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Research Article

Not Just Urban Policy: Suburbs, Segregation, and Charter Schools

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Abstract
As the charter school sector expands rapidly with federal support amid on-going diversification and growing segregation among traditional public school students, this article examines existing patterns of segregation in charter schools. Prior research has demonstrated that charter schools are substantially more segregated than our already stratified public school system. This article uses national data from 2007-08 and finds that charter schools are indeed more segregated for students of all races. We pay particular attention to these trends in suburban areas and at the metropolitan level where charter schools could be institutions that create diversity across city-suburban or intra-suburban boundary lines. It concludes with a discussion of why these patterns may exist and what could be done to remedy segregation.

Key Words
charter schools, segregation, race
On September 13, 2011, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an education bill by a 356-54 vote. In an era defined by intense political rancor, the measure’s overwhelming bipartisan support is particularly noteworthy. Just what was it that brought Washington, D.C.’s two contentious political parties together? The answer: charter schools.

Charter schools are independent, publicly-funded schools of choice. They are initiated by a founding document (called a charter) delineating the purpose of the program, as well as crucial guidelines for its governance and function. In 1992, Minnesota became the first state to pass charter school legislation. A decade later, 34 states enrolled slightly less than 500,000 charter school students, which was approximately 1% of the total public school student population (Frankenberg & Lee, 2003). Fast forward several more years to 2008, and the number of students enrolling in charters had doubled to 1.2 million, roughly 2.5% of the entire public school enrollment (Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley & Wang, 2011). Today, 42 states and the District of Columbia have passed, or are in the process of passing, legislation authorizing the creation of charter schools.

Many charter schools are located in the urban centers of large metropolitan areas. The charter concept has flourished in these contexts, in part because the programs offer an alternative to urban school systems that may be struggling to meet the needs of students isolated by both race and poverty. Yet, although charter schools are still disproportionately located in urban areas, one in four charter students attends a school in a suburb. That percentage may well increase, at least in certain parts of suburbia, due to political pressures to expand the charter sector and demographic forces fueling rapid racial transition in suburban communities.

The tremendous growth in the charter school sector has been accompanied by a radical demographic transformation among the nation’s children. New figures from the U.S. Census show for the first time that less than half of U.S. three-year-olds are white (Frey, 2011). Even though white students still make up about 56% of students of all ages, statistics for the youngest children portend the arrival of a truly multiracial society.

Yet in the midst of this remarkable shift, patterns of segregation in our traditional public schools have been intensifying. In 1988, roughly one in three black students enrolled in an intensely segregated public school—a setting where 90-100% of students came from minority backgrounds (Orfield, 2009). Twenty years later, two out of five black students attended similarly segregated school environments. Latino students experienced comparable but more extreme trends, while white students remained the most isolated of any racial group (Orfield, 2009).

These deepening patterns of regular public school segregation have been exacerbated by the development of charter schools. For example, if a charter school opens in or near a neighborhood experiencing racial transition, white families may choose to enroll their children in the charter school rather than their zoned, neighborhood school (see, e.g. IRP, 2008).

That decision would then contribute to patterns of both school and neighborhood isolation. These patterns may be especially prevalent in suburban communities that are experiencing racial/ethnic diversity for the first time and where there is little history or experience with policies to create stably diverse, successful communities. Instead, schools in these transitioning suburban communities begin to replicate patterns of
racial and economic isolation that already characterize many urban areas.

Segregation still matters because evidence consistently links racially and socioeconomically isolated schools to a variety of educational harms (see, e.g., Linn & Welner, 2007). For instance, students who attend minority segregated schools are far less likely to graduate from high school (Balfanz & Letgers, 2004), to experience high quality and challenging curriculum (Orfield, Siegel-Hawley & Kucsera, 2011) and to benefit from exposure to a stable, experienced, and highly qualified faculty (IDEA, 2007; Jackson, 2009). Each of these dimensions reinforces a cycle of low educational attainment for student groups who are poised to become the racial majority in this country. Meanwhile, white students isolated in overwhelmingly white schools do not learn to work and live with students from different backgrounds, an essential set of skills in an increasingly diverse and interconnected global society.

The following article considers these varied factors—a bipartisan, federally supported expansion of the charter school sector, a rapidly diversifying and more segregated population of regular public school students, and the on-going importance of efforts to combat racial and socioeconomic isolation—in an effort to fully understand contemporary patterns of segregation in charter schools. Prior research has demonstrated that charter schools are substantially more segregated than our already stratified public school system (Frankenberg & Lee, 2003; Nelson, Berman, Ericson, Kamprath, Perry, Silverman, & Solomon, 2000).

This article focuses on an analysis of updated data in order to better understand the current landscape as it pertains to charter schools and racial segregation. We pay particular attention to these trends in suburban areas and at the metropolitan level. Patterns aggregated to the metropolitan area are critical because charter schools could theoretically be institutions that create school diversity across city-suburban or suburban-suburban boundary lines within a metro area. Before delving into our exploration of charter school segregation, however, we briefly review the political push spurring the growth of the charter school movement.

**Recent Federal Backing for Charter Schools**

This September’s 2011 Congressional action highlights an active federal role in fostering the surge in charter school enrollment. Though the current administration has been particularly supportive of charter schools, every presidential administration since George H. W. Bush has provided significant federal backing for the charter sector. Still, federal support for the charter sector expanded significantly under the Obama Administration. For example, Obama’s Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative enticed cash-strapped states to adopt the administration’s education proposals with the promise of over $4 billion in federal stimulus spending. RTTT offered enormous financial incentives to expand charter schools, either through enacting new state legislation authorizing the establishment of charters or by lifting existing caps on the number of charter schools in a state.

Since the advent of RTTT’s charter school incentives, the U.S. Department of Education has made charter school conversion one of its four “turnaround” strategies for schools labeled as struggling, high poverty...
schools. More recently, Obama announced that the U.S. Department of Education would consider granting waivers for schools who do not make annual progress on tests as required in No Child Left Behind—an increasingly critical issue given an impending requirement for 100% student proficiency on tests—provided that states consent to the administration’s comprehensive blueprint for school improvement (Dillon, 2011a). Naturally, that blueprint provides for the continued expansion of charter schools.

We explore these oversight and policy options further at the conclusion of the article, but first we unpack important enrollment and segregation trends.

**Charter Schools and Segregation**

Charter schools have been in existence for two decades. Over that period of time, concerns about patterns of racial, economic, and linguistic isolation in these schools have persisted, in addition to apprehension that charter schools may negatively affect the student racial and economic composition in traditional public schools.²

This article explores these issues using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD) 2007-08. The CCD dataset contains the enrollment and different subgroup counts for virtually every public school (including charter schools) in the country.³ We define schools as minority segregated if they are 90-100% nonwhite and white segregated if they are 90-100% white. Additionally, our definition of schools as urban or suburban uses those definitions from the CCD.

**National Trends: Disproportionate Charter Enrollment by Race and High Levels of Segregation**

Somewhat contrary to initial fears that charter schools would be havens of white flight from diverse or high minority schools, charter school enrollment, on the aggregate, is disproportionately nonwhite. White students make up just 39% of charter school students, even though they still comprise a majority of traditional public school students (56%). Despite this enrollment disparity for white students, the enrollment of charter schools differs from traditional public schools most notably for black students. One-third of charter school students are black, while only one-sixth of traditional public school students are black.

Charter school students are also not evenly distributed across regions. In the West, the most diverse region of the country, the share of white students in charter schools is higher than in traditional public schools, which is unexpected given the overall under-enrollment of white students in charter schools. In the Northeast and Midwest, black students are enrolled in charter schools to a much greater extent than in traditional public schools.

Black students comprise approximately half of the charter school enrollment in these two regions, whereas they make up only 14% of students among traditional public schools. Latino and Asian students’ enrollment in charter schools is largely similar to their enrollment in traditional public schools. One exception is that Latino students in the South, a region where overall Latino enrollment is booming, enroll in charter schools to a greater extent.

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² Charter schools are public schools. For ease of readability, we will refer to non-charter public schools as “traditional public schools.”

³ For more details, see Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, & Wang, 2011.
Segregation of black and Latino students from white students has been rising for nearly two decades in traditional public schools. Yet in 2007-08, levels of segregation for charter school students of all races, but especially black students, were considerably higher than for their peers in traditional public schools. Fully seven out of ten black charter school students attended schools where less than 10% of students were white, and 43% attended schools where white students were less than 1% of the enrollment.

Other charter school students were also in high-minority schools at a higher rate than their same race peers in traditional public schools, though again, these trends were most extreme for black charter school students. Among the reasons to be concerned about such high levels of minority segregation in charter schools is that nearly 90% of segregated minority charter programs (as well as traditional public schools) were also schools where a majority of students came from low-income families.

