Journal of Scholarship & Practice

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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A Message From the Editor

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Welcome to the 2008 spring issue of the *AASA Journal of Scholarship and Practice*. This issue is partially a continuation of the winter issue that focused on systems thinking, a primary emphasis for AASA. A call for papers was issued for articles on systems thinking and the response was gratifying.

The first article is written by Leslie Ford, superintendent of the Onteora Central School District in Boiceville, NY. She provides a systems perspective on how to maintain a focused leadership style without provoking a clash between two dissimilar forces – the stability of school culture and administrative, staff and board-initiated change.

The article, entitled "Working the System: Building Capacity for School Change," by Judith Zimmerman, examines systemic change and school reform. Although America's public education system still holds the best promise to provide educational access to all children, it has come under fire for not serving student needs. While educational leaders can choose various approaches to accomplish the task of school reform, attention to building capacity is significant to the success of the effort. Using the implementation of Baldrige as an example of a systemic reform process, this paper attempts to promote the idea of building capacity as a strategy for leading systemic change. Two keys to building capacity for change that are highlighted in the paper are helping educators to see the connections between change initiatives and providing support that is linked to the characteristics of educators within the learning community.

The next article, "Adopting Team Contracts to Initiate Team Learning," written by Patricia Marcellino, focuses on the use of team contracts as a pedagogical tool of instruction for initiating team learning among aspiring and practicing administrators and leaders. Senge's model serves as a prime basis for the paper's theoretical framework and is applied as a representation for instructors who want to improve student team skills and initiate team learning.

"Systems Thinking and Students: Relationships, Student Achievement, and the Curriculum" is written by Shelley Garrett and Sam Roberson and looks at an aspect of the affects of high stakes testing on student achievement. With the focus on federally mandated testing in public schools, this article looks at the connection between students who do not pass these high-stakes exams and the affect adult relationships might have on their academic success. Mentoring relationships amongst fifth grade students in this study indicated that the personal relationships developed between teachers and students, indeed, had a significant positive impact on student performance.

There is also a research article, commentary and book review in this issue. The research article by Sidney Brown, Sharron Herron and Gwendolyn King entitled "Assessing Dispositions of Administrative Intern Candidates" reports the results of their research study on the topic. The research addressed the dispositions of administrative intern candidates (AICs). Thirty-five (N=35) AICs were surveyed using a two-sided Likert scale to assess their respective beliefs and practices of the dispositions. The results of this research will be used to benchmark best practices (for closing the achievement gap in underserved regions/schools) in principal preparation programs.

This volume concludes with a commentary on a school district that tackled a long-standing tradition of toilet papering each fall during homecoming. David Moscinski describes the steps taken in his school district to address a problem that had an impact on student safety and created a climate of vandalism. The final article is a review of a book by Charles Slater titled *A Leader's Legacy,* written by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner.

Systems Thinking in Action: A District Perspective

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Research on the enduring contribution of leadership to student achievement can be integrated as part of a system planning model.

This article offers a formative sample in the convergence of two dissimilar forces: the stability of school culture, whose rock-solid nature resembles a tectonic plate, and the flowing energy of administrators who join with the board and district staff as the force that helps the system to move through change. Our charge is to maintain a focused leadership style without provoking an earthquake clash of consequences for the entire district.

Curiosity propels us to ask: what skills and ability will take the partnership of the board and superintendent beyond the level of daily problem solving and set us on a course of meaningful change, of deeper dialogue? Employing a systems approach to our work provides a blueprint for our shared work, binding attention to students and the learning environment.

Scenario Building

Imagine you've been selected as super-intendent. Your first task is to view the entire district, to listen to all areas of it for what is said and what is left unsaid, to learn about and value the culture in its current state, and to reflect on the meaning and interrelationship of all of the information you gather.

At the same time, the board who appointed you is eagerly awaiting the result of your quick action. Their interest is in improving the district they represent. As longtime residents, they have had time to study and formulate individual and group opinions about what needs to be changed. Between these two ends of a continuum of action stand the employees you will work with, who may want things to remain exactly as they are, or hunger for change in various areas.

Here is the first level of work: to approach the existing culture with respect, and continue to assess the entire system as a whole. It takes years to understand the complexity of history and relationships woven within the walls and throughout the community of a district.

If the superintendent assumes the role of individual problem-solver, she may be influenced to take action on items that have managed to attract attention, and underestimate the powerful interrelationship of issues and their priorities.

These relationships may not be obvious at first, and require that analysts consider the context, or why things are operating as they are, and how they relate to other issues.

A systems approach seeks proactively to balance the core operating forces in a

district, and does not allow itself to be distracted by "crisis of the day" reactions.

When leaders assume that action in one area will change behavior in other parts of the organization, they may be mesmerized by an illusion of completed work that leaves them overconfident and under-prepared for ongoing system tremors. They are well advised to handle issues of different sizes with a systems approach in order to effect change in many areas over time.

Storytelling: Linking Thought and Action

We can borrow from Aesop's tale of the *Crow and the Pitcher*, with a systems approach twist to the moral. In this fable, the thirsty crow found a pitcher with water in it, but the level was so low she could not reach it with her beak. It seemed as though she might die of thirst within sight of the remedy to her problem. After deliberation, she hit upon a clever plan.

She began dropping pebbles into the pitcher. With each pebble the water rose a little higher, until at last it reached the brim, and the knowing bird was able to quench her thirst. Aesop's moral was that necessity is the mother of invention.

A systems approach to the outside observer may feel much like watching the crow methodically drop pebbles in a pitcher that doesn't seem to be responding much. By raising the operating ability of the entire district (the level of the water) with planned interventions (or pebbles), leaders (crows posing as superintendents and board members) increase effectiveness everywhere.

Application in Real Time

I was appointed in February as superintendent of Onteora Central School District. The three elementary, middle and high schools of this

unified district are elegantly located in the Catskill Mountains. The area is dedicated to the arts and recreation, drawing visitors and second homeowners to its beauty.

There is a history of excellence, creativity and caring that residents point to with pride, fueled by energetic earlier reform work of a stable group of teachers and support staff.

A decentralized model for conducting business and making instructional decisions complements the emphasis on individuality and expression of this artistic, literary, sportsman and rural community. In a new era of accountability, Onteora has sustained test scores above the state average, and maintains a leadership position in the county.

Onteora's current system issues match those of similar districts. A continued state of declining enrollment (the removal of a large employment force, the rising cost of property in a recreational area, and the lack of employment for entry and mid-level employees with growing families in a rural area) is forcing the board to examine per pupil expenditures and consider reductions in staff and programs. Substantial buildings without major modernization alterations are approaching the twilight of their productive life.

The stable staff that supported the existing "way we do things around here" is poised to retire within the next five years. The decentralized model for business and operations provides unclear direction for procedures in their impending absence.

