



**Research and Best Practices That Advance the Profession
of Educational Administration**

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A Message From the Editor

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This issue contains two best practice articles, four research articles, and one commentary. The best practice article focuses on preparation of administrators. The key to preparing administrators is not “HOW” we choose to prepare future leaders but “WHAT” constitutes the preparation they receive. The proposed model suggests four strands and a unifying theme. The four strands—1) knowledge, 2) skills, 3) educational values/beliefs, and 4) processes—are tied together through a commitment to having future educational leaders engage in reflective analysis through metacognition and introspection throughout the program.

In the second article on best practice, the authors propose that politics does not have to be associated with stereotypical negative behaviors such as double-talk, deal-making, trading favors, cronyism, or “you-scratch-my-back-I’ll-scratch-yours.” There is another kind of politics that employs tactics that are above-board, wise, necessary, and practical for achieving the goals of a school system. This article describes five *positive* strategies for dealing with the politics of school administration: **Anticipate, Form Alliances, Listen, Activate Your Networks, and Communicate**. Instructions are also given for mapping the political terrain of any given issue.

The first research article discusses principal shortages. Current principal shortages have resulted in 20 states offering alternative principal certification. Yet, program practices vary widely throughout these states. This study investigated perceptions of principals and superintendents on alternative principal certification policy elements. This study produced recommendations for future policy design and implementation of alternative principal certification programs nationally.

Included in the second research article are the results of a study focused on future Minnesota school leadership openings. Data from the study demonstrate issues of concern in the areas of gender, ethnicity, age and demand. The number of projected openings suggests that it is not too early to begin a collaborative effort among administrative preparation institutions, professional organizations, and state educational agencies to meet K-12 needs for school leaders.

The third research article is a quantitative, causal-comparative study whose purpose was to examine the relationship between using the Data Collaborative Model (DCM) and student achievement through state assessment passing rates in math and reading in order to provide data for decision-making purposes. The rationale was campuses that have attempted to create and implement a culture of data-driven decision making in a collaborative, reflective setting over a 3-year period would see an increase in teacher effectiveness and student performance. Findings from this study revealed there was not a statistically significant difference in state assessment passing rates in reading between high and low implementation campuses. However, there was a statistical difference in math, both in the *within*

and the *between* tests in Usage Type. Moreover, the findings also indicated that high implementation campuses had higher state assessment passing rates and higher mean gains than low implementation campuses. Finally, the study findings revealed that teachers are more likely than administrators not only to understand the DCM, but to also utilize the process and tools more often.

The final research article investigated the effects of a principal's gender and leadership style on 85 preservice principals' post internship concerns about becoming a principal. Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures showed a main effect for the principal's gender on self-related concerns and task-related concerns about becoming a principal.

Lastly, a commentary by a veteran educator is included. She has lots of stories to tell, but most of those stories center around the various players in her professional life—students, parents, board members, and colleagues. This story is different—it is about her and the impact of a recent research and writing experience that powerfully affected the way she thinks about school leadership.

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Soup du Jour and So Much More: A Model for School Leader Preparation

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Alice: *Would you tell me please which way I ought to go from here?*

Cheshire: *That depends a great deal on where you want to get to.*

Alice: *I don't much care where—*

Cheshire: *Then it doesn't matter which way you go.*

Alice: *... so long as I get somewhere*

Cheshire: *Oh, you're sure to do that—if you only walk long enough.*

--Alice in Wonderland (Lewis Carroll)

Where to go in principal preparation programs is the question that has surfaced and resurfaced for over 20 years. This question paired with the current political climate that demands strong educational accountability has created a powerful impetus to change, modify, or redesign principal preparation programs.

The past couple of years have been particularly challenging. For example, in one week, the Department of Educational

Leadership and Policy Studies received an e-mail from the Dean, a note from the Provost and a letter from the President all informing us of the report by Arthur Levine entitled *Educating School Leaders* (2005).

However, Dr. Levine's is only the latest report *du jour* to suggest the failures of our public school systems are due in part to the supposedly poor quality of the preparation programs for educational leaders.

Dr. Levine's report joins a long line of distinguished reports over the past 20 years that advocate a variety of approaches and reforms for preparing educational leaders. These range from establishing a clinical study component (Baugh, 2003; Daresh, 2001; Sergiovanni, 1988) to requiring full-time residential study (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1989); from broadening the scope of administrative preparatory programs to include a traditional academic studies model (Sergiovanni, 1988) to limiting the program to reflect a professional studies model (Baugh, 2003; Bridges and Hallinger, 1993; Daresh, 2001; National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, 1987; Shibles, 1988); from delineating degrees for educational leadership practitioners (MEd, EdD) from those designed for educational leadership academicians (MA, MS, PhD) (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1989).

Although reflection and debate elevate the discourse, it appears over the past 20 years there has been little consensus on the best model for educational leadership preparation. Over 15 years ago, we proposed a model of administrative preparation that suggested it is not "HOW" we prepare educational leaders, but "WHAT" is contained in the leadership preparation program that will make the

difference (Bowser & Sherman, 1989). We would like to revisit and expand on the model previously proposed.

The model is predicated on the belief that an educational leadership preparation program cannot impart all of the knowledge that a future educational leader will need throughout his or her professional career. To assume we could do this would imply that the knowledge base required for excellent school leadership is static and this is clearly not the case. The very fact that we keep revisiting the best way to prepare educational leaders supports the stand that the knowledge base is continually evolving and expanding.

Therefore, the intent of any principal preparation program should be to help future leaders develop and refine their conceptual and intellectual skills to effectively incorporate and utilize the knowledge emerging in this ever-changing field. These skills allow an individual to engage in conceptual thinking such as: critical thinking, problem analysis, decision-making, and leadership. In an attempt to accomplish this outcome, all graduate programs in educational leadership should include four strands: knowledge, skills, beliefs/values, and processes. These four strands are situated within a contextual field of reflective inquiry (see Figure 1).

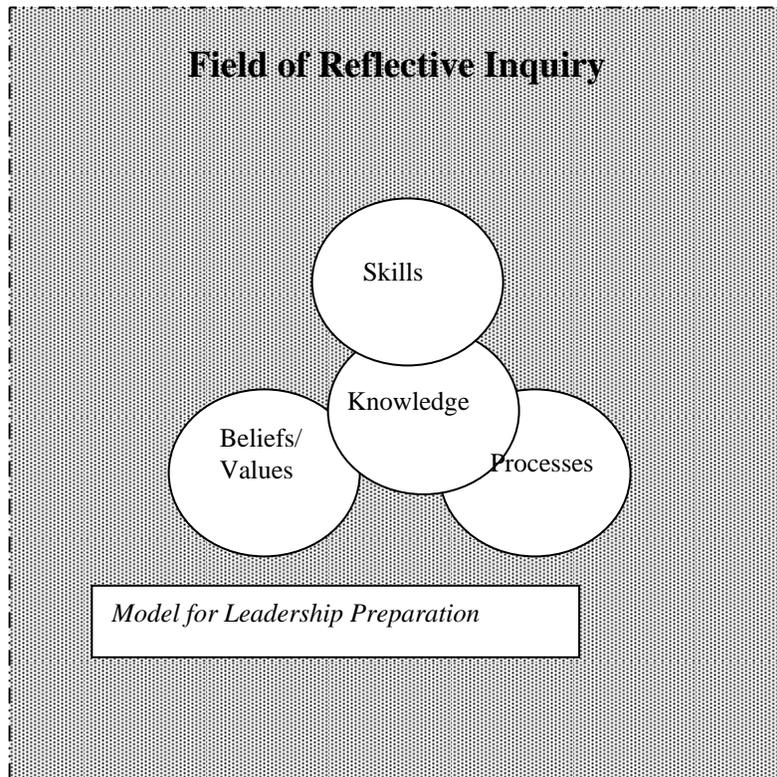


Figure 1. Model for leadership preparation.

The initial strand, knowledge, is the content/theory component. This strand focuses on the foundational knowledge in the field of educational leadership that has been developed through research over the past 80 years. From scientific-management to post modernism, educational leadership thought continues to evolve.

Frequently, this information is imparted through textbooks, readings, and lectures and involves the traditional approach to learning. In addition, this knowledge base includes current information such as laws, policies and mandates that impact school leadership.

This content/theory component is important because it forms the knowledge base from which the other strands evolve. It comprises the educational platform of the student and provides the theory that will guide the individual's practice in the field.

The second strand is the skill component. Each course contains technical competencies that an educational leader must possess to be successful in the field. For instance, human resource development requires proficiency in interviewing, developmental supervision requires conferencing skills, and school business management requires skills in

finance. Mastering these skills increases the efficiency of the educational leader. Professors identify the technical components of each course and provide practical hands-on experiences with these skills.

The third strand is the educational values/beliefs component. It addresses the basic philosophy and precepts of how to be an educational leader and forms the philosophical orientation or stance from which one operates. At a personal level and institutional level, clarification of these beliefs and values establishes a guidance system that provides strength and courage.