In essence, virtually all segregated minority schools are also segregated by socioeconomic status. We also found concerning patterns of segregated white charter schools overlapping with schools reporting no evidence of free/reduced lunch programs. In other words, the data suggest that some overwhelmingly white charter schools do not serve low-income students.

**Differences by Geography**

The geographic distribution of charter schools is skewed towards urban areas. While just 30% of traditional public school students attend schools in central cities, more than half of charter school students attend charters located in cities. Because many states allow charter schools to draw students across district boundary lines, these students may not all live in cities. One-quarter of charter school students attend schools located in suburban areas, which is lower than among traditional public schools (38%). Still, the fact that in 2007-08, one in four charter students were going to schools in suburbia indicates that the growth of charter schools is not just an urban phenomenon.

Like most trends, though, enrollment in suburban charters varies by state. States with populous suburban areas like New Jersey have higher shares of charter school students in the suburbs. Some states, including Florida and Georgia, have higher shares of suburban charter school students than traditional public school students.

Earlier work has shown that while segregated minority schools are concentrated in central cities, as suburban areas grow more diverse—a trend illustrated by recent Census data (Brookings, 2010)—segregated schools are also becoming more widespread in suburbia (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2008). When considering the enrollment of white students in charter schools (compared to traditional public schools) the disparity is larger in suburban areas than in city or town/rural areas. Just under half of suburban charter school students are white (47%), while 58% of students in suburban traditional public schools are white, a difference of 11 percentage points. In comparison, charter and traditional public schools in other geographic areas (cities or town/rural areas) had gaps of 6-7 percentage points.

There are several ways this affects segregation. Suburban charter schools themselves may have higher minority segregation due to the over-enrollment of...
minority students. The significant under-enrollment of white students in suburban charter schools may also affect segregation levels in public schools that may be disproportionately losing nonwhite students to charter schools. However, it is unlikely that this overall trend of under enrollment of white students in suburban charter schools is evenly spread across all suburban communities. While some charters may disproportionately enroll high shares of minority students in suburban areas where white students are a higher percentage of the public school enrollment, research has shown, for example, that charter schools hasten the trend of resegregation in some suburbs already experiencing a loss of white students in the public schools (IRP, 2008).

Nationally, the segregation of suburban charter schools is similar to trends among all charter schools. Nearly one-quarter of students in suburban charter schools are in 90-100% minority schools, which is considerably higher than among traditional public schools in suburbia, but lower than that of all charter school students (36%). Like all charter schools, the percentage of suburban charter school students in 90-100% white schools was lower than in traditional public schools in suburban areas. Taken together, however, nearly 30% of suburban charter school students attend either a racially isolated white or minority schools. These trends are concerning given increasing diversity in suburbia and the importance of integrated schools.

Metropolitan Area Patterns
Though charter schools are a widely discussed policy initiative they still educate a relatively small handful of students, in many metropolitan areas around the country. In most metropolitan areas with at least 20 charter schools, charter school students still account for less than 5% of the overall metro enrollment. The places with higher shares of charter school students tended to be in the West (particularly California and Arizona) and the Rust Belt (particularly Ohio). We examined enrollment and segregation trends at the metropolitan level, believing that if charter schools were to fulfill their integrative potential; this would be the scope of the area across which charter schools would need to draw students.

Despite the broad trend of minority over-enrollment in charter schools, this is not the case across all metros examined, particularly those in the West. In California, every metro except San Francisco has a higher share of white students enrolling in charter schools than in traditional public schools. In these same metros, which are places that serve some of the highest proportions of Latino students in the nation, Latino students are under-enrolled in charter schools. Meanwhile, black students are generally over-enrolled in charter schools when comparisons are done at the metropolitan area level.

In most metropolitan areas, minority segregation in charter schools is higher than in traditional public schools. Again, however, we see several instances in which this is not the case, notably in California and Arizona, which are places of higher charter school enrollment. In some metros, like Fresno or Los Angeles, the less extensive charter school segregation could be due to the fact that charter schools in these metros enroll higher shares of white students than traditional public schools. In other metros with a larger share of white students in charter schools (e.g., Sacramento or

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4 In the Rust Belt and Ohio, particularly, this finding is likely influenced by urban charter schools.

5 An exception to this trend is in some Florida metropolitan areas, places that have substantial diversity of black, white, and Latino students.
Santa Rosa in California), however, there are still alarmingly high shares of charter students in 90-100% minority schools. Such patterns suggest that white and nonwhite students are attending different charter settings throughout these metros.

On the other end of the spectrum, while white segregation is relatively low in most metro area charter schools, it is still a concern in some. Nearly 30% of Portland’s charter schools have less than 10% minority students. The Tampa metropolitan area—located in a state with countywide school districts—has both higher levels of minority and white charter school segregation than traditional public schools (19% and 17% of charter students, respectively, compared with 4% and 4% of traditional public school students). It is possible that in large school districts, charter schools may be an avenue for both white and nonwhite students to avoid the more diverse public school system.

Charter schools and civil rights considerations: What can be done?

These findings, along with multiple studies from around the world, confirm a basic principle: unfettered school choice leads to heightened stratification (Fuller, Elmore, and Orfield, 1996; Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995; Ladd, Fiske & Ruijs, 2010; McEwan, 2008; Morphis, 2009). Appropriate policies can help mitigate the stratifying effects of choice, however, by fostering more open and equal access for disadvantaged students.

Imagine for a moment a family who recently arrived to the United States with limited English skills and no automobile. Though they move to a large West Coast metropolis with countless educational options, the parents are unable to take advantage of these different choices because they simply do not know about them. Even if one of their new contacts passed along information about a desirable educational option, a district policy of not providing transportation to out-of-neighborhood students would further limit the family’s ability to access the school. In addition, no pro-diversity policy governed enrollment in the district’s schools of choice. So when the family did purchase a car, the school that they were interested in no longer had space available because more advantaged students had already filled it to capacity.

This hypothetical example highlights three critical civil rights considerations for school choice: wide availability of information about the school of choice, the provision of free transportation, and diversity goals and procedures to govern admission (Fuller, Elmore & Orfield, 1996). While magnet schools (another federally-funded choice program) have historically attended to each of these important policy mechanisms, the expanding charter sector has not done so in any systematic way (Siegel-Hawley & Frankenberg, 2011).

For all of these reasons, the Obama Administration has at times been at odds with traditional civil rights organizations over its fervent support of charter schools (Santos, 2011). However, one of the ways the recent bill garnered such bipartisan support in the polarized House of Representatives is that it called for more federal oversight of charter schools (Dillon, 2011b). Such oversight might lead to federal action regarding civil rights concerns in charters, a potentially powerful antidote to dismayingly high levels of charter school segregation.

The federal government should further help states and charter school authorizers by providing clear guidance about civil rights and charter schools. The U.S. Department of
Education’s Office for Civil Rights efforts to enforce anti-discrimination laws, including in charter schools, should be expanded. Charter school legislation in many states contains language about the importance of furthering integration and/or not impeding existing desegregation efforts among public schools. More oversight and enforcement is needed to honor those legislative commitments.

It is also critical to assess how policies that are, at face value, race-neutral—like whether charter schools provide subsidized lunch (we found evidence that up to one-fourth do not), transportation across boundary lines, or funding preferences for educating certain students—have a disproportionate racial impact on charter school enrollment patterns. Additionally, local charter authorizers and operators of charter schools must also take active efforts to prevent racial isolation by expanding outreach and limiting any barriers to enrollment or retention for all groups of students. Private foundations should prioritize funding for charter schools and/or operators that are not exacerbating racial segregation.

Conclusion
The last two decades have seen an explosion of all types of school choice and it is likely that charter schools are here to stay. Even though charter schools could draw students across the district boundary lines that typically help isolate students by race and socioeconomic status, most charters are not currently living up to their integrative potential. Instead charter schools display very high levels of segregation, particularly for black students. These trends are especially important to consider in diversifying suburban areas. Understanding how charter schools may harm districts’ efforts to stabilize school diversity in addition to creating more diverse charter school options should be part of an on-going, regional-level conversation in our metropolitan areas.

Much of the research about charter schools has been politicized, and arguments have focused on assailing findings instead of thinking about how to address the consensus of studies finding that charter schools are part of the growing problem of school segregation.

Instead of outrage, we think it is in everyone’s best interest to find ways to understand persisting patterns of segregation across school sectors to ensure that all families have access to high-quality integrated schools. Charter schools, while still only educating a small share of students, are expanding rapidly. Support for that expansion continues despite the segregated educational environments found in many charter schools and the segregating effect they may have on nearby non-charter public schools.