There is a need to underscore the shared values that bind us together. One example of a relative small but "hot" issue that could mistakenly be addressed at the problem-solving level was the complaint about the annual allocation for custodial overtime. This issue was highlighted during budget analysis, and

required a systems rather than individual problem-solving resolution.

Decentralization also creates friction with the opposing tectonic force of state and federal accountability. Although test scores generally remain high, math scores for middle school students have been in a slump for three years, and the graphed shape of high state scores represent a plateau more than continuous growth.

This is what Michael Fullan calls the profile of a cruising school, where the state test scores look fine in comparison to state scores, but remain stagnant compared to its history. The district comprehensive plan acknowledges the need to shift from site to district-focused planning.

Issues:

1. Plateaued state test scores

2. Declining enrollment/ budget

3. Aging facilities/lack of capacity for current instruction

4. Procedures not shared, commonly used

5. Specific employee issues relate to other issues in a larger context; excessive use of overtime for custodians

The Systems Model: Four Levels of Observation and Intervention

In systems terms, Onteora's profile offers a working model of the four simultaneous levels in any district: events, patterns, systems, and mental models. Individual events, repeated over time, led to the patterns captured in the five issues mentioned above.

The observable regular events in a district represent the tip of an iceberg model to

systems approach. The trick, as the reigning crow, is to drive observation, reflection and dialogue deeper to tie these individual pieces to a series of patterns or trends that affect the entire district.

When these are described clearly, we can identify the current practices contributing to the reinforcing nature of these forces, and, with diligence, glimpse the unchallenged thinking supporting status quo.

My role as superintendent is to address the entire system with an ongoing process of analysis, synthesis, action and evaluation with the board, administrative team and staff.

In practical terms, that means we will be involved in six tasks:

1. Communicate our common purpose using concrete examples. Convey the power of each individual's contribution, and underscore the passion, dedication, and optimism inherent in our work with children.

2. Look for the strengths in the system and build on them.

3. Identify gaps where there is not enough support, and fill them as we understand their interconnection to other areas in the district.

4. Don't put too many small or first-order changes in place at once. Concentrate on long-term goals, and build to second-order or sustained change.

5. Pick key areas to work on, and build district growth in a cycle of improvement.

6. Develop a decision making model for large long-term issues.

Mental Model Work through Action Planning

This plan of action is the concrete and systemic way to address the less obvious mental models embedded in our individual and group thinking.

Onteora is choosing to frame its enrollment decline as an opportunity rather than a shortcoming. Strategic planning in the next year will focus on adopting a new education model for middle school, which will in turn influence all other grade levels.

In order to prepare for change, leaders throughout the district are involved in gathering a set of shared procedures supported by policy and regulation. Data teams for each site focused on student work signify the presence of a professional learning community in evolution.

The board goals intend to command a precise focus on the achievement and development of each child. Long term planning goals, which are significant and will take time to resolve, are informed by the attention to the needs of the entire system.

The crow deposits each pebble to raise the level of the water. Each small pebble contributes. Specifically, how were the custodial overtime hours addressed? After researching the components of the cleaning schedule, budget, and employee attendance, a pattern of behavior emerged. We discovered an interconnected web related to facility use form processing, program and after school use, employee absentee rates, and the difficulty of hiring substitutes in a rural area. A switch in routing for facility requests that takes advantage of custodial leadership, attention to attendance as a factor for all employees, with specific coaching goals easily addressed the most egregious concerns.

Summary

A summative leadership study from the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) highlights the connection between the consistent leadership of a superintendent and gains in student achievement. We live in interesting times, where the difference between local needs and federal guidelines compels us to develop a rich style of curriculum delivery with that same consistent support of the entire district.

Superintendents, administrators and board members whose work is informed by recognition of the interconnection of elements, who can reflect in thoughtful dialogue and plan for sustained change in the growth of their district will find their daily burden of management issues decrease over time in proportion to the larger planning context they are able to embrace.

This systems approach allows every employee to focus on the needs of students, and decreases the risk of distraction and splintering of effort by other agendas.

Author Biography

Leslie Ford was appointed superintendent of the Onteoro Central School District in Boiceville, NY in February 2007.

Working the System: Building Capacity for School Change

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America's public education system still holds the best promise to provide educational access to all children. However, public education has come under fire within the past two decades for not serving all student needs. Therefore, increasing demands are being placed on public schools to reform in order to improve achievement.

Critical to the success of any reform initiative is the sense of common purpose that leaders promote by involving others in developing and communicating a shared vision (Senge, et al., 1999). Accordingly, it is critical for superintendents and other school leaders to "build the capacities of the system's sub-systems to relate to each other with a focus on the shared vision" (AASA, 2007, p. 5).

While educational leaders can choose various approaches to accomplish the task of school reform or redesign, no matter which framework is employed, attention to building capacity is significant to the success of the effort. Capacity building is "a process that takes people from where they are to where they need to be in order to think and act in systems terms" (AASA, 2007, p.5). Baldrige, one approach that is being used in some schools across the country, is a systemic process for

improvement that emphasizes the importance of leadership, mission/vision, shared decision-making and performance accountability (Ohio Department of Education, 2007). The Baldrige categories describe the essential elements of an in integrated management system:

1. Leadership

2. Strategic Planning

3. Student and Stakeholder and Market Focus

4. Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management

5. Faculty and Staff Focus

6. Educational and Support Process Management

7. Organizational Performance Results (NIST, 2005, p. 6)

According to Mitchell (1999), "The principles underlying … Baldrige … are applicable at all levels of the educational system, including the classroom" (p. 69). However, when embarking on any reform effort, school leaders need to recognize that the success of implementation may be subject to

many variables. "Many strategies not only fail to motivate teachers to implement improvements but also alienate them further from participating in reform" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 13). Hence, change efforts in schools, such as implementing Baldrige, may be met with resistance. Therefore, today's superintendents and other school leaders are obliged to prepare to lead change, understand the process and nature of change, and provide the essential support so that those involved in change can be successful.

Moreover, according to Kennedy and Kennedy (1996), "we need to take a systemic view of change which not only takes attitudes into account but also investigates both the social norms and the perceived behavioral control which will be specific to a particular context" (p. 359).

Seeing Connections

One key to overcoming resistance and building capacity for change is to help educators see the connections between change initiatives, such as Baldrige, rather than viewing them as add-ons. For example, schools that already use the Pathwise Mentoring System could complement that program by also implementing Baldrige (Author, 2002).

Pathwise is built on a framework of 19 essential teaching skills, clustered into four domains as defined by professional educators: planning for student learning, creating an environment for student learning, teaching for student learning, and professionalism (Pathwise Orientation Guide, 1995).

The criteria represent the knowledge, skills and abilities possessed by the accomplished teacher. Both of these education initiatives, Baldrige and Pathwise, are frameworks based on research and proven practice that use developmental and continuous improvement cycles grounded in reflective

practice to help improve instruction and student achievement (Author, 2002).

