



Research and Best Practices That Advance the Profession of Educational Administration

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## A Message From the Editor

**Frederick L. Dembowski**  
*Southeastern Louisiana University*

Dear Colleagues,

This issue is special in an important way.

I am planning to retire at the end of July so we are organizing this issue and the fall issue to publish as many manuscripts as we can under “my watch.” The result is that each of these issues will be a bit longer than previous Journals.

Because of the length, I will not give a preview of each article. However, it is gratifying to see that the issues will contain articles by some of the top people in the field of educational leadership!

I will provide more details in the final issue scheduled for publication October 1. For now, enjoy reading!

Dr. Fred Dembowski

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## Students' Reflections on the Relevance and Quality of Highly Ranked Doctoral Programs in Educational Administration: Beacons of Leadership Preparation?

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### Introduction

The manner by which colleges and universities prepare school leaders in doctoral programs is being called into question. One report is stirring much controversy for its unflattering portrayal of administrator preparation programs. In a 2005 report entitled “Educating School Leaders,” former Columbia University president Art Levine characterizes the current state of leadership preparation as a “race to the bottom.”

In short, Levine suggests that an over abundance of degree-granting programs, many of which offered at non-research intensive institutions, is having the effect of diminishing the quality of leadership programming. He also laments the increase in “weaker research-intensive universities” pursuing doctoral programs which he argues “award doctorates that are doctoral in name only” and require coursework with minimal relevance to practice (p. 24).

With a greater number of degree outlets, rigor and quality become more suspect, Levine contends, where the overwhelming emphasis is placed on credit counting rather than crucial practical and theoretical knowledge and skill acquisition. While his depiction may be partly, wholly, or not accurate at all, little research exists in the area of leadership programming quality to refute such claims. Moreover, markers of quality in leadership programming differ widely and no consensus truly exists at this time. This study forges a new direction in evaluating leadership preparation programming by examining the perspective of the current student – more specifically, current doctoral students at elite leadership preparation institutions.

The premise for gathering current doctoral students' impressions from these elite institutions emerges from a notable lack of research that underscores programming outcomes in highly ranked institutions

altogether as well as previous research which has examined former student reflections of their doctoral experience. While research has looked at programmatic aspects related to the strength of curricula, student selection, and standards at lower ranked institutions (Marzano, Waters & McNulty 2005; & Creighton, 2002), no studies have examined student impressions at top ranked institutions with respect to the quality of preparation for practice. The assumption of course is that, like former students, students currently attending these high ranked institutions will likely yield not only positive feedback but also previously unavailable data regarding criteria for judging excellence in leadership preparation.

Thirty current students from six of the top 10 institutions as ranked by the 2007 *U.S. News and World Reports* were selected to participate in this study. These institutions included Harvard, Stanford, Columbia, Ohio State, Penn State, and Wisconsin. Other criteria used to select these six schools included their designation as private or public and their regional location. To frame the study and data gathering, literature regarding the historical development of educational administration as a field of study and research pertaining to measures of quality in leadership programming is presented. A brief description of the method follows with results and conclusions offered in turn.

## Background

### *Brief Historical Context of Leadership Preparation*

Educational leadership as a field of study began forming early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Elwood Cubberly, one of the early pioneers in the field, remarked about the need for a more systematic and intellectual approach to the study of educational administration (Culbertson, 1988). With the financial assistance from private groups such as the Kellogg Foundation, a number of colleges and universities throughout

the country created doctoral programs in educational administration. Since then, the field has undergone major turning points.

For instance, the movement toward standards in the early 1980s generated support for a “one best model” approach to leadership education programs. The development of the American Association of School Administrators *Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators* (Hoyle, 1982) signified a major shift from a somewhat idiosyncratic model of leadership preparation to one emphasizing a set body of skills and competencies that programs could adhere to nationally. Several states adopted these guidelines. Subsequent major benchmark initiatives such as National Council for the Accreditation of Colleges of Education (NCATE) and Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) would embed many of these guidelines and earn adoption in more states.

Despite progress in coalescing around a set of standards, some scholars argued the standards fell short of squarely addressing social challenges related to race, poverty, culture and other societal phenomena. While some institutions have altered their programmatic focus to more directly address these issues, others have stayed the course. Today, program pursuits are more variable than at any point in the field’s history. Whereas some scholars believe leadership education is best approached through social science research and theory (Hoy & Miskel 2007; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004), others contend that school leadership must be more responsive to social change and hence more pragmatic. As to the latter, a growing number of programs have begun rebuilding their programs around specific themes to drive curriculum and instruction such as democratic practices (Crow & Slater 1996; Gale & Densmore, 2003), social justice (Tillman, Lopez, Larson, Capper,

Scheurich & Marshall, 2003), unconditional love (Hoyle, 2002), and the spiritual side of leadership education (Dantley, 2003; Houston & Sokolow, 2006; Hoyle 2002b, & Wheatley 2002).

An additional factor to consider is that the number of programs offering graduate degrees in educational leadership nationally has grown markedly. In 2004, a total of 371 educational leadership programs were available in the U.S. and Canada (Creighton, Lunenberg, Irby, & Nie, 2004). Since 1978, the percentage of educational leadership programs offering the doctorate has increased nearly 20% from 38% (130 of 342 programs) to 57% (211 of 371 programs). With more doctoral programs, control over quality becomes an even greater challenge.

### *Assessing Program Quality*

It is safe to say that no two programs are identical. In light of greater program variation and number, the criteria for assessing quality seemingly become more complex. Some elite programs have come under intense scrutiny for neglecting to stress the practical dimensions of leadership and student learning (Elmore, 2007; Hiefertz, 2007; Murphy, 2000, 2007; Levine, 2005). Scholars however continue to note improvements in leadership education involving admissions standards, gender and ethnic diversity among students and faculty, and a general commitment to school improvement from both leaders in practice and program faculty (Hoyle, 2005; McCarthy, 1999; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner 2000; Jackson & Kelly, 2002). Yet, perhaps one of the more influential measures of quality comes from the *U.S. News and World Report* yearly rankings. These rankings are derived from a blend of expert opinion and numerical indicators that reflect quality of faculty, students, and research (Clark, 2004). In spite of methodological shortcomings used to arrive at its rankings (see other ranking models created by the National

Research Council and Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index as alternatives), the *U.S. News* rankings clearly surpass others in notoriety and prestige.

### *The Case for Examining Current Student Impressions*

In a prior study, the authors of this study investigated former students' reflections of students attending these six top institutions. The findings reveal that students had very favorable impressions of their doctoral experience and its contributions to their practice. Students generally praised the support of faculty, the applicability and relevance of coursework, and opportunities to engage in scholarly work that was clearly linked to practice. The findings seem to partly refute Levine's contention that programming is lacking in relevance. Whether current students feel similarly about their doctoral experience is the question driving this study.

### **Procedures and Methods**

The intent of this study was to gather information regarding current student impressions of their doctoral experience at six of the top institutions according to the 2007 *U.S. News and World Reports*. A total of 30 current students at six institutions were interviewed. Based on the authors' prior work as well as historical trends in programming, 12 questions were created. The questions attempt to capture information regarding aspect such as students' reasons for selecting the respective institution, coursework, financial support, scholarly activities, academic and professional support from faculty, and examinations. Structured interviews with current students were administered on-site during the 2006 fall semester.

These interviews were typically thirty minutes in length, audio taped, and transcribed. Transcriptions of the interviews were sent back to student participants to assure the data was

accurately interpreted. A qualitative analysis was employed. Thematic groupings were developed using a pattern coding strategy as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984). This technique along with memoing, which occurred during and after the interview, verified that the data was labeled properly. It is important to emphasize that the reflections gathered are not representative of all programs and even those students that attend these particular institutions. Yet, the findings are intended to call greater attention to this important issue.

### Findings

Responses from 30 doctoral students were revealing and somewhat similar about their experiences as current students. Participating students from all six institutions held the faculty in high esteem and with few exceptions agreed that they chose the program for the national reputation of the faculty and the program's high ranking by *U.S. News and World Report*. Proximity to the campus was an important factor for some attending Ohio State, Penn State, and Wisconsin.

The financial incentives at Harvard, Stanford and Teachers College were also mentioned as reasons for applying. Several indicated that without the fellowships they could not afford the high costs of these three private institutions. Financial incentives were not mentioned by students in the other programs, but several were willing to seek loans and or jobs/assistantship to defray program costs and work with "name" faculty in order to pursue their doctorates. The annual \$12,000 - \$15,000 assistantships also included a waiver of tuition and other fee costs and health benefits for themselves and family members.

Full-time students not in cohort groups enrolled for courses within the program or education colleges as well in other colleges and divisions. These course decisions were made by

the adviser and the student based on their research interests. These students with a few exceptions were planning to pursue careers in higher education or education policy and took fewer courses than cohort groups specifically designed for public school administrators. However in all programs, with the exception of Stanford, students in higher education, policy, and public school administration attended three or four core courses together to gain an understanding of the vital links between higher education, policy, and public school administration. In addition to three or four core courses together to gain an understanding of these connections, they also took similar courses in research methods. Students seeking superintendency licensure in Pennsylvania, New York, Wisconsin, and Ohio took classes embedded into their doctoral course sequence. Licensure is not currently part of the degree plans at Stanford or Harvard.

Students in each program mentioned opportunities to write papers and attend state and national conferences and several students had co-authored articles in top-tired research journals and a couple had co-authored books or book chapters with their major professors. Students at Ohio State, Wisconsin, Penn State underwent comprehensive written exams to qualify for candidacy while students at Stanford and Teachers College agreed that comprehensive written exams would be very difficult since, with the exception of, a few core courses individual degree plans vary significantly according to advice from the committee advisor and the student's research and career orientation.

Students in the cohort groups at Harvard, Penn State, Wisconsin, and Teachers College agreed that their coursework had strong theoretical grounding, but courses also applied to problem solving and leadership skills for improving public education. Full-time students in all programs concurred that their

degree programs were primarily theory and research based with less emphasis on public school leadership strategies.

Students in the cohort strands felt that they had good support and timely advice from their advisors and other faculty. Some full-time, on-campus students expressed concern that their advisers were not always available for advice when they needed it. These students understood the demands on faculty for grant writing, publications, and invited lectures that frequently took them away from the campus. Students in all programs, with the exception of Stanford, were not clear on how the program faculty determine the residency requirements for doctoral students.

Unless a student is on an assistantship and assigned to work with a faculty member, he or she can maintain a full-time job and take the required number of hours to fulfill the residency requirement. This is a complex issue faced by most doctoral programs across the country.

