities Consortium and is the school primarily used in this article as an example of putting theory of sustainable change into action. Traverse City West Senior High School was able to meet all milestones and benchmarks at the end of the five-year grant period. The data and

evidence provided in this article were obtained from the final MSU evaluation report for the SLC grant (Printy & Smith, 2013). The evaluators were actively engaged with the Consortium participants over the five years of the grant, providing accountability measures as well as valuable feedback to the processes and practices being implemented.

Identifying the Problem

Many school systems have “initiative fatigue,” which we define as systems continuing to implement various changes in efforts to obtain a golden ring—the one program or initiative that will achieve their goals and make all of their problems go away. However, many districts have not defined the fundamental problem(s) they are trying to address, even as they grasp at trendy programs promoted by neighboring districts or professional associations.

To achieve sustainability, any proposed change initiative must have a purpose: a why. This purpose is typically a problem of practice—a challenge area of learning or need to change something that is interfering with progress toward a goal. What exactly does a school or district want to “get smarter about” in relation to teaching and learning? In this age of accountability, a place to develop this purpose might be found in data. However, many schools and districts immediately jump to standardized test scores for their data, which are often a moving target based on what appears to be state or federal legislators’ whims. Although test scores may be a good place to start, other data should be explored more deeply. Three areas of data should be explored including demographic data such as attendance rates, enrollment trends, behavioral data; achievement or outcome data, which should include both standardized as well as classroom assessment data, and perception data. Process or classroom observation data should also be included when gathering information. Is there evidence other than standardized test scores to support a challenge area of learning that has been tentatively identified? Is there a trend to be found in local assessments or other regional assessments?

In addition to analyzing test score data, a school or district should look within the instructional core to gather additional data about the problem of practice or challenge area of learning. What is really happening in the classroom when students and teachers connect in the presence of content? Elmore (2007) defines the instructional core as the intersection between student, teacher, and content. Additional information can be gleaned by looking at the task teachers are asking students to do, as well as the tasks students are actually completing. For example, if assessment scores indicate students are struggling with higher levels of cognition—such as within Bloom’s Taxonomy or Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Webb, 2002)—educators should gather observational data within classrooms by looking at relevant tasks students are being asked to complete and those they are finishing. This will offer a clearer picture of where the learning or teaching may be breaking down.

The federal SLC grant’s “Absolute Priorities” included “preparing all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers.” (Brandell & Bodrie, 2007). The problem and subsequent data that drove these priorities —stemmed from several decades of research by the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), the Gates Foundation, and others, which indicated that schools with fewer than 500 students graduated more students who were college and career ready as measured by various student achievement tests and benchmarks. The U.S. Department of Education identified the problem of practice as being related to large, comprehensive high schools where the learning environment was not personalized and students were “lost” in the crowd (Brandell & Bodrie, 2007).

In theory, if students were in smaller learning environments, they would be better known and therefore their academic, social, and emotional needs could be known and met.

Three of the six schools in the Consortium applying for this grant represented inner-city high schools in Grand Rapids and Muskegon—communities supported by a business and industry economic base. Marquette High School in the comparatively isolated Upper Peninsula city of Marquette, Michigan (home of Northern Michigan University) also was involved. Two Traverse City high schools participated, one of which was West Senior High; both are located in a large, primarily agricultural area that includes popular tourist destinations. All of the Consortium's schools had a significant number of economically disadvantaged students, as well as ethnically diverse populations. Students struggled with the common problems of large high schools, including isolation, disengagement from the education process, and large achievement gaps among subpopulations.

The Consortium members unanimously agreed that a collective, collaborative effort would dramatically enhance the likelihood of success more than individual efforts to improve and reform. Consortium members set forth a plan to accomplish the SLC grant's Absolute Priorities by implementing a coherent set of strategies and interventions aligned with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Breaking Ranks II (NASSP, 2006), the Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools Comprehensive School Improvement Framework, and the national Coalition of Essential Schools Common Principles and Practices (Brandell & Bodrie, 2007).

The grant required that all students were to be randomly placed and included in an academic SLC by 2012. The federal SLC monies gave the high schools additional resources to use for activities such as release time, professional learning opportunities, and coaches to assist in creating smaller learning communities within the large high schools. Professional development and coaching services from the grant's technical assistance provider, a regional center for the CES, were utilized and were instrumental in guiding the work of the Consortium (Printy & Smith, 2013).

Theoretical Underpinnings of Change

Clearly identifying the problem is only a beginning. The problem must be addressed using a theory of change that will explain the how and why of the desired change and link various activities and outcomes to this vision. According to Laing and Todd (2015), a theory of change is a theory-based approach to planning, implementing, or evaluating change at an individual, organizational, or community level. It explains how a project is intended to achieve outcomes through specific action steps while keeping the context in mind. The focus is on outcomes (results) vs. outputs (activities), allowing a portfolio of data to be collected that will help determine if an intervention has succeeded or failed and why.

Laing and Todd (2015) identified key approaches in developing their theory of change, which includes these four approaches:

- A deductive model using existing research and knowledge.
- An inductive model built from observations.
- A mental model derived from stakeholders' knowledge and experience.
- A collaborative model co-created through academic expertise (research) and practice expertise (the stakeholders' views).

The authors cautioned that using a theory of change carries the risk of presenting change as linear. They argued that change theory should be thought of more as a network—as links between strands of action that demonstrate complex relationships. The SLC grant priorities implied an

integration of these four approaches as reflected in the Gates Foundation Small Schools research and publications which influenced grant programming at the time (Brandell & Bodrie, 2007). The Michigan State University, third party evaluation team, also used methodology integrating the approaches.

Another approach to presenting a theory of change is the use of a logic model. According to the Kellogg Foundation (2004), a logic model can be defined as “a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan to do, and the changes or results you hope to achieve” (p. 1). In other words, a logic model can serve as a broad road map for a change initiative. It is a framework for describing the relationships between investments, inputs, activities, and results/outcomes; it provides a common approach for integrating planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting. The Michigan Coalition of Essential Schools was instrumental in preparing the SLC grant application and included a W. K. Kellogg Foundation logic model template (Brandell & Bodrie, 2007).

Goal: Student Improvement

To create sustainable change and achieve a vision of student success, leaders need to view their schools as learning systems for both adults and children. The reason to initiate any change should, of course, be based on student outcomes—on the conditions of learning we want to change for our students. Those conditions must be based on quantitative and observational evidence. School organizations are usually adept at collecting and analyzing numerical data, but that has to be followed by observing actual practices to verify or help to better explain the quantitative information, as mentioned previously.

When a student learning problem has been identified and verified through observational practices, then it is time to look at the adult learning needed to improve instruction or make the changes that will result in improved student learning. A deceptively simple question must be answered: what do the principals, teachers, students, and parents as stakeholders need to know, understand, and be able to do in order to successfully implement and sustain the change? Paying attention to this adult learning offers a huge return on the investment in whatever change is desired. Just implementing a program or strategy and hoping it will have an impact, without ensuring that adults are able to effectively implement new strategies, may be a waste of precious human and fiscal resources resulting in little improvement in student learning.

Elmore’s (2007) description of the instructional core as the intersection of student, teacher, and content means a school cannot hope to improve upon student learning by only making a change in one leg of that three-legged stool. To improve student learning, schools need to look at the teachers’ learning as well as the quality of their interactions and the alignment of whatever content is used. Organizations must allocate resources of time, funds, and people to train staff in the continuous improvement process and embed those resources into daily work. A targeted professional learning component will need to be developed that is appropriate for each of the team members; not all of them will need the same training.

