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Table of Contents

Board of Editors	2
Sponsorship and Appreciation	3
Editorial	4
Evidence-Based Article	
Aesthetic Leadership and School Leadership Preparation: Cultivating Aesthetic Awareness Through an Arts-Based Leadership Development	6
<i>by Diane Ketelle, DPA and Betty Lin, MA, CCLS</i>	
Research Article	
What Did We Learn from Race to the Top Teacher Evaluation Systems?	18
<i>by Deani Thomas, MEd and Douglas Wieczorek, PhD</i>	
Commentary	
Good Governance and the Influence of the Superintendent.	35
<i>by Kim Bridges, EdLD; Annie Knickman Plancher, EdLD; and Stephanie Downey Toledo, EdLD</i>	
Book Review	
<i>Bush-Obama School Reform: Lessons Learned.</i>	43
<i>written by Frederick Hess, PhD and Michael McShane, PhD reviewed by Art Stellar, PhD</i>	
Mission and Scope, Copyright, Privacy, Ethics, Upcoming Themes, Author Guidelines & Publication Timeline	47
AASA Resources.	51

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Sponsorship and Appreciation

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We also offer special thanks to Kenneth Mitchell, Manhattanville College, for his efforts in selecting the articles that comprise this professional education journal and lending sound editorial comments to each volume.

The unique relationship between research and practice is appreciated, recognizing the mutual benefit to those educators who conduct the research and seek out evidence-based practice and those educators whose responsibility it is to carry out the mission of school districts in the education of children.

Without the support of AASA and Kenneth Mitchell, the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* would not be possible.



Reflection on Leadership

by

Ken Mitchell, EdD
Editor

AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice

ISLLC Standard #5 describes a school administrator as “an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.” For most, these attributes come naturally, yet not without ongoing introspection about how one’s leadership is defined. Leadership requires ongoing cultivation. It is not a skill, but rather a state of consciousness and purpose.

The 2019 summer issue of the *AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice* provides an opportunity for such reflection. The three articles examine leadership and provide ways in which superintendents can use reflection and introspection to enhance their work.

The first does so in the context of a theory of aesthetic leadership. According to our contributors, Diane Kettle and Betty Lin of Mills College in Oakland, California, “Mumford and Fried (2014) position aesthetic leadership as one of a number of ideological models of leadership that are, together with servant leadership and ethical leadership, values-oriented and focus primarily on moral behaviors.” They go on to explain how aesthetic leadership provides a buffer between management and administration by focusing on “the development of leadership qualities and dispositions that contribute to a leader’s emotional and sensory awareness and a general self-awareness.”

In our second article, Douglas Wieczorek of Iowa State University and Deani Thomas of the Ames Community School District in Iowa pose the question, “What Did We Learn from Race to the Top Teacher Evaluation Systems?” How did public school district leaders, building leaders, and/or teachers engage with the United States’ RTTT program teacher evaluation policies in the context of their beliefs, previous experiences, and local school community contexts?

The authors cite Lawson et al. (2017) who found that “successful districts resisted the temptation to rely on a compliance-oriented, top-down approach to implementation and instead used collaborative communication to preserve teachers’ autonomy, which had a positive impact on teachers’ trust of school leaders and the evaluation process.” They go on to describe how a “power of belief and emotion in the change process comes from authenticity in relationships. Positive changes can be promoted when leaders emotionally support those they lead through the process of connecting their existing beliefs and current emotions to proposed changes.”

Finally, in “Good Governance and the Influence of the Superintendent,” by Kim Bridges of Virginia Commonwealth University, along with fellow authors Stephanie Downey Toledo, and Annie Knickman Plancher, it is proposed that superintendents should reconceive their roles to become lead “influencers” of good governance among both board members and the public.

The issue’s book review by Art Stellar, examines recent leadership at the federal level in Rick Hess and Michael McShane’s collection of essays, *Bush-Obama School Reform: Lessons Learned* published by Harvard Education Press, Cambridge, MA in 2018. National educational reform enjoyed perhaps its most productive era during the sixteen concurrent years of the Bush and Obama administrations. The federal role in education greatly expanded. Washington and the reformers were ecstatic. Practitioners, while not as enamored, went along with new cumbersome regulations to receive the associated funds that came with compliance. Yet, common support began to crumble near the end of Obama’s second term. What happened and what lessons can be learned from this nearly ten-year surge in Federal education policy?

Aesthetic Leadership and School Leadership Preparation: Cultivating Aesthetic Awareness Through an Arts-Based Leadership Development Curriculum

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Abstract

Aesthetic leadership is focused on the developed of leadership qualities and dispositions that contribute to a leader's emotional and sensory awareness and a general self-awareness. This article outlines three arts-based assignments that were used in developing leaders in order to illustrate the kind of work that can be done to promote the development of aesthetic awareness in leaders.

Key Words

aesthetic leadership, leadership development, arts-based curriculum, emotional awareness

Aesthetic leadership is a style of leadership that has been variously positioned in leadership studies literature (Mannix & Daly, 2015). Dihn et al. (2014) describes aesthetic leadership theory as focusing on followers and their subjective views (gained through sensory awareness and knowledge) of the leader qualities in the leader-follower dyads. Others have argued that aesthetic leadership is fashioned by sensory knowledge (Hansen et al., 2007).

Hansen and colleagues contend that a significant feature of aesthetic leadership is the way in which followers' views on the leadership qualities are as important as the leaders' qualities. In other words, aesthetic leaders are not self appointed, but emerge from the perceptions of colleagues (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007). Mumford and Fried (2014) position aesthetic leadership as one of a number of ideological models of leadership that are, together with servant leadership and ethical leadership, values-oriented and focus primarily on moral behaviors.

In organizational studies literature, aesthetic leadership has been offered as a way of enabling flow between fields of management and administration (Guillet de Monthoux, 2007). In this interpretation, the management field is where visionary, action-oriented managers and economists operate and seek profits, while the administration field is occupied by those who value tradition, regulation, equality and a place for controlling costs.

The aesthetic part of the organization is where one seeks to determine what it means to provide or produce quality through "creative philosophizing" (Gulliet de Monthoux el al., 2007, p. 267). In some ways, aesthetic

leadership provides a buffer between management and administration.

Aesthetic leaders are those leaders who count tacit knowledge, a type of knowledge that resembles sensory/aesthetic knowing and is gained from deep indefinable know-how that defies logical explanation (Hansen et al., 2007). Proponents of aesthetic leadership argue that knowledge is formed, transformed, and transferred through interactions and connections with others. Aesthetic knowledge and awareness are ways of making meaning based on embodied experience (Woodward & Funk, 2010) and emotional tools that complement conventional ways of knowing (Bathurst et al., 2010).

In a review of the literature, aesthetic leadership is, in essence, a style of leadership underscored by sensory, somatic, and emotional awareness, and a strong moral purpose focused on the value of being fair, just, and truthful (Katz-Buonincontro, 2011).

What is the Role of Arts and Aesthetics in Leadership Preparation?

While educational leadership and organizational management scholars have highlighted the need to improve leadership preparation (Millstein & Kruger, 1997; Murphy, 2006; Pounder, Reitzug & Young, 2002) by focusing on the quality and type of learning experiences, scholars have yet to fully examine how to incorporate aesthetics into leadership preparation (Kelehear, 2008) or to infuse lessons learned through art into leadership thought and practice (Crow & Grogan, 2005).

Most of the current demands of the field are focused around improving leadership accountability of student academic

performance and refining efforts to make university-based learning experience more relevant to professional experience.

Focusing on developing leaders who can make sense of their practice, air their assumptions about their abilities and organizational problems, and then revise their leadership approaches with actionable plans is one way of developing leadership. Duke's (1986) aesthetic leadership model, for example, builds on an analogy between the artistic process and the leadership process: Much like an artist, a leader's behavior shapes and alters the effects of experience.

Developing Aesthetic Awareness

Emotions are often conceived as central to laying a foundation of empathy in order to understand another person's viewpoint (Smith, 1996). Brady and Hart (2006) build on this idea, presenting a more complex aspect of emotions; they argue that when leaders are empathic, they are more likely to remain open to understanding multiple, competing views.

Affect is highlighted in the context of working in the service of historically marginalized groups of people (English, 2008). This puts a twist on the model of charismatic leadership, which emphasizes the social psychology of influencing others through manipulation or emotional exploitation (Ladkin, 2006); scholarly orientations included inspiration, passion, engagement (Duke, 1986), and excitement or pleasure in one's work (Weggeman, Lammers & Akkermans, 2007). The expression and recognition of feelings as a legitimate source of knowledge (Taylor, 2002), even when feelings may be vague or difficult to express (Stein, 2003), is an important aspect of studying aesthetics in organizational life.

The leader's responsibility to promote connections between students, teachers and

staff on an emotional level—not just focusing on student performance—has been emphasized (Hurley, 2002). Emotions, in this sense, are conceived as a core foundation to help leaders become aware of their personal balance as they handle various stressors (Cowan, 2007).

The orientation toward caring, relational leadership has been associated with female leadership style in the past, but the current emphasis on compassion and empathy indicates that these aspects will continue to play an important role in leadership development regardless of gender.

The Assignments and Our Experience

For sixteen years the first author, Diane, served as the director of the school leadership program at her institution. The second author, Betty, was a student of the first author and later taught early childhood leadership development courses at the same institution. Diane and Betty have collaborated as professor-student and later colleague-to-colleague for fifteen years. In the following paragraphs we outline assignments that Diane developed and Betty completed as a student. Betty later began teaching leadership development courses and refined some of the assignments through her personal experience and observations of the needs of her students.