As our country rapidly becomes more diverse, segregated schools are increasingly of concern—for the future of those students who attend them and more broadly to the health of our democracy and economic well being of our communities. As suburban diversity increases, the role of charter schools and public schools play in addressing school segregation will be critical to whether communities rapidly transition or create neighborhoods and schools of stable diversity.
Author Biographies

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References


Job Satisfaction of Female and Male Superintendents: The Influence of Job Facets and Contextual Variables as Potential Predictors

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Abstract
A descriptive multiple regression approach was used to assess the job satisfaction of female and male public school superintendents taking part in a decennial survey conducted by AASA. Self-reported job satisfaction of public school superintendents was regressed on their affective reactions to specific job facets (supervision, co-workers, and compensation) and to contextual variables (type of school district, legislative mandates, and funding sources) purported to influence their job satisfaction. Results indicate that female and male superintendents were found to be similarly satisfied with their current job assignment but for different reasons as revealed by interaction terms addressed in the regression analyses.

Key Words
job satisfaction, superintendents, sex differences
Given the emphasis on high stakes testing (e.g., Nichols & Berliner, 2008) and the reduction in funding (e.g., Hanushek & Lindseth, 2009; McNeil, 2009), executive level leadership is extremely important. One factor likely to influence superintendents is their job satisfaction having implications for withdrawal (Currall, Towler, Judge, & Kohn, 2005), excessive absences (Koslowsky, Sagie, Krausz, & Singer, 1997), and ultimately job turnover (Trevor, Gerhart, & Boudreau, 1997). Consequently, our study focuses on the job satisfaction of superintendents.

Within our study, we examine the job satisfaction of female and male superintendents via two research questions. One research question concerns if female and male superintendents differ in their overall job satisfaction, and the other research question concerns if their affective reactions to different job facets/contextual variables purported to influence job satisfaction vary by gender group. To address these research questions, we used a recent database compiled by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) (see Author).

**Literature Review**

Guiding our study is a rich body of literature indicating that job satisfaction is a psychological construct (e.g., Miceli & Lane, 1991; Scarpello, Huber, & Vandenberg, 1998), varies along a single continuum (i.e. satisfaction ↔ dissatisfaction), and is influenced by various job-related factors. Based on this research, our study addressed some of the most likely factors (i.e., job facets, contextual variables, and a personal attribute) likely to influence the job satisfaction of public school superintendents (see Figure 1).
Figure 1. Potential predictors of job satisfaction for public school superintendents.
**Job Facets**

Specific job facets addressed in our study are supervisors, co-workers, and compensation (see Figure 1). These job facets have been noted to be important in the professional literature (Lawler, 1973) and are assessed by leading commercial instruments (e.g., Job Descriptive Index [nd] and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire [nd]). Clearly, superintendents can view each job facet either as a liability or an asset having implications for their job satisfaction.

**Reactions to supervisors**

Supervisors of public school superintendents are school boards (Glass, Björk, & Brunner, 2000). School boards must endorse the recommendations of superintendents in many areas (e.g., policy issues, financial expenditures, and employment recommendations) and are responsible for evaluating the job performance of superintendents (Land, 2002).

However, because job satisfaction is considered as a construct influenced by several job facets, we addressed additional job facets (co-workers and compensation) likely to influence the job satisfaction of school superintendents.

**Reactions to co-workers**

Within the school setting, superintendents must work with a variety of co-workers, and these co-workers can be categorized into separate workgroups (Author) with each having implications for job satisfaction. The workgroups considered in our study are district level administrators, building-level administrators, teachers, and support staff. In addition to considering supervisors and co-workers, groups purported to influence the job satisfaction of superintendents, we addressed still another job facet in our study i.e., compensation (Williams, McDaniel, &, Nguyen, 2006).

**Reactions to compensation**

Compensation has been reported to be important to employees (Terpstra & Honoree, 2003), to have implications for their quality of life (Young & Castaneda, 2008), and to be reflective of their organizational value (Gerhart & Milkovich, 1992). A superintendent’s compensation is comprised of two sources: (1) annual pay and (2) fringe benefits (Author). Unique to school superintendents is that these sources of compensation are negotiated with school boards and can be an asset or a liability, either from a personal or from a public relation perspective with implications for the job satisfaction of superintendents.

**Contextual Factors**

In addition to considering job facets (i.e., supervisors, co-workers, and compensation) noted to be mainstays in the professional literature, we addressed several contextual variables often overlooked in the existing research stream, especially for superintendents. Specific contextual variables addressed are school district type, legislative mandates, and funding sources (see Figure 1).

**School district type**

Although school district type could be classified as rural, suburban, or urban, we chose to use a dichotomous predictor, i.e., rural vs. non-rural. Guiding our choice is that rural school districts differ from non-rural school districts in many ways (Poppink & Schen, 2003) having implications for job satisfaction. These differences are financial resources reflected by operational budgets, labor markets for attracting superintendents as well as their co-worker groups, and compensation (pay and benefits) as employment incentives (Winter & Melloy, 2005).

**Legislative mandates**

Since the passage of NCLB, a metric for assessing school district outcomes within a
state (Au, 2007) has emerged, i.e., high stakes testing outcomes. This information is used to compile district report cards (e.g., Cupertino Unified School District, n.d.) serving as a barometer for gauging the performance of superintendents (Author). Because federal mandates are implemented at the state level through complementary legislation, we consider the affective reactions of superintendents according to each level of government in our study as a potential predictor of their job satisfaction.

**Funding sources**
A major contextual variable facing superintendents is funding for their school district, and the major sources of funds are federal grants, state monies and local contributions (King, Swanson, & Sweetland, 2003). Given that these sources of funding (see Figure 1) are based on tax revenues, each has been restricted due to the recent downturn of the US economy. Consequently, “scarce resources have required superintendents to make unpopular and painful decisions” (p. 309) likely influencing their job satisfaction.

**Personal Attribute**
**Gender of superintendents**
Results obtained in the recent study of superintendents (Author) when compared to a similar study (Glass et al., 2000) conducted a decade ago indicate an increase in the percentage of female superintendents. However, it is largely unknown if the job satisfaction of public school superintendents varies according to gender, to specific job facets (i.e., supervisors, co-workers, and compensation), and/or to certain contextual variables (type of school district, legislative mandates, and funding source), and we considered these possibilities by assessing main effects associated with job facets and contextual variables as well as gender of superintendents by considering interaction terms in our analyses.

Consequently, within our study addressing the job satisfaction of female and male superintendents, we addressed both their overall job satisfaction and their affective reactions to potential contributors likely influencing their job satisfaction (see Figure 1) as set forth by our research questions.

**Method**
**Population**
In total, 1,867 public school superintendents responded to the most recent decennial study (Author) conducted by AASA. Collectively, these persons are representative of all states, regions, and types of school districts (see Table 2.4 in Author). However, our population is defined by 1,637 public school superintendents providing complete information for all variables, and descriptive statistics for our population are found in Table 1.
### Table 1

**Descriptive Statistics for Variables of Interest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables of Interest</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
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<td>Sex of Superintendents(^1)</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to State Mandates</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Federal Mandates</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to State Funding</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Federal Funding</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to Local Funding</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note\(^1\):** Gender was effect coded where males were coded -1 and females were coded 1.

**Note\(^2\):** Rural school districts coded 0 and non-rural school districts coded 1.

---

**Procedure**

Decennial studies of the superintendency since the 1920’s have used field surveys to assess the affective reactions of public school superintendents. The revised instrument used in our study built on past surveys to provide continuity but included new items having contemporary implications (legislation, funding etc.). Prior to administering our survey, items were assessed using a content validity paradigm where the panel of experts (see Author for a description of the panel) included those knowledgeable about the superintendency.

Feedback obtained from the panel of experts was used to construct a final instrument. This instrument contained 159 items with some items involving multiple responses for 13 different choices. Even though the revised instrument contained 159 items spread across 27 pages requiring a substantial time commitment for those choosing to participate in the most recent decennial study, several steps were taken to encourage their participation.

Initially, superintendents received an e-mail from AASA describing the new decennial study and requesting their participation by responding via an internet survey technique. Within ensuing weeks, two additional emails were sent: (1) the second e-mail served a reminder for those failing to respond and encouraged their participation in the online survey and (2) the third e-mail requested again
their participation and provided alternative directions for downloading the questionnaire and for using U.S. mail void of an internet address. Based on these follow-up efforts, 1,637 public school superintendents provided information for those variables of interest (see Figure 1 and Table 1) addressed in our study.

**Variables of Interest**

**Criterion variable**
Our criterion variable is the self-reported job satisfaction of public school superintendents. Job satisfaction was assessed on a 4-point Likert-type scale. Anchor points on this scale include: (a) *Very Satisfied* “4”, *Moderately Satisfied* “3”, *Moderately Dissatisfied* “2”, and *Very Dissatisfied* “1”.

**Predictor variables**
We considered 27 predictor variables: main effects (N =14) and certain interaction effects (N = 13). Main effects are listed in Figure 1 and include multiple job facets (i.e., supervisors [school boards], co-workers [district administrators, building administrators, compensation [pay and fringe benefits]], legislative mandates [i.e., federal and state], funding sources [i.e., federal, state, and local], type of school district [i.e., rural vs. non-rural], and a personal attribute of superintendents [i.e., gender group]). For each main effect, interaction terms (N = 13) were computed according to gender of superintendents.