In order to deploy a reform effort at all levels, it is important for educators to think in systems terms. Hence, using Baldrige and Pathwise concurrently provides a framework for teachers to translate into classroom action *the plan, do, study, act* (PDSA) cycle of continuous improvement and the developmental cycle of *plan, teach, reflect,* and *apply* (Author, 2002).

For example (Author, 2002), a teacher and his/her students could identify a classroom process to be improved and develop a flow chart to describe the process (Baldrige Category 6 – *Educational and Support Process Management* and Pathwise Criterion D1 – *Reflection on the Extent to Which the Learning Goals Were Met*).

Next, the teacher and class would determine an improvement strategy to use, monitor the new process, and analyze the data gathered. After the process improvement data were collected, analyzed, and acted upon, the planning for process management and improvement would begin again (Shipley & Caldwell, 2000).

Providing Professional Development

Systems' thinking also requires the superintendent and other educational leaders to have "the ability to re-imagine the system as a comprehensive learning community" (AASA, 2007, p.5). Therefore, another key to building capacity, with systemic programs such as Baldrige, is providing support that is linked to the characteristics of educators within the learning community.

Self-efficacy has been correlated to employee acceptance of new procedures or innovations, and Author (2006) found that

teachers' sense of self-efficacy was significantly related to their use of Baldrige. This finding is important, because teacher self-efficacy is related to students' achievement, motivation and self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Moreover, positive school culture and shared classroom decision-making are not only related to higher teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998), but are also key foci of the Baldrige Framework.

When teachers experience success with students, their sense of personal efficacy grows (Hoy & Hoy, 2003). Because leadership support and teacher training can help to build teacher self-efficacy (Hoy & Hoy, 2003), there are implications, therefore, for educational administrators to support teachers in their use of Baldrige or other initiatives.

Moreover, a number of authors have stressed the importance of professional development to the success of any educational reform effort (Glickman, 2002; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). "Change is a gradual and difficult process for teachers and they need encouragement, support, and feedback after training in a new method to get them through the initial slump in their confidence" (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998, pp.236 & 237).

School administrators can develop a supportive culture for change by providing opportunities for teacher collaboration and participation in decision making. Lambert asserted that "meaningful participation is a cornerstone of professional and school communities – a stone hat we often leave unturned" (2003, p.11).

One avenue to attaining meaningful and informed participation by teachers is to provide opportunities for respected teachers to serve as role models and credible sources of feedback to cultivate self-efficacy in their less-experienced

peers (Hoy & Hoy, 2003; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Moreover, Author (2006) found that veteran teachers (20 years or more of experience) had a significantly higher sense of self-efficacy than those with 7 years or less of teaching experience. Teachers who are considered opinion leaders can also exert influence over their colleagues in the adoption of innovations (Rogers, 2003). This peer pressure coupled with peer support is most effective in developing a culture of change in schools (Fullan, 2001).

When leaders think systemically they envision and support learning communities within their schools (AASA, 2007). The core principles of professional learning communities include embracing learning rather than teaching, collaborating to help all pupils and adults learn, and using data and focusing on results to foster continuous improvement (DuFour, Eaker & DuFour, 2005).

According to the National Staff Development Council, this support for adult learning and collaboration comes through "staff development that improves the learning of all students [which] requires resources" (Hirsh, 2003). These resources include providing financial resources and allocating time for professional learning.

Conclusion

"District leaders are finding that the disciplines of systems thinking provide a framework for clarifying and deepening their understanding of dynamic systems and for organizing their thoughts and strategies in leading and managing school system change" (Thompson, 1999).

Using the implementation of Baldrige as an example of initiating a systemic reform process, this paper has attempted to promote the idea of building capacity as a strategy for leading systemic change. Because "you cannot

strive for the next level of organizational excellence by changing one piece of your system at a time," school leaders must make simultaneous improvements at all levels of the system (Duffy, 2002, p. 136). Hence, building capacity for change should be deployed throughout the system in order for reform efforts to be successful. Two keys to building capacity for change that were highlighted in this paper were helping educators to see the connections between change initiatives, and providing support that is linked to the characteristics of educators within the learning community.

Author Biography

Judith Zimmerman is associate professor of educational administration and leadership studies at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, OH. Her former leadership positions included being a superintendent, high school and middle school principal, and vocational school student services supervisor. Dr. Zimmerman's research interests include leading organizational change in schools, collaborative decision making and professional learning. She has co-authored three book chapters and has had 17 articles published regarding organizational change. She has also made numerous presentations at national, regional and state conferences.

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Adopting Team Contracts to Initiate Team Learning

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Background and Introduction

Creighton, Harris and Coleman (2005) suggest that educational leadership instructors introduce aspiring administrators to a sound knowledge base. Currently, engaging in teams is recommended for high performance and problem-solving (Bolman & Deal, l997; Katzenbach & Smith, 2003; Kline, l999; Lipnack & Stamps, l997; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Polzer, 2003; Senge, 2006). Bolton (l999) recommends that instructors coach teams so teaming skills are improved.

But, oftentimes, there are team tensions that surface in teams and cause them to fail (Kling, 2000). The problem for an instructor working with team units is how to reduce team tensions so that students learn from the team experience. To support team development, Aranda, Aranda and Conlon (l998) recommend team members formulate a team contract. They suggest that team contracts can provide a basis of ongoing assessment on whether the team is fulfilling its goals and provide a mechanism to monitor a team's progress.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to conduct an exploratory action-research investigation of 24 teams and their contracts in eight graduate courses taught at a private university in New

York. An MBA business course (with three teams) was conducted first and served as a benchmark for the seven educational leadership courses (21 teams) that followed.

Theoretical Framework

Senge's (2006) systems thinking framework, which includes the disciplines of personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning formed the study's theoretical framework. Students had varying levels of personal mastery when they began each course.

To initiate a shared vision and team learning, an outline of a contract originally formulated by Aranda, Aranda and Conlon (l998) was adapted as an instructional tool. The contract outline suggested that students identify the team's membership, purpose and goals, structure, rules, roles, strengths, skills, improvements needed, methods for arriving at decisions, meeting dates, process for collecting information and means of communicating with members.

Furthermore, students were asked to reflect on *their mental models* by discussing their expectations and assumptions about teaming, prior team experiences and the team process as it evolved. Aranda, Aranda and Conlon state that the framework of a team

contract "is dynamic rather than static. Teams are created (structure); then they begin their work (process). As teams work, they form values (culture), and the teams learn to influence (politics). Ongoing assessment (renewal) helps teams to revise their structure; then the whole framework cycle begins again (p. ix)."

Research Design and Methods
This study was based on action-research, which stems from a qualitative methodology (Mills, 2003). Action-research is an iterative process as the instructor applies it to each course that is taught. The study was cross-sectional and contained repeated measures. To insure trustworthiness and dependability, methods were triangulated. These included the 24 contracts, inventories, periodic team updates, summative reflective essays and selected interviews.