Through the process of developing leaders, we are presented with opportunities to think deeply about connecting our students with deeper understanding and awareness of themselves. Our programs are small, enrolling between eight to twelve students per year. The size of the program helps to shape its highly relational orientation.

Over time, as professors of educational leadership and early childhood education, we used arts-based assignments that are intended to challenge students to consider the

multifaceted nature of leadership and the demand it makes on individuals.

Emotional Awareness: Assignment 1

Emotional awareness offers significant and useful focus to apply to leadership preparation. This area of inquiry offers a lens to deeply examine the social-psychological aspects of leadership practice.

The purpose of an assignment focused on the development of emotional awareness is to evoke feeling to empathize in order to cultivate a creative, problem-solving mindset and empathy for students and families. In order for this to occur, activities need to be organized in expressive, interactive ways and allow for the openness of improvisational theater.

The sock puppet assignment is simple. Students are required to create three sock puppets: the first puppet should represent how they present themselves in the world, the second should represent elements of themselves that they keep hidden from others, and the third puppet represents their leadership identity which should be an integration of the first two puppets.

Many students resist this assignment at first glance, writing it off as silly or strange. Some students have offered to write research papers in order to avoid creating puppets, but we do not allow it. This assignment provides students the reflective space to explore aspects of their identity in an aesthetic manner (through thought, feeling, and sensory engagement) in order to make new meaning in relation to their future leadership.

The puppets have been made in every possible way – from great effort and detail to quick sketches on paper pasted on a sock. Sometimes students come to class with no puppets and only notes. The socks and how

they look are actually not the important part of this assignment. The goal of this assignment is to help students reflectively explore the beliefs about themselves in relation to leadership and to think deeply about the kinds of leaders they wish to become.

After completing this assignment and sharing it with their colleagues in class, students are required to write a reflection on lessons learned from the assignment. Jamal, an African American male student in the educational leadership program wrote in his reflection:

At first I couldn't understand why we would be asked to do such a thing as make puppets, but then the day came for me to actually complete the task. I used a jet black sock for how I present to the world. I am acutely aware that my presence scares some people. My hidden self was a pink, lacey sock from my daughter's drawer. My leadership identity was a brown sock. My thinking was that I should tone my blackness down. In class, my colleagues challenged me to find ways to be my authentic self as a leader. I don't have to be a brown/black man (whatever that is). I have to understand myself and the societal dynamics at play.

In this example, Jamal used the concrete assignment to explore racial dynamics that he was holding and that were affecting his leadership development. He was conflicted about how he could be seen as a leader and how his true self could emerge. Cultivating

emotional awareness is linked to instilling a moral purpose and this includes addressing “otherness” and “undemocratic” practices (Dantley, 2005, p. 39). The implication is that leadership development should reflect on the degree to which we address sociological perspective on educational policy and practice in our teaching. This means we cannot assume that developing leaders is a value-neutral activity. Another leadership student, Gloria, wrote:

The hidden self-puppet was the hardest for me. I decided to be honest with myself about how bossy I can be and how much I need to be in control. As I was making the puppet I started to realize that my controlling nature probably wasn't much hidden at all – it is probably something everyone can see. If I was to lead I am going to have to tackle some hard personal issues first. Meeting with my classmates in class got me thinking about listening. I don't listen enough to lead. I am challenging myself to listen more and just move ahead with my ideas at the drop of a hat.

Gloria reaches some understanding that her hidden self is seldom hidden—instead her hidden self is often on full display. Control issues cannot be managed in one graduate school assignment, but the larger issue is that Gloria is doing something very brave: she is looking at herself and the kind of leader she would like to become. She is also becoming aware of the importance of listening, a disposition related to emotional awareness and empathy.

Betty's Perspective

As a student, Betty recalls the puppet assignment turned into a soul-searching

activity. She asked many questions: Did she worry about being accurate of how others see her? Did she worry about being true when showing a hidden part of herself? What parts does she intentionally hide from others? What image of leadership does she wish to present to others? She did not have quick answers to these questions.

At the time, her image of herself as a leader was unclear and it was a struggle to formulate because what was perceived as the requirements to be a leader did not fit with how she viewed herself. This nontraditional assignment pushed Betty and got her to use more than her analytical brain; she had to sort through her feelings and use courage to complete the assignment.

Fast forward a few years and Betty was using the sock puppet assignment in her early childhood leadership class. During the first year's implementation, she faced the challenge of students presenting the puppets as three disconnected aspects of self: here is what you know about me; here is what you do not know about me; here is what I look like as a leader. Betty reflected on what she had learned and what she wished for her students to learn from this assignment—that to be an authentic leader starts with knowing yourself, and leadership comes from allowing the truth of that deep connection with self to surface. She required her students to make the third puppet as an integration of the first two puppets plus a projection of how they see themselves as a leader. This was the actual assignment that she had been presented with years prior, but it was only through teaching leadership that she arrived at the profound potential of this assignment while developing leaders herself.

The resulting student reflections got closer to what Betty wanted her students to experience—the sensory engagement with the

art material, the discovery of feelings associated with self-reflection, the vulnerability of emotional connection with self and others as they present images of self through their puppets, and the tension that each student must confront while integrating different aspects of self into one image.

While art can inspire overtly, it operates covertly as well. For example, previously hidden aesthetic dimensions of work processes are no longer the exclusive domain of artists— aesthetic understanding is necessary in leadership grounded in the fact that beauty, harmony and the sublime exist in schools and not just museums, theaters, and concert halls. Arts-based assignments, as the one described in this article, can activate the imagination. How the imagination responds to leadership is personal and associative and tinged with affect and bodily rhythm, concerned with wordless knowledge, its whole knowledge of emotional experience, of virtual impulse, balance, conflict, the ways of living, dying and feeling.

Sensory and Somatic Awareness: Assignment 2

Sensory and somatic attentiveness involves meaning and experience related to one's body. Ladkin (2008) notes that sensory and somatic awareness is the embodied way in which they [leaders] attempt to motivate, direct, and transform" (p. 39). A leader's senses and perceptive faculties guide her "gut feelings" about a particular choice (Weggeman, Lammers & Akkermans, 2007).

"Gut feelings" is a term that suggests an interrelationship between feeling and physicality. Sensation is rooted in both cognition and emotion and represents a kind of embodied knowledge. Strati (1992) discussed the way that a leader manages her physicality in terms of visibility and privacy within the physical setting by allowing or not allowing

subordinates to access her. A leader's physicality may be significant in that her actions form a sort of performance which followers observe and about which they make judgments.

The assignment related to cultivating sensory and somatic awareness is the self-regulation log. Students keep the log for six weeks, noting when they are triggered in physical ways in their work environment. After six weeks, students analyze their log and write a paper on strategies for growth.

Nina, a leadership student, noted:

The self-regulation log caused me to consider what or who at work triggers my anger. Anger causes me to react physically, tensing and moving more quickly than I might normally. I am going to implement a strategy to listen more intently when colleagues disagree with me. I will work to pose questions in order to diffuse my initial response.

For Nina and other students like her, identifying triggers helps in developing a more self-aware stance and an openness to others. By not allowing triggers to rule her responses, Nina will, we hope, have the ability to allow more points of view into decisions, instead of leading from her own singular perspective.

Betty's Perspective

When Betty completed this assignment as a student it was an exercise of not just acknowledging what triggered her, but more importantly recognizing why she was triggered and how she responded to the trigger. Betty used the ABC of behavioral psychology as a structure in approaching this assignment: antecedent (what happened), behavior (my behavioral and physiological response), and

consequence (the impact of my action or the self-regulatory steps I took to reestablish physiological homeostasis) (Watson & Skinner, 2001; Sterling-Turner, Robinson & Wilczynski, 2001). Using this framework helped Betty go deeper into the assignment as a student.

As a professor, Betty found the depth of students' engagement with this assignment varied. At the most basic level, students identified moments when they experienced strong feelings such as anger, outrage, annoyance, or embarrassment. They were able to identify external factors that led to the experience of an intense feeling.

However, students rarely explored the internal factors or the *why* behind each feeling (why were you angry instead of just being annoyed) and the bodily responses (body temperature, sweat, heart rate, breathing, upset stomach, etc.) to the triggers they had identified. Students did not automatically analyze the strategies they used to calm down or to consider how they could stay engaged in the situation with the goal of achieving a productive outcome.

When students did not note these details in the log, it was hard for them to recognize a pattern of behaviors and responses and write a meaningful and emotionally aware reflection after six weeks. Betty found that offering students the Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence structure helped her students better organize the self-regulation log to increase their sensory and somatic awareness (Appendix A).

She also found that creating time in class for students to share what they have learned from their logs allowed them a chance to engage in a discourse that would push each other to think more deeply and gather perspectives that could lead to new

understandings. The result moved this assignment closer to what Betty had in mind—students made discoveries of how emotions were connected to their decision-making process, and learned what helped them stay regulated during heated exchanges at work.

A leader's physical presence is not divorced from how and what they communicate to others. Gaining insight into personal triggers contributes to regulatory capacities that help in moderating a leader's responses. If a leader's senses are used to interpret situations and the environment, then developing regulatory capacity in regard to social interactions is critical.