Overall students in all six programs spoke favorably of their faculty and the overall standards and rigor of their experience. In addition, each student believed that their investment in time and resources would lead to productive and satisfying careers.

## Discussion

In general, students felt their programs surpassed expectations. While the ranking itself was a factor for most students, the possibility of studying under prestigious faculty was an equally important consideration. This finding seems to connote students who seek entrance into these top university programs pursue more than financial benefits or professional mobility, but also a rich intellectual experience. Distance for students appeared to be more of an issue for students attending the public institutions.

This may be due to several factors such as varying career pursuits of students, type of programs offered and degree of flexibility (e.g. weekend cohort models), and costs, to name a few. Not surprisingly, full-time students not in cohorts tended to gravitate toward the more interdisciplinary model with regard to course selection but in most cases were required to take several core administration/leadership courses, a common research sequence, and in some cases, courses that satisfied statewide superintendency license requirements. While the lack of practical relevance of coursework is a common critique against programs, this finding provides some indication that many of these top programs are in fact placing a premium on a knowledge base closely linked to leadership and administration.

This issue, of course, has implications for the manner by which students' mastery of coursework was assessed. While some programs conducted a traditional comprehensive examination, others did not. Because degree plans tended to be individually tailored especially for full-time students particularly at the private institutions, requiring a standardized examination for all students would seem impractical. This revelation however poses a concern for the mastery of a common knowledge base for leadership – a criticism expressed by Levine.

While full-time students reported issues with regard to access to faculty and were exposed less to practical content, students in cohorts generally praised the balance of theory and practice in course content and advising and support they received from faculty. Cohorts by design make graduate programs more accessible to working professionals. The perception these institutions were meeting student needs speaks to the relevance of coursework and the effectiveness of cohort models to deliver programs to a broader

segment of potential students, many of whom having limited capacity due to career obligations and family. In the end, students rated their experiences at these institutions very favorably despite the occasional concern.

### **Conclusion**

It is apparent that graduates and full-time students attending top-ranked doctoral programs in leadership preparation are very satisfied with their experiences. Most important, their satisfaction is found in their successful performance in improving schools for all students. In a time of easy access to doctoral programs on-line or on-campus to acquire a diploma for public school administrative positions, the students in this study are proud of the rigor and quality of their doctoral programs.

While Levine and others are most likely correct about some programs taught by underpaid adjunct professors with large classes of students seeking credentials to earn higher salaries as teachers and administrators, these critics however tend to paint all graduate programs with a brush of inferiority with little data to support their claims.

According to Paul Houston (2005), executive director of the American Association of School Administrators, products of graduate programs in educational administration are the

prime reason that more students are graduating and succeeding in the work force, military, or higher education. These leaders have led reforms that increased Advanced Placement courses from 5,000 in 1983 to well over 14,000 today. The number of AP candidates has grown from about 175,000 to nearly a million. In addition, an increasing number of students are taking more and increasingly difficult courses. Doctoral leadership preparation programs play a vital role in these positive trends in America's schools.

Therefore, professors in educational administration must produce high quality research on leadership outcomes of graduates and employ the most imaginative teaching strategies to improve the requisite performance skills and conceptual base of the discipline of educational administration. This dedicated resolve to strengthen the tenets of scholarship and model successful principles of best practice will soften the words of critics; but we should never become satisfied.

Criticism can be a form of motivation. A wise person once said, "A little grit is vital in producing a beautiful pearl." Thus a proper amount of grit is healthy to imbue each of us in the professoriate to never allow one student to graduate without a passion for excellence in school leadership.

### Author Biographies

John Hoyle is professor of educational administration at Texas A&M University and specializes in leadership training and assessment and future studies. He is one of America's leading researchers and reformers in administrator training and is an authority on future studies.

Hoyle was selected by his peers as one of four "exceptional living scholars" in educational leadership (2004), two Texas A&M University awards for distinguished achievement in teaching; the Hoyle Leadership award by the Texas A&M University Administrative Leadership Institute (2007); the first Living Legend award by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (1999); the Living Legend award presented by the Texas Professors of Educational Administration (2008); the Golden Deeds award for distinguished service to Texas education.

A prolific writer, Hoyle has authored over 150 published articles. His most recent book is titled *Leadership and Futuring: Making Visions Happen*, (2007) 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Other recent books include *The Superintendent as CEO: Standards-Based Performance* (2005); *Leadership and the Force of Love: Six Keys to Motivating with Love* (2002). Hoyle has served as a public school teacher, coach, and administrator.

Mario Torres is an assistant professor in K-12 educational administration at Texas A&M University in College Station. His primary research interests include education law and policy. He has published in the *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *Journal of Educational Administration*, and *Education and Urban Society*, and is currently co-authoring a book with John Hoyle on the quality of leadership preparation programming. Torres received a doctorate from Penn State University.

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## Recruiting and Retaining School Principals: What We Can Learn From Practicing Administrators

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### Introduction

Research indicates that the leadership of a school principal is a determining factor in school effectiveness, second only to the role of a student's classroom teacher (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2005). Yet, the species of "principal" is dwindling. National reports indicate that a great number of schools and districts are experiencing a shortage of a qualified pool of principal candidates (Gronn & Rawling-Sanaei, 2003; Pounder & Crow, 2005; Quinn, 2002). And the dearth of principals is particularly endemic in districts perceived to

have challenging working conditions, large populations of impoverished or minority students, low per pupil expenditures, and urban settings (Roza, Celio, Harvey, & Wishon, 2003; Forsyth & Smith, 2002; Mitgang, 2003; Pounder, Galvin, & Sheppard, 2003; Pounder, Reitzug, & Young, 2002).

In addition, conservative estimates suggest that roughly 40% of principals will retire this decade (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001; Ferrandino & Tirozzi, 2000) and that the number of principal positions needing to be filled will grow 20% in the next five years (Mitgang, 2003). But the principal shortage is

more than an issue of balancing recruitment and retirement; retaining highly qualified principals has become equally problematic. The “revolving door” of the principalship has been fueled by pressure and demands that make the job nearly untenable. As Fink and Brayman (2006) speculate, principals are frustrated, having been stripped of autonomy, which has produced “an increasingly rapid turnover of school leaders and an insufficient pool of capable, qualified, and prepared replacements” (p. 62-63).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the nature and characteristics of the principal shortage (both current and impending) in Massachusetts. Responses to a web-based survey of Massachusetts’ principals and existing licensure supply and demand ratios were collected and analyzed. Information gleaned from the data analysis was used to assist the Massachusetts Department of Education in determining how it can best recruit and support principals in the Commonwealth and better address issues of educational quality in this era of accountability.

### **Research Methods**

The web-based survey instrument was designed to elicit information on a principal’s work history, reasons for becoming a principal, perceptions of available support mechanisms, types of professional development that are most useful, and whether he/she expects to leave the principalship in the next five years. Questions included previous positions held before assuming the principalship, age upon assuming the principalship, and years of teaching experience.

At the time of the survey there were 1,735 K-12 public, non-charter school principals in Massachusetts. A representative sample (1,137) was selected to participate in

the survey. These participants were invited via e-mail to link to the on-line instrument. A total of 523 principals responded to the survey for a response rate of 46%. Survey data was aggregated and analyzed using non-inferential descriptive statistics. Mean scores were calculated and results were used to identify emergent themes.

Principals who responded to the survey were demographically representative of the Massachusetts’ principal population as a whole. Fifty-four percent of respondents were female; 46% were male. Sixty-five percent held elementary school principalships, 18% were middle or junior high school principals, 16% were high school principals, and 1% were principals of K-12 schools. The urbanicity of principals who participated in the survey were also representative of the Massachusetts’ context. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were principals in urban school districts, 62% were in non-urban districts. Respondents were primarily white non-Latino (90.8%), while 5.2% identified themselves as black and Latino (2.2%).

### **Findings**

#### *Principal supply vs. principals who apply*

An imbalance exists between those who are licensed to assume principalships and those who seek administrator positions. According to Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) data, 3,500 people in the state held school administrator licenses as of October 2003. That same year 914 new individuals received an initial Massachusetts administrator licenses, resulting in a total pool of licensed principals of 4,414. The total number of state principalship and assistant principal positions requiring licensure (1,735 and 642 respectively) puts the total number of administrator positions requiring licensed applicants at 2,377 (Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association, 2004).

As with other states, there is ample supply for the demand; nearly twice as many educators hold administrator licenses as there are principalship positions. Massachusetts data confirms the national trend where nearly half of those licensed to assume the role of principal choose not to (Education Research Service, 2000).

#### *Where do applicants come from?*

Eighty-four percent of principals served as teachers before assuming the principalship, 12% held assistant principal positions, and the remaining 4% held other positions at the school level such as speech-language pathologist, school psychologist, school social worker, or language or curriculum specialists. Over half of those surveyed (56%) had been assistant principals.

#### *Why apply for the principalship?*

Seventy-five percent of survey respondents indicated a desire for an increase in responsibility and career challenge as the most compelling reason for becoming a principal. Fifty-nine percent of survey respondents indicated a desire to impact more students, while nearly half (48%) considered assuming the principalship as the next logical career step.

It is interesting to note that men mentioned these reasons at a greater rate than women who were more apt to cite an ability to devote more time to work because of decreased family responsibilities. Currently, there are more women in the pool of potential administrators. However, their commitment to family responsibilities presents an obstacle to recruiting early/mid-career females into the principalship.

#### *Retirement and retention*

Over half (62%) of our survey respondents had been in their current principalship for less than five years, and 41% had been in their current principalship for less than three years. Only

16% of the participants reported more than 10 years at their current post. The Education Research Service (1998) study reported that the average age of principals in the United States increased from 46.8 years in 1987-1988 to 47.7 years in 1993-1994.

In Massachusetts the average age of principals is 52.2 years. Despite the short tenure of most Massachusetts administrators, 63% of principals surveyed indicated that they expect to leave the occupation of school principal within the next five years. This percentage holds true for all demographic groups, whether they are male or female, urban or non-urban, or working in different grade-level schools. Of the 63% of individuals that plan on leaving the principalship in the next five years, the vast majority (70%) will leave due to retirement. This projected rate of attrition from the occupation is much higher than what was experienced in previous years.