Questions and discussions were generated in person, via e-mail and over the Blackboard network. Miles and Huberman's (1994) structured guidelines were followed for data analysis. Contracts were compared and contrasted. Data were coded and analyzed for themes and surprises; categories and sub-categories were created.

Team Context
Teams were set up utilizing the Learning Connections Inventory © (LCI) developed by Johnston and Dainton (l997a, l997b). The LCI© has test-retest reliability (Learning Connections Resources Website: http://www.LCRinfo.com; Let Me Learn Website: http://www.letmelearn.org) and content, construct and predictive validity. Similarly, Johnston recommends that team members compose a team charter.

Contracts centered on a team project, which included a team policy paper and technological presentation, which was peer evaluated (Topping, l998). Students formally signed their contracts and team members received copies.

Participants
Participants (96) were aspiring leaders in one business (MBA) and seven educational leadership courses. There were 24 teams; 3 business teams with 14 individuals participating and 21 education teams with 82 individuals participating. There were 73 females and 23 males. In the business class, there were seven females and seven males; in the education teams, there were 66 females and 16 males. Teams ranged from two to six members.

Results and Discussion
Multiple perspectives were offered from team members regarding adherence to the team contracts. Findings indicated that discussing team assumptions and expectations, while negotiating the contract initiated team identification.

A key to a team's success seemed to lay in a team's contract and the attitude of team members toward that contract. Contracts provided a framework for team members to implement a shared vision in setting the team's purpose and goals. Students indicated that they utilized their contracts as a tool for the implementation of a team's performance and product primarily.

Team "rules" seemed similar when comparing contracts. Business values were indirectly imbedded in the rules or goals. Education "rules" seemed predicated on developing values, such as unity, respect and cooperation.

A business rule stated, there will be "no voting anyone off the island" indirectly emphasizing unity, while an education rule directly stated, "the team is expected to work cohesively and cooperatively." Most students

reported that they seldom utilized their contracts as active models for ongoing assessment of the team process or for assessing a team's values or standards.

Throughout the study's eight iterations, team tensions were evident on all teams at various times regardless of the discipline. Oftentimes, contract infractions were ignored unless they directly affected the product. Infractions centered on missing meetings or disregarding agreed upon deadlines.

This was especially acute on one business and one education team. In addition, there were problems of alienation or withdrawal on five education teams that could be traced directly to the contracts or stipulations in the contracts. For example, on three teams, problems were traced to the alienation or withdrawal of a team member in the writing of the contract itself.

One student stated, "I have been greatly disappointed in my team and myself. I have lost heart … I am so lost and frustrated." When the other members were asked why they alienated her, one stated "she was losing her focus and we needed to move forward and she was preventing us from doing this."

On two teams, contract stipulations outlined roles that overlapped. Both students withdrew and claimed they weren't able to share in the team tasks because of this. The other members compensated for the withdrawal of these members and took over their responsibilities.

Even though education students inserted value-laden goals in their contracts, team process problems still evolved. Individual students learned regardless of whether the team experience was positive or beset with problems; they learned what to do and what not to do on a team.

The instructor, when she was alerted, applied instructional coaching and asked, "What can you do to support the team?" Reflection is integral to action-research (Mills, 2003). When a course ended, the instructor reflected and asked, "What can I do to improve the course for succeeding classes?"

For example, in the first education course, one team followed contract stipulations and one team did not. So in the second course, the instructor spent more time laying the contract groundwork.

In this course, one "successful" team took more time negotiating the contract so the instructor allotted more time to succeeding classes in preparing contracts.

In the third and fourth courses, teams that spent more time on their contracts, put more details and meetings into their contracts. With more meetings, tensions exacerbated among members who were already juggling professional and personal responsibilities. Therefore, the instructor asked for periodic updates that were intentionally linked to contracts so that contracts, meetings and updates could be compared from each student's perspective.

In the fifth course, one team spent too much time on contract stipulations, while another spent too little time. Because of concerns regarding task delivery, one member on each of these teams was alienated from the contract process. Therefore, the instructor spent additional time coaching individual members so that tensions would be lessened.

In the sixth course, the instructor intentionally had students compare their contracts beforehand so that differences could be noted. In the seventh course, more questions, updates and discussions on team contracts evolved over the Blackboard network.

In this final course, one team illustrated the fluidity of their contract by updating and changing provisions in it. In this course, students on all three teams engaged in team learning initiatives that had positive closure. Students rated their teams with mean scores ranging from 9 to 9.5 (out of 10) on a scale based on Katzenbach & Smith's (2003) team performance curve (p. 84). When asked if team contracts should be applied to the work setting, a majority of the students (83 percent) in this final course answered affirmatively, but some members felt that contracts would be successful only under certain conditions.

Students commented:

> *I think that it is extremely important to have team contracts, even when working within one's own school.*
>
> *I like the idea of a contract; it tends to keep people honest and true to the cause.*
>
> *I wholeheartedly agree with team contracts [for example] in team teaching situations.*
>
> *If the task is large enough (such as writing curriculum), then, I would agree [that] it would make sense to write a contract so everyone knows what is expected of them.*
>
> *I think that team contracts would not be supported in a working environment. I do feel they would be useful if they could be implemented.*

Conclusions and Implications

Team contracts seem to be a useful tool for instructors working with teams because they expedite the team's purpose and its shared vision (Senge, 2006). Contracts can also serve as a common mode of reference for team members as team learning is initiated.

A key to a team's success in regard to *team learning* seemed to lay in a team's contract and the attitude of team members toward that contract. If used actively and without time constraints, team contracts may serve as a device for implementing process values, such as respect and cooperation.

Unfortunately, students in this study did not utilize their contracts as a mechanism for measurement or assessment as recommended by Aranda, Aranda and Conlon, (l998). In a revised syllabus, instructional coaching is intentionally applied during the formation of the contracts. Each contract is discussed, compared and contrasted for possible strengths and weaknesses at the beginning, mid-way and end of each course. Contracts are viewed as fluid instruments that can be updated and changed if warranted.

This study may serve as a reference for instructors who want to improve their students' team skills and initiate team learning.

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Patricia Ann Marcellino was awarded a doctorate in educational administration by Hofstra University in 2001. She holds an MBA, an MA in education, a certificate in management and a BA in political science. Her teaching and research agenda includes leadership, team development and diversity issues.

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Systems Thinking and Students: Relationships, Student Achievement, and the Curriculum

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The surge of high-stakes testing and accountability has been felt in Texas and all across the country. Every state is demanding to some degree or another that administrators and teachers increase their workload, alter their teaching, rearrange the curriculum, adjust professional development, and implement improvement programs in order to raise test scores.

Various government entities from the national to the state level want to prove that America's system of education is working; however, for all the high-stakes testing and consequent desperate measures, including aligning the curriculum to instruction and assessment, there has been very little improvement in student learning.

What, then, can be done to improve student performance and increase student motivation with regard to their academic performance in this high-stakes testing world?