Promotion of Moral Purpose: Assignment 3

Pursuing a moral purpose rounds out emotional awareness and sensory and somatic awareness. Instilling moral purpose is necessary for bringing people together around a common cause and appealing to the human desire to be noble and good. English (2008) advocated for a cognitive aesthetics lens that is sensitive to particular contexts, values, emotions, and moral function.

English underscored the role immorality plays in failed leadership. To English, "leadership is an embedded moral enterprise located and ultimately connected to one's sense of personal and historical identity within a specific culture" (p. 58). Because leadership development literature often emphasizes the establishment of a vision and organizational purpose, which derives from a leader's own moral compass, it is surprising this aspect is not emphasized more strongly in all theories of leadership.

Another assignment, the portrait assignment, requires students to create three portraits. The first portrait is of themselves

without themselves in it. The second is of themselves hidden. And the third is a portrait of themselves as a leader. There are no restrictions on how this assignment can be completed.

Students can take photographs, create drawings, or construct collages, or use another format. The goal of this assignment is to support students in clarifying their moral purpose. A portrait of themselves without them in it has to reflect their purpose. Like other assignments, after the students present their portraits to the class, they are required to reflect on the activity and write a reflection.

Anna, a leadership student, noted:

At first I found this assignment confusing. A portrait of myself without me in it seemed ridiculous. The more I thought about it, however, the more serious it got. The portrait without me in it had to reflect my passion and purpose for leading. I took a picture of class with the students smiling. My moral purpose is to serve students.

The challenge of seeing herself in a portrait that does not have her face forced Anna to consider what would represent her purpose. This sort of assignment has the potential to push students beyond bland statements of moral purpose, into an arena that allows them to explore their tacit knowledge and visually explore how they will represent themselves.

Betty's Perspective

When Betty completed this assignment as a student, it confused her. She was unsure how she was supposed to construct a portrait of self without her face in it. Betty worked to anchor herself around the idea that the portraits reflected her identity across time (past, present,

future) and contexts (culture, race, gender, home, work, school).

She created portrait-collages that included three main themes: families, education, and politics. In the first self-portrait without her in it, she had shadow figures of adults and children surrounding the word *families*. In her portrait-collage as a leader, a drawing of the White House and of a school were set behind the images of families, and photo images of female leaders who Betty admired. She placed a photo image of herself right next to the female leaders and teacher colleagues. From this assignment, Betty identified her moral purpose as supporting children and families through education and advocacy.

A portrait of self without an image of self must have context. It requires students to think about what represents their moral stance and what they hold to be true and just. The assignment of the self-portrait was hard for Betty, as it is for all students, but as Betty worked on the assignment, her purpose came into focus and gained clarity. Even though Betty has not used this assignment in her early childhood leadership classes, she has used various classroom activities to underscore the importance of a leader understanding her moral purpose.

A sense of moral purpose may be the most important aesthetic quality to instill. Efforts to promote equity and question the status quo are a constant moral challenge to leaders. The implication is that educational leadership faculty should reflect on the degree to which they address sociological perspectives in their teaching.

Conclusion

A focus on expressive, interactive activities can cultivate aesthetic understanding in leadership

classrooms. The assignments described in this paper pushed our students to develop attentiveness in order to help them gain greater understanding of how leaders move and act, not just talk and write, through embodied cognition. Visually-oriented activities such as watching or acting out scenarios, or using films and plays, can deepen a student's perceptual understanding of situations, an approach stressed in Kelehear's (2008) art-based instructional leadership practices.

As leadership faculty navigate school reform in the 21st century, it is imperative to

stress the emotional and moral bonds between educational leaders, teachers, students, families, and communities. These qualities will most likely strengthen current practices aimed at improving academic achievement, not dampen or derail those efforts. Many teachers and students strive for organizational beauty – coherence and harmony – in what can feel like a disconnected or fragmented learning climate. A focus on aesthetic leadership suggests we reclaim a focus on humanistic experiences of schooling and also challenge those of us who develop leaders to cultivate leaders who have social and emotional competence.

Author Biographies

Diane Ketelle is dean of Mills College School of Education and a professor of education at Mills College in Oakland, CA. Ketelle's teaching in Mills College post-graduate programs in educational leadership has informed her practice as an administrator. Having taught in public schools, private universities, prisons, and in other countries as a two-time Fulbright Scholar, she brings a life-long commitment to education, to the liberal arts, and to an asset approach to education that values the cultural, emotional and linguistic knowledge that every person brings to the task of learning. Ketelle's research focuses on life writing and she has pursued many interesting projects including a three project in a prison helping inmates write their stories. For the past two years, she has been collecting the life stories of female boxers in the Bay Area of California. E-mail: dketelle@mills.edu

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Appendix A

Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (ABC Log)

Date/ Setting	Antecedent Description of the environment and what occurred prior to the behavior	Behavior What was done or said & by whom	Consequence Who responded immediately following the behavior? What was the response? Note changes to your body.	Your response Upon receiving the consequence, how did you respond?

What Did We Learn from Race to the Top Teacher Evaluation Systems?

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Abstract

We reviewed and synthesized 35 peer-reviewed empirical studies published between 2014-2018 that investigated district leaders', principals', and/or teachers' interpretations of and experiences with Race to the Top teacher evaluation systems. We analyzed evidence of how educators' prior experiences, beliefs, values, organizational contexts, and community needs may have contributed to a teacher evaluation policy-practice divide. Our findings revealed three main implications for district- and systems-level instructional supervision and evaluation practices: 1) leaders should develop and provide relevant, differentiated supports for principals and teachers to implement and refine teacher evaluation processes; 2) leaders should maintain focus on stakeholders' professional relationships and a sense of community; and 3) leaders should utilize teacher evaluation processes to foster a systemic culture of professional growth.

Key Words

district leadership, teacher evaluation, education policy, instructional leadership, accountability, instructional supervision, policy implementation

The United States government's competitive Race to the Top (RTTT) program allocated and distributed over four billion dollars to 19 states between 2009 and 2016 (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; United States Department of Education, 2016). RTTT leveraged federal resources and state-level accountability measures meant to improve teacher effectiveness through rigorous, data-driven teacher evaluation systems connected to student achievement measures—value-added measures (VAM) (Amrein-Beadsley & Holloway, 2017; Patrick, 2016).

Previous research demonstrates how local leaders and teachers interpret education policies through their previous experiences, and adapt policy mandates to respond to local, organizational, and contextual needs (Coburn, Hill, & Spillane, 2016; Datnow, 2006; Werts, Della Salla, Lindle, Horace, Brewer, & Knoepfel, 2013).

Despite RTTT policy intentions, scholars contend that educators' individual agency, policy ambiguity, and a hierarchical, loosely-coupled educational system often contributes to a policy-practice divide (Cohen, Moffitt, & Goldin, 2007; Huffman, Pankake, & Munoz, 2006; Matland, 1995; Spillane, Parise, & Sherer, 2011).

The purpose of this article is to review and synthesize empirical studies that investigated district leaders', principals', and/or teachers' interpretations of and experiences with RTTT teacher evaluation processes.

We wanted to know how school leaders and teachers interpreted and implemented state-level RTTT teacher evaluation mandates in their local contexts, which potentially created a teacher evaluation policy-practice divide. To conduct our review we applied one guiding

question: How did public school district leaders, building leaders, and/or teachers engage with United States' RTTT program teacher evaluation policies in the context of their beliefs, previous experiences, and local school community contexts?

We do not intend to discuss the merits of RTTT policies or VAM models of teacher evaluation; rather, our goal is to inform systems-level instructional leaders who are in a primary position to develop and implement teacher evaluation systems in their respective school district contexts under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and beyond (Coburn, Toure, & Yamashita, 2009; Derrington & Campbell, 2015; Rorrer & Skrla, 2005).

Our analysis shows that educational actors, including teachers, principals, and superintendents, are not opposed or resistant to evaluation systems.

However, evaluation systems emphasize proving competency rather than using performance indicators to support continued growth. If teachers and principals shift their focus from improving their practices to proving their competence, their thinking about student learning might also shift.

There are potentially dangerous, albeit unintended, consequences associated with shifting the collective mindset of the educational system to focus strictly on proving results, rather than striving to continuously improve.

Our methods and analysis were framed by two areas of theory and research: 1) theories of action which framed RTTT teacher evaluation policies, and 2) constructivist perspectives of educators' interpretation of and engagement with education policies.

RTTT Teacher Evaluation Policy Theory of Action

Implemented as an optional, state-level policy inducement, RTTT stated four broad school improvement goals to improve student learning outcomes:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals how they can improve instruction;
3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
4. Turning around our lowest-achieving schools. (United States Department of Education, 2009, p. 2)

A policy inducement is defined as “the transfer of money to individuals or agencies in return for certain actions” (McDonnell & Elmore, 1987, p. 134). As the primary focus of our inquiry, RTTT funded states were required to develop and implement teacher evaluation systems in all community school districts and local schools to address RTTT goal three (McGuinn, 2012).

RTTT teacher evaluation systems were characterized by summative judgements of teachers’ annual performance, which included “common quality criteria that enable[d] quantifiable comparisons or classifications across a group” of teachers (Mintrop, Ordonez, Coghlan, Pryor, & Madero, 2018). Teachers’ professional performance and instructional quality criteria were articulated and guided by instructional practice protocols and evaluative

scoring rubrics [for a comprehensive summary and review see Gilmour, Majeika, Sheaffer, & Wehby (2018)], which principals used as tools to document classroom observational evidence, collect and evaluate artifacts of teaching practice, and determine teachers’ professional competence (Bradford & Braaten, 2018). This approach leveraged data-informed evaluations and performance ratings to motivate district leaders, principals, and teachers to mutually develop and implement instructional changes at the classroom, school, and district levels (Firestone, 2014).