#### *Stress, pay, and time*

Thirty percent of current principals who participated in this study plan to leave their positions for three primary reasons that are consistent with national level studies on the difficulties of recruiting and retaining principals: 1) the principalship is stressful (21%); 2) salary is low compared to the responsibilities of the position (13%); and 3) the job is complex and time-demanding (12%) (Education Research Service, 1998, 2000, 2003). Eleven percent of those who intend to leave the profession within five years indicate a frustration with “too little time to focus on instruction” as their primary reason for departure. Somewhat surprisingly, only 6% specifically identified the pressures associated with high-stakes testing as a primary reason.

### **Discussion and Implications**

Study findings reveal that the Massachusetts principal shortage is fueled by a dearth of people who actually want to assume the role for

which they were prepared and licensed and that this issue is intensified by widespread retirements. There are more educators holding principal licenses in the state than are needed to fill principalships; yet only about half of those licensed intend to become administrators. Future research should delve into the reasons why people earn administrative credentials yet do not go on to seek administrative positions.

### Improving principal recruitment efforts

The increasing average age of principals on the national level shows that as principals age, new principals entering the profession are hired with more years of education experience. This trend has led to a shorter amount of time that principals serve as school leaders before retirement. As our study reveals, this late arrival – early exit condition is chronic in Massachusetts where 62% of currently practicing principals have less than five years of experience, yet 70% are within five years of retirement. It is believed that experienced teachers make better principals than those without any education experience. Encouraging educators to enter leadership positions earlier in their career will increase the amount of time they are able to spend as principals prior to retiring. Teachers who move into administration will realize a larger pay increase if they make the transition before they reach the upper end of teachers' pay scale.

### Principal as leader of learning

The role of principals as chief academic officer or instructional leader must become more valued, explicit, and valued in the recruitment process. Gajda and Cravedi (2006) posited that job boredom is a significant risk factor for seasoned high school teachers and that mid-career teachers want to assume leadership positions related to the core practice of schooling: teaching and learning. While

principal as manager is a critical function, principal as instructional leader ignites the intrinsic need of seasoned educators. The Massachusetts DOE has chosen to re-craft its licensure standards for school administrators. The draft framework: Professional Responsibilities for School Administrators articulates three key responsibilities and corresponding key practices for school leaders (Gajda, Militello, & Rallis, 2007). This framework will showcase the learning-focused role required of administrators and entice more teachers into assuming positions of leadership for which they feel most competent and committed.

### Conclusion

The survival of the principalship is in question. In Massachusetts there are impending mass retirements, yet despite an abundance of individuals holding a license, a severe shortage of applicants for open positions exists. Those who assume the position of the principal (mostly former classroom teachers) do so late in their career, which results in an early exit from their administrative post and high attrition rates.

We recommend creative efforts to improve the recruitment of new principals, that these efforts target educators earlier in their teaching career and emphasize the need for individuals committed to the improvement of teaching and learning. Simply recruiting more people for a position that appears undesirable will not solve the problem of the principal pipeline. The role of school leader is difficult and leaders are not provided pragmatic recipes for success. Rather, as James March (1978) points out, leaders are provided directions that look more like “a bus schedule with footnotes by Kierkegaard” (p. 244).

### Author Biographies

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In 2005, the American Evaluation Association recognized Gajda with the Marcia Guttentag award for outstanding achievement in educational evaluation. She is former director of teacher education at the University of Vermont and secondary school teacher and dropout prevention coordinator in Colorado.

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## Demographic Trends in Texas Bond Elections

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**T**he ability to hold a successful bond election is a vital part of the superintendency in Texas (Bordelon, 2005). Aging facilities, increasing student enrollments, and technological needs exacerbate the need to gain community support for capital improvement projects. Appropriate facilities are needed not only for the physical space they provide, but also because well-maintained appropriate buildings improve student achievement (Schneider, 2002). In

order to create successful bond election strategies a superintendent should be aware of factors involved in voter dispositions. The purpose of this study is to determine the demographic trends in ethnic groups, age levels, socioeconomic areas, and educational level. A superintendent developing committees and soliciting input must understand the need for trust, but are there certain demographic subpopulations that may be predisposed to

supporting an election? Understanding demographic trends may provide information to support committee make-up and provide an understanding of voters who may not naturally develop a connection with the school. Recognizing bond election trends adds to the knowledge that informs practice.

### **Bond Election Factors**

Research suggests that the most important factor in school bond success is trust in the leadership and good communication (Faltys, 2006; Hickey, 2006b; Schrom, 2004). This trust is built through time, and as such, most bond referenda are decided long before the election is called (Koetter & Cannon, 1995). Failure to develop a history of trust with the community is a key factor in negative sentiment in bond elections.

One proven method to assist a school district in building trust is to solicit the involvement of the community, or at least key leaders in the community, during the bond development stage (Pappalardo, 2005; Clemens, 2003). Involved community leaders are more likely to see the need within the school district, communicate this need to others, and generally support the bond effort. Failure to connect with the community may result in poor election outcomes (Hickey, 2006b).

Although trust is important, there are general trends in bond elections among demographic groups. There have been previous studies focusing upon some of these factors. Tedin, Matland, and Weiher (2001) studied a Houston, Texas bond election and discovered that minority ethnic groups tended to vote in favor of bond elections. Hickey (2006a) had similar findings, with African-American and Hispanic populations having a positive correlation with “yes” votes on bond elections. This same study found a slight negative correlation for the white population.

Senior citizen voting has been found to have a negative impact on school bond elections (Dismuke, 1994; Speer, 1993). The belief is that senior citizens have few connections with local districts, and fearing any increase in taxes (even if their taxes will not actually go up), vote disproportionately against bonds. This belief has been supported by a recent study (Hickey, 2006a). However, senior citizens may vote in favor of bond elections when connections with the school district occur (Tedin et al., 2001).

There has been little research on socioeconomic trends in bond elections. The research that has been completed suggest a slight positive correlation for increasing percentages of low socioeconomic students with “yes” votes on bond referenda (Hickey, 2006a). The reason for this trend is unknown, but it suggests that local economic issues may not be a strong predictor of bond success.

Individuals with high levels of education vote at a much higher rate than the average person (Putnam, 2003); therefore, this demographic is likely to be important to any referendum. Educational level of the population has not been studied previously in any previous bond election study, but it is hypothesized that this demographic characteristic would positively correlate with bond election success.

### **Method**

This research was designed to determine the correlation between the dependent variable of “yes” votes in Texas bond elections and the independent variables of city population percentage of white, African-American, and Hispanic groups, district percentage of white, African-American and Hispanic students, city poverty percentages, district socioeconomic percentages, median city household income, median age, senior citizen population percentage, and city percentage of residents

with a bachelor's degree. The city data was obtained from census data. School district student data was obtained from the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report. The percentage of "yes" votes was obtained either from newspapers, Internet, or directly from the individual school districts.

Bivariate correlation was completed through Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Each independent variable was entered with the dependent variable to determine relationships. Significance statistics were not used because the research was looking for general trends. Similar demographic characteristics were studied between the city where the school

resided and individual school district data to provide added support to any trends found. This support was especially important regarding city data, which was six years old at the time of the study.

The research collected data from school districts and cities that held bond elections during 2006 in Texas. Although every school bond election was studied, many were removed because of difficulty finding the percentage of "yes" votes, or the school district shared only part of a city, suggesting a possibility of poor data if the election was used in the study. The final database held information from 55% of the districts that held a bond election in 2006.

## Results

The white demographic suggested a negative trend with bond election "yes" votes in the city ( $r = -.086$ ) and district ( $r = -.205$ ). Figure 1 illustrates these findings.

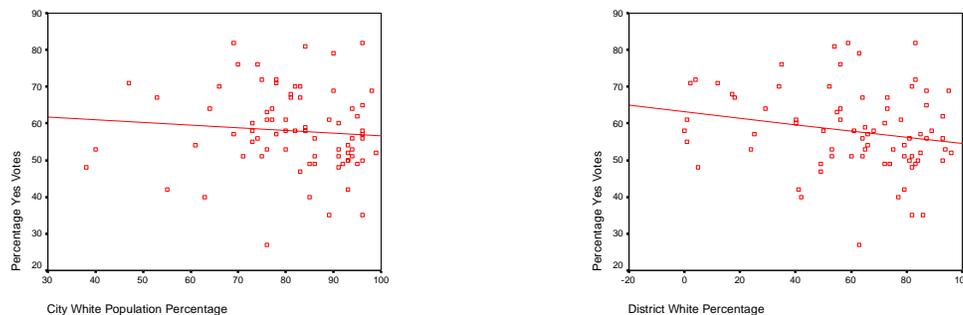


Figure 1: Trend lines for white population percentage as correlated with "yes" votes.

The African-American demographic suggested a slightly negative trend as well for both the city ( $r = -.079$ ) and district ( $r = -.042$ ). Figure 2 illustrates these trends.

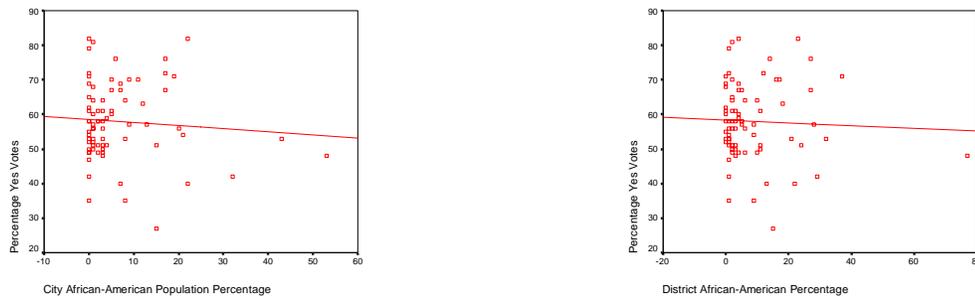


Figure 2: Trend lines for African-American population percentage as correlated with “yes” votes.

The Hispanic demographic showed a positive correlation in both the city ( $r = .176$ ) and district ( $r = .223$ ). Figure 3 illustrates these trends.

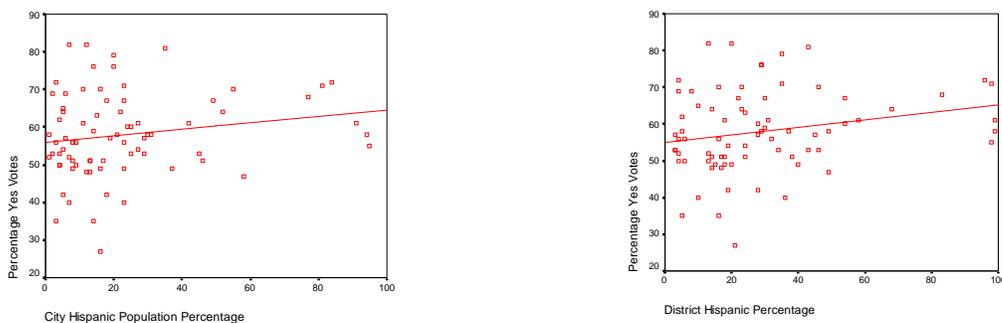


Figure 3: Trend lines for Hispanic population percentage as correlated with “yes” votes.