To improve student performance there were four main goal areas outlined in the federal SLC grant proposal, with prescriptive strategies and professional development to meet those goals:

1. Create an environment in which a core group of teachers will:
 - Know the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well through Advisories or other structures.

- Monitor each student's progress.
 - Provide the academic and other support each student needs to "catch up" students and close the achievement gap.
2. Utilize interdisciplinary and data-driven core teaching teams, which will be assigned common students and common planning time to:
 - Align instruction with standards.
 - Develop common assessments.
 - Integrate career pathways and interdisciplinary instruction.
 - Examine student work and other data to make decisions.
 - Assist with student exhibitions.
 3. Assure that teachers focus on mastery for learning:
 - Students will demonstrate mastery with exhibitions, portfolios, and capstone projects, as well as standardized tests.
 4. Increase engagement with relevant interdisciplinary instruction and real-world application by aligning place-based education, service learning, internships, etc., with essential learnings.
 - Teach literacy skills across all content areas.
 - Flex schedules to accommodate strategies consistent with how students learn most effectively and for teachers to effectively team with one another.

According to the independent evaluation of the SLC grant conducted by MSU researchers, Drs. Susan Printy and BetsAnn Smith (2013), most of the goals and strategies were met by all of the schools. However, Traverse City West was the only school that consistently implemented all of the goals and maintained the structures, systems and strategies design in the Theory of Change to sustain the SLC project (Printy & Smith, 2013).

The Consortium schools committed to identifying students entering high school who were below grade level in ELA and/or mathematics; they were to be provided with accelerated “double dipping” opportunities during the school day and before and after school. Online credit recovery would be available for students to access 24/7, and core content seminars would be provided for guided independent work. Intervention programs would (a) be designed to equip participating students with grade-level reading/language arts and mathematics skills by no later than the end of the 10th grade, (b) be grounded in scientifically based research, and (c) use age-appropriate and culturally sensitive instructional materials and strategies.

According to the MSU evaluation, Traverse City West successfully met the “catch-up” goal by using EXPLORE and/or PLAN scores– to identify below-grade level students then “double-dipping” them in either Read 180, Adolescent Accelerated Reading Initiative, English or Math Concept Class, or E2020 for credit recovery while keeping them on track for graduation. 169 students took the Academic Resource class for guided independent study and the Academic Assistance Room was staffed and open before, during, and after school providing support to students (Printy & Smith, 2013). At the end of the grant period, there was a 17% decrease in failures of Algebra I as well as a mere 6% failure rate in English 9 and English 10 (Printy & Smith, 2013)

According to the SLC grant requirements, students, teachers, administrators, and community members had to participate in a culture of inquiry using student data—placing students at the center of the educational experience and sharing a vision and focus to help all students reach high standards. Workshops, collaborative teams, study groups, staff retreats, and technical assistance from highly skilled school-redesign coaches were some of the pathways used to build the knowledge base and skills of all stakeholders.

To increase the percentage of students who entered postsecondary education in the semester following high school graduation, comprehensive guidance and academic advising were provided to students and their parents. This included assistance in selecting courses and planning a program of study that provided the academic preparation needed to succeed in postsecondary education. The primary structure developed to meet this objective was “Advisories” that served all students. In year one of the SLC grant, Traverse City West developed the Advisory structure, curriculum, and personal learning plan (PLP) format. It implemented student-led conferences using PLPs and electronic student portfolios as cornerstones for self-monitoring progress. 100% of the students met in advisories twice a week for 30 minutes each. A committee of teachers developed the curriculum and met frequently to monitor progress and modify lesson plans. Career Cruising is used for college and career planning to be integrated into the PLP’s (Printy & Smith, 2013).

As a result of these efforts, student participation in Advanced Placement (AP) and/or dual enrollment classes increased by more than 5% with 18% of the AP tests taken by disadvantaged students (Printy & Smith, 2013). There was also a 41% increase in the number of students participating in Upward Bound, which is a federally funded program for disadvantaged students to help prepare them for post-secondary opportunities (Printy & Smith, 2013). Today, taking an AP class or dually enrolling at the local community college is common practice for high school students at West Senior High beginning in their sophomore year. All students complete a common application in their advisory.

The activities in the SLC grant relied on Deming’s Plan-Do-Study-Act methodology with the addition of Cycle of Inquiry. With assistance from the CES, a cycle of continuous improvement was used to implement the plan and evaluate progress during the SLC grant. Theory of change and feedback loops were used to continually modify the plan. The knowledge, skills, and dispositions developed during the grant period were enhanced by staff learning and growth. As West Senior High’s continuous improvement expertise evolved, instructional rounds protocols and the Learning Forward protocol were added.

Identifying and Engaging Stakeholders

A Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching white paper (Park, Hironaka, Carver, & Norstrom, 2013) presented six common themes that characterized three types of educational organizations engaged in continuous improvement. One of those six themes stressed the role of communication and engagement with stakeholders. Identifying who the appropriate stakeholders are and the roles they will play in a change initiative is fundamental to any successful change process. The most successful change initiatives are enacted when a group of people share a common vision toward a better, more productive, more efficient organization.

Before implementing any change initiative, there must be a sense of urgency (Chandler, 2016; Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Urgency is generated when the pain/fear/concern of staying in the current situation is greater than the anticipated pain and effort that will be needed to change. To generate a sense of urgency within the organization, it is best to include internal stakeholders in collecting the evidence, establishing an inquiry stance, and identifying the purpose, as described previously.

Involving external stakeholders is also appropriate; a school organization will get the most support when community members, parents, business leaders and service providers are involved with the solution. At the very least, all external stakeholders should understand the purpose behind any change effort. DuFour and Eaker (1998) stated that “. . . a process that also includes

representatives of parents, community members, area businesses and student is preferable” (p. 67), explaining that each person brings a different perspective that is valuable to the change process. People outside the school setting have a “customer” viewpoint to current processes and can assist in identifying the future in terms of benefits for their children and/or community.

Chavan (2012) also spoke of the power of collaboration. He believed that one person’s ideas would be limited, whereas a collaborative effort would include multiple perspectives and competencies that could further germinate thoughts and ideas. He stated that change is most successful when those who are responsible for implementing the change initiative have a strong voice in the design of that implementation.

Finally, Kouzes and Posner (2003) stated they were unable to find examples of extraordinary achievement occurring without the active involvement of many people. The authors wrote:

We’ve yet to find a single instance in which one talented person-leader or individual contributor accounted for most, let alone 100 percent, of the success... the winning strategies will be based on the “we, not I” philosophy. Collaboration is a social imperative. (p. 20)

In deciding who the stakeholders are for a change initiative, certain questions need to be answered:

- At what level will the change initiative actually be implemented (e.g., classroom, building, district, or community)?
- Who will be affected by the change?
- Who will actually implement the change?
- What level of involvement, direct or indirect, will each of these people need to have?
- Who are your existing team members?
- What knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors do those team members bring to the initiative?
- What training, information, or professional development do they need to have to help support the initiative?

For the implementation of some initiatives, internal individuals might be the most effective team members. In other situations, involving people outside of the organization in the actual implementation is critical to success. Each change initiative will need different internal and/or external stakeholders as team members, depending on where the change will occur and how large the impact is expected to be. For an example, if the change initiative is curricular, more internal stakeholders at the table would be appropriate. On the other hand, if the change is something the school community is strongly tied to such as an athletic program or community garden, then it would be necessary to include key external stakeholders.

Once it has been determined where the change will be implemented and who will be affected by this change, a list of names and roles can be generated for internal and external stakeholders. Next, determine who the people of influence are on this list of stakeholders. Who will the key people be able to assist in advocating for the change and where are they located—inside or outside of the organization? Will they be directly responsible for the change, a supporter of the change, a bystander assessing the effect of the change, or an interested community member?