Our analysis focused on how educators’ personal values and beliefs, professional perspectives, individual opinions, and shared organizational priorities and cultures influenced teacher evaluation implementation at the local level (Spillane, 2012).

A Constructivist Perspective of Teacher Evaluation Policy

We employed a constructivist analytical perspective (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Garner, & Sazabo, 2002), which describes how leaders’ and teachers’ previous experiences, beliefs, and values influenced their agency to interpret and enact RTTT teacher evaluation policy mandates in local contexts (Bridwell-Mitchell & Sherer, 2017; Cobb & McClain, 2006; Moran, 2017).

Previous empirical and theoretical research has demonstrated how local school leaders and teachers are simultaneously subjected to, and also act as instruments of, education policy implementation (Honig, 2006). Our theoretical approach accounts for the influence of local districts’ organizational and community contexts (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, 2008), and explains how leaders and teachers interpreted and implemented federal and state education policies to suit local priorities and respond to their stakeholders’

needs (Coburn, 2001; Honig & Coburn, 2008; Schecter & Shaked, 2017). Our analysis describes leaders' and teachers' perspectives and actions which potentially contributed to a RTTT teacher evaluation policy-practice divide.

Methods

We applied Hallinger's (2013) literature review model to conduct a five stage literature review synthesis and analysis. In the following sections we describe our procedures.

Article search processes

In stage one, we searched the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) and EBSCO databases using the broad search term "Race to the Top" and refining the searches to include peer-reviewed publications from 2014-2018. We also searched the table of contents of each of twenty-six online education journal issues during that time frame. Our initial search yielded a total of 135 article titles.

Data inclusion criteria and screening procedures

In stage two, we read each article abstract to identify empirical studies. Then we reviewed the article's background, introduction, and research questions to determine each study's purpose. We retained qualitative or quantitative studies that purposefully investigated district leaders, principals, or teachers expressed interpretations of, or observed experiences with, RTTT teacher evaluation systems. We screened each study for indicators of empirical rigor: a clearly defined theoretical or conceptual framework, descriptions of methods relevant to the design, and a discussion of results or findings in the context of current literature.

Determination of article relevance

In stage three, we reviewed each study's findings or results, discussion, conclusion, and

implications sections, to determine if the study yielded empirical evidence that was relevant to our guiding questions and theoretical perspective. This was important particularly for qualitative studies which often describe unanticipated, emergent findings or implications.

Our review includes a total of 35 studies. Of these, 12 investigated teachers, 15 investigated principals, and one focused solely on superintendents. Five studies included a combination of principals, superintendents, and teachers. Two articles did not specify a target sample group, but we retained them because leaders and teachers were included in the findings or discussion sections. In our sample, 24 studies used qualitative methods, six used quantitative methods, and five used mixed methods.

Data analysis

In stage four, we applied a textual and content analysis methodology to organize, reduce, and analyze our data set into a literature review synthesis table format (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We collected text from each study's findings, discussion, conclusions, and implications sections and placed the data into Excel spreadsheets organized by participant type: district leaders, principals, and teachers. Within each sheet, we coded entries as priori evidence of educators' constructed thoughts, beliefs, values, conceptions, descriptions, or reflections regarding teacher evaluation processes.

Second-stage data analysis and confirmation

In stage five, we completed a second round of open and inductive keyword coding within each participant group to develop coded categories across multiple studies (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). These final coded categories provided us with contextual exemplars and descriptions of educators' interpretations and

experiences which were evident across multiple settings and cases. To ensure inter-rater validity and reliability in our analysis, we consulted with each other to determine thresholds of evidence, resolve contradictory evidence and provide a check on our subjectivity.

Methodological limitations

Our review is constrained by several limitations. First, we only included published, peer-reviewed, empirical journal articles in our analysis. This criteria leaves out potentially significant research published as dissertations, book chapters, research reports, conference papers, or white papers. Second, we acknowledge potential errors in the search process and instances where we were not able to locate and review relevant articles.

Third, research about RTTT will continue to be published during the next 12 to 18 months due to the research publication lag time that exists in academia; additional evidence may be revealed in these studies which is not included here. Fourth, we acknowledge inherent researcher error and inconsistency in our coding and analysis. To the extent possible, we have mitigated these errors through transparent descriptions of our research and analysis procedures.

Findings

Our goal was to provide research-based evidence of a RTTT teacher evaluation policy-practice divide, demonstrated through district leaders', principals', and teachers' experiences in local contexts. Our analysis and findings describe five thematic categories which were shared primarily between principals and teachers: 1) stakeholders' sensemaking of increased policy and professional demands; 2) stakeholders' perceptions of systemic reliability and consistency; 3) balancing accountability with teacher growth and learning; 4) teachers'

confidence and receptivity to new requirements; and 5) teachers' satisfaction and retention. Within each category we provided selective citations and examples from the 35 sampled research articles to demonstrate our claims.

Stakeholders' sensemaking of increased policy and professional demands

Principals had to adapt to the new demands, and they attempted to integrate policy tools into their work, spent longer days working at school, took work home with them, and delegated administrative tasks to teacher leaders (Derrington & Campbell, 2015, 2018).

The increased demands on principals' time created by the new evaluation systems translated into principals spending less time in classrooms and interacting face-to-face with students and staff (Derrington & Campbell, 2014, 2015, 2017; Lavigne & Chamberlain, 2017). Evidence shows how principals value instructional leadership, and Derrington and Campbell (2017) found that over time, principals began to adjust aspects of new evaluation systems that they did not perceive as directly supportive of instructional leadership.

These adjustments were based on principals' professional knowledge and relationships with teachers and included modifying scoring rubrics based on contextual needs. Principals' efforts did not always translate into effective instructional leadership, and principals struggled to provide comprehensive feedback to all teachers (Reinhorn, Johnson, & Simon, 2017).

The critical importance to learning of relationships may be lost on policymakers, but it is not lost on principals or teachers. Learning requires vulnerability, vulnerability necessitates trust, and trust is founded upon quality relationships. Principals tended to focus their

attention on the formative aspects of the evaluation systems (Derrington & Campbell, 2017; Reinhorn et al., 2017) and emphasized the value of positive relationships (Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015). Collaboration and feedback, as achieved through pre- and post-observation conferences, were perceived by principals as highly beneficial (Donaldson & Papay, 2015; Reddy et al., 2018; Williams & Herbert, 2017).

Principals acknowledged the importance of positive relationships and shared a variety of approaches they used to nurture relationships such as reminding teachers of past successes, promoting unity, emphasizing the importance of the work to students and communities, and employing interpretive frameworks (Gawlik, 2017; Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015). Reid (2017) found that some principals also attempted to preserve positive relationships with teachers by giving more favorable evaluation ratings, which called into question the reliability of the new evaluation systems.

Stakeholders' perceptions of systemic reliability and consistency

Concerns over the reliability of new evaluation systems (Herlihy et al., 2014) were not surprising given that required training for principals was minimal (Derrington & Campbell, 2017).

Administrators were confused about their roles (Williams & Herbert, 2017), and principals who did receive training struggled most with tasks associated with establishing reliability in scoring observations (Lavigne & Chamberlain, 2017). Additional reliability concerns were related to perceived inconsistencies inherent in the evaluation systems. While some principals expressed that the evaluation frameworks could align expectations across districts (Wieczorek, Clark,

& Theoharis, 2018b), other principals and superintendents began to perceive and express concerns about the inconsistencies between schools and districts due to the subjective nature of the evaluation systems (Derrington, & Campbell, 2014, 2015, 2017). Derrington and Campbell (2017) provided a detailed overview of the ways in which principals' thinking evolved over time to reflect a combination of value for the evaluation tools and concerns about consistency between principals and across content areas.

The use of a single tool to evaluate all teachers was concerning to principals since the tools were more applicable to some content areas and grade levels than others (Derrington & Campbell, 2017, 2018; Wieczorek, Clark, & Theoharis, 2018a), and concerns about the use of a single tool were even more pronounced when only portions of a tool were prescribed.

For example, Williams and Herbert (2017) found in a study of ten Louisiana principals that principals were concerned that the adoption of only certain components of the Danielson framework had a negative impact on the scoring system because the adopted components did not apply equally well across all subject areas and grade levels.

An additional area of concern expressed by principals related to inconsistencies between student achievement data and observation data (Derrington & Campbell, 2017, 2018) that might be explained in part by changes teachers make to their instruction for evaluation observations (Ford, 2018; Williams & Herbert, 2017).

Teachers want to be perceived as competent and successful, and this desire becomes even more pronounced when their livelihood depends on perceptions of their competence. The requirements for effective

instruction outlined in evaluation tools such as rubrics might be ideal, but they might also be unrealistic for any human to implement on a continual basis. An emphasis on documentation for accountability purposes might be at odds with gaining insights to support professional growth (Shirrell, 2016).

Since teachers' livelihood under accountability systems is based largely on what they are observed doing, it is logical for teachers to attempt to do their best to make their performance match the expectations of evaluation tools regardless of whether it matches their daily practices or their beliefs about quality instruction (Ford, 2018; Williams & Herbert, 2018).