The correlations related to socioeconomic level were inconsistent, with the city poverty level suggesting a negative trend ( $r = -.059$ ), district socioeconomic level being slightly positive ( $r = .027$ ), and median city income being positive ( $r = .107$ ). Figure 4 illustrates trend lines as related to socioeconomic levels.

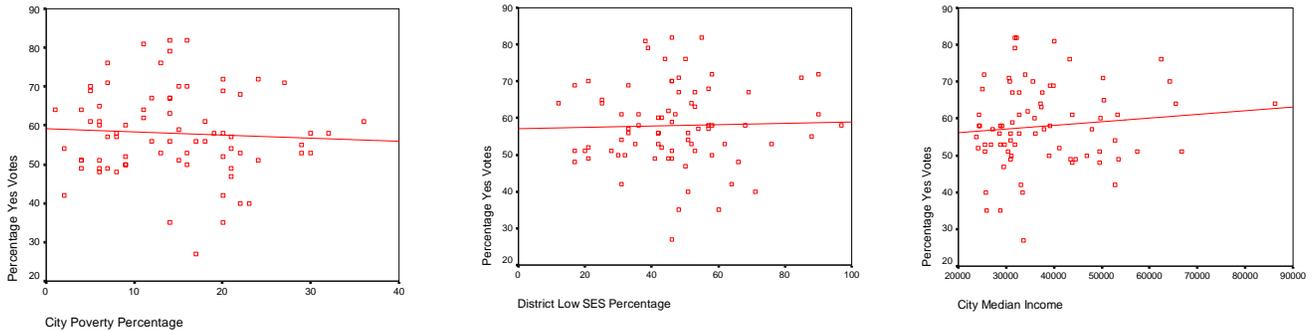


Figure 4: Trend lines for socioeconomic level percentage as correlated with “yes” votes.

Age trends showed a slightly negative correlation for senior citizen percentage ( $r = -.037$ ) and almost no correlation for city median age ( $r = .003$ ). Figure 5 illustrates trend lines associated with age.

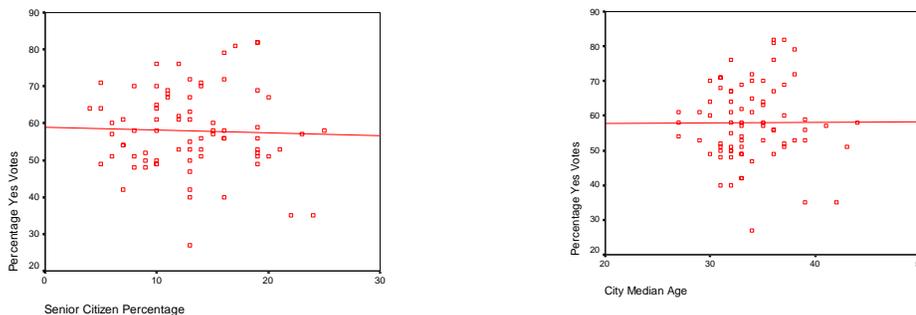


Figure 5: Trend lines for age as correlated with “yes” votes.

The correlation for “yes” votes on bond election with the percentage of the city with a bachelor’s degree was strongly positive ( $r = .257$ ). Figure 6 illustrates the voting trend among cities with greater education as defined by bachelor’s degrees.

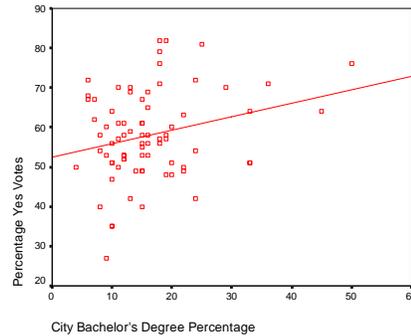


Figure 6: Trend line correlating city’s Bachelor’s degree percentage and “yes” votes.

## Discussion

The 2006 Texas bond elections suggest several demographic trends. There appears to be a slightly negative correlations between “yes” vote percentage and white and African-American populations, both at the city and district level. This negative trend can also be found with senior citizen populations, although not as strong as some previous studies indicate.

Since trust and communication are important factors in bond election success, perhaps there are problems in connecting with these demographics. A superintendent should build trust with these groups consistently, but awareness of negative trends should make school leaders more anxious to respond to the tough questions that come from these demographic populations. These are a district’s toughest critics. A superintendent who can address their concerns should be able to respond appropriately to all stakeholders.

Economic factors provide contradictory trends. Low socioeconomic status on the district level suggested a slightly positive trend, whereas poverty levels in the city was negatively correlated with bond election “yes” votes. This contradiction may simply mean that socioeconomic level alone should not be a major concern for school districts pursuing a bond election. No one likes to have their taxes increased, regardless of income, but a superintendent who can communicate the district’s building needs is likely to get support at all economic levels.

The strongest positive correlations existed with Hispanic city and district populations, as well as the factor of population percentage who hold a bachelor’s degree. The reason for this trend for bachelor’s degree percentages may be the value this group places on education. Individuals who have benefited

from a strong education may be more likely to recognize the benefit for their children and for the importance for the community in general. This is a demographic group that a superintendent can utilize for their educational example, as well as their predisposition toward bond elections.

The Hispanic trend may exist due to the rapid population growth of this demographic, and as a result, school districts that have high percentages of Hispanic families and students are often rapidly increasing enrollment. The dynamics involved in being in a district with expanding enrollment may create a sense of urgency among community members and voters in general. The community's self-

interest in providing students with acceptable schools may drive this trend.

The data in this article suggests current factors that trend toward bond election support, but research emphasizes the need for building trust among all groups. The data increases the knowledge of superintendent and educational leaders in understanding which demographic groups exhibit a tendency to vote for or against bond election proposals. Although all stakeholders should be addressed, school leaders may use the data to understand which groups have the toughest critics. District leadership that can use data to recognize support and respond to concerns are likely to help themselves at the polls.

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## Transformational Assessment: A Simplified Model of Strategic Planning

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**S**trategic planning is a way to evaluate a present situation and set a course for the future. While there is no dearth of literature on Strategic Planning (Basham & Lunenburg, 1989; Blum & Kneidek, 1991; Kaufman, 1996; Kaufman, Herman & Walters, 1996; Knight, 1997; Martisko & Ammentorp, 1986), there appears to be reluctance on the part of K-12 educators to engage in strategic planning (McHenry & Achilles, 2002).

Besides the cynicism about change, another roadblock to strategic planning is the time it takes. This is particularly problematic in a school where teachers have little time to meet and discuss their daily concerns let alone redesign the school. For strategic planning to be effective it has to energize as well as engage teachers.

Several authors (Fullan, 2000; 2000a; McCombs, 2003; Pressley, et. al., 2004) have described examples of successful reform efforts and have highlighted in these descriptions needed elements of change. These elements have included educator- or stakeholder-driven change (Ohanian, 2000; Wheatley, 1999), school by school change (Conant, 1959; Orlich, 2000), and data driven change (Stiggins, 1999;

Linn, 2000). This needed, collaborative, participatory, school-focused and data-driven model for school reform or strategic planning can be found in Transformational Assessment.

The objective of Transformational Assessment is to energize and empower school personnel to engage in reform planning that addresses the specific needs of each school community and builds school leaders in all stakeholders.

The model is called Transformational Assessment to highlight the goal of changing and improving educational practice. The intended outcome is improved education through reform. The ideas of change, reform and transformation must remain in the forefront of the planning process. Assessment was chosen because the root word *Aassess@* comes from the Latin and means to walk beside.

This connotes the importance of a non-judgmental approach to data gathering and interpretation. Thus the purpose of Transformational Assessment is not to judge, but to walk beside as a school raises questions, harnesses data, and plans reform strategies to improve itself.

Transformational Assessment is inspired by the work of David Fetterman and his Empowerment Evaluation Model (Fetterman, Faktarian & Wandserman, 1996), Michael Quinn Patton with his work on Utilization Focused Evaluation (Patton, 1997), Margaret Wheatley's work on Leadership (Wheatley, 1999; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1998), and the work of the MG Taylor Corporation on DesignShops and facilitated solutions, (Pergamit & Peterson, 1997) .

The evaluation theorists (i.e., Fetterman and Patton) remind us how important it is to develop useful and meaningful evaluations while also building self determination within an evaluated organization. Transformational Assessment is designed to enhance self-determination by including teachers, students, and parents as well as administrators in the planning. Wheatley reminds us how important information and relationships are to the healthy organization. Transformational Assessment encourages school personnel to recognize they have knowledge about what makes an ideal school.

It brings educators and other stakeholders together to ask the question, "What would our ideal school look like?" The facilitated solutions work provides strategies for promoting creativity, and effectively using the power of groups to solve complex problems.

Transformational Assessment proposes a roadmap for traversing the uncharted waters of strategic planning, by providing an organized process for educational leaders to use when engaging in strategic planning. Schools are encouraged to identify a new comprehensive model rather than merely identifying small areas of needed improvement. Transformational Assessment fosters collective ownership by soliciting stakeholders to engage

in a series of tasks that become progressively more concrete as the process unfolds. It is a stakeholder-driven process and consequently results in qualitatively different results for each school. Data are emphasized because they indicate what exists and point the direction to needed changes.

The more information educators have, the more effectively they can improve their schools. Participants are encouraged to remember the importance of data and refrain from trying to find a scapegoat for an existing condition. Transformational Assessment involves five steps: visioning, refraction, assessment, investigation, and implementation.

## **Transformational Assessment Model**

### **Step 1: Visioning**

Stakeholders are brought together to clarify their understanding of the role of education, the mission and goals of their school. This is done by identifying the qualities in a particular school that make it unique and set it apart from other schools.

The goals of visioning are to:

- create a shared vision for the school;
- create buy-in by all stakeholders;
- identify the qualities a particular school community finds necessary for an effective school.

During visioning stakeholders engage in a session lasting about four hours using a workshop format to identify the desired qualities for their school. Thought-provoking and futuristic questions are asked to stimulate the participants to think beyond the obvious descriptions of schools. Examples of such prompts are in Appendix A.