At this point in the process it is important to have a conversation with several key stakeholders, as mentioned above, to discuss the idea of the change initiative and why it is important. The feedback from these conversations will identify areas of support or resistance. These individuals may end up being a type of informal or formal advisory committee.

To support the stakeholders’ understanding of the need for change—and their understanding of the process as it is underway—they need access to research and information. Some of the team

members will need more information than others, so it is important to use the right dissemination methods. This means communicating in a variety of ways because everyone has a preferred communication style: snail mail, email, social media, and/or face-to-face meetings. Also, communication is a continual process; a one-time informational session will not bring either internal or external stakeholders along.

Traverse City West had several staff members participate in the district Future of Learning Summit including parents, students, and stakeholders to inform and gather feedback about the high school transformation efforts. Parents and students were the targeted audience for Planning for the Future workshops that focused on completing FAFSA and college applications. The Administrative team conducted frequent “listening” sessions for parents. A student voice program was established to involve students not traditionally involved in the decision-making process (Printy & Smith, 2013).

Finally, especially for internal team members, professional development will be needed. It is unlikely that anyone will have a full understanding of the change and implementation processes required. In the KASAB process, Killion (2007) identified a means for assessing the knowledge, attitudes, skills, beliefs, and behaviors needed for this targeted professional learning. A brief survey might be utilized to assess the knowledge of the team members and then identify specific training. This will ensure that everyone has a basic understanding of the need for change; how it occurs; and how it could be a productive, positive initiative for all involved.

The organizational design for the SLC project supported classroom teachers with structures and practices that directly promoted knowing students well; this included student groupings, schedules, professional development, decision-making strategies, teacher collaboration, and powerful teaching and learning strategies. The design contained several structures, systems, and strategies that supported the Consortium as a whole as well as each of the four districts and six schools. A “train the trainers” approach was reflected in the establishment of some of these key structures.

- A Consortium Council, which included district- and building-level leaders, was charged with the coordination of the project and accountability to the evaluation process and the U.S. Department of Education.
- A Leadership Team was established at each school, which monitored all activities and ensured fidelity to the grant goals and action plan. The Leadership Institutes provided professional development for each school’s Leadership Team members, enhancing their knowledge and competencies for shared leadership.
- A Critical Friends Group (CFG) was created at each school—facilitators for the professional learning communities that informed classroom and schoolwide practice. The CFG members were trained in the structure of different learning designs, the use of protocols or structured conversations, and facilitation skills.

Each school in the Consortium had at least five teachers on its Leadership Team and another five as CFG facilitators. By distributing leadership across the teaching staff through professional learning communities and examining data (including student work), achievement gaps could be identified and addressed. Nationally trained school-redesign and content coaches provided support to each school. The West Senior High participants were diligent about taking what they learned during professional development sessions to the rest of the staff. Staff meetings were dedicated to sharing information and collaboratively planning implementation of grant priorities and strategies. The Leadership Teams used release time to meet on site to plan and implement the work. They were also diligent about collecting data to inform the plan as each step unfolded.

At West Senior High, interdisciplinary and data-driven core teaching teams were assigned smaller units of shared, randomly selected students. These teams had common planning time available to align instruction with standards, the MME (Michigan Merit Exam), and the ACT college entrance exam. They identified essential learnings, developed common assessments, integrated career pathways and interdisciplinary instruction, and looked at student work and other data to make teaching and learning decisions. Strategies related to rigorous learning were implemented, including the establishment of essential learnings students were required to master to graduate. Tapping research by Hayes-Jacobs (2010), Wiggins and McTighe (2010), Stiggins (2014), the Michigan CES facilitated a collaborative process for teachers to formulate essential learnings aligned with state standards and content expectations. This process built the capacity of the professional learning communities to use a student data-driven cycle of continuous improvement for decision making regarding classroom and schoolwide practices. Over 50% of the staff assumed some form of leadership (Printy & Smith, 2013).

Teachers focused on student mastery for learning versus focusing on what was “covered.” For example, they assisted students in developing student exhibitions. In addition, literacy was taught in all subjects using content area materials. Efforts like this helped the teaching teams become masters at identifying outcomes and collecting and analyzing student, classroom, and schoolwide data.

All students demonstrated their mastery with 360-degree assessments such as exhibitions, portfolios, and capstone projects, as well as “slice” assessment of state standardized tests within their advisory. Student engagement heightened as interdisciplinary instruction, teaming, and emphasis on real-world application increased relevance to their lives, aligning place-based education, service learning, internships, etc. with essential learnings. This practice continues today.

Finally, schedules were constructed by the neighborhood teaching teams to assure there was flexibility to accommodate teaching strategies consistent with the way students learn most effectively. These schedules allowed for effective teacher teaming and lesson planning, and included common planning and blocks of time for extended learning activities.

Accountability Processes to Create Sustainability

Systems-level thinking for change also requires setting up structures across processes and around goals, both of which promote interactions and coordination across the organization. The data collection and analysis processes put in place to support a change initiative should create collective responsibility for teacher practice and student learning, as well as a systemic structure with clear accountability for implementing and monitoring the change desired in relation to the goals.

Putting together a cross-disciplinary leadership team containing members with varied strengths and philosophical beliefs helps to create collective responsibility. The first item on the agenda should be to create a vision for the team, as well as a set of norms to guide the work and how the team will conduct the work. To generate optimum investment and buy-in, the volunteer leadership team members should be given a list of responsibilities to help guide their decisions when they become members of the leadership team. These practices will shape the leadership team’s work and create collective responsibility and accountability. What sometimes occurs is that a member or members of the leadership team will act in name only. In other words, they will agree with the group behind closed doors, but then “drop out” and let the building leader take responsibility for the message to the broader school community. It is imperative that all leadership team members take on their role and responsibilities as true and active leaders of a system. If

something is agreed upon as a team, then all need to stand behind that decision as a team in front of the staff.

To move toward sustainability, a leader needs to empower the team members by giving them tasks and responsibilities and then get out of their way. This can be accomplished through a well-written, structured plan of action as outlined in the theory of change. The plan should be developed initially by the leaders, then discussed and amended as needed in coordination with all team members. Any plan needs to include timelines and accountability for each action step.

Research from the past few decades supports the theory that school communities must change their structures and their policies and practices to adequately prepare all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers. This work has a particular focus on challenging the inequities that exist for students who are disadvantaged, have disabilities, or are students of color. For the changes to be comprehensive and sustainable, extensive professional development must occur (NASSP, 2006).

Thus, high-quality professional development was provided throughout the project to (a) advance the practice of teachers, administrators, and other school staff; (b) define and implement effective, research-based instructional strategies for improving the academic achievement of students, particularly students with academic skills that were significantly below grade level; and (c) provide the knowledge and skills staff needed to participate effectively in the development and implementation of SLC.

For example, the CES facilitated school change by providing professional development that created a school-wide professional learning community focused on improving instruction and student achievement through collaboration, inquiry, and reflection. This process was driven by student achievement data and utilized a theory of change or road map based on research from the Consortium for Policy Research on Education (CPRE). These professional learning communities became the decision-making bodies of the school—a transfer of responsibility and accountability from school administrators to the practitioners (Furhmann & Odden, 2001).