The issues of inconsistency and relevance, combined with the high-stakes nature of the evaluation systems, led principals to question the fairness of the new evaluation systems despite their acceptance of the systems' permanence (Derrington & Campbell, 2018; Flores & Derrington, 2017).

Balancing accountability with teacher growth and learning

The stated mission of most schools is to promote civic, emotional, and cognitive development (Stemler, Bebel, & Sonnabend, 2011). Accountability-based evaluation systems, however, measure learning as a finite outcome and shift the focus from growth to ratings. This was reflected in principals' concerns that teacher evaluation systems interfered with teachers' growth as teachers became more focused on evaluation ratings than instruction (Wieczorek, Clark, & Theoharis, 2018b).

Principals and teachers alike valued learning and understood that data provide insights into learning, but they also understood that learning is complex and cannot be reduced

to numbers (Bradford & Braaten, 2018). Principals acknowledged that student achievement data were important, but they placed less importance on student achievement data than the evaluation systems might suggest (Lavigne & Chamberlain, 2017), which makes sense because estimates for student growth models are complicated by the prevalent nonrandom grouping and assignment of students (Dieterle, Guarino, Reckase, & Wooldridge, 2014). Wilcox and Lawson (2018) found support for these assertions through focus groups with 143 teachers who reported that they were preoccupied with the relationship between test scores and performance evaluations.

While not a lot is known from the available literature about teachers' thinking about new evaluation systems, the literature suggests that the interconnections between student achievement data, teacher evaluations, and instruction were not lost on teachers. For example, McDuffie et al., (2017) found through interviews with twenty-four middle school math teachers that the teachers were concerned about the use of student achievement data in evaluations and worried that state assessments would detract from quality instruction.

Due to the high-stakes nature of new evaluation systems and the influence of student achievement data on teacher evaluations, teachers tended to use evaluation frameworks as proxies for understanding Common Core State Standards (McDuffie et al., 2017; Stosich, 2017).

A potentially unfortunate and unintended consequence of accountability-based evaluation systems is the loss of confidence among educators in their own professional judgment (Bradford & Braaten, 2018). When teachers replace efforts to undertake the complex task of understanding

quality instruction with the menial task of conforming to checklists of instructional actions, rich educational experiences are sacrificed, and student learning suffers. For example, Ford (2018) found in a study of 32 Louisiana teachers that the teachers tended to focus their attention on making superficial instructional changes that they believed were most likely to improve their evaluation ratings. Interestingly, teachers and principals appeared to use evaluation tools in parallel ways.

While teachers were using the tools as proxies for professional growth based on genuine understanding of quality instruction, principals were using the tools as proxies for genuine understanding of quality feedback (Wieczorek, Clark, & Theoharis, 2018a). The ways in which teachers and principals used evaluation tools represents the shift described by Holloway and Brass (2018) from education actors conceiving of accountability apparatus as external to relying on accountability apparatus to define themselves as “transmitters of pre-determined standards and the ones responsible for delivering content correctly and objectively” (p. 378).

Teachers’ confidence and receptivity to new requirements

While the reported actions of teachers seem to indicate that they care about evaluation systems, teachers generally expressed neutral attitudes about evaluation systems (Kowalski & Dolph, 2015; Reddy, Dudek, Peters, Alperin, Kettler, & Kurz., 2018). Novice teachers tended to be more receptive than veteran teachers (Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016), and principals perceived and reported that veteran teachers experienced insecurities related to the new evaluation systems (Wieczorek & Theoharis, 2015).

Insecurities among veteran teachers made sense because they had rarely been

included in the evaluation process. Teachers were more receptive to evaluation systems when they believed that the process could improve their instruction, and they identified detailed feedback based on observations, collaborative communication, alignment with personal values, and an emphasis on professional growth as helpful to them in the evaluation process (Donahue & Vogel, 2018; Lawson et al., 2017; Reddy et al., 2018; Reinhorn et al., 2017; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016).

Teachers want to be respected as professionals, but reforms like new evaluation systems can come across as demoralizing when approached as something done *to* teachers rather than something done *with* teachers. Lawson et al. (2017) found that successful districts resisted the temptation to rely on a compliance-oriented, top-down approach to implementation and instead used collaborative communication to preserve teachers’ autonomy, which had a positive impact on teachers’ trust of school leaders and the evaluation process.

Teachers’ satisfaction and retention

New teacher evaluation systems were designed with the intent of holding teachers accountable for effective instruction and potentially dismissing ineffective teachers from the profession.

While overall teacher retention patterns appeared to be unaffected by new teacher evaluations systems, new evaluation systems did appear to encourage ineffective teachers to leave, teachers with more “grit” to stay, and some retained teachers to strive to become more effective (Dee & Wyckoff, 2017; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016).

For example, Dee and Wyckoff (2017) found that the District of Columbia’s high-

stakes evaluation system, IMPACT, resulted in the replacement of many ineffective teachers as well as increased effectiveness among retained teachers, both of which resulted in student achievement gains. It is less clear whether evaluation systems like IMPACT led to the retention of the most effective teachers and whether teachers' job satisfaction was influenced by the systems.

Considering potential relationships between job satisfaction and teacher retention is important since job satisfaction likely has some influence over teachers' decisions to remain in the profession. Wright, Shields, Black, Banerjee, and Waxman (2018) found that while curricular and pedagogical autonomy were significantly lessened for teachers in RTTT states, job satisfaction did not differ among teachers in RTTT states and those in non-RTTT states; these findings did not isolate teacher evaluations as a variable in examining job satisfaction.

Koedel, Springer, and Tan (2017) found a correlation between job satisfaction and evaluation ratings with teachers who had higher ratings expressing higher levels of job satisfaction.

Of course, the correlation between evaluation ratings and job satisfaction could be explained in a variety of ways, and it seems unlikely that higher ratings alone directly cause teachers to be more satisfied.

Discussion and Implications for Practice

A constructivist theoretical perspective situates leaders' and teachers' previous experiences, beliefs, values, and community concerns as significant influences on how they implement teacher evaluation systems.

The answers to our essential question, "What did we learn from RTTT teacher evaluation systems?" indicate evidence of a policy-practice divide in the context of leaders' and teachers' experiences at the local level. Systems-level school leaders need to acknowledge and understand how pre-existing professional cultures, individuals' previous experiences, and stakeholders' beliefs influence the teacher evaluation implementation process.

Based on our analysis, there are three main implications for practice that can inform systems leaders' efforts to develop, implement, or refine teacher evaluation processes in their local district contexts.

Develop and provide differentiated support for implementation

Systems-level leaders should develop and implement supportive structures, procedures, and training to integrate teacher evaluation policies into organizational routines.

Stakeholders need differentiated types of pedagogical and leadership support which includes specific resources and modes of preparation to effectively implement teacher evaluation processes.

Principals need sufficient support, training, and coaching to develop their understandings of and skills to supervise and evaluate instruction. Policy tools and instruments provide general, basic structures and guidelines, but systems-level leaders need to enhance or adapt tools to meet principals' and teachers' needs.

Despite the widespread use of instructional protocols and rubrics, they fall short to provide relevant, content-specific pedagogical support or guidance. Teachers

need to be essential partners in, and not a target of, the development and implementation of the teacher evaluation process as part of continuous improvement efforts.

Teacher evaluation policy instruments and procedures need to be relevant to teachers' content area pedagogy and grade level standards to support instructional meaningful change and professional development opportunities.

Maintain focus on professional relationships and a sense of community

Systems-level school leaders should consider the ways in which teacher evaluation systems can provide an opportunity to strengthen professional relationships, organizational culture, and climate.

High-stakes teacher evaluation models can potentially trigger negative individual and organizational stressors which hurt professional culture.

Evidence demonstrates that principals and teachers rely on collaboration, trust, and relationships to develop and implement teacher evaluation processes at the local level.

Emotion and relationships drive the bus in a person-centered industry like education, so successful implementation of new initiatives require purposeful attention to stakeholders' emotional state and capitalizing on professional community and relationships.

The power of belief and emotion in the change process comes from authenticity in relationships.

Positive changes can be promoted when leaders emotionally support those they lead through the process of connecting their existing

beliefs and current emotions to proposed changes.

Teacher evaluation requires more than technical knowledge and efficient procedural implementation, and systems leaders should be cognizant of the affective and relational impacts on stakeholders' experiences.

Utilize teacher evaluation to foster a culture of professional growth

Systems-level school leaders need to emphasize teacher evaluation as an opportunity to develop a systemic, professional culture of growth and continuous improvement.

Teacher evaluation driven by accountability, and professional growth, are sometimes viewed by stakeholders as incompatible goals.

Professional growth is a higher priority for stakeholders, and the extent to which principals and teachers believe the system is beneficial to practice, and subsequently to student learning, is essential.

Evaluation scores and ratings are not motivating factors to spur principals or teachers to change instructional practices, and are likely disruptive to collaborative, meaningful dialogue around professional growth.

Faced with new technical and cultural challenges, both principals and teachers did not want to get bogged down in the bureaucratic aspects of the policy, and focused on developing professional cultures which valued growth and improvement of practice.

Even in cases where teachers and principals knew the potential of negative professional consequences, they still valued the potential of the tools and system mandates to

improve practices and impact student learning. If principals and teachers do not believe the system can improve teaching at the classroom, school, or district levels, then they will simply ignore the policy, or treat the system as a compulsory obligation.