Because the affective reactions of superintendents can vary along a single continuum; these main effects were scored according to a five-point Likert type scale. Anchor points on this continuum are: (a) *Major Asset* “5”, *Minor Asset* “3”, *Neither an Asset nor a Liability* “3”, *Minor Liability* “2”, or *Major Liability* “1”. However, different scoring schemes were used for other variables reflected in Table 1.

School district type (i.e. rural vs. non-rural) was dummy coded (i.e., 0 or 1) with rural school districts serving as the referent group. Gender of superintendents was effect coded where males were coded -1 and females coded 1. For each interaction term involving gender of superintendents, sex of a superintendent was multiplied by each main effect.

**Statistical Analyses**
A descriptive multiple regression approach was used because these data reflect population parameters. Within this approach, we used a hierarchical order of variable entry involving two steps. In the first step (see Model 1 in Table 2), job satisfaction was regressed only on gender of superintendents, while in the second step (see Model 2 in Table 2) job satisfaction was regressed on all main effects as well as on interaction effects involving gender of superintendents.
Table 2

*Overall Regression Equations Addressing Research Questions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.016*</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.330*</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For both models, $R^2$'s were calculated. In the first model only gender of superintendents was considered as the sole predictor as per our first research question. Results indicate that males and females are similarly satisfied with their current job assignment, i.e., $R^2 = .00$ (see Model 1 in Table 2).

With respect to our second research question considering all potential predictors as well as interactions involving gender of superintendents, information is provided. According to Model 2, 11% of the variance associated with the job satisfaction of superintendents can be explained (see Table 2) by this particular linear combination of variables.

Based on findings from both models, each model was deconstructed to reflect unstandardized ($b$) and standardized regression coefficients ($B$) (see Table 3).
Table 3

Deconstructed Regression Models as Per Research Questions
(Note: In all cases replace sex with gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Superintendents</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Constant)</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Superintendents</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to School Boards</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to District Administrators</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Building Administrators</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Teachers</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Support Staff</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Pay</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Fringe Benefits</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Type of School District</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to State Mandates</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to Federal Mandates</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to State Funding</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions to Federal Funding</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction to Local Funding</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x School Boards</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x District Administrators</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Teachers</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Support Staff</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Pay</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Benefits</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Type of School District</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x State Mandates</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Federal Mandates</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x State Funding</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Federal Funding</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex x Local Funding</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1: Gender was effect coded where males were coded -1 and females were coded 1.
Note 2: Rural school districts coded 0 and non-rural school districts coded 1.
Note*: A standardized regression coefficient ≤ .15 was considered as important as a population parameter. Even though consideration for statistical significance is inappropriate in our study, a standardized regression coefficient ≥ .15 would have been statistically significant if a probability sample had been used.
Because standardized regression coefficients \( (B) \) reflect the relative importance of predictor variables, it is unsurprising that \( B \) is near zero for Model 1 (i.e., \( B = -.02 \)) that considers only gender of superintendents. With respect to the deconstructed equation involving Model 2 (see Table 3), these data provide important insights by considering main effects as well as interaction effects influencing the job satisfaction of public school superintendents.

At first glance, it would seem that main effects for gender of superintendents (i.e., \( B = .42 \)) and for school boards (i.e., \( B = .16 \)) should be important considerations when interpreting data found in Table 3.

When interpreting the data found in Table 3, the main effect for gender of was ignored because Darlington (1990) indicated “a variable’s average effect is often of little interest if it interacts with other variables” (p. 331) included in the regression equation. The only main effect noted as important and failing to interact (i.e., see interaction, \( B = .09 \), in Table 3) with gender of superintendents is their affective reactions toward school boards. That is, those perceiving their school board as an asset are more satisfied with their current job assignment than are those perceiving their school board as a liability.

Beyond this main effect involving school boards, several interaction terms involving sex of superintendents surfaced. These interaction terms included: (a) Gender \( \times \) Teachers (i.e., \( B = -.50 \)), (b) Sex \( \times \) Staff (i.e., \( B = .34 \)), (c) Sex \( \times \) District Administrators (\( B = -.16 \)), and (d) Sex \( \times \) Pay (\( B = -.15 \)). To provide further insight about these interaction effects, separate slope coefficients were computed (see Table 4).

### Table 4

**Intercept and Slope Coefficients for Interaction Terms Involving Female and Male Superintendents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intercepts</th>
<th>Slopes: Sex ( \times ) Teachers</th>
<th>Slopes: Sex ( \times ) Staff</th>
<th>Slopes: Sex ( \times ) District Administrators</th>
<th>Slopes: Sex ( \times ) Pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When consideration is given to different slope coefficients for female and male public school superintendents, insights are provided. Most important, these results indicated that affective reactions to support staff are more important for female (i.e., \( b = .43 \)) than for male superintendents (i.e., \( b = -.25 \)). On the other hand, information contained in Table 4 indicates that the job satisfaction of male superintendents more than of female superintendents is influenced by their affective reactions to teachers (i.e., .07 vs. -.07), to pay (i.e., .04 vs. -.02) and to district administrators (i.e., .04 vs. -.01).
Discussion
Given the importance of job satisfaction (Heneman & Judge, 2006) relative to implications for organizational outcomes, research addressing this construct for public school superintendents is timely, especially as related to sex of superintendents. In the past, most superintendents have been males (Glass et al., 2000), but females have made considerable inroads and little is known about their affective reactions to their new assignments. To partially fill this void, we conducted an empirical study addressing two research questions.

Our first research question focused on the overall job satisfaction of female and male superintendents. We found both gender groups have similar levels of job satisfaction with their current job assignment (see Table 2 Model 1). Although this is important information, it fails to provide any insight as to why they might be similarly satisfied.

To address the why, our second research question considered the affective reactions of female and male superintendents to specific job facets and/or contextual variables (see Figure 1) likely to influence their overall job satisfaction. By using this two-prong approach, we found that similar job satisfaction is likely due both to a common source (i.e., reactions to school boards) and to counterbalancing perceptions about different job facets involving co-workers [district administrators, teachers, and support staff] and compensation [annual pay].

Clearly, these findings have important implications for researchers, individuals holding a superintendent position, and individuals aspiring to be a superintendent. Researchers should not overlook the notion that only those job facets noted to be important in the job satisfaction literature were found to account for important systematic variance in job satisfaction.

Although we considered other contextual variables, as listed in Figure 1 as probable predictors, none of these variables was found to be important when consideration was afforded to job facets.

Even though our study analyzed the affective reactions for a specific population (N = 1,637) of school superintendents taking part in the most recent decennial study, these results have implications for the field at large (i.e., 12,500 see Author).

By using the unstandardized regression coefficients reported in Table 3, all superintendents can compute a personal satisfaction score based on the job facets and the contextual variables considered in our study. Thus, they can assess their current level of job satisfaction from a norm perspective involving a large, albeit restricted, population.

With respect to aspiring superintendents, our findings should be considered as important. Signaled by our findings is that aspiring females should pay special attention to support staff when choosing among school districts. For aspiring male job candidates it would be wise for them to consider teachers, district administrators, and pay because their affective post-job reactions to these variables have likely implications for their future job satisfaction.

The above recommendations should not be summarily dismissed because we found that 11% of the variance associated with the self-reported job satisfaction of public school superintendents can be accounted for by our specific combination of predictor variables. This amount of variance is by no means small when consideration is given to an effect size.
measure and to the size of our population (N = 1,637). According to several authorities (e.g., Cohen, 1998; Huck, 2008), 11% is considered as a medium effect that has practical/observable implications in the field setting.

Not to be overlooked, the number of public school superintendents taking part in our study is by no means small (N = 1,637) given informational demands for participation. That is, superintendents were requested in the most recent decennial study conducted by AASA to complete a survey containing 159 items spread across 27 pages. Certainly until additional research is conducted along these lines, our findings can serve as a benchmark for comparison.

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George Petersen has been a public school teacher, administrator and university faculty member. Currently, he is dean and professor in the School of Education at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA. E-mail: gjpeters@callutheran.edu
References


Research Article

Using a Framework to Help Understand School Reform

Scotland Nash, EdD
Instructional Coach
Instructional Services
Seattle Public Schools
Seattle, WA

Abstract
The purpose for this study was to use the KSH analytic framework as a tool to provide insight into the organizational change process that, when considered, might result in lasting and significant school change. In this qualitative multi-case study of two urban comprehensive high schools, the researcher not only described the initiation and implementation strategies of reform by an external agency, but also described the lasting effect of the reform five years after the large nonprofit agency left the schools. The major research questions addressed in this study were: to what extent does each of the following, leadership, vision, teamwork, and action implementation, influence the school reform process initiated by an external agency as experienced in two urban high schools?