The professional learning communities collaboratively investigated best practices in instruction. This included literacy strategies across content areas, formative assessments, extended instructional time, skills for catching up, curricula development for academic support, use of a continuous improvement cycle for data-driven decision making (including student work and other authentic assessments), identification of students needing support, and differentiated instruction. The Michigan CES professional development approach aligned with Learning Forward's characteristics of high-quality professional development adopted by Michigan's Board of Education. It was job-embedded and delivered in a variety of ways, primarily through on-site workshops that occurred during professional development release time days, during staff meetings, and/or during common planning time or release time where small groups of staff members were rotated through workshops or provided collaborative work time facilitated by a school-redesign coach.

Traverse City West structured smaller learning communities by grade-level neighborhoods so cross-curricular teams could meet during common planning time to discuss student concerns, successes, and areas that need improvement. In addition, time was built into the school calendar for PLC's in the core content areas to refine assignments, projects, Common Core and state standards alignment, common assessments and review student work using Critical Friends protocols. The schedule included six 90-minute meetings and one monthly meeting over the course of the school year. Many PLC's chose to meet even more often. Professional Learning included Writer's

Workshop, RAISE Literacy strategies, Instructional Rounds, and collection and analysis of student data to inform instructional practice (Printy & Smith, 2013).

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is a critical component in any commitment to systematic and intentional change. Continuous improvement efforts depend on leaders with a learning or growth mindset. They do not look for a “silver bullet,” but rather focus on disciplined processes for developing, testing, evaluating, and improving their work.

W. Edwards Deming (2000) is generally credited with the continuous improvement movement as a process he used to assist the Japanese industrial recovery following World War II. His Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle focuses on the goals of the organization, analyses of data to identify gaps between those goals and the current reality, and a plan to close the gaps. This business-based methodology emphasizes the collection of data to improve quality and create continual progress for the development of organizations. Deming (2000) stated that improving quality would reduce expenses while increasing productivity.

The PDSA cycle tests a change in the work setting by planning the change, trying it, observing the results, and acting on what is learned for the next cycle. The process has no endpoint, with four steps repeating as part of an unending cycle of continuous improvement:

- *Plan.* Identify a goal or purpose, formulate a theory, and define outcomes for success.
- *Do.* Implement the components of the plan.
- *Study.* Monitor outcomes to check the validity of the plan for signals of progress or problem areas for improvement.
- *Act.* Integrate what was learned by the entire process—adjusting the goal, methodology, or initial theory—and begin the cycle again. (Deming, 2000).

Although the term “continuous improvement” has been used extensively in educational circles in recent years, its actual implementation does not seem to be occurring on a wide scale. However, when it has been implemented, it has produced significant results (Park et al., 2013). Implemented with fidelity, continuous improvement models like PDSA in curricula could be groundbreaking in an educational setting.

In the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching white paper, the authors presented six common themes that characterized their review of three levels of educational organizations engaged in continuous improvement:

1. The classroom level, which promotes data-informed decision making in the classroom
2. The system-wide level, which implements a broader number of structural improvements from the administration and school board to support classroom activity (e.g., monetary investments in professional development)
3. The collective impact level, the broadest of the three, which involves a long-term commitment from a group of participants from outside the educational system who have a common agenda for solving specific problems (Park et al., 2013).

The six common themes were:

- Building capacity
- Data collection and analysis
- Methodology
- Organizational infrastructure
- Communications and engagement

- Leadership and strategy

According to Park et al. (2013), the processes used by organizations conducting continuous improvement work in the field of education included the following characteristics:

- Entry points were not mutually exclusive but could be multiple in varied contextual settings.
- Continuous improvement was not synonymous with simultaneous improvement of all processes.
- Research and learning cycles were iterative and gradual in nature.
- Despite being both iterative and gradual, it was imperative that the work be planned and undertaken in a rigorous, thoughtful, and transparent manner.

Any continuous improvement methodology needs to focus on system outcomes for specific beneficiaries—in this case, students. The act of measuring key processes and outcomes is crucial and needs to be embedded in the daily work of the staff. Quality improvement requires the application of an evidence-based methodology with its inherent standards, protocols, and guidelines, meeting new conditions as they evolve over time. This systems approach aligns with Deming's premise that results are viewed (and situated) as natural outflows of the current design of the system (Deming, 2000).

In this grant-funded effort, the CES road map to student achievement mileposts included a data-centered continuous improvement process. This process included the creation of professional learning communities, alignment of instruction and assessment with state standards, and improvement in practices in four key areas: school organization, classroom practice, leadership, and community connections.

The overarching goal for this Consortium was for students to be college and career ready, and the theory of change identified the following outcomes to achieve that goal:

- Schools would be reorganized into smaller learning communities.
- Classroom instruction would be reorganized around interdisciplinary, project-based themes.
- Leadership would be distributed to teacher teams responsible for the academic growth and support of the students in their SLC.

Ultimately, students and their success were at the center of the school changes at West Senior High. School structures that changed included advisories, smaller learning communities of teachers and students, and professional learning communities engaged in job-embedded professional development. 100 % of incoming freshmen had a peer mentor as well as a teacher advisor. At the end of the grant cycle, 75% of students reported feeling like they had more than one adult in the building they could go to (Printy & Smith, 2013). School practices that changed included best-practice instructional methods; data-driven decision-making; and collaborative and reflective design of curricula, instruction, and assessment. Although both Traverse City high schools were awarded the same grant funding and participated in the same professional learning opportunities and experiences, 10 years later, only West Senior High continues to operate the same structure of school "neighborhoods" with Advisories or SLCs.

Professional Learning

A final aspect of successful change involves professional learning and development. Hord and Roussin (2013) identified five interconnected phases of change as it relates to professional learning. These phases include preparation, incubation, insight, evaluation, and elaboration. Hord and

Roussin suggested three tips for a successful change initiative: (a) use data, (b) use stages of concern to help support and influence staff, and (c) use Learning Forward's Innovation Configuration Maps to help navigate the process.

Hirsch, Psencik, and Brown (2014) described a nine-step theory of change to improve student achievement that included four steps related to professional learning:

- Define clear descriptions of effective practice.
- Develop and maintain leadership capacity.
- Establish a consistent system of support for leaders.
- Collect multiple sources of data to determine professional learning needs.
- Provide differentiated professional learning for individual leaders and teams.
- Assure implementation of newly acquired skills.
- Improve administrator, teacher, and education practices.
- Improve student achievement.
- Continue the cycle.

Using this approach, the first type of outcome that a school organization is likely to see will be educators, principals, and teachers expanding upon their knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions. To accomplish this, these team members need to ask themselves the following questions: Why did I become an educator? What do I stand for as a teacher? What do I bring to the table? How do I check in or ensure I continue on the learning journey to benefit the students first, and then myself as a professional? (Fullan, 2003). Each team member must truly believe that ALL students can learn and must internalize a growth mindset so that can be transferred to the classroom, and each will ensure that all students are learning.

This individual sense of urgency alone will not make improvements (Fullan, 2003). Each individual educator needs to be supported by a system through the learning and processes that are put in place. The change that is being introduced and initiated can be supported through standards of professional learning (Learning Forward, 2011). Learning Forward developed the following seven Standards for Professional Learning. Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and positive results for all students includes:

- Learning Communities – Learning communities that are committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- Leadership – Skillful leaders who develop their capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- Resources – The prioritization, monitoring, and coordination of resources for educator learning.
- Data – The use of a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and systems data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.
- Learning Designs – Integrated theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve intended outcomes.
- Implementation – The application of research on change and sustained support for the implementation of professional learning for long-term change.
- Outcomes – Alignment of outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

For example, Learning Forward members subscribe to a learning cycle in which the above standards are applied to any professional learning or change initiative; this results in improvement in educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This, in turn, will lead to changes in educator practice, resulting in improvements in student learning (Learning Forward, 2011).