Absent system-level leadership bridging accountability policies with principals' and teachers' values, principals and teachers will not invest the time and energy to develop and implement meaningful changes to teaching and leadership.

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- * = denotes a study included in the literature review analysis

Good Governance and the Influence of the Superintendent

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Abstract

While there is a link between the work of school boards and positive outcomes for K12 students, some elected boards and superintendents continue to struggle with effective governance practices, a dynamic which can contribute to diminished public confidence. This article explores the most common challenges, their impact, and the role of superintendent leadership in navigating them. The authors conducted personal interviews with current and former superintendents and school board members, observed board meetings, and reviewed the literature on school board effectiveness. Through this work, they determined superintendents must focus on being lead “influencers” of good governance among both board members and the public. They offer proactive strategies for superintendents—and those seeking the superintendency—to consider. This article asserts that influencer superintendents can increase board effectiveness, public confidence, and expectations for effective democratic governance by building trust and better school board practices.

Key Words

K12 system governance, effective school boards, influencer superintendents

“**S**uperintendent Call It Quits ... and Said School Board Member is the Reason.”

Ongoing headlines like this one from the *Connecticut Post* in 2016 illustrate the link between school district governance and the superintendent’s ability to get the job done. While many districts have governance teams with stable tenures and shared norms that empower superintendents to negotiate a clear avenue for action, others experience leadership churn and erratic practices in which both members and superintendents struggle.

Well-governed school districts are associated with positive student academic outcomes, so superintendent leadership for improvement requires understanding what gets in the way of and what can be done to foster consistent board effectiveness.

To surface common school board governance tensions and seek solutions, we embarked on an inquiry into school board effectiveness. Our exploration included a broad review of the literature as well as interviews with current and former superintendents and school board members.

This process illustrated five of the most common challenges, how they impact superintendents, and actions we believe superintendents can take to build an effective governance alternative that supports rather than impedes their work.

The Challenges

Confused roles and authority

This challenge is so pervasive it appears across the literature (for example, Boyle & Burns, 2012; Walser, 2009; Mayer, 2011). In some cases, board members or administrators do not have a full understanding of their respective roles; in others, “swim lanes” get crossed,

board members overstep their authority, or administrators create obstacles to board authority.

The most common challenge cited in the literature around role and authority is “micro-managing,” when board members engage in issues that should be overseen by the school administration or attempt to manage staff who report to the administration.

Walser (2009), for example, includes micro-managing as one of the top three pitfalls limiting school board effectiveness; one case example involved school board members in a district who made a practice of going directly into schools and providing live feedback to teachers, leading to staff distrust and decreased confidence in the superintendent.

Examples exist on the other side of this challenge as well, when school boards rarely challenge or question the superintendent, deferring all major decisions to him or her. Giving up board authority in this way can present difficulties between the governance team and a public that expects shared decision-making informed by multiple perspectives.

Ineffective decision-making

Poor decision-making can play out in various ways. It may occur, for example, when board members choose not to ask questions in efforts to speed up a meeting or to avoid looking uninformed, or when board members fail to prepare for meetings.

It can also happen when board members insert new agenda items within a meeting, a dynamic which doesn’t allow for proper advance preparation among staff or leadership. Board members may come to meetings with pre-conceived notions or independently-formulated plans; while this might seem to speed decision-making, it presents a number of

negative consequences. It prevents the full group from engaging in the plan making; blindsides the administration, impeding the superintendent's ability to provide needed context and background information; and circumvents public input on outcomes.

Poor communication

Breakdowns in communication occur when superintendents and board members do not have a joint understanding of what information needs to be shared, when it should be shared (particularly with respect to fast-developing district or school-based issues), and/or how it gets presented.

In some cases, the superintendent does not provide sufficient information, or relays information after the fact. In one interview, we heard about struggles that arose when a group of parents brought an issue to the board's attention after the superintendent had made decisions without relevant board input.

In other cases of poor communication, board members publicize individual opinions about issues without sharing those opinions with fellow members or the superintendent.

This diminishes trust among members and between members and the administration. Opinions that are not discussed with the full governance body can cause longer-term damage than differing opinions shared while debating a given issue.

Communication struggles between the board and the community also arise when board members limit public voice or take actions with limited transparency. Mayer (2011) notes that the community may feel that the board and school leadership are intentionally hiding information when communication occurs out of the public eye. Further, historically excluded minority groups may feel unheard,

deprioritized, and distrustful of board and system leadership.

Conflicting values

In any community, groups of people hold fundamentally different beliefs and priorities for schools and for education broadly. Boyle and Burns (2012) argue that this stems from a natural tension between America's core ideals of liberty, prosperity, equality, and community.

Decisions that prioritize liberty and individual prosperity may compromise equity and a sense of common good, and vice versa. Further, differing values arise from the history of public education and the evolution of their perceived purpose.

Whereas schools were initially charged with creating good citizens, their purpose has shifted in some minds to one of workforce preparation. Others see public schools primarily as a tool for economic development.

Debates around the purpose of schools in relation to the core ideals of our nation continue today, and differing opinions on many contemporary issues arise from which purpose a board member or a community prioritizes.

It should come as no surprise, then, that elected governance often brings members who hold conflicting values. Board members make judgments reflecting their own values and those of their constituents.

At the extreme, major swings can occur in board membership, from a group that predominantly represents one set of values to a group that represents an opposite set of views. These swings may create instability in district policies and practices, turbulence in teaching and learning practices, and leadership turnover that affect students in significant ways. A superintendent can be the fulcrum in balancing

the values of a board—and a district—that operates in a diverse and distinct community context.

Competing agendas

Members with different reasons for serving on a school board can bring competing agendas. Boyle and Burns (2012) raise the idea of competing agendas in their discussion of some school board critics, who describe “three unlovable types: 1) aspiring politicians for whom this is a rung on the ladder to higher office; 2) former employees of the school system with a ‘score to settle’; and 3) single-minded advocates of one dubious cause or another” (p. 157).

Even when school board members don’t fall into one of these categories, incumbent members seeking re-election can bring competing agendas; in these situations, a school board member may feel tempted to focus on the desires of an important constituent group to gain favor and further support.

This may also manifest as a focus on the agenda of a particular political party, which may or may not be relevant or optimal for the broader community. Although it is a natural temptation for any elected official to seek support from parts of the community that share political preferences or to use a position of authority to promote an agenda of her supporters, tensions arise when those members are making difficult decisions that impact the system (which must include community members outside of a particular member’s constituent base).

In each of these cases, competing agendas can diminish individual and board effectiveness. Further, competing agendas can thwart equitable decision-making and impede superintendent actions that must be taken on

behalf of all students, not just those in a particular community or constituency.

Mitigating impacts

Regardless of the location or size of the district, without superintendent engagement, each of the five challenges can play out as a loss of confidence and trust amongst various critical actors. Players and scenarios can include:

Staff. School and district staff in our micromanaging case feared angering the board, but the deep tensions over roles and authority ultimately ended with a series of destabilizing superintendent and board transitions. Staff trust in district leadership is essential for superintendents as well as boards; yet ineffective board decision-making can damage credibility with staff and divert staff time and finite resources from key priorities. This reduces capacity to do the demanding work involved in systemic improvement.

Board. Trust can spiral downward and outward when poor communication or competing agendas create obstacles for boards to make decisions that truly reflect the interests of the community and of the students. Further, dysfunction arises if trust erodes to the point that members refuse to listen to the views of others or to continue along an agenda when their strong opinion is not shared by the majority.

Public. When public confidence erodes in school board leaders, voters show up to replace those leaders. *The Future of School Board Governance: Relevancy and Revelation* (Alsbury, 2008) illustrates a predictable pattern resulting from discontent: dissatisfaction with the board and school system progress gets demonstrated in elections that remove board members, and this board turnover carries over to superintendent dismissal. Breaking this

cycle of public dissatisfaction requires both intention toward improving board effectiveness and increasing community understanding of how effective boards operate. Expectations for good governance as a community norm will help voters elect members who will uphold it.

So How Can Superintendents Be Influencers of Effective Governance?

Although some superintendents see board relations as a frustrating add-on to an already overwhelming role or as the primary responsibility of the boards themselves, superintendents can play a key role in changing these common challenges to opportunities.

We conclude that success with democratic school governance requires the superintendent to be a lead “influencer” of good governance. To navigate through these common challenges, “influencer superintendents” can use key strategies to build both the capacity of the governance team and public expectations for good governance:

1. Influencer superintendents leverage key inflection points to foster good governance

Two critical moments offer great opportunity for influence. The first is the superintendent search process. Typically viewed as the board’s opportunity to pick a leader, this is also the time for candidates to screen the board.

Candidates can assess board governance effectiveness ahead of time through research on a board’s history, including long-term election results, board tenures, board actions and the way the board conducts its meetings. Strategic questioning about those findings demonstrates that the candidate knows what makes an effective board; it also gets the board to assess and debrief its own progress.

For veteran superintendents considering moves to new school districts, being strategic

in considering board governance and members’ willingness to grow helps determine fit with the community.

For more novice district leaders eager to earn their first superintendency, understanding the barriers to effective governance is critical if they take the job in districts with less-than-ideal governance practices. The advance intelligence prepares the new superintendent for the challenges so they can craft an immediate plan for building relationships, trust, and influence.