Key Words
school reform, education leadership, systems change
The story of frustration in school reform is not unique to one school or one district. In schools nationwide, people inside and outside high schools are trying to change the traditional school day for teachers and students in order to improve student success.

School reform is not only being attempted by school personnel, but numerous foundations and civic groups are trying to initiate school reform nationwide. This study examined the influence of a significant externally funded school reform effort initiated in two large, urban high schools by an external agency.

Furthermore, the reform implementation and the lasting influence of these reforms were examined five years after the change agent left the schools.


The KSH analytic framework provided a useful framework under which to understand better the successes and pitfalls of school reform at these two large, urban high schools.
Table 1

_The KSH Analytic Framework_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics/Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualities of a leader include: integrity, trust, honesty, reliability, enthusiasm, discipline, and clear communicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longevity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take responsibility, act with competence, communicate clearly, be results-oriented, risk-taker, comfortable with change, and use focus and direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>build morale, invite participation, reward curiosity, facilitate risk-taking, use effect conflict resolution skills, and support and empower colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment, use data, and monitor and evaluate reform efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mediate and communicate with a variety of stakeholder audiences and balance the diversity of their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflective, life-long learners; high standards and ambitious goals; balance vision and reality; and able to facilitate others to take the necessary steps in realizing the vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear, concise, provides direction and inspiration for changing the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>select the right work, the entire school needs to create and embody a vision that defines the work to be done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintain that all people and all decisions align with the vision in order to define and focus reform efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivates people to move in the same direction, and unifies a diverse people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Distributive Leadership</em>: based on individual interests, abilities, roles, knowledge and strengths; inspires greater participation, job satisfaction, productivity and commitment; leadership, shared governance and collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Communication</em>: clear, transparent communication creates functional teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Collaboration</em>: dialogue, decision-making, action, and evaluation; discuss issues and challenges and to celebrate successes; teacher participation in the decision-making process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Collegiality</em>: gathers colleagues who learn together, provide perspective, and help mobilize the masses to move toward the vision of the organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Study Methods Data Collection

This qualitative multi-case study provided an in-depth perspective into the change process at two large, urban, public high schools in the same school district. By considering the experience at two different high schools participating in the change process at the same time with the same external organization funding and facilitating the process, similarities and differences between the schools could provide a richer set of descriptive data than exploring the change process at only one school. The district, at the time of grant implementation, had been guided by a policy of site-based management that encouraged the school personnel at each building to use grant resources as each school’s faculty and staff thought would best enhance the schools’ individual improvement.

Data was collected about the two schools, the funding agency, and the facilitating organization by analyzing documents, conducting interviews, and facilitating focus groups. Teachers, school leaders, facilitators and leaders from the implementing organization all contributed to the study. Both an outside reader and I coded and examined the data. I performed data analysis within each of the data sets. The facilitating organization and each school site were considered separately across each of the four critical elements of the KSH analytic framework. Also identified were similarities and dissimilarities between the two schools to deepen the understanding of how leadership, vision, teamwork, and action implementation facilitate and support an understanding of the reform in the two settings.

### Participants

In the fall of 2000, the King Agency\(^6\) provided grant support for one large, urban school district that included ten large, comprehensive high schools in the western United States. The agency was interested in initiating small-school reform in the large, comprehensive high schools. The nonprofit agency provided funding and support to the district for five years. It was the King Agency’s first grant of a significant size and therefore, the goals for the grant were evolving throughout the course of implementation of dollars being spent in the district (personal communication, April 20, 2010).

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\(^6\) To protect the anonymity of the King Agency, Schools First, and the school sites, names have been changed and documents gathered have not been identified.
However, in the initial year of the grant, the goals were stated as follows:

1. Transformation of all high schools to high achievement schools;
2. Improvement of all schools through technical assistance, training and improved technology; and

The agency hired Schools First to implement the grant. Schools First was created in 1995 as a merger of three education-related organizations that had similar goals in supporting the local urban school district. The main objectives for the organization were to inspire change, organize community leadership, and serve as a facilitator for the use of private resources. Following the completion of this school-reform initiative, Schools First has maintained a longstanding relationship with the school district and plays an important role in supporting continued school improvement efforts.

In 2000, at the start of the grant, both Birchwood High School and Jefferson High School had over 1,500 students. Approximately 55% of the population at each school was Caucasian and approximately 20% of the population at each school was on free and reduced lunch. In both high schools, students were achieving higher than the district average scores in reading, writing, and math tests; however, neither school was excelling.

Although the culture at both high schools was professional, neither school faculty was enthusiastic about change. Both schools were also entrenched in their own communities, had their own unique customs, and their own student body. In both schools, change that the community and school personnel perceived to significantly alter the traditional structure had been largely resisted. Ultimately, the communities at both schools were grounded in their community traditions and people believed that they were already doing what was best for students.

**Findings**

**Leadership**

According to the research, an effective leader has strong personal and professional qualities such as integrity, trust, honesty, reliability, enthusiasm, and discipline. For effective change, a leader will take responsibility, act with competence, communicate clearly, be results-oriented, and use focus and direction. “In fact, one of their major conclusions is that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn in school” (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005, p. 26). The importance of leadership in school success is evident throughout the research.

Birchwood High School personnel experienced at least three leaders during the time of grant implementation. The first leader proved to push too hard and not provide time for faculty and staff support of the vision. The second leader proved to be underprepared to be the principal at a large, urban high school. The third leader was an interim principal; however, he had been principal at the school prior to the change process and was able to begin to rebuild a trust among teachers and administrators. The changes in leadership and the tension that resulted diminished the personnel’s ability to implement the change.

At Jefferson High School, when the grant was initiated in 2000, the principal
fostered an environment of distrust and anxiety. The teachers believed that the principal was manipulative. This distrust resulted in intense conflict as how best to implement the grant resources. Following her departure, the school had at least three interim principals who did not facilitate change but rather managed the high school. Change leadership was left in the hands of teacher-led committees, which resulted in increasing faculty tension throughout the building. Without a stable and focused leader, there was no one to unify the faculty and staff around a common vision.

Schools First frequently noted throughout their year-end reports and in the interviews, the instability of leadership in the grantor agency and the district office in addition to the changing leaders at individual schools. The transitioning leadership in the grantor agency, district, and schools created an environment where leaders were unable to communicate the vision directly and foster collaborative teamwork. Therefore, the lack of leadership might have resulted in less than desired school reform.

**Vision**

As discussed by Kotter (1996) the personnel in the organization need to have an interest in making change. However, in addition to feeling a need for change, the personnel need to define a direction for change. The teachers in the school need to want to participate in and understand the change and eventually feel the direct influence of the change.

Personnel in neither high school felt an immediate need for structural change, but they were committed to programs to improve student achievement. As the vision from the grantor agency shifted from a general vision for improved student achievement through personalization, to using the specific structural model of small schools, the teachers got distracted from the purpose of the reform. Subsequently, personnel at neither site entirely bought-into or supported the proposed structural changes that would significantly alter the traditional high-school model and therefore, the grantor’s vision of small schools was not achieved.

**Teamwork**

Large, urban high schools are complex. Many stakeholders have opinions about how faculty and staff can provide students with what is necessary for high student achievement. Although stakeholders claim to put student success at the forefront of their work, there are many perspectives and strategies that the stakeholders believe can be successful.

At Birchwood High School, the principal immediately created a divide among the faculty and staff with the creation of the Better Schools Team. As a means of implementing the initial plan, the principal appointed special faculty and staff to the Better Schools Team, which was perceived to replace the elected Building Leadership Team. This action caused a divide among the faculty and staff. Subsequently, the teachers union asserted that the Better Schools Team did not truly represent the teacher’s voice. This conflict created a barrier to planning, implementing, and successfully achieving school-wide reform.

At Jefferson High School, the principal created teacher-led committees to facilitate the use of the grant money, and therefore, to direct school reform. The teachers appointed to lead the committees were excited about restructuring the traditional school curricular structure. Other teachers resisted the steps that were implemented as part of the change process because they believed that reform was unnecessary as the school was already meeting
the needs of its students. In other words, the teachers were divided based on their beliefs about how best to meet the needs of their students, alternative curriculum and instruction versus the traditional high-school model. The divide was strong and distinct and slowed school-wide change.

Many factors undermined potential teamwork at both schools. Based on the opinions expressed by the participants, divided faculties and divisions between faculty and leadership both lessened the progress of the educational reform at their respective schools.

Despite the tension that was described by the participants, a culture of professionalism pervaded the school environment at both high schools. The internal school culture, although tense, operated with the primary goal of supporting the students: the teachers were able to put their differences aside enough to put the students first on a daily basis. Students and parents at both schools were most likely not aware of the strife that pervaded the staff and faculty culture at the time of the grant.