Perhaps haunted by a reflective question such as this, the assistant superintendent of a 4-A school district in northeast Texas, acting on a core belief of the district that personal relationships are critical to student success, conducted an informal research project in which fifth grade students who in the previous school year as fourth graders (2006) had failed to pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in reading (n=101) and math (n=58) were assigned to willing mentor teachers.

The volunteer teachers did not necessarily have the students in their classrooms, and their mentoring roles were not to be of a tutoring or academic nature. The superintendent urged the teachers to take time out of their day to locate the student assigned to them and touch base, say "hello," and make some kind of supportive contact. The teachers were encouraged to check on their assigned students throughout the semester in person, by

note, by phone, on the weekends, and even during holidays. Each teacher was expected to have at least 10 hours of contact time in the mentoring relationship over the course of the school year leading up to the 2007 TAKS test administration in April.

The superintendent's efforts proved to be fruitful. Mean scale scores in both reading (up 115.41) and math (up 89.43) increased for students in the sample. Paired sample t-tests revealed there was a significant difference for each group. Effect sizes (reading= .88; math= .56) indicated that the personal relationships developed between teachers and students, indeed, had a significant positive impact on student performance.

Given such results, what are the implications of such alternative ideas in addressing inadequate student performance on high-stakes testing exams?

Some districts are choosing to focus on students who have not passed state tests. They are looking at how effective remedial classes have been in improving student performance, although this subject is not open to debate since remedial courses are a requirement of No Child Left Behind. Other districts are dissecting and mapping their curricula in order to uncover what essential knowledge and skills are not being covered during instruction to cause such failure rates and disparities among sub-groups.

In spite of such typical responses, one must ask if districts are looking at the situation in a piecemeal fashion. Instead, should districts and their administrators, like the innovative Texas superintendent, integrate systems thinking into their approach to education and curriculum and instruction by addressing the whole child?

From the beginning of America's public education system, the purpose of education was less about curriculum content and more about creating good citizens. Noddings (2005b) said that the curriculum had undergone many changes over the years, but usually to align with standardized tests and rarely to address the larger aims of society or the expressed needs of students.

Further, Noddings believed the great aims that are meant to guide our instructional decisions, such as ethical character, intellect, rewarding relationships, and home membership, are intended to educate the whole child. From her perspective, the needs of the child may have been misplaced in the shuffle of state-mandated testing and subject-driven curriculum reform.

For example, she argued that most of the typical school curriculum is supported by the assumption that educators and policymakers know what children need, but that curriculum is designed to satisfy inferred needs—needs that adults have chosen for the students. She was convinced that more emphasis must be focused on the expressed needs of students—needs that can be seen and heard, such as social skills, attention, and relationships.

Lost entirely in the high-stakes testing debate and demand for improved curriculum is an essential basic human need called relationships. If the energy spent "teaching to the test" and grasping at straws in curriculum reform were redirected and spent on embedding relationships with students into the curriculum perhaps the testing would take care of itself.

Danielson (1996) believed that relationships were what really made schools better, and Barth (1990) contended that in schools, it all started and ended with relationships. If caring and nurturing are what students need, perhaps the first step in supporting students toward success is to revamp the curriculum.

Ralph Tyler and Hilda Taba, two prominent names in curriculum development, promoted curriculum models that began with the student in mind—identifying student needs, particularly "educational, social, occupational, physical, psychological, and recreational" aspects and constructing a meaningful curriculum with these needs at the forefront (Oliva, 2005, p. 129).

It should be obvious that students need to learn basic math facts. But students also need to have positive, caring adult relationships that can support his/her learning. Perhaps both experiences can be built into the curriculum—particularly if meaningful student-adult relationships can have a more profound effect on student achievement than high-stakes testing alone.

Search Institute (2007), a nonprofit organization that conducts applied scientific research on positive student development, has conducted research that supports the theory of giving students what they need by measuring the effects of student-adult relationships on academic achievement. Their research shows that a young person's level of developmental assets (such as relationships with adults) is a much better predictor of a student's academic achievement, risk behaviors, and thriving than other measures that are often used, such as race and family economic status.

Some of their recent research (Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Sesma, 2003) supports a strong correlation between students' academic success and the number of positive adult relationships they have. Young people who reported having more relationships with adults were more likely to have higher grade point averages (GPA) and a higher class rank. This finding is significant since GPA and class rank are measures of actual academic performance, not a young person's self-reported success in school.

In a study conducted by the Minnesota Institute of Public Health (Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Sesma, 2003), 360 students were surveyed longitudinally across three data collections. As a result of implementing the program, the study found that academic failure rates were cut in half, truancy rates showed a downward trend, and use rates of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana declined dramatically. With reference to focusing on relationships as an intervention, Scales and Roehlkepartain (2003) reported:

> These new findings suggest that an emphasis on overall development … may actually have as much or more positive impact on academic outcomes in the long run as more obvious and traditional strategies for boosting achievement, such as emphasizing task mastery, requiring higher teacher certification standards, and using high-stakes testing to track achievement. (p. 9)

Initial results also indicate that having adult relationships and being engaged in school also contribute to improved test scores. This positive relationship has significant practical implications. Who would argue against implementing a program that could assist students in passing their high-stakes state exams and increasing their odds of having a higher GPA three years later?

Search Institute is certainly not the first voice to say that relationships are key to student success. John Dewey promoted a sense of service and community as being integral to student success more than a hundred years ago. Dewey believed that education was a process built on socialization by which students learn to participate in societal life. Further, he believed that intelligence was socially acquired through interaction with others in natural problem-solving environments (Gutek, 2001).

Similarly, other researchers (Sanchez, Colon, & Esparza, 2005) have more recently determined that a sense of belonging consistently positively affects academic outcomes such as grade point average, absenteeism, motivation, effort, and educational aspirations.

A study by Juarez (2001) revealed that providing a caring and supportive environment is a better indicator of academic success than completion of homework. Wimberley (2002) found that students who formed good school relationships had higher educational expectations and postsecondary participation. Cassellius (2006) maintained that great schools were not built on the latest trendy programs but on building relationships, one person at a time over time.

Building relationships with our students matters. It may be the only thing that matters. Senge (2006) saw the unhealthiness of our world today, and perhaps of our schools and achievement results, in direct proportion to our inability to see it as a whole. In that same vein, students must be seen as whole people and not merely little test machines.

Albert Einstein had a sign in his university office that said, "Not everything that counts can be counted, and just because it can be counted doesn't mean it counts." To be able to pinpoint to an exact percentile the disparity between third-grade reading scores of various ethnic groups of students does not mean that such identification is exclusively meaningful or useful.

Wouldn't it be a more meaningful and useful exercise to focus on the whole child,

regardless of color, socioeconomic status, or native language? Noddings (2005b) asked the question: If standardized test scores rise, what has really been gained?