Examples of visioning output are in figures 1 and 2.

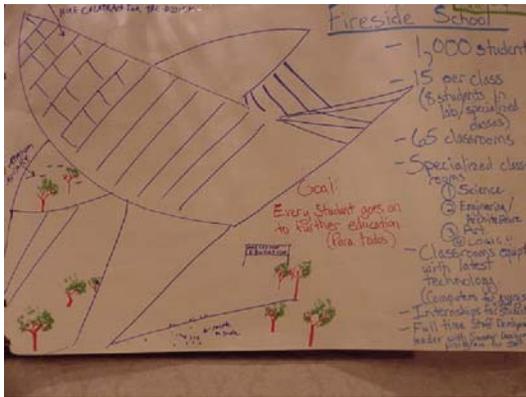


Figure 1: Example of output from high school visioning.

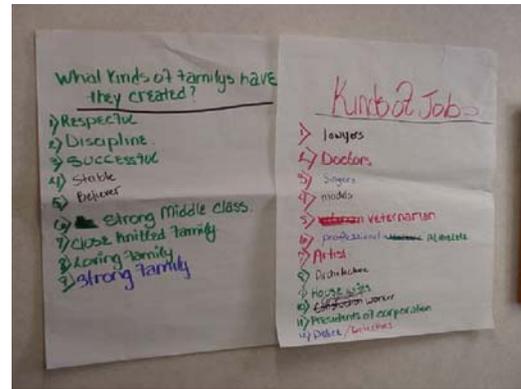


Figure 2: Example of output from elementary school visioning.

It is interesting to listen as the models are shared with others. Comments from participants after a visioning activity often include surprise at the similarity across work groups and expressions of frustration at how little time there is to step back from daily activities to discuss education or teaching philosophy. Teachers report being recharged, energized, enthusiastic, and hopeful after this workshop.

Following visioning the notes and work products are examined to identify potential qualities. These qualities become the starting point for step two, refraction.

### Step 2: Refraction

A prism is used in physics to refract or separate white light, the combination of all colors of light, into its constituent colors, a spectrum. A prism is used as a metaphor for step two because just as a prism refracts light this step refracts or separates and organizes the school qualities. The ideas, thoughts, dreams and expectations from the school community, identified during visioning, are submitted to

refraction in order to separate them into their constituent themes.

Refraction is done through a q-sort process where individuals, working in small groups, are asked to sort the ideas identified in visioning into categories and title the categories.

These categories are then discussed or voted on until consensus on the categories is achieved. The goal of refraction is to develop a limited number of themes or qualities. These qualities form the basis for the school's assessment strategy.

### Step 3: Assessment

The function of assessment is to assure agreement on the direction identified during visioning and refraction. The assessment tools are built around the categories identified during refraction.

Comments from high school students on assessment tools included, "Thanks for asking for my opinion." "I have never been asked what I liked and did not like before." Parents and

teachers similarly reported feeling empowered by being asked their opinion.

#### Step 4: Investigation

After assessment, the general directions for change have to be formed into specific plans. Strategic work groups are formed to investigate the research on specific ideas. These strategic work groups make specific recommendations about how ideas can be implemented.

Strategic work groups are composed of teachers, administrators, school support staff, students, parents, and community members. Students are often the most energetic and excited members of these teams. The strategic work groups make a final report to the entire school community.

#### Step 5: Implementation

Implementation must go hand in hand with further assessment. All parties must be open to hearing concerns and responding to them. It is important to remember that change is not easy. No matter how much an individual is involved in the development of a model when the reality of implementation occurs there will be resistance. Tuchman (1965) reminds us of the stages of change, forming, storming, norming and performing.

Change, when it is implemented, will be met with resistance, e.g., storming. Following this natural resistance, as participants become more comfortable with change, have begun to adapt, and have begun to see the effects of change, norming begins.

During norming some teachers are on board and talking favorably about the change; they encourage their colleagues to try it. As the critical mass grows, performing occurs. Performing may take three to five years to reach. This is when there is complete acceptance of the changes. The changes

become so integrated in the working of the school that teachers express amazement that things were ever different.

Implementation must include ongoing assessment and the willingness to make small improvements reflected in the assessments. It is important, however, to make changes based on well-constructed and predetermined assessments, rather than on the complaints of some.

This is a critical factor during the early stage of storming. During storming is when the most vocal resisters could have the greatest effect and sabotage the more significant aspects of change. Responding to the loudest, but not necessarily the majority, can result in dropping the reform efforts or watering them down to the point where they do not create the intended reform. This sabotage results in frustration in the majority who supported or worked for the change and leads to frustrated statements when other change is advocated such as, “we tried that before and it didn’t work.”

### Outcomes from Transformational Assessment

Teachers have reported feeling a greater understanding about the mission of the school. They also reported feeling more in control of the evaluation, more open to being evaluated, and a sense that this evaluation process may actually lead to change in their schools.

Principals reported similar feelings of empowerment and control. Additionally, principals reported that immediately following visioning, they observed teachers talking more with each other about what they are doing in the classroom and why they are doing it. Teachers appeared to be asking for more support and the climate in the school seemed to have become more open to discussion and healthy discord.

### Author Biography

Rebecca Bardwell earned her doctorate at the University of Iowa. She has been teaching educational psychology at Marquette University for 30 years and has been working with schools and other organizations to facilitate meaningful change.

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## Appendix A

### Visioning Prompt for a High School

Working with the other persons at your table, respond to the situation you have been presented. Flip charts and markers are available at the front of the room. Send one person up to collect a set for your group.

After the fire, which destroyed RUHS and all its records you have been asked, as the only teacher remaining who was at the school before the new millennium, to help redesign a new school. Since the political climate in the country has changed, schools are seen as important resources and you are given an unlimited budget for this redesign.

Design the school in any way you think will maximize the learning and motivation of the students and faculty. In your design think about some of the following:

- 1) What expectations will there be for students?
- 2) What will students do after graduation?
- 3) What will the Education Plan include?
- 4) What would you like the headline announcing the opening of the new school to read?
- 5) How does this school expand and redefine what we mean by education?

### Visioning Prompt for an Elementary School

It is 2025 and the 2000 class of your school is meeting for a 25<sup>th</sup> class reunion. The planning committee wanted as many teachers as possible to attend the event. You are there and enjoying yourself.

- 1) What are the qualities of the students you meet?
- 2) What kinds of jobs do they have?
- 3) What kinds of families have they created?
- 4) What is the most famous member of the class doing?

**Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise**

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**E**ducators are facing increased pressure to improve the academic performance of students. This increased emphasis on student accountability has led many school leaders to implement changes in the school day in order to maximize the time that students spend in academic pursuits. Frequently, this has resulted in the cutting or reducing of time spent in extra- and co-curricular activities, including recess and physical education. These changes have the potential to reduce the time children spend being physically active.

Childhood health is also of great concern, and has recently received much attention in the popular media, including

concern for obesity. Children are increasingly showing the development of lifestyle diseases such as Type-II diabetes and atherosclerosis, typically not seen until adulthood. These conditions can be brought about in part by low levels of physical activity and poor nutrition.

The development and implementation of strategies to improve health and academic performance in school is important for ensuring the well-being and success of the children. In the following report, we describe a program aimed at providing increased opportunities for physical activity and improved nutrition at school, along with the program's impact on several school performance and academic achievement variables.

**Program Description**

The Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise (MGDE) program was implemented beginning in the year 2000 at Springfield Local Elementary School in New Middletown, OH in an attempt to improve the academic performance. Springfield’s school health team, which included teachers, the school nurse, the food service supervisor, and the school principal, developed the program. After obtaining discouraging results from more traditional academic interventions, such as summer school and after-school programs, school personnel decided to try this alternative approach. The program is based on an environmental intervention to enhance physical

activity and access to breakfast for all students while at school. From 2000 to 2006, school personnel have seen improvements in achievement-test performance, attendance, student behavior, and other related school-performance variables.

The MGDE program consists of three core components: 1) environmental change to increase access to physical activity every morning, 2) access to a free breakfast program to facilitate sound nutritional intake for all students, and 3) a reversal of the order of lunch and recess, such that recess occurs before lunch. Table 1 illustrates how a typical school schedule might appear prior to and following the environmental manipulation.

Table 1

*School schedule prior to and following implementation of the Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise program*

<u>Work Day (Pre 2000)</u>			<u>Increased Activity Work Day (2000-2006)</u>		
<u>Activity</u>	<u>Time</u>		<u>Activity</u>	<u>Time</u>	
<u>AM</u>					
Students enter building	8:25		Students enter building	8:25	
Student Attendance		8:30	Student Attendance		8:30
Announcements	8:35		Announcements	8:35	
Class begins		8:40	Staff/Students		8:40
			Physical Activity*		
			Students eat breakfast*	8:50-9:05	
			Class begins		9:05
<u>Mid-day Activity</u>					
Lunch	11:30		Recess*	11:30	
Recess		12:00	Lunch*		12:00
Resume Classes	12:30		Resume Classes	12:30	
<u>Afternoon</u>					
End of classes		3:15	End of classes		3:15

\*Elements that are part of the Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise

This type of environmental change is supported by Epstein (Epstein, 1998), who

suggested that interventions focused on increasing access to opportunities to be active

as well as decreasing access to sedentary behaviors are most likely to have long-term success in changing physical activity behaviors.

The first component of the program involved adjusting the school schedule to focus on a 10-20 minute physical activity period with teachers and students at the beginning of each school day. Subsequent activities throughout the school day were shortened by only 2-3 minutes each to make up for this extra period.

The classroom teacher-led activities provided moderate to high levels of activity for both students and teachers, were easy to understand and manage, and required minimal amounts of equipment. To increase teacher ownership in the MGDE program, each classroom teacher selected the activities for that day. Examples of activities performed included walking, running, exercise videos, calisthenics, resistance training, and gymnasium and playground games.

After listening to daily announcements, teachers led their classes in their selected physical activity for the morning, and then guided their classes to the cafeteria to pick up pre-prepared breakfasts in brown paper bags. Students and teachers then retreated to their classrooms to eat breakfast while beginning some teacher-led instruction. Janitorial staff strategically placed rolling refuse cans near each classroom for students to dispose of their waste to avoid overflow in smaller classroom waste cans. The academic day began immediately after students finish breakfast.

Since the school already had a partial grant left over from the previous year, as well as a subsidized breakfast program in place, the cost of implementing the breakfast aspect of the program was relatively small the first year.