The second inflection point to leverage comes each time new board members join the body. Influencer superintendents reach out quickly and frequently to new members to hear concerns and ideas to incorporate into the board’s work. A proactive approach not only builds the 1:1 relationship but also helps to bridge current board practices with what needs to happen as the team changes.

The superintendent armed with knowledge about what matters to each incoming board member—and the differences in values and rules of engagement between the old board and the new board—is the superintendent the new team will depend upon to help navigate the changes.

2. Influencer superintendents focus on interaction with board members

Common recommendations for increasing school board effectiveness include board training, retreats, norm setting, and ongoing advance meetings to craft agendas and update board leaders on district actions. These are positive steps that can and should be taken to move existing boards forward in the spirit of continual improvement. But just as district professional development for teachers cannot be a “one and done” effort, board development must not end when a training session does. An influencer superintendent leverages ongoing

opportunities to promote effective practices and institutes communication and decision-making structures which foster trust and collaboration.

Proactively discussing roles and governance processes can prevent significant board confusion and dysfunction in the long run. Explicit understanding about board members' roles also supports positive interactions with school staff who may feel disequilibrium about reporting to multiple people or pressure to ensure board happiness, as opposed to focusing on student learning.

Strong communication and regular advance planning between the superintendent and board leadership is another way influencer superintendents catalyze their impact for students. Interviews with high functioning governance teams identified regularly scheduled meetings with the board chair and vice chair to discuss percolating district issues and agree on agendas for board meetings.

Both superintendents and board members noted a profound difference in board comfort-level and perceived effectiveness of that superintendent once recurring interactions were in place. This level of confidence was driven not necessarily because the board agreed with the superintendent more, but because board members knew they would hear about the issues and the superintendent's stand on each directly from the source. By lessening the board's feelings of surprise about new district issues, tensions decreased, and trust in the superintendent rose.

Influencer superintendents actively promote the democratic purpose of the board; therefore, they espouse a belief that board members can bridge connections between the system and the surrounding community, highlighting that each member represents diverse community opinions.

Reminding board members and the public about the link between seeking diverse viewpoints, getting critical feedback, and making better decisions also helps pave the way for the inevitable tensions and conflicts that arise in the democratic process. With the commitment to democratic principles and the need for diversity established, the superintendent can advocate for how to approach decision-making.

The best practice involves anchoring decision-making processes in student achievement data and involving teachers, families and school leaders. Walser (2009) highlights a district that made five smooth transitions within a ten-year period in redrawing school boundary lines, typically one of the toughest activities boards can undertake. This suggests that clear decision-making processes focused on student data can build public confidence and help the governance team navigate difficult decisions.

3. Influencer superintendents create a process of—and public demand for—transparent accountability focused on student achievement

Superintendents have at least three key opportunities to create and model transparent accountability to the board, the district, and the public.

First, as the district sets goals, the superintendent should ensure clear links between these goals and the expectations of the board about how the superintendent will lead progress toward achieving them and how the board will enable progress through policymaking.

Second, influencer superintendents should work with the board to create annual governance plans with a master calendar that

includes ongoing and recurring decision-points and training options for the board; this can establish clarity between the superintendent and the governance members on the supports needed throughout the year to maximize the board's ability to make positive, sustaining change for students.

Third, the district's public accountability instruments should include those governance goals. Many districts generate some version of a balanced scorecard to report and track systemic goals and outcomes, but few include within them metrics of success for the board itself. Promoting public accountability for board outcomes as well as school outcomes creates a connection between board actions and community expectations. Strengthening that link also builds social capital with the public,

something that keeps goodwill from dropping too precipitously when challenges arise.

In our era of high expectations for public schools, governance expectations are shifting too. Superintendents willing to exert proactive influence towards effective board practices can build better governance teams and increase public confidence.

Leveraging key moments, intentionally promoting trust and collaboration, and putting an emphasis on transparent accountability and democratic decision-making processes are all strategies that take time and effort. But the commitment to being an influencer of good governance clears the path for superintendent leadership in concert with the support of the board and the expectations of the community.

Author Biographies

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Bush-Obama School Reform: Lessons Learned

Written by

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National educational reform enjoyed perhaps its most productive era during the sixteen concurrent years of the Bush and Obama administrations. The federal role in education greatly expanded. Washington and the reformers were ecstatic. Practitioners, while not as enamored, went along with new cumbersome regulations to receive the associated funds that came with compliance. Yet, common support began to crumble near the end of Obama's second term.

What happened and what lessons can be learned from this nearly ten-year surge in Federal education policy?

A diverse panel of contributors, some of whom were involved in designing legislation, has written about different aspects of these reforms. They address such topics as standards and accountability, testing, charter schools, education research, funding, and civil rights. Their analyses may be useful for future educational policy measures at state or federal levels.

These provocative essays capture the mood of much of the country. While results generally fell far short of expectations, there have been some successes and ideas, which have yielded progress for students. School superintendents simply do not have time to

analyze the nuances of these complicated reforms and can comfortably rely upon this volume. Politicians, scholars, foundation officials, and education reformers can use this retrospective of what happened to plot out future activities and avoid potential conflicts.

The signature policy foci of this era were testing and accountability, although neither were educational innovations. Their significance was magnified as testing and accountability became drivers of everything else.

In Chapter One, "Testing and Accountability," Deven Carlson of the University of Oklahoma reviews their evolution. He describes how small-scale trials in a few states and the perceptions about them led the shift in federal policy. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) changed the game entirely for educators as federal funds went to states and districts that adopted challenging standards and administered new tests aligned with them while publicizing the results.

The threat of the loss of funds countered with incentives of more funds helped launch NCLB. The logic of testing and accountability made sense to some policy makers; however, previous attempts to scale these concepts did not meet with universal acceptance, thus, the

funding mechanisms served as carrots and sticks to leverage states and districts.

NCLB mandated that all students (by average and by sub-groups) reach specified targets annually and all goals by 2013-14. This provision was called “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) with public reports readily available.

What soon became shocking was the huge number of schools or districts labeled as failing to meet AYP. Some of these schools or districts had been previously touted as outstanding due to high overall achievement.

However, when forced to disaggregate the test score data by student subgroups, it became readily apparent that not all students were able to meet the standards at a satisfactory level. Many educators attributed these results to the challenges faced by students in poverty, English language learners, and special education students, compounded by funding inequities.

As the enthusiasm for NCLB began to wane, the Obama administration ushered in the Race to the Top grant competition with hundreds of millions of dollars for states to implement designated reforms.

This move kept the reforms alive, although the bloom was fading. To resurrect the reform platform, Secretary of Education Anne Duncan announced in 2011 that 82% of the schools in the country would fail to make AYP. This forecast received attention, but Congress was still insufficiently motivated to reauthorize ESEA. The Obama administration employed this lack of congressional action to gain waivers to NCLB in exchange for adoption of their preferred approach to accountability, standards, and testing.

This was a clever maneuver to keep states and districts moving forward at a slower

pace, but still down a path that most would not have taken otherwise.

The second chapter, “The Limits of Policy for School Turnarounds,” Ashley Jochim presents a pessimistic view of the impact of policy on major school improvement strategies.

In 1997 Congress passed the Comprehensive School Demonstration Project which “... offered a seemingly perfect reform strategy ... more than 1.6 billion federal dollars were distributed ...” (p.35). Yet, research findings indicated that only a few reform programs have any documentation of progress.

More funds and regulations followed during the Bush years; however, by 2009 there were over thirteen thousand American schools under some kind of status for insufficient improvement with just 12% in restructuring (the highest sanction status) able to exit.

Among the lessons learned are these two: Centralized Solutions are Vulnerable to Problems and You Can’t ‘Idiot Proof’ School Reform.

While other chapters document that federal funds can influence what reform programs are implemented, few of the reforms produced the overall desired end results. Part of the reason is that federal officials did not have the same level of accountability applied to them that state and local officials had.

The highly qualified teacher provisions provided money for professional development but had little teeth to ensure teachers utilized the strategies to enhance student achievement.

Based upon research some of the approaches worked in small experimental designs but were overly cumbersome for everyday use on large scales. Consequently, people with good intentions went through the motions. For example, one of the few

widespread tangible effects of the highly qualified teacher provisions was there were fewer teachers teaching on certification waivers.

There was little follow up from Washington to ensure compliance and little evidence to suggest that teacher quality had improved, except the data showing the top 37% rated as highly effective. Instead, an unintended consequence appeared to be a marked decline in the number of prospective teachers entering the profession, thus, creating teacher shortages.

However, the federal attention on teacher quality has had a positive effect on perceptions that quality is more important than time served, which manifested in how many teacher pay systems and layoffs have been restructured.

The biggest winner in the Bush-Obama educational reforms was the increase in the number of charter schools. Unlike most other policy initiatives, charters were endorsed by both Republicans and Democrats at federal and state levels.

The chapter, “Federal Support for Charter Schooling,” by Anna Egalite, seems to promote charters; however, it fails to bring attention to student achievement data and the disappointing results in charters, especially as compared to their promises.

Another chapter, “Sound and Fury” by Joshua Dunn describes the impact of the educational reforms of the period on civil rights. Of course, the rhetoric around civil rights was strong with little discernible action to write about. The authors did not elect to examine the benefit of reducing equity gaps, even if the improvements were small, as worthy of much ink.

For this reviewer, the chapter on state departments of education, “Challenging, Building, and Changing Capacity in State Education Agencies,” by Sara Dahill-Brown, was disappointing. Granted, it is difficult to summarize how 50 different state departments of education handled all the reforms over a 16-year period.