**Action implementation**

Leaders need to communicate the vision and align the systems to the vision. Leaders need to remove barriers and facilitate the organization into generating short-term wins. Training members of the organization, mapping the steps, and pacing the change are important for organizational reform (Kotter, 1996; Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Senge, 2006).

The changes that did occur at Birchwood High School and Jefferson High School supported the general vision of improved student achievement as held in the district. Currently, both schools have more scheduled hours built into the school year for professional development, thereby altering the year-long calendar. There are teachers working across disciplines and using student data. Although this collaboration has not guaranteed an integrated curriculum, it has encouraged more reflective practice through conversations about student work. Despite a challenging process, once teachers began to participate in teacher-led professional development both faculties have been able to institutionalize elements of the process that directly improved teacher practice.

Structurally, Birchwood High School faculty more firmly established a few small learning communities throughout the school: one at the ninth-grade level and a few others that integrate curriculum and spanned grade levels. However, the most successful academy at Birchwood had been originally sponsored by another funder and began prior to the King Agency entering the school.

Jefferson High School personnel eventually created interdisciplinary teams across the ninth grade. While the number of subjects included in the team has decreased from four to two, all ninth graders are still part of a teacher-teaming experience. Again, however, this change was ultimately funded by another organization that extended the funding provided by the King Agency, thereby allowing for important teacher support and reinforcement of change. Ultimately, at both high schools the structural changes advocated by the King Agency were not as broadly implemented at either high school as were the instructional changes that were a by-product of the grant.

**Conclusions**

Although Birchwood High School and Jefferson High School personnel both had different ways to respond to and work with the grantor agency, the KSH analytic framework
provided a framework that allowed the researcher to consider elements that were significant to allow for and support school reform at the high schools. Leadership was unstable in both schools and in the King Agency. The vision, although somewhat misunderstood by personnel at Birchwood High School, was described by personnel at both schools as making more personalized learning environments for students than previously in place.

Both schools had intense turmoil in terms of faculty cohesion and relationships. However, at both schools were teachers who tried to implement change.

Finally, as a by-product of the proposed structural change and the actions taken at both schools, faculties at both schools made a cultural shift. In turn, five years post-grant both faculties had created sustained change that began during the grant implementation.

The most important change noted in both schools was a change in professional development and cross-discipline teacher collaboration; both of these changes were grounded in how the faculties used funding from the grant and the process created in trying to implement change.

Implications
This study suggests that reformers will be successful if they carefully consider the four elements of the KSH analytic framework while implementing and reflecting on the change process:

1. Leadership: Change will most likely occur when leadership is consistent at all levels of school reform. This would seem to imply that for sustainable reform, the school board needs to create structures that provide stable and supportive district leadership. In turn, the district and the school board need to support and provide for consistent leadership at the school level in particular. Stability and consistency in school-level leadership will likely provide an environment that teachers believe is safe for managing and experiencing the challenges of school reform.

2. Vision: Research indicates that a vision needs to be a clear and consistent with the beliefs of the stakeholders. Vision would seem essential to school reform. Clarity and consistency will enable the stakeholders to foresee the longevity of the school reform and, in turn, act to see through the essential change. The vision needs to be clearly communicated. Student achievement needs to be at the heart of any school reform vision, as the purpose of school reform is to raise student achievement through school structure and more importantly through teacher instruction.

3. Teamwork: In order to implement change (smoothly), stakeholders need to work together. For example, in this study, divisiveness in a faculty and staff can halt and eventually destroy any attempt at system-wide reform. Professional development opportunities should be viewed as an opportunity to build collegiality. As suggested from this study, teacher-led professional development
can attain and retain faculty buy-in to facilitate necessary change. Interdisciplinary teacher collaboration can be viewed as essential to increase the success of team-building in a large, urban comprehensive high school.

4. Action Implementation: As indicated in this study, tradition can hamper the process of implementation and money alone is not the answer. Tradition needs to be respected and money needs to be used to support the change vision. To support successful action implementation, it appears that there needs to be time for teachers to participate in essential professional development to understand clearly the reform and clear communication with critical stakeholders about the benefits of reform. There also needs to be opportunity to monitor progress of the change and modify actions as needed.

After a needs assessment on student achievement, the school or district should consider the four cornerstones of the KSH analytic framework when creating and reviewing a model for school reform.

The change process is not immediate. It takes time to create and implement systems that support significant change. Therefore, outside agencies should intend to engage with the school for an extended period of time during which they constantly revisit and engage in reflection about the success and direction of the reform. During this time, they should consider multiple constituencies with different agendas and make a commitment to leadership.

Furthermore, so that teachers are prepared for the reform process, they need to be heard and supported for successful change implementation while building collegiality. Therefore, training should not be short-term, but should provide support to teachers throughout the change process.

There are many challenges to successful school reform. And, although large scale, national curriculum and instruction reform has yet to be implemented successfully, the studies and theories presented in the literature, and in this study, indicate that there are four elements that support effective change: leadership, vision, teamwork, and action implementation. In other words, by understanding how the cornerstones of the KSH analytic framework are important for implementing school-wide change, school reform can continue on successful path.

The KSH analytic framework provided structure for understanding school change by providing a common focus for the researcher to understand better what worked well and what needed improvement regarding specific reform at these two schools while at the same time respecting that schools have individual cultures and communities. The KSH analytic framework can help personnel at individual schools determine what they might need to build upon to improve the school environment and, in turn, increase student achievement.

Concluding Thoughts

Although the changes at these schools would eventually be deemed positive by educators, including those who participated in this study, the most common descriptors of that time period tended to be negative. Leadership turmoil and faculty tension prevailed at both schools throughout the time of the grant. The participants in this study indicated that the upbeat and positive tone surrounding the
increase in professional development, cross-curricular collaboration, the use of data-driven decision-making, and the use of school transformation plans occurred at both schools.

Ultimately, there are no villains in this attempt at school reform; all participants wanted to improve student achievement. While outside change agents can be successful in initiating and implementing sustained change, they need to be cognizant of the individual school community, culture, and history.

Change agents need to consider the potential influence of weak or transitional leadership versus strong and stable leadership, a lack of vision versus a clear vision, a dysfunctional versus a functional team, and misdirected and incomplete action implementation versus a coordinated and intentional action implementation. As long as students are struggling for academic success, people will attempt to reform schools. However, people outside of the school system need to understand the complexity of schools prior to beginning a reform effort.

The conversation about school reform has become a political hot topic as demonstrated by the President Obama’s recent address to the nation in the Education Nation National Conference, September 27, 2010. As President Obama stated, “We can’t spend our way out of it. I think that when you look at the statistics, the fact is that our per-pupil expenditure has gone up during the last couple of decades even as results have gone down.” President Obama continued, “Obviously, in some schools money plays a big factor … On the other hand, money without reform will not fix the problem” (Education Nation National Conference, September 27, 2010).

Based on the findings from this study, the researcher believes that the KSH analytic framework provided a uniform tool of analysis to determine what factors of reform were important for making reform successful in these two schools, while not requiring that the model of reform to be uniform at both schools.

Specifically, the role and skills of district and school leaders, the clarity of vision for change, the environment created for teamwork, and methods designed for implementing the change can all be evaluated to determine their influence on the success of the school reform.

Author Biography

Scotland Nash has spent fifteen years in education instructing elementary through post secondary students and supporting teachers. She earned her doctorate from Seattle University in educational leadership. She is currently an instructional coach and supporting district-wide change in creating and implementing common history standards. E-mail: scotlandnash@gmail.com
References


Instructional Leadership in Alberta: Research Insights from Five Highly Effective Schools

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Abstract
This article reviews original research, sponsored by the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA), to gain evidence-based insights from five case studies of leadership in exemplary elementary schools in Alberta, Canada. Schools were identified by the ATA as sites where effective leadership was practiced. In this study, effective leadership was specifically linked to successful student learning. Over the course of the 2009-2010 school year, researchers spent time in each school interviewing school staff by asking two questions: (1) What makes this school a good place for teaching and learning? and (2) What does the leadership do to make it so? Data were analyzed and categorized into eight themes. This article reviews these themes and theorizes about what lessons these findings might teach for school leaders.

Key Words
leadership, achievement, effective schools
"A leader is best when people barely know he (she) exists, when his (her) work is done, his (her) aim fulfilled, the people will say: We did it ourselves."
Chinese Taoist Philosopher Lao Tzu (600 BC – 531 BC)

Introduction

During 2009-2010, we conducted case studies of five elementary schools where instructional leadership was practiced successfully. In this article, we review the findings and insights from these five case studies. Our research suggests that Lao Tzu’s insights were correct: principals who practiced successful leadership in the schools we researched were able to create spaces where teachers and students “did it themselves.”

To collect data in these schools, we employed a simple research methodology. The Alberta Teachers Association selected five of the best elementary schools in Alberta and, during the 2009-2010 year, we spent time in these schools asking administrators, teachers, aides, and other staff two questions: (a) What makes this school such a good place for teaching and learning? and (b) What does the administration do to make this so?