DuFour and Eaker (1998) stated that “. . . enduring catalysts for change are a powerful sense of purpose, a widely shared vision of what an organization might become, and a collective commitment to act in a way that will make that vision a reality” (p. 55). Thus, developing a positive culture is an important factor to the success of any initiative. Do team members feel valued and respected? Do they all feel that they have a voice? Are their needs and concerns understood and respected? The answers to these questions can be reflected at the most practical level. Successful professional development involves identifying training days and times that are flexible and work for the stakeholders’ schedules. This may mean both day and night sessions; multiple sessions at different times; small-group, large-group, and online options; the need for substitute teachers; and an adequate budget.

Creating a Positive Culture for Change

It is important to note that nothing in any documented practice in schools is a model to be followed exactly. Communities have to use the process of continuous improvement with their own data to identify what works for them and for their community.

Hord and Roussin (2013) identified six beliefs about change:

- All change is based on learning.
- Implementing a change is more successful when there is social interaction.
- Individuals must change before an organization can change.
- True, effective change affects emotional and behavioral responses.
- People will embrace change more easily when they are able to see how the change factor enhances their work.
- Sustainable change is more apt to occur when others “own” the change initiative.

The process of change can cause disruption and challenges within any organization. Within most educational institutions, these changes occur more slowly than in the business world because data cannot be obtained as frequently or as quickly to make immediate change visible. Moreover, this kind of long-term improvement and change requires frequent communication with all involved parties, flexibility from all participants, and a shared set of goals.

Change is not a linear process, but the likelihood of success and sustainability will increase if leaders give attention to the following:

- Know the problem that drives the purpose as well as the future state.
- Identify the stakeholders and their needs.
- Ensure student results is the focus; create a theory of change based on a logic model and continuous improvement cycle.
- Create processes and structures to support and sustain change.
- Use research-based resources to support change efforts.

Conclusion

Successful sustainable change in K-12 education requires rigor, patience, intensive thinking and communication, and consistent effort over time—guided by the development and implementation of an underlying theory of change. Traverse City West Senior High’s story presented in this article is a relevant example of how to implement a change model. Administrators first identified a problem; the high school was “too big” and students were getting lost in the cracks academically and socially. They then identified and engaged all stakeholders, ensuring everyone was on the same

page in creating an environment for students where “everyone is known, being known matters”—a motto West Senior High still espouses. Finally, they created accountability structures, new practices, and continuous improvement cycles to ensure the needs of all students were being met. While the smaller learning communities are not currently operating exactly as designed when the grant was originally funded, this large high school retains a personal feel for staff and students. Change worked.

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Collaborative Principal-School Counselor Preparation: National Standards Alignment to Improve Training Between Principals and School Counselors

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Abstract

To meet the challenges of promoting equitable educational opportunities and improved academic achievement for all P-12 students, principals and school counselors must join forces in substantive ways. However, higher education preparation programs for principals and school counselors have not typically collaborated in efforts to prepare candidates to work together through curricula employing national standards from both fields. The purpose of this project was to align standards and competencies from National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) to develop units of study for preparation programs that foster effective partnerships between administrators and school counselors. Guided by Social Capital Theory, this paper outlines standards-aligned curricular units for principal preparation, developed in partnership with school counseling faculty, that are currently being implemented at one Midwestern university with the goal of promoting collaboration toward P-12 student success.

Keywords: Principal-Counselor Collaboration, Leadership Preparation, Cross-Discipline Standards Alignment, Social Justice Leadership

Effective relationships between principals and school counselors are imperative as we develop high-quality educational opportunity for all children, their families, and communities (Connolly & Protheroe, 2009; Dollarhide, Smith, & Lemberger, 2007; Martin, 2013). Working as allies, principals and school counselors are in a unique position to forge systemic change that promotes social justice, fosters student success, and develops partnerships with the school community to directly support the school's vision and mission (Connolly & Protheroe, 2009; Dahir, Burnham, Stone & Cobb, 2010; Janson, Militello, Kosine, 2008).

In their preparation programs, school counselors are trained to implement state and national professional counseling standards and competencies, including comprehensive school counseling programs based on the American School Counselor Association's national model (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012b). The ASCA national model calls for comprehensive school counseling to become an integral part of the school's academic mission and provides a framework with four essential components: foundation, management, delivery, and accountability (ASCA, 2012b). Roles of school counselors and use-of-time allocations are clearly outlined in comprehensive school counseling programs as counselors strive to address the academic, career, personal, and social development of all students (ASCA 2008, 2012b). In addition, under the ASCA (2012b) model, school counselors are summoned to leadership and advocacy roles within their schools and communities, which is fitting as reform in today's P-12 educational system calls for school leadership to be a collaborative effort (Brown et al., 2016; College Board, 2008; Janson, Stone & Clark, 2009; Marbley, Malott, Flaherty, & Frederick, 2011; Martin, 2013; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2017; Wingfield, Reese, & West-Olatunju, 2010).

Research indicates that strong comprehensive school counseling programs favorably advance important school goals like improved student achievement, opportunity, and equity (Carey & Dimmitt, 2012; Carey & Martin, 2015; Wilkerson, Perusse, & Hughes, 2013). However, research also reveals that few school administrator preparation programs provide principal candidates with information on comprehensive school counseling or the national ASCA standards (Bringman, Mueller, & Lee, 2010; Leuwerke, Walker & Shi, 2009). Principals often exhibit lack of understanding about the appropriate roles of school counselors per the national model, which may

create barriers for implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs (Armstrong, MacDonald, & Stillo, 2010; Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005).

The success of a school counseling program, like all vital programs within a school, is contingent upon support from the school leader (Amatea & Clark, 2005; Duslak & Geier, 2018). A positive partnership between the principal and school counselor may enhance outcomes in many areas, for example, increased support for at-risk and disadvantaged students (Johnson & Perkins, 2009), establishment of an achievement-oriented school climate (College Board, 2008), and heightened social justice advocacy (Crawford, Arnold, & Brown, 2014). Therefore, the need for effective and collaborative principal-counselor relationships cannot be overstated and prompts important implications and recommendations for administrator preparation programs. These recommendations, as outlined by Carnes-Holt, Range, and Cisler (2012), stress the need for principal candidates to be educated about the importance of school counselors and their appropriate roles, the ASCA national model for comprehensive school counseling, and the potential for partnerships between school counseling and administrative preparatory programs at the university level. In addition, it is essential for principal candidates to learn how to effectively work with school counselors to increase student achievement (Mason & Perera-Diltz, 2010) and for principals to include counselors in school improvement processes and leadership activities (Wingfield, Reese, & West-Olatunju, 2010; Young, Millard & Kneale, 2013). Improving the preparation of P-12 principals to effectively collaborate with school counselors per the national standards from both fields is the focus of this manuscript.

Although there is growing awareness of the importance of communication and respect in the principal-counselor relationship (Duslak & Geier, 2018; Finkelstein, 2009), principals may still be unaware or unclear about counselors' responsibilities and appropriate roles per comprehensive school counseling programs (Graham, Desmond, & Zinsser, 2011; Williams & Wehrman, 2010). Despite precise definitions of the school counselor's role by ASCA (2005, 2008) as a leader, advocate, collaborator, and systemic change agent; a lack of clarity regarding the role of the school counselor among principals has persisted. These include the principal viewing the counselor as a quasi-administrator and assigning the counselor inappropriate duties such as testing coordinator or disciplinarian, unrealistic use-of-time expectations, conflicting program focus, and role disparity (ASCA 2012b; Dahir et al., 2010; Edwards, Grace & King, 2014; Martin, 2013; Williams & Wehrman, 2010). In summary, principals' unclear role perceptions and their lack of understanding about the ASCA national model may present challenges for school counselors by placing barriers to the effective implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs and also by reducing the amount of time counselors have available to spend on appropriate duties as defined by ASCA (2008; 2012b).