The importance of these values and beliefs is fundamental throughout the program. These values and beliefs are what will lead to the establishment of a school culture which translates into the ability to help establish a school vision, mission and set of core values. Some courses may address the issue directly while in other courses the educational leadership faculty models the values rather than providing explicit instruction.

The fourth strand is process. Students learn the courses of action required in the principalship. Throughout the program, students learn to analyze and organize. For example, students are taken through the processes of proposal development and program evaluation. Writing becomes a vehicle for clear expression and communication, but also part of the process of analyzing and organizing. Listening and observing are practiced both within the classroom setting and as part of assignments that take the student into the daily activities of the school.

The final element, which transcends all strands, is reflective inquiry. We suggest this is a field in which all the strands of the program function. Just as in physics where field theory

unifies the fundamental forces into a theoretical frame, we suggest that reflective inquiry is the field that unifies all components of a leadership development program into a consistent whole.

Two forms of reflective inquiry are practiced. First reflective inquiry occurs after reading and discussion. This form of reflection asks the student to identify the main ideas or concepts in the reading or discussion. Next the student identifies how these ideas or concepts relate to his or her personal experiences and considers how this new knowledge will impact future action or learning.

The second type of reflection occurs after students have completed an activity either within the classroom or on the school campus. This reflective inquiry addresses the “4 P’s.” The first “P” involves thinking about the people involved in the activity such as: students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders and the influence they exert on the activity. The second “P” is reflecting on the implications for the position of the principalship. The final two “P’s” are reflecting on the personal and professional impact that the activity has on the leader. Reflective inquiry provides the student an opportunity to engage in introspection, a detailed mental self-examination of feelings, thoughts, and motivation.

At first glance, there may seem to be nothing particularly new or radical about our stance on leadership preparation programs. The elements may be found in many models of leadership. What we believe is different about our approach is the clarity of purpose. Margaret Wheatley (1994) suggests we must have agreement on what we are trying to accomplish and the values by which we are operating and then allow people freedom to accomplish those tasks. Our model is the agreement on what we are trying to accomplish and provides the values by which we are operating.

Conclusion

In 2002, Peterson estimated that by 2007 over 50 % of all principals would retire, resign or leave the profession. Along with this high rate of principal turnover, the school age population is expanding and placing pressure on the system to produce more educational leaders. Simultaneously, the role of the principalship becomes more complex with the expansion and addition of a variety of instructional and non-instructional roles.

The demands of the position have evolved so that traditional leadership methods of preparing administrators are no longer adequate to meet the challenges faced by educational leaders in the new millennium (Levine, 2005; Peterson, 2002). However, it is still incumbent upon each educational leadership program to produce the next generation of leaders. But what is the best approach to producing this next generation of leaders? The authors of this article would

suggest the future of educational leadership lies in the ability to teach the next generation of leaders how to use their conceptual and intellectual skills; in essence, how to think critically, solve problems appropriately, make decisions cogently and provide leadership to the enterprise.

The key to preparing administrators is not “HOW” we choose to prepare future leaders but “WHAT” constitutes the preparation they receive. The proposed model suggests four strands and a unifying theme. The four strands—1) knowledge, 2) skills, 3) educational values/beliefs, and 4) processes—are tied together through a commitment to having future educational leaders engage in reflective analysis through metacognition and introspection throughout the program. Since time immemorial the future belongs to those who can think deeply to solve the challenges of mankind.

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How to Survive the Politics of School Administration

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Scenario:

You have been contemplating a change that you believe needs to be introduced in the school system where you are employed as the superintendent. This change involves implementing a dual language program in your elementary schools to deal with the increase in English Language Learners in the district. You know that this change is likely to meet with resistance from some who will not understand the need for doing things differently. As you drove into work this morning, you were mulling over some important points from Fullan's (2001) book, Leading In A Culture of Change. You know you are on the right track, but you'll have to do some strategizing to move forward carefully and purposefully.

While opening mail at your desk at 7:30 a.m., you get a call from the transportation director who informs you that a fourth grade student has been found to have a weapon in his possession at the bus stop, and that the local television station is on its way to the scene. You leave to debrief with the law enforcement officials.

When you return to your office you find six parents waiting to talk to you. Your administrative assistant privately explains to

you why they are there. They are upset about something a middle school teacher assigned in English class yesterday.

You have several challenging situations in front of you, all calling for some form of "political" response on your part. And this is only Tuesday!

A scenario like the one above is not uncommon in the daily life of a school superintendent. You meet situations that range from those that require quick thinking to those that need thoughtful reflection and long-range planning. But almost every challenge requires some degree of political thinking and behavior. We have witnessed many school leaders get into sticky predicaments as a result of trying to maneuver through the politics surrounding the business of education.

We would like to propose five strategies for dealing with the politics you encounter as school administrators. Our advice is to **Anticipate, Form Alliances, Listen, Activate Your Networks, and Communicate**. If you practice these behaviors, the political issues will not go away, but you can be proactive and better prepared to handle them. We believe that politics does not have to be associated with

stereotypical negative behaviors such as double-talk, deal-making, trading favors, cronyism, or “you-scratch-my-back-I’ll-scratch-yours.” There is another kind of politics that employs tactics that are above-board, wise, necessary, and practical for achieving the goals you have for your school system. They are political strategies that will make you a more effective leader. Let’s unpack each one now.

Anticipate

As a leader you need to **anticipate** what issues, individuals, or changes could put pressure on the organization. Sure, there are the occasional surprises that you cannot predict, but for the most part, you are able to discern what and who will need your attention before introducing an innovation, or what to do to keep an issue from exploding or reeling out of control. When you are planning change, make yourself a political map (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

A sample of a political map is provided for you in Appendix A to outline who will be your supporters and naysayers, who has the formal and informal power to help you move the change forward, and with whom you need to network to access resources (see Figure 1). Mapping the political terrain on an issue forces you to anticipate where your proactive work needs to be done. It also assists you in being realistic about the likelihood of the success of your endeavors. Do you have a critical mass of support for the change, or is the political “climate” too resistant to proceed at this time?

The act of anticipating requires that you take some time to be reflective about what is really going on in the school or district. It is what Heifetz (1994) calls “going to the balcony” to gain a perspective on the action that is not visible from the “dance floor.” Anticipating also involves keeping an ear to the ground, an eye to the newspaper, and your nose alert to detect a storm in the air.

For example, a change requiring students to wear school uniforms may be one that parents will support, but you will likely have a significant number who will question and resist the change. Before such a change is suggested, it would be wise to “get a feel” for what parents and other stakeholders are thinking. What will teachers think about such a change? What questions are parents likely to ask, such as, “Why is this change being considered?” “How much will this cost?” A similar approach should be taken if a change to the student code of conduct is being considered.

While reasons for a specific change may be clear to you and building-level administrators, parents and students may not understand why a change is needed. Anticipating their questions, and even their objections, will make you better prepared to proceed with the change, or to possibly re-evaluate the situation.

Form Alliances

Anticipating where support and resistance might come from can prompt you to consider the need to **form alliances**. We have all seen how the proponents on any particular issue form alliances. They may come in the form of a petition of gathered names, a letter to the editor signed by a group, an entourage arriving unannounced at a school board meeting, or the P.T.A. conducting a telephone campaign.

The goal is to convince you that there is a critical mass behind the issue. You need to form alliances, as well, to insure that you are not embarking on a march up the newest hill alone. Do you have the support of key staff members, influential parents, and the board of education for a proposed innovation? Are there community members or business partners that will stand beside you as you move forward with your changes? Consider the power of the

local media and foster good relationships there. If you are preparing to charge a hill that you may die on, it will be comforting to know you have some company!

A “hot potato” issue that many school leaders have tried to handle without getting burned is the censorship dilemma, when a teacher assigns a controversial book as required reading. Hopefully, the teacher has informed the principal and you of this assignment, allowing time for discussions with the librarian at the public library as well as the school library media specialist to form helpful alliances.

Talk with them ahead of time to decide how any challenges will be handled. Make sure the principal brings up the subject with the parent/teacher group before you have a complaint, so these alliances will already be in place. Such a discussion will help the principal know what parents think, and provide the opportunity to “guide” their thinking in a positive direction if a particular situation has not escalated to the point where sides have already been taken.

Another example of a situation that can be even more volatile is when student attendance zone lines have to be changed. A growing school district often has to face this difficult task, sometimes several times in a decade. Even communities where citizens have a history of cooperation can find parents pitted against each other in “zoning battles.” If you find yourself leading such an effort, you should definitely spend time forming alliances before formal plans are presented.

Forming a “Community Planning Team” can help you gain input from parents and other community members. Meeting with city leaders and other key communicators to get their input and listen to their suggestions is time well-spent. Issues discussed openly and thoroughly are much more likely to lead to a

decision that everyone understands even if the decision is not totally supported.