She also noted that many teachers were abandoning the standard curriculum to teach lessons about life and relationships, acting as social workers and parents, to supply students' expressed and immediate needs. Noddings suggested a way to embed this caring into the standard curriculum:

> Although we cannot discard all the fragmented subjects in our present school system and start from scratch, we can and should ask all teachers to stretch their subjects to meet the needs and interests of the whole child. Working within the present subject-centered curriculum, we can ask math and science teachers as well as English and social studies teachers to address moral, social, emotional, and aesthetic questions with respect and sensitivity when they arise. (2005a, p. 12)

Building relationships starts with every adult in a community and in a school—from the top to the bottom and everywhere in between. Building relationships can invigorate a staff with a new sense of purpose and mission—a knowing that a difference can be made for all students.

It is imperative, then, to reach out, to make contact, and to build staff-student relationships throughout our schools, even with students not in our classrooms. Education is, after all, a fundamentally human endeavor.

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Assessing Dispositions of Administrative Intern Candidates

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Introduction

Richardson and Onwuegbuzie (2003), the implication for assessing dispositions are profound, because "this area is, by nature, subjective and is often dictated by personal philosophies" (p. 3). Those assessing administrative interns candidates' (AICs) dispositions must make an effort to use objective measures that minimize bias.

School leaders' values and dispositions impact the quality of education in their schools (Gold, Evans, Earley, Halpin, & Collarbone, 2003). We will begin with a definition of dispositions: The American Heritage Dictionary (1991) defines dispositions as one's usual mood, a habitual tendency or inclination.

As schools are pushed toward increased accountability standards by state boards of education and other accrediting agencies, we must measure why we do what we do in our schools and principal preparation programs. Effective schools and appropriate leadership dispositions must be assessed and standardized models must be developed to give direction for future growth.

The accrediting agencies and the college of education at a mid-sized state university in a southern state began gathering data to track the effectiveness of future program offerings and to gauge AIC mastery of their necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions within their field of expertise.

This university serves a disproportionate number of AICs that are employed in school districts where the majority of its candidates live in the remote "black belt" region of the state. This region is one of the most socio-economically and educationally deprived areas in the United States. This area of the state has the highest percent pool of

teachers who do not meet "highly-qualified" standards.

Another obstacle for the districts in question is the inability to hire and retain highly qualified personnel due to location, training requirements and lack of incentives. These public schools in turn educate students, who are less prepared for college admittance, while a disproportioned number of them being enrolled at this university,

Purpose of study

The purpose of the study was threefold: (1) to determine the perceptions of AICs toward their beliefs and practices of dispositions regarding the decision-making process, (2) to contribute to the limited existing body of literature on dispositions of AICs and (3) to assist this university's college of education in gathering data for the purpose of program improvement, and the reaffirmation of it's accreditation with the National Council for Teacher Educators (NCATE). Data collected in this research will be used for further study, support, and documentation for future NCATE and state department of education purposes and for program improvement.

Four questions were addressed:

1. Do you believe that all children can learn at high levels and do you persist in helping all students achieve at high levels?

2. Is it important for you to keep abreast of new ideas in the field?

3. Are you committed to explore, examine, and use research findings in your decision making?

4. Do you demonstrate the belief that teachers and pupils' views are important?

The descriptive method of research was used in this study. This method of research describes and interprets existing observations, and is very effective for investigating a variety of educational problems.

The 18 item double-sided Likert Scale questionnaire was constructed using two domains of focus. These domains are: (1) section I: demographics and (2) section II: dispositions survey questions. Section II consists of a list of 18 dispositions statements on each side of which contain a 5-point Likert-like scale to assess both the beliefs and practices of each AIC's decision-making (N-35).

The statistical procedures narrative provides demographic information about the administrative intern candidates who participated in this study. The number of missing variables for responses to each question ranged between 1 and 4.

On the left side of the scale candidates were to report the level of importance or their attitudes about beliefs.

On the right side of the scale they were to report the level to which they practiced dispositions associated with the beliefs and practices included in the survey. Respondents' opinions could range from 1-5, one being low and five being high.

Significance of study

Most of the faculty in the college of education at the study site acknowledges the challenges of meeting the dispositional needs of the AICs while working. They work in a largely underserved school systems ("black belt" counties) in the state. The inequities they face are real, as are the disadvantages of remote locations, poverty, and lack of adequate funding, teacher quality, mentoring opportunities, and the unfair labeling that the

schools and students must bear. Yet these schools are required to meet the standards set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the state department of education mandates, and accountability standards without recourse.

Findings

There are very few studies that address the perceptions and dispositions of AICs. It is generally believed that because of advanced training and a desire to be in an educational environmental, an individual will automatically be prepared to understand the educational and environmental needs of children and those responsible for providing these services. In table's 1, 2, 4 ninety-seven percent of respondents believed that all students could learn; it is important to keep abreast of new ideas; and willingness to help one's peers, and 3 percent did not believe this.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument used in the study measured dispositions, practices and beliefs in AICs decision-making processes. Respondents answered questions pertaining to their beliefs about educating children, advanced preparation in the field, the utilization of research and practical techniques in the educational environment and their beliefs about views of teachers and pupils being important considerations in the decision-making process.

Outcome measures include: beliefs and practices relative to the ability of all children to learn, success in learning outcomes based on pupil strengths, and the positive effects of research in decision making.

Variables

Four variables were created from the larger data set for the purpose of completing this study.

Expectations of learning

Studies show that educators and administrators who believe that all children can learn at high levels and persist in helping all students achieve at high levels are more likely to be successful administrators.

Ideas

It is perceived that based in the old adage that ideas are the mother of invention that administrators who take time to explore new ideas and engage in reflective practices are more likely to be successful administrators.

Current Research

It is perceived that administrators who keep abreast of and utilize current and emerging practices in the field are more likely to be successful administrators.

Views

Research studies demonstrate that the most successful leaders are those who are willing to consider the view and beliefs in administrative practices and procedures.

Statistical Procedures

In order to assess the effects of the study variables on the perceived success of AICs, cross-tabulations were utilized (SPSS 14.0). The cross-tabulations along with the corresponding test for statistical significance (Chi-Square) will show the relevance of the variables in relation to perceived success rates for administrative intern candidates (N=35).

Demographically, the majority, 74.3 percent, of the respondents are African-American, while 20 percent are European-American, 2.9 percent Native American and 2.9 percent self-identifying as international. In terms of age, 26 percent of the candidates are between the ages of 23-27, 20 percent are between ages 28-32, 17 percent are 33-37, 23

percent are38-42, and 14 percent are over age 43. Although this represents a good cross section of candidates in terms of the ages, it may also be an influencing factor in the way candidates respond to the survey. The average age for principals/ILMs in the study state is between 40-50 years of age.

The statistical procedures narrative provides demographic information about the AICs who participated in this study. The total number of respondents was 35. The number of missing variables for responses to each question ranged between 1 and 4. A double sided Likert–like scale was used to generate responses from those participating in the study. On the left side of the scale candidates were to report the level of importance or their attitudes about beliefs. On the right side of the scale they were to report the level to which they practiced dispositions associated with the beliefs and practices included in the survey. Respondents' opinions could range from 1-5, one being low and five being high.