The treatment in this section has no clear reference to what states did well and what states mismanaged the process; hence, the author held no one accountable. Instead, this chapter focused on building capacity in state departments of education, rather than actual outcomes. State departments have lots of potential power with few states using that power, for instance, to effectively turn around schools.

Therefore, the lists of underperforming schools or schools with lower grades on achievement keep growing. This issue was basically unaddressed.

The contributors to this volume agreed that the efforts over two administrations were tightly linked. Needless to say, when two administrations represent the two major political parties, this is highly unusual.

Despite political support, the influx of significant amounts of federal funds, a somewhat coherent strategy, and a timeline of 16 years, the main goals of the federal agenda were not realized.

According to the editors, “Looking back, after close to two decades of unprecedented federal leadership and ambitious activity, it’s hard to make the case that American education has dramatically improved.” (p.185).

Making the case that the intent of this volume is to encourage learning, the editors summarize nine takeaways:

1. Major reform accomplishments are often ancillary to the intended objective.
2. The center of gravity in schooling has shifted from districts to states.
3. It's not just about technical expertise.
4. For good and ill, the ecosystem matters—a lot.
5. Politically feasible timelines for reform may be at odds with educational timelines for effective implementation.
6. Once a reform gains political momentum, it can be hard to alter course or make necessary adjustments.
7. Incentives are most effective when success is straightforward; they're less effective at spurring complex change.
8. The unsexy machinery of policy turns out to matter a lot.
9. Nationalizing education politics makes it tougher to build state-specific coalitions (pgs.187-192).

To complete their analysis, the editors deviate from presenting recommendations by citing crucial school reform trade-offs:

1. Accountability is always more appealing in the abstract than in the here and now.
2. Scarcity is a powerful lever, but also a slippery one.
3. Brand names are an asset, but can turn into a burden in short order.
4. Labeling school reform a 'civil rights' issue is a rhetorical boon, but also a recipe for rigidity (pgs.192-195).

Education at its heart is an optimistic profession. Educational reformers tend not to look backward, viewing experience as relying upon the status quo or worse. Advocates push forward with new labels, which may be attached to old ideas, ignoring possible lessons to be learned. This book could be used to create a game plan for how to effect successful and sustainable improvements in education and learning from such lessons.

Reviewer Biography

Art Stellar is vice-president of the National Education Foundation and CyberLearning and a consultant for Cenergistic, an energy conservation company. In these roles he assists superintendents acquire and conserve funds and resources. Stellar has served as a superintendent for 25 years. He received three of AASA's top awards and became a life member in 1972. The Horace Mann League elected him president, as did ASCD and the North American Chapter of the International Society for Curriculum and Instruction. He also served as vice president of the New York State PTA. E-mail: artstellar@yahoo.com

Bush-Obama School Reform: Lessons Learned, edited by Frederick Hess and Michael McShane, was published in 2018 by Harvard Education Press, Cambridge, MA. 248 pp. \$32.00 softcover.

Mission and Scope, Copyright, Privacy, Ethics, Upcoming Themes, Author Guidelines, Submissions, Publication Rates & 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 focuses 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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Ethics

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* uses a double-blind peer-review process to maintain scientific integrity of its published materials. Peer-reviewed articles are one hallmark of the scientific method and the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* believes in the importance of maintaining the integrity of the scientific process in order to bring high quality literature to the education leadership community. We expect our authors to follow the same ethical guidelines. We refer readers to the latest edition of the APA Style Guide to review the ethical expectations for publication in a scholarly journal.

Upcoming Themes and Topics of Interest

Below are themes and areas of interest for publication cycles.

1. Governance, Funding, and Control of Public Education
2. Federal Education Policy and the Future of Public Education
3. Federal, State, and Local Governmental Relationships
4. Teacher Quality (e.g., hiring, assessment, evaluation, development, and compensation of teachers)
5. School Administrator Quality (e.g., hiring, preparation, assessment, evaluation, development, and compensation of principals and other school administrators)
6. Data and Information Systems (for both summative and formative evaluative purposes)
7. Charter Schools and Other Alternatives to Public Schools
8. Turning Around Low-Performing Schools and Districts
9. Large scale assessment policy and programs
10. Curriculum and instruction
11. School reform policies
12. Financial Issues

Submissions

Length of manuscripts should be as follows: Research and evidence-based practice articles between **2,800** and **4,800** 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*.

Cover page checklist:

1. title of the article:
identify if the submission is to be considered original research, evidence-based practice article, commentary, or book review
2. contributor name(s)
3. terminal degree
4. academic rank
5. department
6. college or university
7. city, state
8. telephone and fax numbers
9. e-mail address
10. 120-word abstract that conforms to APA style
11. six to eight key words that reflect the essence of the submission; and
12. 40-word biographical sketch

Please do not submit page numbers in headers or footers. Rather than use footnotes, it is preferred authors embed footnote content in the body of the article. Articles are to be submitted to the editor by e-mail as an electronic attachment in Microsoft Word, Times New Roman, 12 Font. The editors have also determined to follow APA guidelines in adding two spaces after a period.

Acceptance Rates

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* maintains of record of acceptance rates for each of the quarterly issues published annually. The percentage of acceptance rates since 2010 is as follows:

2012: 22%
 2013: 15%
 2014: 20%
 2015: 22%
 2016: 19%
 2017: 20%
 2018: 19%

Book Review Guidelines

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
- Publisher, city, state, year, # of pages, price
- Name and affiliation of reviewer
- Contact information for reviewer: address, city, state, zip code, e-mail address, telephone and fax
- Reviewer biography
- Date of submission

Publication Timeline

Issue	Deadline to Submit Articles	Notification to Authors of Editorial Review Board Decisions	To AASA for Formatting and Editing	Issue Available on AASA website
Spring	October 1	January 1	February 15	April 1
Summer	February 1	April 1	May 15	July 1
Fall	May 1	July 1	August 15	October 1
Winter	August 1	October 1	November 15	January 15

Additional Information

Contributors will be notified of editorial board decisions within eight weeks of receipt of papers at the editorial office. Articles to be returned must be accompanied by a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope.

The *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* reserves the right to make minor editorial changes without seeking approval from contributors.

Materials published in the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice* do not constitute endorsement of the content or conclusions presented.

The Journal is listed in Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities. Articles are also archived in the ERIC collection. The Journal is available on the Internet and considered an open access document.

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- ✓ The **AASA School Safety and Crisis Planning Toolkit**, available to members, is comprised of a set of online resources to assist school districts before, during and after a crisis. This package features a myriad of resources as well as a select group of safety leaders throughout the U.S. who are ready to provide peer-to-peer guidance about a variety of crises, including shootings, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fires, suicides and other major disruptions that come without notice. For additional information, visit www.aasa.org/toolkits.aspx.
- ✓ The **AASA's Leadership Network** drives superintendent success, innovation and growth, shaping the future of public education while preparing students for what's next. It is the largest, most diverse network of superintendents in America. Passionate and committed, the Network connects educational leaders to the professional learning, leadership development, relationships and partnerships needed to ensure a long career of impact. For additional information on leadership opportunities and options visit www.aasa.org/LeadershipNetwork or contact Mort Sherman at msherman@aasa.org or Valerie Truesdale at vtruesdale@aasa.org.
- ✓ **Upcoming AASA Events**

National Women's Leadership Consortium The 2019 meetings will be held in Alexandria, Va., Oct. 21-23, 2019. www.aasa.org/women-consortium.aspx

Aspiring Superintendents Academy for Female Leaders launches **October 17, 2019** in San Marco, Calif. Deadline to apply is **August 15, 2019**. For additional information contact Valerie Truesdale at vtruesdale@aasa.org. www.aasa.org/aspiring-socal.aspx

AASA's ongoing academies, cohorts, consortiums, and programs are open for renewal (and if you're interested in, let us know):

Urban Superintendents Academy

- Howard University: aasa.org/urbansuperintendent.aspx
- University of Southern California: <http://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=37483>

AASA National Superintendent Certification Program®--West Cohort

www.aasa.org/superintendent-certification.aspx

Aspiring Superintendents Academy®

www.aasa.org/aspiring-academy.aspx

National Aspiring Principals Academy 2019-2020

www.aasa.org/aspiring-principals-academy.aspx

Redefining Ready!

www.aasa.org/redefiningready.aspx

Early Learning

www.aasa.org/early-learn-cohort.aspx

Digital Consortium

www.aasa.org/DigitalConsortium.aspx

Personalized Learning

www.aasa.org/personalized-learning.aspx

Leadership Academy

www.aasa.org/AASALeadershipAcademy.aspx

STEM Consortium

www.aasa.org/stem-consortium.aspx

Innovation and Transformational Leadership Network

www.aasa.org/AASACollaborative.aspx

Impacted by the ESSA requirement to improve the lowest 5% performing schools? AASA has embarked on a new partnership with Talent Development Secondary (one of the premiere school turnaround organizations in the country, meeting the federal thresholds for evidence in multiple categories) to build a networked improvement community (NIC) of 20 districts with up to 40 CSI schools to participate in a rich school transformation initiative. To learn more visit: www.tdschools.org/2018/11/14/you-can-now-apply-for-the-tds-aasa-networked-improvement-community-nic

AASA 2020 National Conference on Education, Feb. 13-15, 2020, San Diego, Calif.