Some equipment was purchased, such as milk coolers and garbage cans to collect

refuse. The actual cost of food varied slightly each year depending on the percentage of students at the school who qualified for the federal free/reduced meal programs. The breakfast meals were simple, with cereal and/or another bread product being served along with milk and juice on most days.

The third program component was to change the order of lunch and recess, placing recess before lunch on the schedule. In general, students are eager to participate in recess after spending the morning hours sitting in the classroom.

When recess is held after lunch, which is a typical format in many elementary schools, students are likely to rush through their meal, leaving much of it uneaten, in order to hurry outside to the playground. Also, following recess students are frequently over-excited and/or quarrelling with peers, and it may take teachers several minutes to quiet the students down and get them ready to learn. By placing recess before lunch, students can expend their pent-up energy immediately, then eat lunch and return to classrooms ready to learn.

### **Evaluation and Discussion**

The multiple measures used to assess intervention efficacy for the MGDE program were both qualitative and quantitative. The measures included attendance, student nurse visitations, disciplinary data, teacher "buy in," reported changes in school "climate," and 4<sup>th</sup> grade standardized testing scores required of all students (writing, math, and reading).

Baseline measures were first assessed during the 1999-2000 school year and subsequent data in this manuscript are reported through the 2003-2004 school year for school performance variables, and through the 2005-2006 school year for achievement-test performance.

Daily school attendance has steadily improved from 94.3% in 1999-2000 to 95.9% in 2003-2004. Attendance increases has been accompanied by a 67% decline in nurse visits, with the number of visits “out of boredom” (as determined by the school nurse) specifically

decreasing in frequency. The school has also seen a 58% decrease in the total number of discipline referrals in the first 4 years of implementation of the MGDE program (see Table 2).

Table 2

*Change in selected performance indicators at Springfield Local Elementary School after implementation of the Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise program*

	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention (2000-2004)			
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
<b>Average Enrollment</b>	449	399	391	397	435
<b>School nurse visits (% change)</b>	5,798	3,408 (-41%)	2,774 (-19%)	2,219 (-20%)	1,933 (-13%)
<b>Daily Attendance rate</b>	94.3%	95.1%	95.5%	95.7%	95.9%
<b>Discipline referrals (expressed as a decrease from previous year)</b>		-12%	-7%	-16%	-23%

Academic performance at Local Elementary School has improved dramatically since implementing the MGDE program. The students at Springfield have improved from passing one of the current state indicator proficiency tests (writing) prior to the intervention to passing all three tests during the 2001-2006 school years (a school is considered to have achieved a state indicator if 75% of students at the school pass the associated proficiency/achievement test).

Students with individualized education plans (IEPs) are included in the testing data beginning in the 2002-2003 school year. Comparisons of the 2005-2006 school year to pre-intervention data from 1999-2000 show that the percentage of students passing each of the 3 tests has increased (writing +25%, reading +27%, math +31%; see Figure 1).

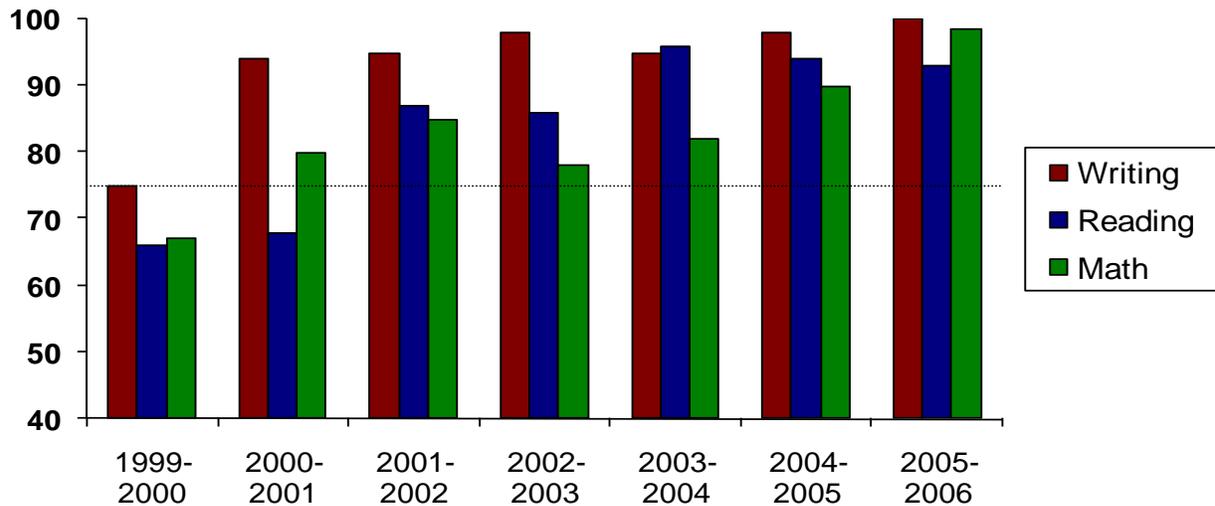


Figure 1: Percent of students passing Ohio fourth grade proficiency test by school year and sub-test (Ohio state requirement is 75% pass rate)

Writing improved 19% the first year after the intervention and maintained the improvement in each subsequent year. Reading and math scores indicate that more students are passing the subtests every year after the intervention was introduced.

A substantial body of research demonstrates that physical activity and good nutrition have a positive influence on academic performance. Several reviews of the research literature have established that a positive relationship exists between exercise and cognitive performance (Brisswalter, Collardeau, & Arcelin, 2002; Colcombe & Kramer, 2003; Etnier et al., 1997; Sibley & Etnier, 2003; Tomporowski, 2003a, 2003b).

Researchers have reported that on any given day as many as 30% of children attend school without having consumed any nutritional food (Sampson, Dixit, Meyers, & Houser Jr, 1995; Siega-Riz, Popkin, & Carson, 1998). This omission of good diet has been

associated with poor school performance (Meyers, Sampson, Weitzman, Rogers, & Kayne, 1989), and other researchers have demonstrated that children test better when fed compared to when they are tested on an empty stomach (Pollitt, Leibel, & Greenfield, 1981; Pollitt, Lewis, Garza, & Shulman, 1982).

In addition to direct effects of physical activity and nutrition on student academic performance, program advocates at Springfield Local Elementary School also claim the MGDE intervention contributed to an overall positive shift in the learning atmosphere at the school. This positive shift seemed related to positive psychological changes from the physical activity, nutrition interventions, and to increased positive interactions between students and teachers during physical activity time.

There are some limitations to this research that should be considered in the context of the results. We employed a cohort

analysis, which means different groups were used for comparison of the measured variables (i.e., fourth grade students' proficiency test results were examined each year).

Furthermore, since there were no control or comparison groups, this is not an experimental design, and therefore we can only assume there is some influence or relationship of the MGDE program on the measured variables.

### Next Steps

The MGDE program is now an essential component of Springfield Local Elementary School's day. The primary challenge to maintaining the program is funding the approximate \$10,000 annual cost, which is almost entirely food expense.

However, after observing program benefits, school administrators and school board members have committed to maintaining the program. The actual cost of implementing and maintaining the program will vary from school to school. Costs are also dependent on the socio-economic status of the student population as well as the specific food options offered for breakfast. Schools with a high percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced meal programs may be able to conduct the program at almost no cost.

Researchers have successfully implemented the MGDE program at a second elementary school in southwest Ohio. At this

school, the breakfast program has been simplified, with the juice and cereal being stored in individual classrooms, and the milk is distributed each day. Start-up costs were minimal, including some additional physical education equipment for the morning activities, garbage cans, and hand sanitizer to be used prior to lunch.

A more robust and scientific assessment of the program's "impact" on student health and academic achievement is underway at this school. Future analyses might include analyses of the gains of several large groups (e.g. male/female, minority/non-minority) and evidence that the treatment lasts beyond grade 4.

The idea that healthy students will achieve greater academic performance than unhealthy students is not a new one (Kolbe, 2002). As school administrators work to implement changes to the learning environment we hope consideration will be given to enacting a program similar to Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise.

The information collected from the 6-year intervention at Springfield Local Elementary School supports improved academic performance through increasing daily physical activity, providing a nutritious breakfast, and placing recess before lunch. A small investment of resources and innovation has the potential to provide substantial returns by creating an improved, quality learning environment.

### Author Biographies

Benjamin Sibley is an assistant professor of physical education teacher education at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC. His research interests include physical activity and cognitive/academic performance, physical activity interventions in schools, and physical education pedagogy.

Rose Marie Ward's research focuses on health psychology, sexual assault, statistics and research methodology. She is assistant professor in the department of kinesiology and health at Miami University in Oxford, OH.

Thomas S. Yazvac is principal of the Springfield Local Elementary School in New Middletown, OH and championed the implementation of the Making the Grade with Diet and Exercise program at his elementary school in the Springfield Local School District.

An associate professor of community medicine at West Virginia University in Morgantown WV, Keith Zullig is the director of the interdisciplinary doctoral program in public health sciences. His research interests are adolescent quality of life research, substance use prevention, and program evaluation.

Jeffrey Potteiger is professor in the department of kinesiology and health at Miami University in Oxford, OH. He has researched the effects of physical activity and exercise on health and human performance improvement for over 20 years.

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## Technology Allows Great Teachers to Speak in Their Students' Language

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I think we all know that the days of chalkboards and ditto machines are over. What's interesting about today's classrooms is their complete departure from uniformity, both in terms of the learning tools and way students are learning.

During a recent visit to a second-grade classroom at Armstrong Elementary School in the Highland Park Independent School District, a group of students read lines from their play into microphones hooked up to the teacher's computer. As they spoke, the spikes and valleys of their dialogue moved across the white board in the front of the classroom.

Next, the students edited the podcast, posted it for downloading, and rotated to the reading center, where they began research for their next group project. Little did they know that during the last 10 minutes, they had developed their critical thinking, writing, editing and public-speaking skills using collaboration and a convergence of hardware, software and the Internet.

"To them, it's just taking their play and posting it as a podcast," says second-grade teacher Elaina Hauk, who, by the way, doesn't think what she's doing in her classroom is anything all that special. That's because she's

what author and game designer Marc Prensky (2006) refers to as a *Digital Native* – one of those for whom cell phones, computers, video games and the Internet are a seamless part of life. When Hauk and her students work in the classroom, stories are more than words on paper – they come to life through a digital camera, digital recording device, and translated into multimedia projects using software and a basic computer

Welcome to today's classroom, where the teachers and students speak the same language. They don't call it technology. For them, it's just the means of communicating, learning and playing. And to keep today's student's fully engaged, we need to be able to speak their language. Once that happens, things get really interesting.