Cross-tabulations

Table 1.
Administrative Intern Candidates Expectations of Learning
_____

Believes All Children Can Learn	Low	Avg.	High	Total	Chi-Square
Believes all children can learn			34	34	.168
Participates in prof. ed. development	1	8	24	34	.680
Values the use of ed. technology		6	27	33	.290
Engages in reflective discussion		4	29	33	.048

_____

Note: N = 35. Totals vary because several of respondents did not answer some items.

Respondents' attitudes about believing all children can learn was cross-tabulated against the level to which they demonstrate a belief that all children can learn, participation in professional educational development and engagement in reflective discussions with fellow candidates, faculty and supervisors. Ninety-four percent of respondents believe that it is important to join and participate in professional educational organizations, while 6 percent do not. Ninety-three percent of respondents believe that the use of educational technology is important, while 6 percent do not. Ninety-four percent of respondents believe that it is important to engage in reflective discussions with fellow candidates, faculty and supervisors. The chi-square test of statistical significance shows that there is a significant relationship between candidates' beliefs that all children can learn and the level to which they demonstrated dispositions associated with engaging in reflective discussion with fellow candidates, faculty and supervisors.

_____

Table 2.

Administrative Intern Candidates Importance of Keeping Abreast of New Ideas

_____

Keeps Abreast of New Ideas	Low	Avg.	High	Total	Chi-Square
Keeps abreast of new ideas		4	30	34	.112
Believes teachers and pupils views are imp.		2	32	34	.248
Committed to continuous learning		2	32	34	.001
Interacts and relates to others with confidence		2	31	34	.001

_____

Note: N = 35

Table 2 shows 94 percent of candidates demonstrate the belief that it is important to interact and relate to others with confidence while, 6 percent do not. The chi-square test of statistical significance shows a significant, positive relationship between the belief that one should keep abreast of new ideas in the field and the demonstration or disposition of believing that teacher and pupil views are important, commitment to continuous learning, and interaction and relating to others with confidence.

Table 3.

Administrative Intern Candidates Utilization of Current Research

_____

Explore Examine and Use Research	Low	Avg.	High	Total	Chi-Square
Explore examine and use research		6	25	31	.001
Recognizes the imp. of learning environ.		5	28	33	.174
Raises ques. about ethical principles	1	3	29	33	.010
Committed to working closely with others		1	32	33	.021

_____

Note: N = 35

Table 3 shows 91 percent of the respondents demonstrate the belief that exploring, examining and using research findings is important, while 9 percent do not. In each of the other categories used to study this variable, 9 percent of the candidates demonstrated the respective beliefs while 6 percent do not. The chi-square test of statistical significance shows that there is a significant, positive relationship between the belief that exploring, examining and using research is important and the demonstrated practice of exploring, examining and using research findings, raising questions about ethical principles, and commitment to working closely with others.

Table 4.
Administrative Intern Candidates Importance of Views of Pupils and Teachers

_____

Teachers and Pupils Views are Important	Low	Avg.	High	Total	Chi-Square
Keeps abreast of new ideas		4	30	34	.056
Explore examine and use research		6	25	31	.428
Disposed to use student's strengths		3	29	32	.125
Willingness to help peers		4	30	34	.079

_____

Table 4 shows that 97 percent of the candidates demonstrated the belief, while 3 percent did not. In the other categories 91 percent of the candidates demonstrate the belief that it is important to explore, examine and use research findings, and disposed to student's strength, while 6 percent do not. The chi-square test of statistical significance shows that there is a significant relationship between the importance of pupils and teachers views and keeping abreast of new ideas.

Although the sample size is small, the implications are significant for the field. AICs dispositions are directly influenced by their beliefs and practices. Statistically significant relationships can be found between the beliefs and several of the dispositions included in the study.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates a step in the positive direction toward studying the reason for the gap between beliefs and practices of dispositions held by AICs. Extensive research must be done by institutions of higher learning when redesigning principal preparation programs. All educational policies must support student achievement and all principal preparation programs must develop the capacity of school leaders who are instructional leader managers (Hale, Moorman, 2003).

Some of the strategies included in the research refer to the utilization of mentoring models, exploring dispositions, impact of teaching and learning, and identifying areas of unmet needs. Principal preparation programs must continue to evolve through deeper understanding of dispositions/pedagogy for school improvement but also as a means for ethical, social justice, and democracy in our schools.

Further study will be conducted on the beliefs and practices of dispositions by gender and other regional differences in order to improve programmatic offerings (closing the achievement gap) and professional development opportunities. More specific study will entail the comparison of AICs in the "black belt" regions to the AICs in the Appalachian region; and we will study local communities to assess their perceived needs for the redesigning of principal preparation programs. Lastly, the authors will conduct a longitudinal study for the purpose of establishing effective models of best practices for principals and instructional leader managers using research from authentic settings.

Author Biographies

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Sharron Herron is an associate professor in political science and has been at Alabama State University for the last six years. Previously she was an assistant professor and director at Fresno State University in California. She is currently the interns' supervisor for candidates completing their field experiences for the degree requirements in political science.

Gwendolyn King has been assistant professor in instructional leadership at Alabama State University for the past three years. She is a retired teacher, counselor, and administrator from Florida.

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Time to Terminate Toilet Papering

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Each September in Wisconsin students return to school, football games draw enthusiastic crowds, and homecoming week is celebrated. Trees lose their leaves only to be re-adorned in white in that generation bridging tradition known as toilet papering.

Community residents have differing opinions on "tp"ing, in large part determined by whether they are on the giving or receiving end. A quote from the principal of a Wisconsin high school has almost state-wide application, "One of the problems we have in our community is that people think that toilet papering is safe, harmless, no-cost fun". Parents did it when they were kids and may even continue to participate today.

Many community residents are of the opposite view – particularly if the white mess covers their trees; or if their filters have been clogged; or if students have trespassed over their yard; or if the celebration has gotten further out of hand and other vandalism has occurred. An enterprising student once waited for "tp"ing classmates to show up at his home where upon they were ambushed and blasted with paint balls that had been frozen. Some districts have taken to canceling homecoming events because the behavior has gotten so out of hand. This article treats toilet papering as a student safety issue and recommends a plan to eliminate it and potentially save students from harm.

Teens seldom walk to the site of the toilet papering, although this writer once re-directed a crowd of over 200 students away from the village proper as they walked down the county highway at 10:00 p.m. While teens make up 7 percent of licensed drivers, they suffer 14 percent of fatalities and 20 percent of all reported accidents. This statistic is of even greater import when you consider that teenagers spend 20 percent of their waking time off the roads in school.

The most common time for teen accidents is from 9:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. This is also prime time for toilet papering. It is also prime time for underage drinking. The combination of driving, "tp"ing fun and drinking certainly can lead to safety issues.