At the same time, counselors may lack knowledge of national professional preparatory standards for principals; the National Educational Leadership Preparation standards (NELP), and this may limit school counselors' understanding of principals' roles and responsibilities (National Policy Board for Educational Administration [NPBEA], 2018). However, by introducing future principals and school counselors to the roles and standards from both ASCA and NELP while they are in training, a new understanding of the need for collaboration may be developed. To this end, we sought to develop a series of standards-aligned curricular units to be presented to principals and school counselors during their preparation programs, designed to foster positive collaborative relationships between future principals and school counselors towards school improvement and social justice. This paper details the principal preparation components of this project, which are currently being implemented at a Midwestern university.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to align standards and competencies from the new NELP standards with the ASCA standards to develop units of study that demonstrate collaboration between departments of educational leadership and school counseling in higher education institutions (ASCA, 2012a, 2012b, 2014, 2016; NPBEA, 2018). We strive to be proactive in preparing a new generation of highly collaborative school leaders who are equipped to partner with school counselors and other school stakeholders to create equitable and culturally responsive P-12 environments. Specifically, this project cultivates partnerships between principals and counselors with the goal of effectively navigating current educational challenges and promoting equity through cooperative practices that support all P-12 students through implementation of research-based standards and competencies.

Separate training programs for administrators and school counselors decrease opportunities for leaders and decision makers to understand roles, responsibilities, and relationships between the two disciplines (Carnes-Holt, Range, & Cisler, 2012; Shoner & Williamson, 2000). As the leading national standards for their respective fields, NELP and ASCA standards are critical components of principal and school counselor preparation programs throughout the United States (ASCA, 2004; NPBEA, 2018). Our goal was to bring together leading national standards from educational leadership and school counseling to identify and develop curricular units to prepare principals and school counselors to work together judiciously and effectively in educational settings. Furthermore, the integration of culturally responsive standards-based practices for principals and school counselors to enhance cultural competency, promote education for social justice, develop social capital networks, and foster inclusive school environments are important component of our joint training framework.

Research suggests that efforts to increase educational opportunities and collaboration between administrators, school counselors, and school stakeholders should take place to better prepare P-12 students to be college and career ready (DeSimone & Roberts, 2016). Studies on the topic of administrator and school counselor relationships have been completed (e.g. Dahir et al., 2010; Finkelstein, 2009; Janson, Militello, Kosine, 2008); and principal-counselor collaborative leadership models have been proposed (McCarty, Wallin, & Boggan, 2014). However, it is difficult to implement a collaborative pre-service program between two academic departments while integrating national standards and competencies for both programs. This paper will outline a comprehensive standards alignment with curricular units for principal preparation to promote collaboration with school counselors toward P-12 student success.

Theoretical Framework

Social Capital Theory guides this work and refers to the relationships and social networks (i.e. principal-counselor-students-families-communities) where information and resources are shared and developed at the individual or institutional level. It has been proposed that variations in levels of social capital might be one reason why some schools and students perform at higher levels (Coleman, 1988; Linn, 2001; Ortiz, 2001; Plagens, 2011).

Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988) are widely recognized for early development and application of Social Capital Theory in educational contexts. Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital in terms of an individual's actual or potential access to institutional resources. Bourdieu postulated that a person's level of social capital was dependent on the size of his or her network of connections,

plus the collective amount of social capital possessed by each person in that network (Dika & Singh, 2002).

In schools, social capital and the pedagogic work of educators, as defined by Bourdieu and Passeron (2000) can work towards either preserving or transforming the status quo (English & Bolton, 2016). Bourdieu's concept of social capital suggests that most educational "reform" movements (e.g. high-stakes testing, school choice, vouchers) serve to maintain current cultural power structures and repressive practices, rather than dismantle them (English & Bolton, 2016). Therefore, school leadership requires a strong social justice perspective and understanding of culturally responsive practices (Minkos et al., 2017), as well as appreciation of social capital networks and relationship development as assets for school and student success (Plagens, 2011).

Employing a social capital lens, Coleman (1988) examined why high school graduation rates were higher in private religious schools than public schools. Coleman demonstrated the value of social capital to students in the private religious schools by identifying the sizeable and influential network of social relations that existed between parents, the school, and institutions in the community (Ortiz, 2001). In sum, social capital acted as a helpful resource (Coleman, 1988).

In school-based social capital, relationships occur at two levels, which include the micro-level (e.g., principals and families, principals and school counselors, school counselors and families) as well as at the macro-level (e.g., schools, community, business, or government agencies). Social capital plays a critical role in educational outcomes for P-12 students because school personnel such as principals and counselors, as well community partners, have valuable information, resources, and opportunities to help meet the changing needs of P-12 students (Lin, 2001). As such, the development of social capital guides our joint training of principals and school counselors to be change agents who pool their collective resources through teamwork.

Method

The purpose of this project was to align national standards and competencies for educational leadership and school counseling, and to promote collaboration in training programs in higher education with a focus on social justice. University faculty members from educational leadership and school counseling developed the standards alignments and curricular units.

To start the process, we first conducted a comprehensive literature review to understand current practices surrounding principal and school counselor collaboration for both pre-service training and current practitioners. The literature provided insights into the importance of effective working relationships between principals and school counselors and also highlighted potential overlaps in skill development and training for principals and school counselors. We took insights gleaned from the literature and began an extensive review of standards and competencies that guide principal and school counselor training including *NELP Standards for Building Level Leaders* (NPBEA, 2018), *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors* (2016), and *ASCA School Counselor Competencies* (2012a).

After review of each set of standards or competencies separately, we mapped out an alignment of all three sets. This alignment went through several versions where we interrogated the alignment to ensure appropriateness and proper fit of each standard and competency. As a result, six curricular units for principal preparation were developed. Pre and post assessments were also developed to evaluate whether our intended curriculum was enacted (Porter, 2006).

Standards-Aligned Curricula Units

Our curricular units and standards alignment allows future principals and school counselors opportunities to work together as collaborators to provide equitable learning opportunities for all P-12 students and to advocate for positive changes in public education for children, families, and communities (Bickmore & Curry, 2013; Perusse, Roynton, Parzych, & Goodnough, 2015). While aligning the national standards and competencies, we identified themes and trends for intentional partnerships between departments of educational leadership and school counseling in higher education with a focus on culturally responsive practices.

We incorporated social justice advocacy throughout the curricula. To provide candidates with research, theory, and practical applications of social justice leadership, we developed culturally responsive practices for each unit and also adopted a textbook as a “core reader” to be used in six foundational courses during the principal preparation program. The core reader we selected was, *Leadership for Increasingly Diverse Schools* (Theoharis & Scanlan, 2015). Two to three chapters are studied in each course. A culminating reflection and application activity occurs in the internship at the end of the principal preparation program.

The following six units are currently being implemented in the principal preparation program, with parallel units soon to be implemented in the school counseling preparation program. The units developed for the principal preparation program are the focus of this paper and are summarized below.