Listen

It goes almost without saying that as a leader, one of the most important things you need to do is **listen**. Listening to what is being said, as well as what is *not* being said (reading between the lines) can help you anticipate and plan for your next course of action. The following excerpt from a case study involves a principal’s encounter with an influential parent whose husband is a school board member.

Georgia (the school principal) has informed her superintendent of her plans to introduce a Dual Language Program in her school, because test scores have declined with the influx of Hispanic children to this formerly exclusive, affluent school. Georgia has done her research on the program and found that it has been effective in boosting the achievement of Hispanic children struggling to learn English. Nan, the wife of the school board member, volunteers at the school a lot, and does her own “politicking” with the teachers. She and her husband are opposed to Georgia’s introduction of the Dual Language program.

The following conversation took place one day as Nan came in to meet with Georgia.

Georgia: *“Hi Nan, what can I do for you today?”*

Nan: *“Well Georgia, I just thought I would pop in and say hello. It seems that you and I have not talked in a long time. I have been thinking about those kids who can’t speak English. I know that with staffing issues and a lack of funds - you are in a tight spot. But I have to tell you – the word in the teacher’s lounge is that building teams of teachers will just not serve anyone. And your teachers are saying that they should not be held responsible for teaching children who don’t speak our language- especially since they did not sign up to do that*

when they went to college. I have to let you know my husband and I are very concerned about the quality of programs here at Leighton. We just can't let our kids suffer because other children are here and not as prepared to learn.

Now our little parent group has always liked you- but we are just so worried that our school may go down a road that will lead to mediocrity for our kids. And you know, nothing is more important to us than our kids."

Georgia: *"Yes, Nan, I agree that nothing is more important than our kids. Thanks so much for your insights. I look forward to our next PTA meeting"* (Tooms, 2004).

Georgia heard that Nan and her husband had formed alliances with a group of parents and some teachers ("the word in the teacher's lounge is...). She could also hear the somewhat threatening tone of "our little parent group has always liked you, but ... "

Georgia reflected on what she had heard and began to strategize how she would proceed to diffuse some of the resistance, while still moving her agenda forward to include the all-important Dual Language program. She realized that she would need to educate the parent group and the teachers about the positives of the Dual Language program, including taking a field trip to a school that was successfully implementing the program. She knew that she would have to meet again with the superintendent to confirm his support for moving forward with the program, despite the fact that one of the board members (Nan's husband) was campaigning against it. She had to do some self-talk to convince herself that she should not buckle to the veiled threat that Nan and a small group of parents could get her fired.

Listening helped her realize that she had some "political" moves of her own to make. (And, by the way, her final response to Nan was to find a point of agreement and thank Nan

for her insights – a political strategy in itself). As a superintendent, you will find that not only do you have to listen carefully to what is being said and not said, but it is wise to train the district principals to do the same.

Activate Your Networks

Another behavior that will help you maneuver the politics in the organization is to **activate your networks**. This is different than forming alliances. Your networks include other professionals who can support you with information and positive testimonies about the kind of change you are introducing. For example, if you are considering the introduction of a new math program at the elementary school level, information from another (preferably nearby) school or district that has made this change will help to alleviate the expected anxiety among teachers and parents that such a change is likely to generate. A call to the principal you met last summer at a conference can provide answers to questions that you may not have yet anticipated.

Your networks also could be community or parent groups with whom you have been diligent to foster good relationships. You may be a member of Rotary or Kiwanis, and you could ask for an opportunity to give a presentation on the proposed change initiative or correct any misinformation that may have been circulating in the community. Perhaps you have a partnership with a nearby university that could assist you with research data on a particular issue. To present research showing positive results of implementing the new elementary math program may provide some assurance to those who may be uncomfortable the proposed change.

Networking with local police and fire departments is also vital. Administrators are extremely conscious of school safety issues. In order to develop adequate school safety plans, you need to have these networks with protective agencies activated at all times. Can

you imagine how politically charged a situation could be if there is an incident of violence in one of the district's schools if these networks are not in place? If you have spent the time to develop a plan in cooperation with community safety personnel, such an event will not only be handled better, but will also instill confidence in the community that you are a good leader for crisis times.

Communicate

Finally, it almost goes without saying that the most proactive thing you can do to move through your politicized environment is to **communicate** continually and effectively. One of the most helpful pieces of advice a new administrator received was the admonition to put a sign above her desk that said 'Who Needs To Know?' This reminded her that every decision she was contemplating probably needed to be "run by" someone else if that was feasible.

Following every meeting, there is usually some information that needs to be distributed. Sharing information, even if seemingly trivial, is usually appreciated by the educational staff. When a leader lets constituents in on his/her thought processes and reflections in relationship to decision making, the constituents buy-in more readily to proposed changes or decisions (Searby, 1999).

People usually don't like unexpected, rapid changes in their work environments. So, save yourself a lot of grief by making certain that you are constantly communicating, forecasting upcoming challenges, keeping key people abreast of unfolding issues, preparing principals for planned incremental innovations, and providing multiple opportunities for the stakeholders to hear from you.

As a school leader, another important question to ask yourself is: "When I was a teacher, how would I have reacted to this change/suggestion/new idea?" Sometimes when you take time to reflect on your own experience as a teacher, the questions and anxieties of the faculty will be much clearer to you. It is also advisable to remember that communication should be in place *throughout* the experience of implementing change.

After a change has been implemented, the wise leader will not just quickly move onto the next challenge. You need to continue to be available to really hear what people have to say about the change and how implementation is progressing at regular checkpoints.

Modifications may need to be made. If not, it is still important to listen and communicate, so you will know how big the planned celebration should be when the great goal has been accomplished!

There is no doubt that every school leader has politics to deal with. When you realize that this is inevitable and that you must develop some political savvy, you will do well to prepare yourself to implement the strategies we have reviewed here. **Anticipating, Forming Alliances, Listening, Activating Your Networks, and Communicating** should help you navigate the political waters of your organization.

(**Note:** For a mental hook to remember the five strategies for how to survive the politics of school administration, look at the bolded first letter of each of the phrases or words and notice what they spell.)

Author Biographies

Linda Searby has been in the field of education for over 25 years. She was an elementary school teacher and K-8 principal in Illinois for 16 years. Currently, she is an assistant professor of educational leadership at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Searby is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University and Illinois State University where she earned her doctorate. She has presented extensively to principals and teachers on topics such as “The Power of Reflection,” “Characteristics of Stuck and Moving Schools,” “Engaging Women in Mentoring Relationships,” and “Effective Leadership.” Searby has presented nationally at the AASA Women and Emerging Leaders Conference, ASCD Annual Conference, National Staff Development Council Conference, and has served as a consultant for the Academic Development Institute in developing Alliance for Achievement, a school reform model.

Connie Williams has been in the field of education for over 35 years. Her experience includes classroom teacher, elementary principal, middle school principal, high school principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. She has also taught education courses at both the graduate and undergraduate level. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama and her master’s degree and certification in school administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She received her doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Tennessee. While serving as principal of Hoover High School which, at the time, was the largest high school in Alabama, Williams was named Principal of the Year by the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals. She later became superintendent of the Hoover City Schools in Hoover, AL. Now retired, she works as a consultant with several school districts in Alabama.

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APPENDIX A

MAPPING THE POLITICS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

Political Mapping is a strategy to use when you are contemplating making a decision or a change in an organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997). It is wise to assess who is for, against, or neutral about the proposed decision/ change. In addition, you analyze what level of power each individual has.

There are 4 steps to developing a political map of your organization:

1. Determine the channels of *informal* communication that happen in the organization (who talks to whom? who seems to have the most and least information on any given topic?) Remember, a formal position is not required for an individual to have a lot of power.
2. Identify the principal agents of influence (the organization's opinion-makers). Who gets his/her way a lot? Who tells others what to think? Who needs to be led?
3. Analyze the possibilities of both internal and external mobilization: who would have to be influenced one way or another in order for change to happen? Some of those people will be inside the organization and some without. Who might resist and why? What networking would you need to do in order to form alliances to influence in the direction you would like to see things go?
4. Anticipate the strategies that others are likely to employ. How will you answer each strategy if it is presented?