In 2004, my first year as superintendent at Shiocton, the high school principal met with me almost daily during homecoming week to seek my support for sanctions in response to complaints from the community regarding student toilet papering. In addition, the maintenance staff was not pleased with the almost daily grounds clean up required to keep the school property clean.

Almost daily toilet papering occurred despite the possibility of homecoming activities being cancelled. The area had also suffered the loss of student lives in night time auto accidents.

Once homecoming week was concluded, we decided that a plan of action was needed to curtail this degree of vandalism in the future. Our plan was developed early in 2005, implemented in September of that year and, based on the fact that the 2006 homecoming week was toilet paper free in spite of excellent weather all week long, appears to have been a success.

In January of 2005 the high school principal formed a school/community committee to review homecoming activities, particularly toilet papering. January was selected because it was far enough away from the potentially emotional topic that an objective look could be had. The committee included teachers, maintenance, parents, students, community members and law enforcement.

There was a general consensus that "tp"ing had gotten out of hand, but a minority thought it was nothing but good clean fun. When the issues of curvy country roads, underage drinking, night time traffic accidents with injury and death, and unsupervised "mob" behavior were brought into the discussion however, the conclusion was reached that toilet papering had become a risky business that could endanger student lives.

The Plan

A plan was formulated to eliminate the behavior over time. The plan included the following.

Set high expectations for student behavior backed at all levels

It was to be announced to students at the start of the school year that it was expected there would be no toilet papering this year or in the future. High school consists of four classes, each of which tries to out-do the previous year with the toilet papering. It was expected that

elimination of the behavior would take four years as the effect of the administrative expectation took its toll on each successive class.

Set consequences for individual behavior

A mob consists of individuals who must first of all decide whether they will become part of the mob. Setting consequences for individual behavior lets the student think before they act. Being seen as a member of a crowd engaged in toilet papering was added to the conduct code list of violations as an activity unbecoming an athlete. For students not covered by the code, toilet papering was cause for banishment from homecoming activities.

Get law enforcement involved

Get a commitment from local law enforcement that they will "confiscate the ammunition" from mobs of students. It may be possible to get a whole years supply of toilet paper for the library, police and fire stations and park restrooms in one night. When students are stopped for the vandalism, check them for underage drinking. Request extra patrols during homecoming week and give the officers the addresses of athlete/cheerleader homes that will be likely targets.

Engage the student council and student clubs

Have students launch a "Save a Tree, Don't TP" effort from an environmentalist standpoint.

Engage the community and parents in the effort

Publicize the expectation that there will be no toilet papering. A person has to hear a message at least three times before it sinks in that change is expected. Let parents know of the consequences. Parents need to ask where there students are going late on a school night and disapprove of the activity. Parental disapproval gives the student an excuse not to engage in the behavior. "Really guys, I'd like to do it but my mom would bake me for Sunday dinner if she caught me."

Get the story into the newsletter and local paper before it happens. Develop a "TP FreeYou and Me" campaign as a memorial for a popular student who was killed in a night time traffic accident. Every community in Wisconsin has such a story.

Try to avoid scheduling other home events during the week
No reason to encourage a mob of students to form after the volleyball matches are completed.

Hire extra supervision at night during homecoming week
Use of the "rent a cop" can be helpful if the school grounds are a target. The job of the officer is to be a visible deterrent as well as to confiscate ammunition if the mob shows up. Again, it may be possible to get a year's supply of toilet paper for the school during the week. The effort may seem daunting with a lot of time devoted to eliminating what is really a student/community problem. Seen from a safety standpoint however, it is a chance to keep students healthy. All the fun of toilet papering is not worth the loss of one student life in a late night car accident. Work up front will help eliminate the problem over time. While we thought it would take four years to change the behavior at Shiocton, it was gone in two. There was no toilet papering at school or in the community during Homecoming 2006 breaking a long standing tradition that went back at least two generations.

Author Biography

David Moscinski has 34 years experience in public education as a school psychologist, director of pupil services, director of special education, and assistant superintendent. Mr. Moscinski is currently serving as superintendent of the Shiocton school district in Wisconsin where is he has been for the past four years. He earned his education specialist degree from the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. Mr. Moscinski has been a contributor to the *American School Board Journal*; *Wisconsin School News*, the official publication of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, *History of School Psychology in Wisconsin* and *The School Administrator*.

A Leader's Legacy by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner

Reviewed by
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Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner are well known for the publication of *The Leadership Challenge,* which has now sold 1.4 million copies in seventeen languages. Their most recent book is *A Leader's Legacy.*

Early on they mention the leader's need for "loving critics," people who will support you and at the same time speak frankly.

However, leaders fail to ask, "How am I doing?" The next to lowest item on their Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) is "He or she asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance." And yet leaders need early warnings to adjust and respond to changing conditions. There is a tendency to feel that people should speak up without being prompted or without the cover of anonymity, but they don't. Subordinates think the leader already knows how they feel, and they fear retribution. To ask others is to feel exposed and vulnerable, but ironically the leader is already exposed.

In the chapter on trust, Posner reveals the story of a trust fall that went awry. The temptation is not to trust again, but that often leads to having to do the work that subordinates supposedly cannot be trusted to do, critical issues go undiscussed, and the organization will not be able to adapt.

The authors borrow a page from Parker Palmer to discuss courage, "You can't plan to be courageous, but you can choose it." They discuss Rosa Parks Moments (RPM's) and suggest that everyone has had moments of courage in which they find the leader within themselves. If taken seriously, the notion that we are all leaders is really a radical idea that ultimately connects human development with leadership development.

Kouzes and Posner write for business leaders, but the book is equally applicable to educational leaders who are immersed in the conflicts and tensions of organizational life. We are able to enjoy the book as a conversation and a reflection on what we are doing well and not so well.

My only request would be for an occasional reference. A few readers will want

to look at the research and understand the context in greater detail. For example, in discussing the importance of leaders who are close to us, the authors report that young people are most likely to select family members as role models, the best predictor of career success is the relationship with the very first supervisor, and when asked what contributes most to ethical behavior in an organization, people respond, "the behavior of my boss." We are left to wonder where these finding come from.

There are also places where cross-cultural comparisons would be helpful. They suggest that good leadership is personal and that leaders should give followers a chance to get to know them. This might be true in the U.S., but would it also be true in a formal culture with more prescribed expectations for authority? In this setting the methods for getting to know people might be quite different.

The authors warn that a leader should not act only to be remembered. If the leader's best work is to serve, sacrifice and liberate, then all that he/she can count on is being part of something larger. They conclude, " You just never know whose life you might touch what change you might initiate and what impact you might have … What you do know is that you can make a difference. You can leave the world better than you found it" (p 181).

Reviewer Biography

Charles Slater is professor of educational administration in the doctoral program in educational leadership at California State University in Long Beach. He received his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He has also been a superintendent of schools in Texas and Massachusetts.

A Leader's Legacy is published by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006; 204 pages; hardcover $22.95.

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