Unit 1: Introduction to Comprehensive School Counseling (CSC)

This unit is designed for school administration candidates who are beginning their degree or licensure program. Candidates are introduced to the national standards and competencies that guide educational leadership and school counseling preparation, as well as the framework for comprehensive school counseling. Seven topics are included in this unit and cover themes such as the research surrounding comprehensive school counseling, college and career readiness, NELP standards, and key aspects of culturally responsive practices. The *ASCA National Model* and *ASCA Student Mindsets and Behaviors For Student Success* are also introduced in this unit (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012b, 2014). Example class activities include having principal candidates write leadership essays describing how they will work collaboratively with school counselors to implement CSC. The standards alignment for this unit is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Standards Alignment for Unit 1: Introduction to Comprehensive School Counseling (CSC)

Unit 1 Topics	<i>ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors</i>	<i>ASCA School Counselor Competencies</i>	<i>NELP Standards for Building Level Leaders</i>
1.1 Framework for CSC (<i>The ASCA National Model</i>)	All standards	I-A-1, I-B-2, I-B-2d, III-B-4d, V-B-3a	1.1-1.2

1.2 The research base behind effective school counseling programs and best practices	A.1, A.3-8, B.1, B.2	I-A-3, I-B-1b, I-C-7, IV-A-5, IV-B-3, V-A-2, V-B-1f, C-V-3, V-C-1	3.1, 3.2, 3.3
1.3 College and career readiness (CCR)	A.4. a-d	I-A-8, I-C-3, II-A-8, III-A-5, III-B-2d, III-B-2e-g, III-B-3I, plus <i>ASCA Student Mindsets and Behaviors For Student Success</i>	4.1, 4.2, 4.4
1.4 Education and licensure of counselor	D. a-n	II-B-1b, II-B-4a	7.1
1.5 State and national standards	E. a-c	I-B-3e, I-B-5c, II-A-1, II-A-2, II-A-6, II-B-1, II-B-3, II-B-3a	2.1, 2.2, 2.3
1.6 Key aspects of culturally responsive practices	A.6. e, B.1 d.	I-A-6, III-A-6	3.1, 3.2
1.7 Skills and dispositions for culturally responsive practices	A.1. f	III-A-6, IV-B-3c	3.3

Note. Standards and competencies from NELP and ASCA (ASCA, 2012a, 2016; NPBEA, 2018). *The ASCA National Model* and *ASCA Student Mindsets and Behaviors For Student Success* are introduced in this unit (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012b, 2014).

Unit 2: The Roles of the School Counselor and the Administrator

In Unit 2, the roles and responsibilities of both administrative and school counselor positions are studied. Following an introduction to comprehensive school counseling in Unit 1, eight topics related to the duties of school counselors and administrators are included in this unit. Themes such as the administrator-counselor relationship, counselors as advocates for all students, and supporting students' social, emotional, and academic needs are covered. Principal candidates learn the appropriate utilization of a counselor's time, expertise, and skills in this unit. Example activities include principal candidates learning how to conduct school equity audits for purposes of school improvement. The standards alignment for Unit 2 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Standards Alignment for Unit 2: The Roles of the School Counselor and the Administrator

Unit 2 Topics	<i>ASCA Ethical Standards for</i>	<i>ASCA School Counselor Competencies</i>	<i>NELP Standards</i>

	<i>School Counselors</i>		<i>for Building Level Leaders</i>
2.1 The administrator-counselor relationship	B.2. e.	I-B-1e, I-B-4, I-C-5, IV-C-3	7.1, 7.2
2.2 The counselor's use of time	B.2. c.	IV-A-4, IV-B-2c, IV-B-4, IV-B-4a, IV-B-4b, IV-B-4d, IV-B-5, IV-B-5a-b	7.1, 7.3, 7.4
2.3 Collaboration of counselors, administrators, teachers, and other school personnel to serve all students	B.2. a-f	I-A-6, I-B-4, I-C-5	3.3, 7.2
2.4 Supporting students socially, emotionally, and academically	A.1. a-j	I-A-9, I-B-4, I-B-4c, I-B-5, I-C-1, III-A-5, III-A-6, III-B-1b, III-C-2	1.1, 3.1, 3.2
2.5 Counselors as advocates for all students	A.6. 1-h, A.10. a-g	I-A-5, I-B-1c, I-B-3, I-B-3a, I-B-3b-d, I-C-4, II-C-1	7.2, 5.1, 5.3
2.6 Crisis response planning	A.9. a-d	III-A-7, III-A-8, III-B-3, III-B-3f, III-B-3g, III-B-3m	6.1, 6.3
2.7 Shifting from deficit to assets-based thinking	A.10. a-g	III-A-6	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
2.8 Examining community cultural wealth	A.10. a, c	-	3.1

Note. Standards and competencies from NELP and ASCA (ASCA, 2012a, 2016; NPBEA, 2018).

Unit 3: Delivery and Management of Counseling Services

Counseling services are delivered in a variety of modes and approaches. Effective methods of providing and managing those services are covered in Unit 3. The content in Unit 3 builds upon the knowledge and understanding of school counselors' and administrators' roles in Unit 2. Six topics are included in Unit 3 and concentrate on themes such as managing student services programs, direct and indirect CSC services, human resource management and resource allocation, and leadership for social justice. As part of *The ASCA National Model*, the four CSC program components of foundation, management, delivery, and accountability are reviewed (ASCA, 2003, 2005, 2012b). Example class activities include principal candidates learning how to utilize collaborative processes for effective search, screening, and hiring of school counselors. Table 3 summarizes the standards alignment for this unit.

Table 3

Standards Alignment for Unit 3: Delivery and Management of Counseling Services

Unit 3 Topics	<i>ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors</i>	<i>ASCA School Counselor Competencies</i>	<i>NELP Standards for Building Level Leaders</i>
3.1 Management of student services program	All standards	IV-A-6, IV-B-1, V-B-1a, IV-B-1b	6.1, 6.2
3.2 Direct and indirect CSC services	A.1. a-j, A.4. a-d, A.8. a-b, A.7. a-j	III-B-1-III-B-4d	2.2, 4.4
3.3 Hiring of counselors	-	-	7.1
3.4 Appropriate counselor to student ratio	B.2. e	V-B-1	6.1, 7.3
3.4 Financial and human resources in support of comprehensive school counseling	A.3. e	IV-B-1, IV-B-6e	7.1, 7.2, 7.4
3.5 Leadership for equity and social justice	A.1. f	I-A-5, I-A-8	1.1, 3.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3
3.6 Human resource management of counselors for equity and social justice	A.10. a-g	I-A-6	7.1, 7.4

Note. Standards and competencies from NELP and ASCA (ASCA, 2012a, 2016; NPBEA, 2018).

Unit 4: Professionalism, Ethics, and Legal Issues

In Unit 4, professional, ethical, and legal decisions and issues for school counselors and administrator are presented. While methods to deliver and manage counseling services are discussed in Unit 3, the content in Unit 4 specifically reviews five topics related to professional and ethical decision-making. Topics in this unit include confidentiality, *A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools* (Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen, & Pollitt, 2013), and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* ([ESSA], P.L. 114-95, 2015). The *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors* (2016) are incorporated into this unit to better prepare administrators and counselors to advocate for all students. Principal candidates also learn requirements for reporting child-abuse, suicide, and bullying; as well as prevention and intervention techniques. Example class activities include reflection papers on case studies surrounding these and other important child-advocacy issues. The standards alignment for this unit is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Standards Alignment for Unit 4: Professionalism, Ethics, and Legal Issues

Unit 4 Topics	<i>ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors</i>	<i>ASCA School Counselor Competencies</i>	<i>NELP Standards for Building Level Leaders</i>
4.1 Counselor and administrator professionalism and ethical standards	All standards (especially F. a-i)	I-A-7, I-B-1h, II-A-7, II-B-4a, II-B-4b, II-B-4g, II-B-4i, II-B-4j, II-B-4k	2.1, 2.2, 2.3
4.2 Confidentiality	A.2. a-o, A.12. a, A.13. c	II-B-4k	2.1, 2.3
4.3 Prevention, intervention, and reporting of suicide, child-abuse, bullying, harassment	A.9. 1-d, A.11. a-e	I-A-9, III-A-7	2.1, 2.2, 6.3
4.4 A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools	A.10 a-g, A.11 a-e, B.2 m-n	I-A-9, IV-B-3g	2.3, 6.1
4.5 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	A.2 j, A.6 c	I-A-7, II-C-5	6.2, 6.3

Note. Standards and competencies from NELP and ASCA (ASCA, 2012a, 2016; NPBEA, 2018). *A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools* (Cowan et al., 2013) and *ESSA* (2015) are also included in this unit.