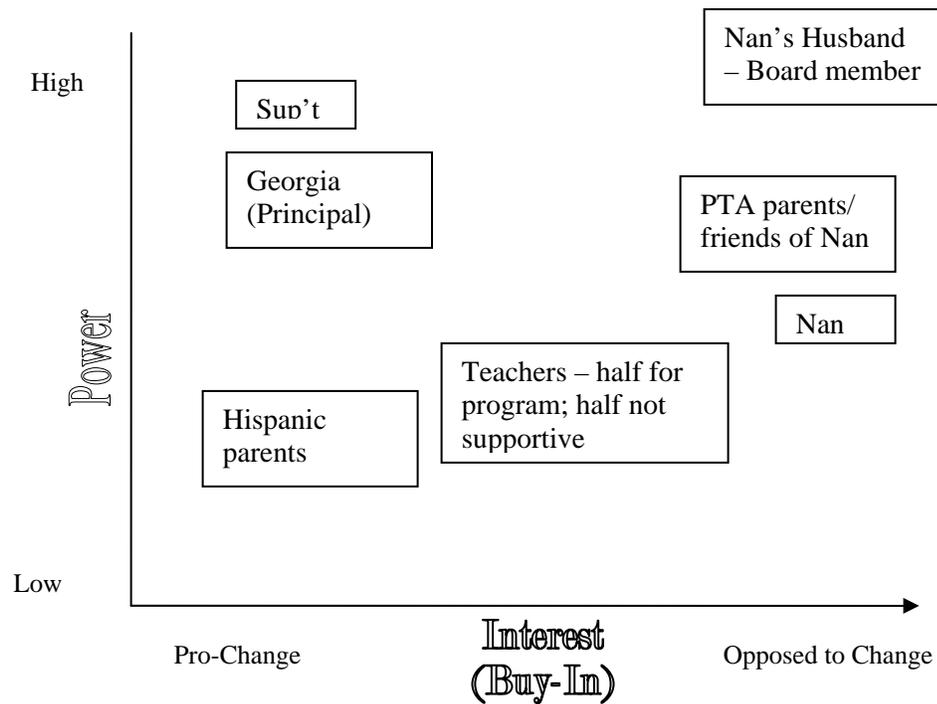


Figure 1. Mapping the politics of dual language program change.

On a chart like the one above, put the names of people inside and outside of the organization who will have an influence on the change process or decision.

Place each name on the area of the cross-axis where you think it should be placed (it is alright to speculate at this point). For instance, in the illustration above, Nan's husband, as a school board member, is relatively High in Power but Opposed to Change. You would place his name on the intersection of the imaginary lines running out to the right of High and above the words Opposed To Change. Georgia is the principal and is High in Power and Pro Change, as is the Superintendent, so they are placed at the imaginary intersection of High Power and Pro Change. The Hispanic parents are Low in Power but Pro Change.

Continue to "map" every individual (or group) likely to exert influence directly or indirectly on the change or decision you are contemplating.

When you have finished, you have created a map of the political culture of the organization when it comes to one particular issue. This will now help you strategize and make your plans for where you need to spend your time and influence.

Essential Elements and Emergent Issues for Alternative Principal Licensing: Recommendations for Policy Design and Implementation

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Introduction

Given today's high stakes accountability for student success and the responsibility for ensuring a faculty of highly qualified teachers (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001), the role of school administrator is significantly more demanding and complex (Glickman, 2001; Fink & Brayman, 2006) than in the past. In these challenging times, the issue of administrator shortages in school districts has intensified (Grubb & Flessa, 2006; Papa & Baxter, 2005). Trend data reveal that the nation is facing a crisis level administrator shortage (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000, p.3). Further, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004) anticipates that the number of available jobs in school administration will grow 10 to 20 percent over the next five years.

The need to provide highly qualified administrators during a time of shortage has given impetus to the creation of alternative

principal licensing programs (Herrington & Wills, 2005). Alternative licensing programs provide an opportunity for individuals to begin the principalship without formal administrative preparation. During the alternative licensing training period, individuals participating in such programs can earn salaries and obtain the same rights and responsibilities of traditionally trained principals.

Investigation

With the increasing attention given to alternative principal preparation, this study examined issues identified by superintendents and principals regarding alternative principal licensing policy and recommended appropriate processes for the implementation and modification of state alternative principal licensing policies. This study provides a greater understanding of how school leaders can be competently prepared through non-traditional licensing routes.

Without question, effective principals positively impact students' success (Hessel, 2002). Therefore it is imperative that studies are conducted that explore alternative principal licensing. Few investigations have systematically examined this issue of alternative principal licensing policy nationally and/or on a state level.

This investigation pursued three lines of inquiry: (a) a nationwide examination of state policies related to alternative principal licensing; (b) an analysis by education leaders on the critical elements gleaned from this nationwide study; and (c) based on the data collected, a study of perceptions of superintendents and principals on alternative certification policies.

As a result of this study, the knowledge base of alternative principal licensing policies was extended. Ultimately a series of recommendations, sorted into eight general categories, were generated providing school districts and state licensing agencies with a foundation to create or modify their respective alternative principal licensing programs.

Three Lines of Inquiry

Data from every state in the nation were gathered and studied. The state departments of education initially provided relevant feedback on their respective alternative principal licensing policies. These data were sorted based on common elements into eight general categories. These categories and common elements were examined and validated through a comprehensive review by an expert panel of one state's education leaders.

Once the initial data were obtained from state departments of education through individual telephone calls, a modified Delphi instrument was used (mailed) in two rounds to build consensus of opinion among the expert panel. Feedback provided by the nine members

of the expert panel resulted in minor modifications to the instrument which was then used with 97 superintendents and principals (32 superintendents, 40 elementary principals, and 25 secondary principals). Again, two rounds (mailed) were used to build consensus of opinion with this group.

Conclusions/Recommendations

The results of this investigation revealed that state licensing agencies should first evaluate the need for an alternative principal licensing by conducting an assessment to ascertain demand and/or shortages of principals. Agencies should be fully cognizant of the research on the change process (Fullan, 2001) and evaluation (Marzano, 2003) before implementing any new and perhaps controversial policy.

A further recommendation was that state licensing agencies must ensure that the requirements for an alternative principal license are similar to those of the traditional principal license. Although there is an anticipated demand for principals, given the impending retirements in school administration (Lovely, 2004), licensing school leaders quickly or without proper training will be detrimental to the local education system.

The individuals that participated in this study expressed numerous concerns for the possibility of a candidate having no prior knowledge of curriculum and instruction, teacher evaluation, student learning, law, classroom management, or current best practices in teaching. These concerns revealed that the "quick fix" principal might not be the best solution for education after all. If a state is providing programs of alternative principal licensing, the requirements of portfolios, project-based assessments, and evaluation in schools, should occur in accord with the expectations imposed on those in traditional programs.

Before the commitment to alternative principal licensing is made, the state agencies should check for commitment of stakeholders for funding, planning, implementation, and follow-through of the policy and future programming. There are three central areas where funding must be addressed: (a) state level, (b) individual alternative principal licensing candidates, and c) school districts. On the state level, it is essential to have a general and informed conversation that occurs by panel reviews, and with principal mentors. Stipends should be paid to individuals who develop assessment rubrics and detailed plans for policy implementation.

School districts in the states that create alternative principal licensing need to adjust their budgets to support these alternatively licensed principals by offering mentors, portfolio reviews, internship leave time, evaluation committees, and classes delivered in the evenings or on weekends. Depending on how each state constructs the peer review process, some individual candidates may need to pay for their portfolio reviews and training. Thus, alternative principal licensing candidates must also evaluate their financial commitment to principal licensing.

An additional state recommendation is that training and development for all practicing school principals must be ongoing. The mentoring of alternative principal licensing is quite critical; however and with a note of caution, individuals from school districts that are mentoring alternatively prepared principals need to be current in their practice of school leadership. Over 60 percent of respondents reported that they were “confused on what the

national principal standards are” or “what is ISLLC.” If individuals with no prior work in education are assigned a mentor who is unfamiliar with the national principal standards, this could unfold into a disastrous mentoring system leading to the potential of harming the field of education further.

Based on this investigation, a final recommendation for alternative principal licensing policies was that the licensing requirements and length of the preparation program need to be carefully examined. There were fewer consensuses for these areas than for any others which were examined in this study. This infers that more discussion with the experts in the field of education as well as conversations with state departments of education that have implemented alternative principal licensing should occur before final adaptation of licensing requirements for an alternative principal preparation program.

In summary, this study resulted in the following recommendations: (a) the broad categories of mentoring, induction programs, and education were regarded as being most important; (b) the category that is the least supported or has the least amount of consensus was licensing (licensing length, type of license); and (c) the alternative principal licensing candidate who has some teaching experience is essential to success in an alternative licensing program.

The findings of this study led to the following statewide recommendations for the development and implementation of an alternative principal licensing policy (Figure 1).