By expanding the ways in which students can soak up learning, the teachers expand the capacity of their classroom and the depth of the learning that takes place there. Each teacher is facing a series of hurdles in the daunting task of teaching the same lesson to a room full of children who have different learning styles.

We are all familiar with the basic learning modalities: visual, audio, kinesthetic.

So in a lesson about acceleration, one student might understand the concept by seeing it captured in words and images; another might need to hear the words or even the sounds; and yet another might learn by rolling a marble down an incline. Add the teacher's own limitations and learning style to the mix, and you'll see that there is plenty of capacity to be gained by using technology to expand the modalities in which the lessons is presented.

In our case, we find that the best way to build this capacity is by combining the right technology with relevant training. We are introducing a combination of interactive whiteboards, active voting devices, and document cameras into the classrooms, and finding that the level of engagement is increasing not only for students, but for teachers.

And we're learning that the best trainers aren't technology experts, but rather, teachers who can show their colleagues real-life application using actual classroom-tested lesson plans. If a peer can show a colleague a way to both save time and present lessons in ways that will grab students' attention, we find there is no need for mandates or salesmanship.

Take interactive white boards for starters. The boards allow students and teachers to bring real-time relevance to their learning. Instead of using static media (i.e., paper limited by the words on the page), teachers and students expand their learning using dynamic media (i.e., video, websites, music, multimedia).

For example, this fall, high school students were studying the Greek terms for means of persuasion, logos (reason), ethos (personal appeal) and pathos (emotion). To add some real-time spice to the lesson, the teacher showed footage of campaign ads in the heated November Congressional elections, and

students shouted out the persuasive vehicle that various candidates were using in their ads. Any teacher who can get high school kids to shout Greek words out loud in the classroom must be doing something right!

Next, we add interactive voting devices that gauge who is catching on and who isn't. The devices work by allowing teachers to review material using multiple choice or yes/no questions. Students push a button to vote for the answer they believe is correct, and instantaneously, a bar chart or graph pops up to reflect the voting results.

The students are not identified by name or number on the chart, but the teacher can track the votes to the student by their assigned voting device number. This accomplishes a number of things: it ensures the participation of the reluctant students, informs the teacher about student mastery, and eliminates the need for drill and kill worksheets and other paper assessments. The students' answers are recorded on the teachers' computer where they can be run as reports that factor into grading.

More importantly, they allow the teachers an objective way to know who is grasping the material. We all know that appearances can be deceiving, and sometimes the student who is constantly smiling and nodding in agreement doesn't always get it, while the one slumped in the back row may be way ahead of the game. The voting devices give the teacher a constant and objective measurement.

Document cameras can be used for more than just documents because they project the image of whatever is placed on the surface. So a geology teacher could bring samples of quartz to class, and while passing around quartz to students to examine, she could put one of the samples under the document camera and point

out – or better yet, ask about – the key qualities she wants the students to observe.

An English teacher could have a student show off a winning piece of writing and discuss the development of the idea, along with reading the piece.

In addition to the natural expansion of the learning modalities, teachers are seeing more spontaneous collaboration and peer-to-peer teaching in classrooms where technology is used to bring the lesson to life.

The integration of new technology in the classroom has caught on much faster than we anticipated. There has been absolutely no need for an iron-fisted mandate. Instead of trying to “sell” the teaching tools, our approach has been to take a step back and value the most important instructional asset in the classroom: the teacher. The latest whiz-bang gadget isn’t going to magically transform a mediocre teacher into an excellent one, nor will it make a master teacher any less inspiring.

Again, the first and most important step you can take on your journey forward is to let

your teachers know how much you value what they do every day with students.

Next, offer the new teaching tools and the training to your staff. What we’ve seen over the years is that when early adopters tell others on their team how new tools are helping them in the classroom, the idea quickly catches on. This training can be informal, as part of team or campus meetings, or formal sessions presented during district-wide staff development days.

But be sure to take advantage of this early phase of excitement by making training readily available. No one likes to feel that they are being left out.

On the other hand, we all know how frustrating it can be to say, “I’ll try it!” only to have a piece of hardware plunked on our desk in a box with these words as our training: “Just read the user’s guide.” And I can say that – I work in the technology department!

In the end, nothing can take the place of a master teacher. Try putting innovative technology tools in the hands of a master teacher, and the result will be engaging learning – in our students’ native language.

### Author Biography

Robert Harris is administrator of instructional technology in the Highland Park Independent School District in Dallas, TX. His interest and background in integration and technology led to his current position where he has been for five years.

Harris began his career as a first grade teacher in Duncanville, TX. He has also served as an elementary fine arts coordinator and district technology trainer. He was recognized as Duncanville elementary teacher of the year and Region 10 elementary teacher of the year. He was also named a Fulbright Memorial scholar. Harris was recently elected as a director to the Texas Computer Education Association and serves on the TCEA board of directors, which governs the association.

**“We really do not ... talk like this:” Principals in Dialogue**

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The title of this article was taken from a statement made by a principal in the Principal’s Dialogue Group and reflects how rare it is for principals to have the opportunity to talk together in a safe, unmanipulated environment. Funded as part of a National Science Foundation grant because the principals involved were all implementing the same science curriculum, the group was formed in September 2005.

This project built on another project I had conducted that brought principals together on the campus of a liberal arts college (see Kettle, 2006). In my earlier study, I found that dialogue benefited principals: 1) in creating a safe environment to talk about their work; 2) contributing to adult learning; and 3) in helping principals think together to create a common reality. The current project extended these findings by placing a greater emphasis on listening, thinking and the development of respectful relationships.

There is a disconnect between what principals are being asked to manage and accomplish and the level of support they receive to meet expectations. At a time when rhetoric on the principalship is focused on collaboration, most principals find themselves

working in an isolated position within hierarchical organizations. And while principals are expected to create “learning communities” at their schools, it’s hard to know where the principal belongs in the midst of all of it, even though principals are viewed as the most central part of school reform. The project outlined in this article was based on the premise that the opportunity to participate in dialogue matters to principals and can help them think about their work in new ways.

**Importance of Dialogue**

Deborah Tannen (1998) has noted that we live in an “argument culture” that has conditioned us to approach all that we need to accomplish as a fight between opposing sides. On the television or radio talk shows the popular trend is to pit two people against each other who represent the most extreme positions on a topic and let them talk over each other, calling such an exchange “dialogue.” In this paradigm, participants set out to win the argument rather than to understand differing points of views. Although this behavior is common, others have considered the promise of dialogue in radically different ways.

Bohm (1996) became fascinated with dialogue and traced the Greek roots of the word

dialogue to *dia*, meaning “through,” and *logos*, which can be “meaning” or “understanding.” So, *dia-logos* or dialogue is a way to make meaning through communication. Bohm argues that unlike other kinds of communication, dialogue is a way of speaking and listening that allows understanding to emerge through the conversation. Bohm is concerned that humans rely too much on fragmentation to make sense of what they perceive, which he argues limits their ability to understand wholeness and make connections.

Buber (1970/1923) gives us another way to think about dialogue. Buber describes humans as having two fundamental ways of being in relation to one another which he calls “I-It” and “I-Thou.” To experience someone as an “It” means to treat her as an object and not a human being. Buber views the “I-It” relationship as the basis of monologue. An alternative way of relating is to meet another as a genuine human being. This is the relationship of an “I” to a “Thou.” Buber believes the “I-Thou” relationship is fundamental to dialogue.

Although each of them pursued fundamentally different philosophical projects they each help us understand something about dialogue. Bohm views dialogue as oriented toward knowledge and its substance is the shared meaning that can be constructed through collective thought. Buber, on the other hand, treats dialogue as a way of being and sees its primary purpose as genuine contact between persons. This is important for school principals because listening and thinking together with others in relation is at the core of the work. That said, principals have little chance to develop or practice such skills.

### **Project and Participants**

This was a voluntary project that met seven times in the 2005-2006 academic year. Invitations were extended to nine middle and high school principals from two urban Bay

Area (CA) school districts. Of the nine principals, four were male and five were female; one was Asian-American, one African-American and seven were white. Years of experience in the principalship varied: two participants were in their first year of the principalship; four in their first five years; and two had even more years of experience. Participation in the dialogue group varied, but a core of six principal participants emerged. In this discussion pseudonyms are used to protect confidentiality.

The meetings were held monthly and most of the time at a centrally located hotel from 10:00 AM to noon, with lunch served. On one occasion we met at a school site and another time we met at a restaurant. The setting was always comfortable with no interruptions and easy to get to for all but one of the principals, who attended the fewest meetings. Each meeting was recorded and transcribed in order to study how bringing principals together in conversation can help them reconsider their work. The research question was: Does dialogue play a role in how principals think, learn and relate to the work they do?

### **Meetings**

Planning began by considering how to elicit free and full participation in the discourse at each meeting. I knew participants would need to be open to alternative points of view, have empathy and concern for how others feel and the ability to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively. To encourage these desired behaviors it was necessary to create a safe environment with no interruptions so the principals could listen and speak freely.

Preparing for facilitating each meeting was done by considering the group needs. Planning was done from an empathic stance, placing myself in the shoes of the principals and trying to understand what they need. Each two-hour session began with an early mood of

politeness and reserve that would fade as participants listened to the experiences and ideas of others.

Dialogue emerged in the group as a skill through: 1) Bohm's conception of listening and thinking; and 2) Buber's emphasis on relationships was evidenced through empathetic connections, which allowed genuine relationships to be formed. The emergence of these skills came through facilitation.

### Listening and Thinking

Facilitation played a key role in how sessions unfolded. In facilitating a dialogue it is important to guide, but not manipulate, to suggest, but not demand.

The importance of listening in facilitation was central to the evolution of dialogue and needs to be clearly emphasized. Developing the capacity to listen matters because principals often find themselves in situations where listening may be the most important thing they can do.

As listening developed the principals surfaced reflective questions as a basis for their thinking. By the fifth and sixth meetings the conversational flow was becoming more fluid and reflective questions were surfacing as the norm.

For example, on the topic of teacher supervision, Joan, a middle school principal, began to think of questions to ask teachers:

... how do you perceive yourself?  
Do you perceive yourself as a professional?