Data were gathered through interviews focusing on these two questions and comprehensive notes were made of the answers. Notes were organized, analyzed, and synthesized into five case studies – one for each school. The final draft of the study was made available to all participants to verify the veracity of findings.

Our research findings are shared in this article. We should note that this article is not intended to report specific findings as much as attempt to thoughtfully theorize about what these research findings might suggest for principals. Our recent book (Parsons & Beauchamp, 2011) outlines our findings in detail. Specifically, in reviewing and reflecting upon the totality of our research, an overwhelming insight surfaced. We came to believe that the leadership literature is impoverished. Our findings suggest that, when people write about leadership, they spend too much time focusing upon identity and too little time writing about relationships.

Research Background

Our work follows a tradition of school leadership research. That we study leaders closely is hardly a surprise. We are a leader-centric culture and engage in what Jim Meindl (1995) calls a “Romance of Leadership.” We believe leaders and leadership are crucial but, Meindl points out, we often give them more credit than they are due by linking success and failure directly to their actions.

Still, as Leithwood, McAdie, Bascia, & Rodrigue (2004) note, leadership practices foster beliefs and set tones and focused their work upon “teaching for deep understanding.” In his book The Learning Leader: How to Focus School Improvement for Better Results, Reeves (2006) further connects the actions of school leadership to student achievement.

Hargreaves (2010) agrees: His research on school improvement in Finland and England suggests a number of school improvement catalysts principals might help achieve. These
include support networks, useful professional development, expert analysis of achievement data, mentor schools and consultants, data-informed reflection and decision-making, and short, medium and long-term strategies.

The clear implications are that principals do impact teachers’ and students’ lives and that, as Wright, Horn, & Sanders (1997) point out, more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor.

More than twenty years ago, Foster (1989) noted the reciprocal nature of leadership. Because leadershipresided within community, he believed it was necessarily shared between leaders and followers and called for community members to create interchangeable actions.

Ten years later, Wheatley (2000, p.346) emphasized working-together leadership, calling organizational change “a dance, not a forced march.” More recently, Shirley (2010) saw the next wave of school improvement supporting extended learning communities where colleagues (including principals) challenged each other’s ideas and worked together to promote school improvement.

In truth, principals need a combination of skills. Years ago, Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 188) noted, “learning is the essential fuel for the leader, the source of high-octane energy that keeps up the momentum by continually sparking new understanding, new ideas, and new challenges.” Lambert’s (2002) research on High Leadership Capacity Schools emphasized the need for a shared vision, using data to drive decisions and developing capacity among all members of the school community.

Our findings mirror Wheatley’s (2000, p. 347) note that people love to work with organizations that “have a sense of history and identity and purpose.” Flora (2003), in Psychology Today, noted that the best bosses are encouraging mentors, not disciplinarians. Indeed, the leaders we studied worked within their schools to build enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will (Collins, 2007; Fullan, 2003).

In our study, successful school leaders used very human skills—as we noted, mostly centered upon building strong relationships. Sergiovanni (1992) notes that educational leaders are both ethical leaders and seasoned, knowledgeable professionals who stress trust, honesty, communication, openness, transparency, responsibility, and accountability.

They “model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 64). Such leadership is true both inside and outside of schools. For example, Howard Behar’s (2007) It's not about the coffee: Leadership principles from a life at Starbucks outlines a leadership philosophy centered on people. As the title suggests, Starbucks’ product was not coffee, but people. These insights echo our findings.

The leaders we studied were constructivists. “Constructivist leadership,” defined by Lambert (1998, p. 17), is a reciprocal learning process that helps community participants construct meaning towards shared purposes. This concept of leadership reshaped traditional conceptions of leadership collected around “trait theories,” which often were limited to those with specific abilities who occupied roles of power and authority. Constructivist leadership calls for fluid, dynamic understandings of both leadership and the space in which leadership occurs. Richardson (2001) noted that principals construct a school ethos and send messages to staff and students with every budget, curricular,
and pedagogical decision they make and by the
tone of every interaction.

Higgins (1994) outlined three basic
management skills principals engage: technical,
human, and conceptual. Technical skill is the
ability to use tools, techniques, and specialized
knowledge to carry out actions. Human skills
help build positive interpersonal relationships,
solve people problems, help teams work, and
shape behavior towards organizational needs.
Conceptual skills help make sense of
organizations. Such big picture thinking helps
organizations solve problems in ways that have
long-term benefits. Although the principals we
studied used all three management skills, the
work we saw focused largely on the human and
conceptual.

How crucially does leadership impact
student learning? Leithwood, Anderson &
Wahlstrom (2004, p. 21) note, “While
leadership explains only three to five per cent
of the variation in student learning across
schools, this is actually about one quarter of the
total variation (10-20 per cent) explained by all
school-level variables.”

This focus on student learning
exemplifies a focus on serving others, a way of
living clearly exemplified by principals we
studied and, at least in part, a move away from
hero-like activities of leaders as managers.

In his recent book, Institute for the
future, Bob Johansen (2009) believes self-
serving leadership will become obsolete. He
sees the next ten years as a threshold decade of
volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and
ambiguity. If they are to achieve success,
organizational leaders must look past their own
interests and collaborate more broadly.

Johansen identifies ten skills every
leader must possess to be effective: these skills
include the maker instinct (the inner drive to
build), clarity, dilemma flipping (turning
problems into opportunities), and quiet
transparency (being open and authentic without
advertising). This path clearly seems the one
taken by the leaders we studied.

Research Context
The context of research always matters, and we
believe the Alberta context influenced our
findings. Alberta, although far from perfect, is
unique among educational systems we know in
large part because of the history of the Alberta
Initiative for School Improvement (AISI)
movement. AISI is now twelve-years old and in
year three of Cycle 4.

This province-wide organization of
school site-based research projects has been
borne at the grassroots by Alberta teachers and
supported by Alberta’s educational partners.
One result is that Alberta has been able to build
strong collegial relationships among
educational partners and within the educational
community.

AISI has helped inject an organized
fluidness into decision-making within the entire
educational system as educational partners have
experienced working together. This is true both
in areas of provincial governance and at school
sites.

Today, in Alberta schools, the work of
teachers and support staff is often characterized
by collaborative communities of practice that
engage leadership on site. AISI team practices
and models of distributed leadership with both
teachers and school administration have grown
to honor expanding leadership processes by
encouraging teams of teachers to meet on their
own and to engage in efficacious decision-
making.

Such organization gives teachers a clear
message and an opportunity to demonstrate that
they are competent professionals. This
expanded sense of site-based leadership helps ensure that teaching becomes more than unthinking compliance. Finally, AISI has helped create a province where job-embedded professional learning is becoming the norm and not the exception.

**Research Findings**

Although there may be several ways to evaluate effective principals, our study centered upon leadership for student learning. Thus, as we collected data, our research was “centered” by making the goal of student learning overt and primary. Specifically, the focus of our study was finding and sharing leadership activities that promoted student learning. Notes gained from teacher interviews based on their regular interactions with administration were thoroughly analyzed. The eight activities that follow emerged from data and were named by teachers and other school staff as activities that promoted student learning:

1) Highly effective principals build and communicate common goals, a common sense of purpose, and a clear vision.

2) Highly effective principals take time to really “know” the people with whom they work and appreciate, value, and respect them.

3) Highly effective principals listen, care, and support the people with whom they work on professional and on personal matters. Highly effective principals have “Open Doors.”

4) Highly effective principals create “family-based” working and learning environments.

5) Highly effective principals are organized; they engage in detailed, inclusive, and proactive planning.

6) Highly effective principals celebrate success with both formal and fun-filled informal events.

7) Highly effective principals include others in planning and deciding, and are “equal partners” who empower good decision-making among teachers.

8) Highly effective principals “walk their talk.”

**Leadership Skills In Demand**

As noted earlier, our findings are not dissimilar to what others are saying about leadership from a wide variety of areas inside and outside of education.

However, it is impossible to over-emphasize one key leadership activity that, although shared by the principals studied, was noted but not stressed in the literature. That is the clear focus principals placed on building relationships within their schools—relationships between administrators and teachers; between teachers and school staff; and between teachers, parents, and children.

These school leaders believed their most important assets were people. As they worked within their schools, principals in our study operated from the belief that all people (including students and teachers) must be able to build knowledge, solve problems, and respond creatively.

The highly effective principals studied were leaders comfortable with change who had exhibited the ability to identify and articulate an organizational vision, foster acceptance of group goals, promote high performance expectations, provide appropriate models, encourage intellectual stimulation, and develop strong school cultures.
Creating and managing change was a key to successful leadership in these schools; but it was important to principals that change was not hierarchical but best fitted the oft-cited words of Mahatma Gandhi, “We must be the change we wish to see in the world.” Effective principals first modeled and then shared school leadership with others.