Category	Recommendations
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve the support of the district superintendent to recommend licensure to the department of education for an individual to be granted an alternative principal license. • Pass the state licensure test for principals before the start of their administrative position.
Review Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a member from the hiring school district, a member from outside of the school district hiring, a licensed principal, a licensed superintendent, and possibly a member from the state Department of Education in the review panel. • Schedule an easily accessible location and time where panel members can attend meetings from around the state. • Review the budget for the panel members. Include money incentive to have individuals interview perspective candidates for alternative principal licensure as well as take the time to design the competencies rubric. • Design a rubric that highlights the main competencies the state is looking for in an alternative principal licensing candidate. It is recommended that there is one uniform rubric for the state so there is a measurable standard and success can be calculated. • Design a rubric that will be standard for candidates with no teaching experience. The rubric must define how to measure “successful” work experience.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm that the alternative principal licensing candidate has some form of a post bachelor degree, such as a Master’s in Education, Masters in Business Administration, etc. • Verify admission into an accredited alternative principal licensing program before the district can hire an alternative principal candidate. • Require practicum at least two times a month (consider travel and time).
Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document at least one year experience teaching OR 3-5 years of “successful” management or leadership experience from outside of education. • Assign a university or college teacher from an alternative principal licensing program to observe and work with the alternative principal licensing candidate. • The review panel should also design a rubric that will be standard for what is acceptable work experience and how to measure “success.”
Induction and Internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design an induction program for alternatively licensed principals if there is not an already established principal induction program to be followed by the hiring school district. • Observation by the alternatively licensed principal of a licensed practicing principal from the hiring school district for a set amount of hours must be completed during the first year. • Teacher observation and practice teaching in the classroom should be completed by the alternative principal licensing candidate if they are from outside the field of education during their first year.
Licensing Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The license should be initially given for 1-2 years. • The license should be renewed 1-2 times. • Develop criteria at the state level for renewal of a candidate and also how to non-renew a candidate. • Define a probationary period and the tasks necessary to complete during this period. • Gain full licensure after the candidate has completed the probationary period as any other principal.
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration for time and funding needs to be made. • Evaluation of the candidate needs to be completed by more than the mentor. • Train mentors (licensed administrators and superintendents) in current practices/research in education as well as the ISLLC standards throughout the mentoring process.
Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass the state principal test. • Pass the state teacher licensing exam.

Figure 1. Recommendations for alternative principal licensing policy elements.

Summary

There can be little debate that the demand for alternative principal licensing is increasing. With large numbers of principal openings projected to occur (“NAESP fact sheet,” 1999), state agencies must be proactive in investigating alternate routes to the

principalship. Yet, since alternative principal licensing is a relatively new concept, the implementation of alternative licensing for principals must be critically evaluated for its effectiveness before steadfast acceptance occurs.

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Michelle Hickey-Gramke has taught in a public school setting, coordinated teacher education at the university level, instructed in a professional development school program, and is currently a school administrator in Colorado. She has presented and published nationally on alternative principal licensing and women in school district leadership. Hickey-Gramke has worked with the Colorado Department of Education as well as other state agencies on alternative principal licensing.

David Whaley is professor and associate dean of teacher education at Iowa State University. He is a licensed teacher and has taught in the public school system as well as taught and administered programs in higher education. His research has focused on alternative paths to teacher and administrator licensure. Additional research areas have included investigations of barriers to educational policy implementation.

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A 2006 Study of the Supply and Demand of Minnesota Public School Administrators

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For the past decade, attention has been drawn to a perceived shortage of school leadership applicants (Bjork, 2003; Educational Research Service, 1998; Esparo & Rader, 2000; Glass, 2003; Kowalski, 2003; Pounder, Galvin, & Shepard, 2003; Stover, 2002). Establishing an accurate perception of the shortage issue, however, is complex (Young & Creighton, 2002). One challenge with the perception of the shortage is the connection made between quality and shortage (Stover, 2002). The interpretation of quality is often times determined by a local school board and tends to include unrealistic expectations of the candidates (i.e. an established political agenda, a changing student population, and the push for accountability) (Kowalski, 2003; Pounder, et al., 2003; Rosa, 2003).

The shortage discussion has also been used to manufacture a crisis by “reformers, popular press and ideologues” to mislead “the public and policy makers with regard to the solutions” (Glass, 2003, p. 285).

In Minnesota from 2004-2006, there were approximately 100 superintendent openings; thus one third of the school districts experienced a change in leadership at the superintendent level. What were the reasons for the number of openings? What effect did the superintendent changes have on central office and principal positions? Further, will this turnover continue, worsen, diminish or remain the same? Whether the shortage is perceived or real, the question remains: What is the future demand for school leaders?

Purpose

The purpose of the article is to share the results of a study regarding the potential number of future openings within school leadership positions in Minnesota. Empirical evidence regarding potential school leadership openings in Minnesota was last reported in 2000 (Boettcher & Bartelson, 1999; Moore & Vandal, 2000; Sheldon & Munnich, Jr., 1999). Consequently, much of the discussion in Minnesota for the past six years has been based

on perceptions of a shortage by local media, professional organizations and search firms.

Methodology

In January 2006 an electronic survey was sent to 2409 practicing school administrators. A total of 1055 administrators completed the

survey for a return rate of 43.7%. Tables 1-4 present a description of the respondents by location, positions, gender, ethnicity and retirement eligibility. A rural regional center was defined as a district that had a significant student population (approximately 2000-5000 students) where the district office was located in the city that housed the county government.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents by position and location

Positions	Rural	Rural Regional Center	Suburban	Urban	Undeclared	Total
Superintendent	136	18	31	2	2	189
Assistant Superintendent	1	1	18	2	0	22
Principal	238	84	223	57	6	608
Assistant Principal	17	21	81	44	3	166
Director of Special Education	11	8	17	1	1	38
Director of Community Education	1	1	0	0	0	2
Curriculum Director	2	1	6	1	0	10
Undeclared	0	0	0	0	20	20

Table 2

Distribution of respondents by gender and location

Gender	Rural	Rural Regional Center	Suburban	Urban	Undeclared	Total
Men	273	88	256	65	0	682
Women	127	47	125	40	0	339
Undeclared	9	2	5	3	15	34

Table 3

Distribution of respondents by ethnicity and location

Ethnicity	Rural	Rural Regional Center	Suburban	Urban	Undeclared	Total
White	387	134	370	77	0	978
Black/Non Hispanic	0	0	8	15	0	23
Other	3	1	3	13	15	34

Table 4

Distribution of respondents by retirement eligibility and location

Retirement Eligibility	Rural	Rural Regional Center	Suburban	Urban	Undeclared	Total
Eligible now	50	22	55	12	1	140
1-3 years	67	21	67	16	1	172
4-6 years	59	15	48	13	1	136
7-9 years	37	14	52	15	0	118
10-13 years	54	16	42	14	0	126
> 13 years	139	48	119	38	3	16

Findings

Data collected was organized by gender, ethnicity, and age. Subtopics included administrative position, district size, and district type. Not all respondents provided complete demographic information, thus the totals in various categories differ.

The majority of responses were received from principals at 57.63%, followed

by superintendents at 17.91%, and assistant principals at 15.73%.

Gender distribution

Of the total responses 65.78% were men and 32.99% were women. Based on the responses from the survey there is a two to one ratio of men to women in leadership positions.

Table 5

Distribution of gender by position

	Superintendent N=187	Assistant superintendent N=21	Principal N=596	Assistant principal N=159
Women	39%	42%	31%	33%
Men	60%	58%	69%	67%

Ethnicity distribution

Ethnic distribution presented a picture of a predominately White/Caucasian population. The percentage of White/Caucasian holding leadership positions ranged from 90% of

assistant principals to 99% of superintendents. The next highest percentage was Black/Non-Hispanic at 2% of principals and 5% of assistant principals.

Table 6

Distribution of ethnicity by position

	Superintendent N=187	Principal N=596	Assistant principal N=159
White/Caucasian	99%	96%	90%
Black/Non Hispanic	0%	2%	5%
Other minorities	1%	2%	5%

Age distribution

The largest age representation of the respondents was in the 51-60 age range at 47%. The next largest group was in the 41-50 age range at 28%. Collectively 75% of all respondents fell into the age range of 41-60 years of age. Five percent of the respondents

were 61 or older. The data suggest that 61% of the respondents in superintendent positions were in the 51-60 age category. Another 9% were 61 or older. Data from the principals suggest a younger age group. The two largest age ranges for principals were the 41-50 age range at 31% and the 51-60 age range at 48%.

Table 7

Distribution of age by position

	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 or older
Superintendent N=187	0%	9%	21%	61%	9%
Principal N=601	1%	16%	31%	48%	4%
Assistant principal N=161	1%	36%	32%	27%	4%

Retirement

The data in Table 7 shows the distribution of retirement by position. Worth noting is that the superintendent and the associate superintendent positions have the highest percentage of

individuals eligible for retirement within the next six years. Further, 24% of the superintendents are already eligible for retirement.

Table 8

Distribution of retirement eligibility by position

	Already eligible	1-6 years	7-13 years	13 years or more
Superintendent N=186	24%	34%	20%	22%
Assistant/associate superintendent N=22	18%	32%	27%	23%
Principal N=601	12%	32%	24%	32%
Assistant principal N=162	6%	14%	23%	57%

Anticipate leaving current position

Data collected included anticipated changes in current positions due to retirement, transfer or other reasons. Respondents for all district sizes reported that between 52-69% anticipate leaving their current position within six years. Sixty percent of respondents anticipate leaving their position within six years due to retirement, transfer or leaving education. One area of interest in data collected from principals and assistant principals was in the category of leaving current positions for reasons other than retirement. Forty-three percent of principals would leave administration; another 4% would leave the field education. Fourteen percent of assistant principals would leave administration and 14% would leave education. No other position reported they would leave either administration or education for reasons other than retirement.