... do you perceive yourself as a daily or an hourly wage worker?  
(March 2006)

In the same conversation, Jill, a high school principal, states:

I think that "what is the job of a teacher?" is a good place to start.  
(March 2006)

By surfacing reflective questions, Joan and Jill opened themselves to thinking about problems of supervision in new ways. Although the questions may seem basic, dialogue isn't about flashy sound bites. It is about providing the opportunity to reconsider experience in new ways. If this dialogue caused Joan and Jill to consider their daily interactions in new ways, that is profound.

### Connections

Another element that emerged from this project was the development of empathetic connections which allowed genuine relationships to form. As listening grew in the group, so too did the capacity to view ideas from multiple perspectives. Ted was a high school principal who listened to Beth Ann, another high school principal, as she discussed problems at her school and afterwards he noted:

I am speechless at what you just said. I am new to the district so I might seem naïve, and I say naïve things so feel free to correct me on the spot, but [my school] does not have those kinds of behavioral discipline issues and I feel slammed. (October 2005)

Ted is coming to grips with an alternate perspective and it is powerful. He had been working in his school environment, and suddenly he understands how isolated he has been as he listens to Beth Ann's comment.

Later in the same conversation, Jim, a middle school principal, states that:

It has been very hard for [my] teachers this year so I think [I] ... try to support them in a personal way ... (October 2005)

After Jim's comment Beth Ann notes:

...you should not feel bad. We could all do a better job creating resources and training ... (October 2005)

Beth Ann's response connects to Jim's and demonstrates careful listening and ability to understand his experience. It is important to acknowledge that exchanging ideas doesn't mean you have to always agree. Perhaps the most profound acknowledgment of a collegial connection is communicating in genuine ways to understand each other's point of view.

The project benefited the principals by giving them the time and space to talk and think together. Perhaps most importantly, the principals made time to attend meetings while juggling difficult district demands. After the final meeting, Beth Ann sent an email sharing the following:

... thanks very much to you. I have learned a lot ...

Beth Ann's comments indicate that she was able to learn together with her principal colleagues.

## Conclusion

Dialogue emerged from the group through the skill and understanding that had been developed between participants. Good dialogue requires a kind of give and take and group participants have to be willing to engage in the conversation fully. Creating a safe environment for dialogue and finding a facilitator who can fully participate can't be taken lightly. As the group developed more skill, the role of the facilitator became less critical, but it was not inconsequential. In this study, as the principal participants became better listeners, it appeared they also became better thinkers. This matters because listening is considered to be dispositional, and in this project I found that such a disposition can be developed.

"Dialogue" doesn't replace administrator professional development. Professional development activities usually have specific or predetermined outcomes. Facilitating a dialogue requires different skills than presenting a workshop. In a dialogue, participants are encouraged to explore multiple perspectives and make connections. Perspective taking is critical to leadership (see Ketelle & Mesa, 2006) and is ripe for development in dialogic contexts.

The first step in getting started is understanding that dialogue matters. Principals long for good conversation and are up to the challenge, but we have to remember that it won't happen if we don't offer them the support they need.

## Author Biography

Diane Ketelle is an associate professor in the Mills College School of Education in the educational leadership and administrative services credential program. She earned her doctorate in public administration at the University of Southern California. She has been at Mills since 2003.

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***Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul***

by Edward Humes

Reviewed by:

Wesley D. Hickey, EdD

Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership and Coordinator of Superintendent Program

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

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Conflicts between religion and science have been common for nearly a century. Some of the early unrest in education occurred with the Scopes Trial, pitting evolution and Genesis creation in a court case challenging a Tennessee law forbidding the teaching of Darwin's theory. Eventually, laws that required the science curriculum to include religious beliefs were found unconstitutional in the 1987 Supreme Court case *Edwards v. Aguillard*.

In a society that finds value in faith, this ruling was disconcerting. Creationism was not allowed to be taught in science classrooms because it was not science. Religious adherents had to find a new avenue to get their faith in public school classrooms, and this has become the hypothesis of intelligent design.

Intelligent design has a long history with the most well-known historical assertions coming from the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century theologian William Paley. Paley compared the evidence of design in living creatures with the apparent purpose of a watch. This idea has been extended in recent times by the work of Michael Behe, a scientist who sees design in

living features that he considers irreducibly complex. Behe, and others from the Discovery Institute, are pursuing a campaign to have intelligent design considered a serious scientific hypothesis.

*Monkey Girl* reviews the intelligent design movement by reporting on the *Kitzmiller v. Dover* trial in which Judge John Jones ruled on both the religiosity and scientific merits of an adopted school policy promoting this hypothesis. The trial found that the policy instituted by the Dover School Board was unconstitutional due to a religious motivation. In addition, Judge John Jones did something that the Scopes Trial did not; he weighed the evidence for both evolution and intelligent design, ultimately ruling that evolution was strongly supported by evidence and intelligent design was poorly researched speculation that required adherence to faith.

*Monkey Girl* covers the evidence presented at the trial, and this is important for administrators to be aware of in a political environment that often supports intelligent design. Intelligent design is not likely to fade anytime soon, and despite any personal beliefs,

an administrator should be aware of the problems associated with this idea. Unless intelligent design can separate itself from an inherent religiosity and create a scientific foundation, attempts to create policies related to it are likely to cost schools time and money. In addition, *Monkey Girl* illustrates the potential problems with a school board that acts on emotion, thus adopting policy without the advice of the teachers and administration.

The outlining of evolution and intelligent design, along with the story of a well-meaning school board making unintelligent decisions, makes *Monkey Girl* a worthwhile read for any school administrator. Politics and social concerns regarding religion make it likely that schools will address these issues again. Knowing the history of *Kitzmiller v. Dover* may prevent others from making the same mistakes.

### Reviewer Biography

Wesley Hickey is a former high school biology teacher, middle school principal, and superintendent. He is an assistant professor in the University of Texas Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in Tyler, TX.

*Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul* by Edward Humes is published by HarperCollins, New York; 400 pp; 2007; softcover; \$15.95

***Rethinking Leadership: A Collection of Articles***

by Thomas J. Sergiovanni

Reviewed by:

Deidre Marshall

Doctoral Student

Florida International University

Miami, FL

In his book, *Rethinking Leadership: A Collection of Articles*, Sergiovanni introduces readers to the craft of moral leadership as what he believes is especially needed in today's schools. The collection of articles within each section of the text supports his idea of the concept of leadership. Sergiovanni reframes the concept of leadership by revealing how ideas and values, not the current formal processes, are the basis of successful leadership.

The collection of articles in section one examines what is meant by moral leadership. It is this type of leadership, based on goals, values, and commitments, that is more likely to motivate followers to assert action. It situates various people into a common goal which leads to "a powerful source of authority for leadership" (p. 2). In order to attain this level of authority, five forces can be used by leaders to add to the growth of their moral foundation: technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural with the latter two being the most influential. Examples of how moral leadership works from an administrative perspective as well as what school administrators can do to make it work effectively are included.

In section two, the author differentiates between transactional and transformational

leadership as it relates to motivational strategies, with transformational (the author's preferred approach) focusing on the intrinsic and moral motives of followers. There are developmental stages of leadership that are outlined acknowledging that schools and school staff are at different stages of readiness in response to the transformational approach. The purpose of the leader is to engage others at the appropriate level to facilitate their movement through the remaining stages. Additionally, Sergiovanni provides suggestions for constructing leadership that is compatible with transformation in order to succeed in a culture of rapid nonlinear change (Fullan, 2001).

The author discusses learner-centered communities in the third section of the text. A community of practice is stated as the most defining trait of a school with a learner-centered philosophy. The problems that schools and leaders must address to become a community are discussed along with the significance of inherent motivation and collegiality among the community or school members. The author also delves into the relational aspect of communities and the fundamental competencies that leaders need in their role as developers and community builders.

Section four explores the type of leadership that adds value to what's being done by constructing and enhancing their leadership capacity. It opens with a discussion of the "lifeworld" of leadership (culture, meaning, and significance) in comparison to the "systemsworld" (management systems intended to assist schools in achieving goals) and the difficulty that occurs when the "systemsworld" governs a school's purpose instead of helping to achieve it.

This theme leads into the five virtues needed to produce learning communities rooted in values. In addition, the author provides a reminder as to why craftsman leaders are critical to school effectiveness. These are the leaders with the capacity to "change vision into reality, to take big ideas and make them understandable and useful, and to bring

together the right mix of human resources to make schools work ... good at managing attention, meaning, trust, self, paradox, effectiveness, follow-up, and responsibility" (p. 143).

Sergiovanni definitely presents a way of rethinking leadership in a thought-provoking manner that challenges the traditional paradigm of educational leadership. This book is useful to school leaders seeking new ways of leadership or assistance with school restructuring as well as university/college professors in search of an innovative approach to leadership instruction. However, the text lacked information regarding how to best implement this form of leadership with school administrators and postsecondary education leadership programs.

### Reviewer Biography

Deidre Marshall is a doctoral student at Florida International University in Miami, FL.

*Rethinking Leadership: A Collection of Articles* by Thomas Sergiovanni is published by Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA; 192 pp; 2006; softcover, \$31.95

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## Book Review

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### *Awards and Recognition for Exceptional Teachers*

by Hans A. Andrews

Reviewed by:

Richard A. Flanary

Director of Professional Development Services

National Association of Secondary School Principals

Reston, VA

This book, *Awards and Recognition for Exceptional Teachers: K-12 and Community Colleges* by Hans A. Andrews provides an excellent resource for the entire educational system in highlighting the need for publicly recognizing the performance of exemplary teachers at all levels.

Successful modeling is a recognized development tool in every profession. The models that exemplars set for any profession serve as a beacon for others to strive for. Traditionally, exemplary teaching performance has been shielded behind classroom doors and school walls and the light of recognition has

not shown very brightly on performance that should be highlighted and replicated.

This book provides a rationale and specific examples of awards and recognitions that are available for exemplary demonstration of the craft of teaching. Building capacity is a central component of improving any school and strong recognition programs provide an avenue for improving the performance throughout an organization by recognizing and highlighting the stellar production of excellent teachers.

I highly recommend this book for individuals and organizations!

### Reviewer Biography

Richard Flanary is director of professional development services for the National Association of Secondary School Principals in Reston, VA.

*Awards and Recognition for Exceptional Teachers: K-12 and Community Colleges* is published by Matilda Press, 1019 Lakewood Drive, Ottawa, IL 61350, 815-431-8934, [www.matildapress.com](http://www.matildapress.com); 2006; 400 pp; softcover; \$24.95

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