In the study principals believed teachers and students were more than capable of controlling their own lives and environments. They personified Arthur F. Carmazzi’s note, “When what used to control us becomes controlled by us, it is the beginning of a new part of our life. Each progress leaves behind a broken barrier that we have conquered; each conquered barrier is another step to our greater selves.”

In this research, a number of factors critical to encouraging change were identified. First, principals developed a clearly articulated reason for action that was both urgent and presented possible solutions to problems or issues within their schools.

Principals enabled groups of teachers to work together to solve real problems while, simultaneously, developing credibility, expertise, and management skills. Such active learning helped create confidence and belonging. Teams of teachers regularly worked to create comprehensive needs assessment that accurately assessed internal and external weaknesses, challenges, strengths, and opportunities.

Good school leadership built and utilized effective teams consisting of manageable numbers of participants with complimentary skills who focused on issues with meaningful purposes, specific goals, clear approaches to work, and a sense of mutual accountability.

Key to highly effective principals was sharing a vision that portrayed the “whys and hows” of change, the desired direction, and parameters of what needed to be done to determine whether the change was successful. These visions were far from “touchy-feely” and contained goals with measurable objectives that defined the “what, how, who, when, and where” of the desired change. Visions were shaped into collaborative work with clearly defined tasks, benchmarks, and specific accomplishments to be completed by specific dates.

In the schools we studied, communication was extremely important because it created a shared language and vision. For example, everyone within these schools had a good sense of the school’s vision and was able to communicate that vision to all stakeholders—including parents and students.

Most importantly, these schools created and engaged in establishing what can best be called “conversational space” that allowed visions and plans to be articulated, reaffirmed, and revised as needed. These conversational spaces naturally included evaluation and revision because highly effective principals understood that even the best plans needed to be modified as they matured.

**Overcoming Change Implementation Pitfalls**

The leaders of the successful schools we studied did not fall into typical pitfalls that traditionally pester leaders who are pursuing change. They didn’t fail to share their vision, clarify their goals, or establish objectives. Their implementation plans defined tasks, responsibilities, and benchmarks.

They understood and worked with others to evaluate progress and challenges, and
they communicated and celebrated successes widely with stakeholders.

Principals in our study made their reasons and purposes clear. They involved participants in planning, and based decisions on group needs and values. They constantly communicated with teachers and worked to relieve pressure or blocks that inhibited their teachers’ abilities to teach.

Principals both respected and trusted their teachers and showed confidence in teachers’ abilities to be and act professionally.

As a result, there was little fear of failure present and teachers were ready and willing to act. Teachers clearly understood the goals and rewards for engaging in the hard work of educational change.

These goals and rewards were wrapped into one key statement heard and, more importantly, practiced in each study school: “It’s all about the kids.”

**Four Lessons Learned**

The research clearly suggested the following lessons for principals.

**Lesson One:** When principals organized teams of teachers to work together in communities of practice to solve real site-based issues, teachers engaged in professional learning that helped solve problems and build communities. Teachers worked best when organized by the principal but were not micro-managed—in other words, when principals trusted teachers to do the work. Teachers, working together, assumed leadership and solved problems.

**Lesson Two:** Good schools shared common attributes. First, good schools were led by vision. Second, good schools were communities where people lived and worked. Third, when things started to go well in schools, they really began to go well. Success became a reason to celebrate, which engendered further success.

**Lesson Three:** Highly effective principals demonstrated a number of successful leadership practices.

1) They removed barriers from teachers with whom they worked. They believed teachers would do good work and provided teachers the space to do it. Highly effective principals assumed the best. They shared expectations with teachers, then stepped aside to allow teachers to practice their craft. Highly effective principals gave teachers freedom to risk, innovate, and try new things.

2) They moved from professional development to professional learning. As a result of our research, we came to define professional learning as local and led by teachers. Highly effective principals expected, encouraged, and supported professional learning. They shared and created opportunities for teachers to lead.

3) They were strong leaders who did not hesitate to express expectations or set high goals, but moved to the background. Our research uncovered leaders who first earned the trust and respect of teacher colleagues and then moved aside so these colleagues could work efficaciously. It became obvious in our study that, to be a good school leader, one must be big enough to become small.
4) They valued people. Effective principals established a culture of belonging. The schools we studied named themselves families—small, close communities filled with joys and heartaches. The wall between personal and professional was permeable, and personal issues came to school daily. Highly effective principals created spaces where teachers worked together and supported each other, and shared stories, culture, and resources.

5) They built cultures of enthusiastic celebration of successes by focusing on the positive. They built a common vision and goals and shared and lived a mission statement.

Lesson Four: This study demonstrated what highly effective principals did not do.

1) Effective principals did not micro-manage. Rather, they were patient and supportive. As difficult as it might be to wait for others to gain a vision, effective principals waited.

2) Effective principals were not negative. Our study found that hard work was not an enemy of teachers nor did it kill teachers’ enthusiasm. Negativity was the real enemy that eroded momentum and spirit.

3) Effective principals were not “wissy-washy!” They were authentic, genuine, confident, and forthright. They said what needed to be said. They were collegial, yet decisive.

4) Effective principals did not take the credit for school success. It was clear in our study that highly effective principals shared credit and got more done when they didn’t care who received credit.

Final Thoughts
In a final thought, our study reinforced how dedicated teachers were and how ready they were to work hard. The greatest strength of the principals we studied was that they mediated and advocated so teachers could do the work they very much wanted to do—help children learn.

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References


Mission and Scope, Upcoming Themes, Author Guidelines & Publication Timeline

The AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice is a refereed, blind-reviewed, quarterly journal with a focus on research and evidence-based practice that advance the profession of education administration.

Mission and Scope

The mission of the Journal is to provide peer-reviewed, user-friendly, and methodologically sound research that practicing school and district administrations can use to take action and that higher education faculty can use to prepare future school and district administrators. The Journal publishes accepted manuscripts in the following categories: (1) Evidence-based Practice, (2) Original Research, (3) Research-informed Commentary, and (4) Book Reviews.

The scope for submissions focus on the intersection of five factors of school and district administration: (a) administrators, (b) teachers, (c) students, (d) subject matter, and (e) settings. The Journal encourages submissions that focus on the intersection of factors a-e. The Journal discourages submissions that focus only on personal reflections and opinions.

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Below are themes and areas of interest for the 2010-2012 publication cycles.

1. Governance, Funding, and Control of Public Education
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3. Federal, State, and Local Governmental Relationships
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12. Financial Issues

Submissions

Length of manuscripts should be as follows: Research and evidence-based practice articles between 1,800 and 3,800 words; commentaries between 1,600 and 3,800 words; book and media reviews between 400 and 800 words. Articles, commentaries, book and media reviews, citations and references are to follow the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, latest edition. Permission to use previously copyrighted materials is the responsibility of the author, not the AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice.

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address. Authors must also provide a 120-word abstract that conforms to APA style and a 40-word biographical sketch. The contributor must indicate whether the submission is to be considered original research, evidence-based practice article, commentary, or book or media review. The type of submission must be indicated on the cover sheet in order to be considered. Articles are to be submitted to the editor by e-mail as an electronic attachment in Microsoft Word 2003 or 2007.

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Book review guidelines should adhere to the author guidelines as found above. The format of the book review is to include the following:

- Full title of book
- Author
- City, state: publisher, year; page; price
- Name and affiliation of reviewer
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South Orange, NJ 07079
AASA Resources

- **The American School Superintendent: 2010 Decennial Study** was released December 8, 2010 by the American Association of School Administrators. The work is one in a series of similar studies conducted every 10 years since 1923 and provides a national perspective about the roles and responsibilities of contemporary district superintendents. “A must-read study for every superintendent and aspiring system leader…” — Dan Domenech, AASA executive director. See www.rowmaneducation.com/Catalog/MultiAASA.shtml

- **A School District Budget Toolkit.** In a recent survey, AASA members asked for budget help in these tough economic times. The toolkit released in December provides examples of best practices in reducing expenditures, ideas for creating a transparent budget process, wisdom on budget presentation, and suggestions for garnering and maintaining public support for the district's budget. It contains real-life examples of how districts large and small have managed to navigate rough financial waters and offers encouragement to anyone currently stuck in the rapids. See www.aasa.org/BudgetToolkit-2010.aspx. [Note: This toolkit is available to AASA members only.]

- Learn about **AASA’s books program** where new titles and special discounts are available to AASA members. The AASA publications catalog may be downloaded at www.aasa.org/books.aspx.

- **Join AASA** and discover a number of resources reserved exclusively for members. Visit www.aasa.org/Join.aspx. Questions? Contact C.J. Reid at creid@aasa.org.

Upcoming AASA Events

- **AASA’s National Conference on Education, Houston, Texas**
  Feb. 16-19, 2011