Discussion

Supply of candidates

Data from the Minnesota Department of Education (2005) would suggest there is an adequate supply of licensed school administrators. According to the Minnesota Department of Education Personnel Licensing Department in March 2006 there were 11,472 individuals licensed as superintendent (2469), principal (8005), director of special education (599) or director of community education (399). Even though this may include a duplicated count—individuals who have more than one administrative license may have been counted twice—the data support the national studies that argue there is no shortage of licensed candidates for school leadership positions (Bjork, 2003; Glass, 2003; Ponder et al., 2003; Rosa, 2003). The issue may be as Rosa (2003) contended—a matter of definition. What constitutes a qualified candidate?

The data from the study indicates there has been no change in the 2:1 ratio of men to women in most school leadership positions. The one leadership position in Minnesota that

does not reflect the ratio is the elementary principal position. According to the Minnesota Association for Elementary School Principals over 50% of elementary principals are women. The data also reflected no change in the under representation of minorities in leadership positions.

The under representation of women in most school leadership positions and the absence of minorities is a concern. A concentrated effort should be made to mirror the demographics of the teaching population and the student population in Minnesota. Women constitute 71% of the teaching population while men constitute 29% (Minnesota Department of Education, 2005), yet women hold only 33% of the school leadership positions. The student population includes 28,000 Spanish-speaking students; 6,700 Somali; and 21,515 Hmong (Minnesota Department of Education, 2005), yet less than 5% of minorities are in school leadership positions.

Demand for candidates

Within the next six years between 52-69% of the respondents surveyed anticipate leaving their position through retirement, transfer or leaving the field of education. The data suggests a high level of turn over may occur in the field of school leadership. Furthermore, with over two-thirds of the superintendent respondents listing their age between 51-60 superintendent positions have the most potential for openings.

Other demand issues

As reported in the findings, only principals and assistant principals were contemplating leaving administration for reasons other than retirement. With 43% of principals considering leaving administration, an examination of the number of positions opening in the future and the reasons for the openings would be useful for determining challenges related to the principal position.

Conclusion

With an increasingly aging superintendent group coupled with a significant percentage of principals considering leaving administration, there exists a potential challenge for Minnesota administration preparation programs to provide a more concerted effort in preparing aspiring school leaders. With the number of projected openings there also exists opportunities to

address the under representation of women and minorities in school administration. Given the importance of effective school leadership in connection with the challenges that exists in today's schools, administration preparation programs as well as school districts should be attentive to the potential pool of candidates for school administration positions.

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Improving Instructions Using a Data Analysis Collaborative Model

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Fullan (2001) notes that school reform is being encouraged throughout the country. Whether this reform is fueled by accountability issues or school redesign, it is now a constant discussion point inside and outside the educational arena. In the present educational system the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 has come to dominate the direction of education reform. NCLB legislation calls for alignment of assessment and stronger instructional practices in order to close the achievement gap and work toward providing equity within the educational system (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2007).

Practices, such as professional learning communities, collaborative lesson studies, job-embedded professional development, smaller learning communities, data-driven decision making, and distributed leadership have all been studied, debated, written about, and initiated as reforms within schools across the nation (Council of the Great City Schools, 2004; DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Since the *age of accountability* (Guskey, 1998) focuses attention

on not only what is taught but also how it is taught (Marzano, 2003), there is now a need for reliable assessments aligned to rigorous curriculum including collection and analysis of data resulting from these assessments (Stiggins, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

As student data analysis reports become more sophisticated, these reports reveal greater details on low performance skills. Availability of models and programs depicting detailed instructions or guidance for utilizing data to impact classroom instruction, in an effort to increase student achievement, has been lacking. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between using the Data Collaborative Model (DCM), and student achievement through the Texas state assessment (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills - TAKS) passing rates in math and reading in order to provide data concerning DCM impact. DCM is a process of utilizing data analysis to guide instructional decision-making for improvement.

The Data Collaborative Model (DCM) assembles assessment literacy, reflective practices and professional development into a four-component process. The sub-components include assessing students, reflecting over data, professional dialogue, professional development for the teachers and interventions for students based on data results, and re-assessing to measure the impact of the changes made in both teacher practice and student interventions. The study focused on whether the DCM process and tools changed teacher practice enough to impact student achievement.

Research Questions

What impact does the use of the DCM have on student achievement over a period of three years?

How does exposure to a model that uses data analysis to impact instruction result in a change in the usage of the district's online data web?

What is the difference in DCM usage perception between campus administrators and teachers?

Conceptual Framework

Educational researchers have studied methods that increase student performance and teacher effectiveness for more than a decade (Allington & Cunningham, 1996; DuFour 2004a, 2004b; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Schlechty, 2002). Rick Stiggins (2004), along with other researchers (Bernhardt, 1999; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Holcomb, 2004; Jacob, 1997; Schmoker, 2004b) suggest integrating the curriculum with assessment and creating an assessment culture. In addition to learning how to align assessment to instruction, campus teachers have also been requested to examine the manner in which instruction is provided (DuFour, 2004b; Marzano, 2003; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Schlechty, 2002; Schmoker, 2004a). Among the most prevalent "best practices" are professional learning

communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hord, 1997; Schmoker, 2004a, 2004b), checking for rigor and relevancy in the every day curriculum (Erikson, 2002; Klonsky, 1998), distributed leadership (Timperley, 2005), job embedded professional development (DuFour, 2004a; U.S. Department of Education Professional Development Team, 1994) and learning organizations (Schmoker, 2004a, 2004b; Senge, 1990; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994).

In this age of accountability, researchers suggest that not all administrators or teachers understand the relationships between what is written, what is taught, and what is tested (Earl & Fullan, 2003; English, 2000). The need to understand the role of assessment and the data resulting from assessment becomes a vital piece in an instructional data-driven decision-making process (Earl & Fullan, 2003). Implementing the DCM as a data-driven decision-making model in order to promote student success involves first and foremost, understanding, then engagement and commitment from teachers and administrators (Fullan, 1998; Hord, 1997). The whole organization must be "engaged and committed, both in favor of a shared vision and in a rigorous search for the truth" (Senge, 1990, p. 438).

Study Methods

This causal-comparative study examined student achievement between two groups of campuses over a 3-year period. The first group, called the high implementation group, consisted of campuses which understood and used the DCM process and tools at a high level based on means. The second group, called the low implementation group, consisted of campuses having a lower level of understanding and usage of the DCM process and tools. When analyzing the data, survey questions were grouped for analysis in the following manner; (a) high and low implementation campuses, (b) factors, created

from subsets of survey questions, and (c) research questions.

The researcher and district officials from an Evaluation and Accountability department collaborated to create and pilot the survey instrument. The 22-question survey instrument identified six campuses having a high degree of DCM implementation over the last three years and six campuses having a low level of implementation.

Administrators and teachers from these campuses were requested to complete a survey concerning the degree of implementation of the DCM process and the various DCM tools available. Once campuses were identified, a database was constructed. For comparison purposes, the database included reading and math passing rates from the Texas state assessment completed over the past 4-year period. Additional DCM training events for each campus were also identified. Data was analyzed using descriptive measures, and measures of variability and relationships, such as ANOVA and Cronbach alpha.

Participating Campuses and Subjects

Over one thousand campus administrators and teachers from a large southern urban public school district participated in creating the database for the study. There were 217 campuses in the district, including 37 high schools, 24 middle schools, and 156 elementary schools. The participating district demographics consisted of 61% Hispanic, 31% African American, 6% White, and 1% Other with over one-third of the student population classified as second language learners. More than 79% of the district's students qualify for free/reduced lunch assistance.

Data Collection and Analysis

Enrollment and demographic data were collected along with web usage by the campuses for 2004 through 2006. The web usage data were utilized to measure campus

academic growth during the three years of DCM implementation. These data were formulated into an intensity level and used to analyze whether additional DCM training impacted a campus' identification as high or low implementer. Of the 162 participating school campuses having the option to complete the survey, 121 campuses returned surveys, resulting in a participation rate of approximately 75%. State assessment passing rates for 2003-2006 were collected from the created district database for the 12 selected campuses – highest and lowest scoring campuses. Additional DCM training received by the 12 campuses was added to the data base.