Unit 5: Evidence-Based Accountability and Improvement Processes

The accountability and continuous improvement plans for administrators and school counselors are emphasized in Unit 5. Building upon the professional, ethical, and legal subjects from Unit 4, Unit 5 focuses on nine topics related to data-based decision-making and cooperative improvement processes. Examples of topics include the school counselor's role on school leadership teams, self-assessment, and annual agreements between school administrators and counselors. The topics in Unit 5 also stress the importance of ongoing professional development and continuing education opportunities for school counselors and administrators. Example class activities include principal candidates interviewing school counselors and learning effective counselor evaluation techniques and processes. Table 5 presents the standards alignment.

Table 5

Standards Alignment for Unit 5: Evidence-Based Accountability and Improvement Processes

Unit 5 Topics	<i>ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors</i>	<i>ASCA School Counselor Competencies</i>	<i>NELP Standards for Building Level Leaders</i>
5.1 Data-based program assessment	A.3. a-g, A.13. i	1-C-7, IV-A-5, IV-B-2d, IV-B-3a-f, IV-B-4a, IV-B-6f, V-A-2, V-A-3, V-B-1, V-B-1a-b, V-B-1e, V-B-1h	4.3, 6.2
5.2 The counselor's role on school leadership teams	A.3. a	I-B-2, I-B-2a-c, III-A-5, III-A-6	1.2
5.3 CSC advisory councils	A.4. a	I-A-6, I-B-1e, I-B-1h	1.2, 5.2, 5.3
5.4 Counselor's evaluation by the administrator	-	V-B-2a, V-B-2b, V-B-2c	7.4
5.5 Counselor's self-assessments	A.13. i	II-B-4h, III-B-4a-c, IV-B-1g, V-B-2a	7.4
5.6 Annual agreements	-	IV-B-1e	7.2
5.7 Counselor's professional development and continuing education	B.2. d	IV-B-1d, IV-B-1e, IV-B-1g	7.3
5.8 & 5.9 Examine internal implicit bias, identity, and privilege through lenses of race, linguistic diversity, class, sexuality, gender (dis)ability, and power	A.10. a-g	III-A-6, IV-B-3c	3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Note. Standards and competencies from NELP and ASCA (ASCA, 2012a, 2016; NPBEA, 2018).

Unit 6: Family and Community Partnerships and Engagement

Methods of establishing and maintaining effective partnerships between school stakeholders, school counselors, and administrators are outlined in Unit 6. As Unit 5 emphasizes accountability and continuous improvement for school counselors and administrators, Unit 6 highlights the necessity of creating commitment to all students' success with families and communities and methods to do so. Five topics are included in this unit and focus on themes such as effective communications and engaging the community in the comprehensive school counseling program. In addition, a culminating reflection and application (internship) activity regarding culturally responsive practices is included in Unit 6. Example activities include the principal candidate and school counselor collaborating on a robust school improvement project at the school site. The standards alignment for this unit is outlined in Table 6.

Table 6

Standards Alignment for Unit 6: Family and Community Partnerships and Engagement

Unit 6 Topics	<i>ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors</i>	<i>ASCA School Counselor Competencies</i>	<i>NELP Standards for Building Level Leaders</i>
6.1 Parents/Guardians as partners in student success	A.6. a, B.1. a-i	I-A-6, I-B-1e, I-B-4, I-C-5	5.1, 5.3
6.2 Effective communications	B.1. e, B.1. h	I-B-1e, IV-B-6g	5.1
6.3 Community and business partnerships	A.6. f	I-C-5	5.2
6.4 Engaging the community in the CSC	A.6. a-d	I-B-2, I-B-4, IV-B-2	5.1, 5.2, 5.3
6.5 Culturally responsive standards-based practices for administrators and counselors	A.6. e, A.10. a, B.1. d	I-B-4c, II-B-4b	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4

Note. Standards and competencies from NELP and ASCA (ASCA, 2012a, 2016; NPBEA, 2018).

Discussion

This paper outlines standards-aligned preparatory units for principals designed to foster partnerships with school counselors towards social capital development and success for all P-12 students in today's schools. We incorporated culturally responsive practices and leadership for social justice throughout the units as social justice curricula has been shown to influence the development of positive dispositions in school leadership candidates (Allen, Harper, & Koschoreck, 2017). Taken together, the new units allow application of every component of the NELP Building-Level Leadership Standards 1-7, with additional collaborative leadership practice in the internship experience (Standard 8) at the end of the program (NPBEA, 2018). These units were designed to encourage teamwork, communication, and understanding between principals and counselors; and were developed by a team of educational leadership and school counseling faculty members who teach the preparatory courses. Faculty members have begun implementing the units and we are helping each other in the development of lessons, joint presentations, resources, and assessments.

In relation to our theoretical framework, the alignment and curricula developed in this project outlines intentional collaboration between administrative and school counselor training programs that promotes the development of social capital networks. This occurs at both the micro- and macro-levels as identified by Coleman (1988) and Lin (2001). Units 1-5 are focused on developing future administrators' knowledge about counselors and effective counselor-principal professional relationships (micro-level) that are most impactful when the professionals are culturally competent and collaborative. Therefore, cultural competence and an understanding of engagement with the larger community and outside resources at the macro-level are also developed in these units. Unit 6 situates the role of principals and counselors as integral to an understanding of families and the larger communities (macro-level). In sum, the units serve to develop collaborative relationships

and increased social capital networks for students and schools, which enhances access to institutional resources and opportunities (Bourdieu, 1986).

Moving forward, it will be important to continuously evaluate and improve the curricular units using assessments, research, and standards to guide our revisions. We have conducted pre-assessments of all incoming principal candidates in terms of their current attitudes regarding social justice leadership and their understanding of the roles of school principals in working with school counselors. We will be monitoring our candidates' progress using post-evaluations and other measures as they complete the units. We look forward to assessing candidates' attitudes and understandings as they move through the preparatory programs to determine if we are meeting our goal of developing candidates who understand and can demonstrate principal-counselor collaboration, social justice leadership, and social capital network development.

The units we have created for principal preparation promote understanding and practical application of essential teamwork between principals and counselors. Our units were developed by university faculty from educational leadership and school counseling collaboratively from a collective standards alignment that focuses on shared leadership, social justice advocacy, and vision between principals and counselors. We believe implementation of our units is an initial and promising step in the career development of principals and school counselors who will join forces to improve P-12 student outcomes.

Conclusions

Public education and the needs of P-12 students are ever changing, and it is important that educators are trained in ways that promote collaborative, "all hands-on deck" efforts to ensure educational opportunity and equity. As this collaboration is needed at the school level, training models must adapt and move from training in silos to building intentional partnerships that foster appropriate skill development.

While current literature highlights the importance of the principal-counselor relationship in meeting the academic, personal/social, and career development needs of students, few researchers have explored the process by which graduate level training programs intentionally prepare each to enter these collaborative relationships in P-12 schools. This project fills this gap by developing joint standards-based curricular units designed to promote principal-counselor teamwork, communication, understanding, and respect.

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