Findings and Conclusions

The findings from this study indicated a statistically significant difference in the state assessment math passing rates ($F(1.70, 401.89) = 92.95, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.28$) after using the Data Collaborative Model for a consecutive 3-year period, though no practical difference was noted in reading passing rates. Results suggested that the use of the DCM had an impact on student achievement in math over a period of three years. The high implementation campuses had between a 29% and 71% increase. (See Table 1.) The low implementation campuses had between a 6% loss in percent passing to a 79% increase. The average percent gain for the high implementation campuses in reading was 38% versus 47% for the low implementation campuses.

The finding also suggested that in some cases, up to three times as many people lacked understanding or failed to implement the DCM tool or strategy even after 3 years of DCM district initiatives. At the high implementation campuses, between 43% and 60% of the participants who answered said they did understand how to impact instruction using the process. At low implementation campuses between 20% and 51% said they understood the process. Between 20% and 49% of the high

implementation campuses indicated they knew how to use the tools. At the low implementation campuses, only 10% to 31% felt they knew how to use the tools. A total average of 31% of the high implementation campuses said they actually used the DCM tools versus 19% for the low implementation campuses. Of the high implementation campuses, between 22% and 41% said they actually used the DCM tools, while only 10% to 26% of the low implementers actually used the tools.

This study concurred with research (Fullan, 2001) suggesting that regularity in principal turnover, yearly change of campus feeder pattern placement, and lack of consistent monitoring on the part of the district leadership may have played a role in poor understanding and use of DCM.

Exposure to a model that uses data analysis to impact instruction did, however, result in a change in the usage of the district's online data web. Data web usage increased for all campuses. However, the increase in usage of the data web fell short of promoting regular use of the data web to aid in impacting student achievement.

There was a significant difference in DCM usage perception between campus administrators and teachers. In 9 out of 10 instances, principals' responses did not correspond with teachers' perceptions concerning implementation of the DCM process and tools on their campuses. Teachers

selected use of more tools or, strongly agreed to implement the DCM more often than did administrators. In every factor except Professional Development, the means showed that the principal understood and used the DCM more than the other categories of campus staff.

The difference between principal means and the general education teacher means was significant in the Understand ($15.9 - 8.2 = 7.7$) and Implement factors ($25.9 - 14.7 = 11.2$). The difference in principal means and teacher means was less significant in the Collaborative/Reflective ($20.4 - 16.0 = 4.4$) and Professional Development ($16.3 - 13.9 = 2.4$) factors.

One could conclude that principals may not be taking an active role in the implementation of the DCM process with their teachers or that teachers exaggerated their responses for the purpose of the survey. The campus means by factors demonstrate that the high implementation campuses were higher in each factor than the low implementation schools. The mean averages of each implementation type reflect that as well. The higher implementation campuses had a stronger understanding of the Data Collaborative Model and were more likely to use DCM. The campus mean for high implementation campuses, which was the average of the four factors, was 14.1 to 15.6. Low implementation campuses had a range of 8.8 to 13.7. (see Table 1 & Table 2)

Table 1

Factor Mean Score by Campus

Campus	Understand	Implement	Collaborative/ Reflective	Professional Development	Campus Average
High 1	8.9	16.4	17.1	14.5	14.2
High 2	8.8	18.0	18.5	15.0	15.1
High 3	10.7	18.8	18.5	14.4	15.6
High 4	8.8	16.4	17.6	15.9	14.7
High 5	9.6	16.0	16.0	14.9	14.1
High 6	8.3	17.4	18.3	15.2	14.8
Low 1	8.8	15.1	16.9	13.8	13.7
Low 2	8.1	13.8	16.5	13.4	8.8
Low 3	7.9	16.0	15.6	14.9	13.6
Low 4	9.0	14.6	13.2	11.2	12.0
Low 5	8.1	13.1	14.7	12.9	12.2
Low 6	7.3	11.4	13.0	12.4	11.0

Table 2

Average Factor Mean Score

	Understand	Implement	Collaborative/ Reflective	Professional Development	Campus Average
Average – High	9.2	17.2	17.7	15.0	14.8
Average - Low	8.2	14.0	12.2	13.1	11.9

Reform comes slowly to any organization (Marzano, Zaffron, Robins, Zraik, & Yoon, 1995), but it is especially difficult in large bureaucracies. A report written by Council of the Great City Schools (2004) stated that the progress can be attributed to, among other things, “ ... regular assessments; [and] stronger accountability; ... ” (p. 65). Data-driven decision making may precede reform at several levels. First and foremost, data-driven decisions are utilized to reform the manner in which schools review and plan for improvement.

The intent of this study was to examine the relationships between using the Data Collaborative Model (DCM) and student achievement through state assessment passing

rates in math and reading and their relationship as they endeavor to produce instructional improvements within the educational system. This research gives hope to urban districts. There are practices that can make a difference district-wide, but the implementation process must be well planned and systemic for reform to occur. Contained within the process of the Data Collaborative Model are research-based *best practices* that continue to add to the success of other urban schools around the country through data analysis and review. Within the right environment, a reform process like the Data Collaborative Model can flourish and ultimately improve instruction when implementation is (a) planned, (b) systematic, and (c) disseminated.

Author Biographies

Rebecca Good has spent over 20 years as an educator, 13 as a bilingual and ESL teacher, and five as a campus administrator. The last two and one-half years were spent as a central office administrator training administrators from 217 campuses in a data analysis model that leads to instructional change. Good received her doctorate from Texas A&M University at Commerce. Her years spent as principal of a large, urban, 98% free and reduced lunch elementary school helped her understand the need to have a strong process in place encouraging teachers to use data more effectively. Using such a model, she was able to lead her school to state-recognized status for the first time in the school's seven year history.

Sherion Jackson is currently director of the TECS Faculty Development Lab at East Carolina University, where she mentors faculty in online courses according to best practices for online teaching. In her 35-year career, Jackson has served as an educational consultant, school administrator, teacher and taught a cadre of graduate level courses using face-to-face, online and distance learning. She holds a teaching, principal, and superintendent certificate in Arizona. Her research and publication interests include instructional leadership, school finance, Web-based learning, and faculty enhancement issues. Jackson is widely published with articles appearing most recently in *School Leadership Review*, *Texas Journal of Distance Learning*, and *National Forum of Teacher Education Journal*. She has also presented more than 25 papers at conferences for organizations such as Southern Educational Research Association, American Educational Research Association, and the National Council for Professors of Educational Administration.

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The Interactive Effects of Gender and Leadership Style on Post Internship Concerns About Becoming a Principal

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Introduction

The principal preparation internship is designed to prepare aspiring principals for the principalship (Alford & Spall, 2001). Principals are expected to lead this initiative through activities that develop aspiring principals' understanding of school leadership (Duffrin, 2001). However, no research has determined if principals' involvement influences preservice principals' concerns about becoming a principal. Additionally, few, if any, studies have determined if universities and school districts examine their methods for pairing preservice principals with cooperating principals.

This study investigated the effects of the principal's gender and leadership style on preservice principals' post internship concerns about the principalship. The merit of this investigation is twofold. First, Fuller (1969) theorized that during the internship, preservice teachers experience self, task, and impact related concerns about becoming a teacher. Teacher education units have used this theoretical framework to address their concerns about teaching (Hall & Hord, 1987).

However, no research has determined if preservice principals depart their internship concerns with self concerns, task concerns, and impact concerns about the principalship. Using

Fuller's (1969) theoretical framework, I centered this research on three questions:

1. Do preservice principals depart the internship experience with concerns about other people's perceptions of their leadership (Self Concerns)?
2. Do preservice principals depart the internship experience with concerns about fulfilling the daily tasks related to the principalship (Task Concerns)?
3. Do preservice principals depart the internship experience with concerns about their abilities to make a difference in the lives of students (Impact Concerns)?

The underlying perspective of these questions focuses on how school culture and leadership characteristics impact the principal preparation internship. The internship is embedded in school culture, and school culture reflects the leadership style of the principal (Deal & Peterson, 1999). Other theorists (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992; Harris, Smith, & Hale, 2002) have cited differences in school cultures that are led by male and female principals. Thus, this study could indicate that

the principal's gender and leadership style influence preservice principals' concerns about leading schools.

Overview of Research on Gender and Leadership

Research has indicated that female principals use more transformational leadership skills than male principals (Eagly et al., 1992; Vinnicombe, 1999). Most female principals facilitate a democratic and cooperative culture for learning and teaching. They are particularly skilled at facilitating school climates of teacher empowerment, instructional focus, and democratic decision making.

Numerous male principals use coercion to accomplish the goals of the school. They are more likely to stress the accomplishment of daily tasks. Pevoto (2003) denoted that more female principals than male principals receive higher ratings on transformational leadership than transactional leadership. However, Kakabadse (1999) argued that gender does not differentiate the leadership performance of principals. Kakabadse further explained this belief by relating that gender is defined in the context of masculine characteristics of leadership.

Methodology

Participants

This study consisted of 85 preservice principals from a Texas university. Twenty four (28%) and 20 (23%) preservice principals worked with transactional male and transformational male principals, respectively. Twenty (23%) and 21 (25%) preservice principals worked with transactional female and transformational female principals, respectively.

Instrumentation

After completing the internship, the participants completed a survey regarding the concerns about becoming principals. The survey asked participants to report the gender and leadership style of their principals. Thirty-three Likert items measured preservice principals' concerns

about becoming a principal. Adapted from Fuller's (1969) concerns survey, the items were divided into "Self Concerns," "Task Concerns," and "Impact Concerns" subscale. Sample items are as follows: "Feeling like a competent principal" (Self Concerns); "Finding the time to serve as the instructional leader of the school" (Task Concerns); and "Convincing community leaders to contribute to the educational mission of the school" (Impact Concerns). The response choices ranged from 1-Not Concerned to 5-Very Concerned. A panel of male and female principals established the validity of the survey. The survey's Cronbach reliability score was .92.

Results

(Due to word limit, I only present the statistically significant findings from this study.)

Two-way (2X2) ANOVA findings revealed a statistically significant main effect for the principal's gender on preservice principals' self concerns, $F(1, 82)=47.126, p<.05, \text{partial}=.365$, and task concerns $F(1, 82)=60.272, p<.05, \text{partial}=.424$, about becoming principals. Preservice principals with female principals ($M=28.23, SD=6.91$) held higher self concerns about the principalship than preservice principals with male principals ($M=16.51, SD=2.29$). In addition, more preservice principals with female principals ($M=33.67, SD=7.77$) than preservice principals with male principals ($M=17.98, SD=4.68$) expressed task related concerns about leading schools.

A statistically significant interaction for the gender and leadership style of the principal existed for task concerns $F(1, 82)=41.290, p<.05, \text{partial}=.510$. These findings showed that preservice principals with transactional and transformational female principals held the higher task concerns about becoming a principal. Though insignificant, the overall self and impact concerns indicated that preservice principals with transactional and transformational female principals were more concerned about the principalship (Table 1).

Table 1

Two Way ANOVA Results for Preservice Principals Concerns About Becoming A Principal

Categorical Concerns	Gender	Leadership Style	Mean (SD)
Self Concerns	Female Principal	Transactional	27.71 (5.82)
	Female Principal	Transformational	28.61 (7.67)
	Male Principal	Transactional	16.79 (1.88)
	Male Principal	Transformational	15.38 (3.67)
*Task Concerns	Female Principal	Transactional	32.64 (8.12)
	Female Principal	Transformational	34.44 (7.52)
	Male Principal	Transactional	17.95 (4.92)
	Male Principal	Transformational	18.10 (4.19)
Impact Concerns	Female Principal	Transactional	20.11 (3.96)
	Female Principal	Transformational	20.50 (4.93)
	Male Principal	Transactional	11.02 (2.34)
	Male Principal	Transformational	11.10 (2.51)

***Statistically significant interaction for this subscale.**

Discussion

Gender was a statistically significant variable for preservice principals' self concerns and task concerns about becoming a principal. Task concerns were also influenced by the interaction of gender and leadership style of the principal. However, no significant main effect was found for leadership.

Thus, the gender of the principal influenced the impact of the leadership style on preservice principals' task concerns about becoming a principal.

These findings counter Kakabadse's (1999) criticisms of gender's influence on leadership. They do, however, show that male principals and female principals affect the members of their school community. This tentatively suggested assumption lends credence to Eagly et al.'s (1992) indication of how gender affects the leadership style of the principal.

For example, preservice principals with female principals had higher concerns about the

principalship than did preservice principals with male principals. This difference may be explained by female leaders' tendency to use themselves as instruments of leadership (Graves & Addington, 2001). That is, more female leaders than male leaders use their perceptions and feedback from others to validate their leadership effectiveness.

The task concerns could be indicative of research on the differences between male principals and female principals. Many male principals possess a task-oriented leadership style (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992; Vinnicombe, 1999). They are focused on accomplishing the tasks and goals of the school.

As such, preservice principals who work with male principals are likely to gain a task-oriented perspective on leading schools. Consequently, they would be less likely to have task concerns about the principalship than would preservice principals with female principals. By working with female principals, they are more likely to develop a democratic leadership style. However, they would presumably be more concerned about completing the task related duties of the principalship.

The final significant finding is that the gender and leadership style of the principal held no statistically significant effects on preservice principals' impact concerns about becoming principals. This finding points to Fuller's (1969) theory about preservice teachers' impact related concerns for teaching. Fuller denoted that during the internship, preservice teachers seldom develop impact related concerns for teaching. According to her, their initial focus is on how to survive teaching. Drawing from this notion, the preservice principals may have focused on grasping a basic understanding of school leadership.

Implications

This study should be used to develop principals' awareness of how their gender and their leadership style affect prospective administrators' views about entering the principalship. This awareness may encourage them to closely examine how they can better mentor preservice principals.

The second implication is that university personnel and supervising principals should build the internship around students concerns and needs. Prior to the internship, preservice principals should express their concerns about the principalship. University supervisors should then meet with the principals and preservice principals to discuss these concerns. A concerns-based action plan should be developed to facilitate leadership activities for preservice principals.

A checks and balance mechanism could be used to monitor and adjust this plan. In addition, university personnel and principals should hold weekly meetings with the preservice principals. During the discussions, preservice principals could reflect on their progress towards addressing these concerns. They could also indicate how their progress is affected by the gender and leadership behaviors of the principals.

This information could provide principals with insight on how their leadership behaviors affect their preservice principals' feelings about becoming a principal. Equally significant, this process will be inclusive of the preservice principals' concerns and needs.

Limitations and Future Research

This study consists of two major limitations. The first limitation was the small sample size. Finally, I did not survey the preservice principals at the beginning of their internship. Thus, I can not discern the differences between the initial and concluding effects of gender and

leadership style on the outcomes of this study. Notwithstanding, the findings are baseline data for identifying and understanding leadership

concerns of preservice principals. That is, they present a new way of using the internship to raise confidence about leading schools.

Author Biography

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On Research, Writing and Catharsis: A Personal Story

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As a veteran educator, I have lots of stories to tell, but most of those stories center around the various players in my professional life—students, parents, board members, and colleagues. This story is different—it is about me and the impact of a recent research and writing experience that powerfully affected the way I think about school leadership.

Last year a colleague, some of his students and I presented at an international conference. Since I had been a superintendent in the state where the research had been conducted, my role was to present the findings and their implications.

The survey used to collect the data asked the respondents to rate the severity of 68 issues on a five-point Likert scale. The issues were grouped into five categories.

During the presentation, I said, “There was considerable consistency between principals and superintendents in terms of their perceptions of the broad problems they face.”

I displayed the relative ranking of the issues from most to least severe:

1. financial
2. student
3. technology

4. administrative
5. curriculum and instruction

I said with sarcasm, “Our schools are in trouble because we don’t have enough money, the students are unmotivated, they’re poor and come from broken homes, they don’t achieve nor do they know how to study.

Furthermore, our technology is always breaking down or is obsolete. We could do better at teaching and leading, but it’s really not our fault.” I went on to talk about misidentification of the problems and concluded that until administrators focused on curriculum and instruction students’ academic achievement was not likely to improve.

Fast forward two months. I spent spring break catching up on my writing. I sifted through the data and decided that there were several journals that might publish an article related to the study, so I wrote an introduction, described the study and outlined the five findings, displaying pertinent data.

After rereading what I had written, I had an “Aha” moment. I quickly wrote a sixth finding : “The most *severe issues* perceived by both principals and superintendents are those which are *beyond their control*—lack of

funding, federal regulations and mandates, pressures from standardized tests, the teacher shortage and the breakdown of the family unit.”

As I wrote this, tears began to stream down my face and I cried—certainly not something a veteran superintendent would do—or admit to. In writing that sentence, I realized the reason why I decided to retire from the superintendency when I had two years left on my contract and a wonderful school board. I only knew at the time that I was tired, that every day I questioned why all of the positive things I was doing did not produce student success.

Nearly a year after the superintendency, the process of writing that sentence helped me to understand what I had experienced—the

helplessness and hopelessness I felt. My dreams of making a profound, immediate difference had been shattered by the realities of life, the things I could not control.

Yes, I believe I made a difference. I believe I touched individual lives. I believe the district and its constituents are better off because I shared my life and expertise with them.

More importantly, I believe that it is essential that we honor those educators who, day after day, against tremendous odds, plod on, ever hopeful. I celebrate those who wade through the quagmire of finances, politics and societal issues to help students achieve. I applaud those who *don't* let the things they can't control keep them from doing the things they can control!

Author Biography

Sandra Tonnsen is a former superintendent of schools in Orangeburg Consolidated School District #4 in South Carolina. She left a professorate at the University of South Carolina to return home to be superintendent in the district where her parents had attended school. Upon retirement in 2005, Tonnsen returned to higher education where she teaches the superintendency course and practicum and coordinates the education specialist and doctor of education programs.

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