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A Message from the Editor

Frederick Dembowski

Lynn University

Welcome to the first issue of the *JOURNAL OF SCHOLARSHIP AND PRACTICE!!* Although this journal has been published by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) for over 26 years, at the recent annual meeting of the Board of Editors, held in conjunction with the AASA Annual Conference & Exposition in San Francisco in February 2004, it was decided that the title of the journal was too narrow in scope, limiting the readership of the journal. It was noted that many practicing superintendents also serve as adjunct faculty members at local universities, teaching educational leadership courses. In these roles, the contents of this journal are very appropriate. With the new title, noting a focus on both scholarship and practice, it is hoped that both full-time and adjunct professors will benefit from the journal to a greater extent. The editorial board also feels that many of the articles will be of benefit to the general membership of AASA, the practicing school superintendent. Please let us know what you think of the journal and how we can meet your needs to a greater extent.

This issue of the journal contains four articles, a commentary and a media review, as well as guidelines for potential authors. Any person, who has an article that would be of interest to full time and adjunct professors, or has to do with the scholarship and practice of educational leadership, is encouraged to consider submitting their work for consideration of publication in this journal.

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Honoring the Best

At the AASA National Conference on Education in San Francisco last February, six doctoral candidates in education administration each received \$2,000 scholarships to offset the costs of their professional pursuits. Five of the six are under the age of 40 and one already holds the title of assistant superintendent. These five winners belong to the “Generation X” age group. You can see their profiles at www.aasa.org under the “Scholarships” section in “Awards and Scholarships.”

Those who graduate from today’s university programs are our profession’s heirs and, because of who they are and the age they represent, they will approach their work from their life perspectives—not ours, of course. (More than 75 percent of sitting superintendents nationwide are in their mid-50s, white and male.) Preparing and supporting them requires different thinking, new approaches and revised syllabi.

At AASA, we are preparing too. Those few already in superintendent positions are overwhelmingly asking for professional development materials, best practices data and innovative case programs that result in student achievement. Many of the young talent are easily recognizable independents, individualistic explorers and inventors.

At AASA, we are adapting by providing the resources they ask for. Funding is near the top of their lists, and we have the ability to provide six outstanding scholars \$2,000 in financial support and conference registration through our national program. You can make a difference by nominating for support those whom you believe offer the greatest promise as excellent school system leaders. The selection committees are staffed with active superintendents selected by the AASA president.

We invite you to join us in supporting the ambitions of *your best student* by nominating one doctoral candidate in your administration or leadership program for scholarship consideration. Here’s how:

Visit www.aasa.org and download the application form from the “Awards and Scholarships/Scholarships” tab. Write your letter of recommendation and present it to your selected candidate with the application form. Submission details are included on the form.

Or, contact Vanessa Wells at vwells@aasa.org or by direct phone, 703-875-0763.

More information is available at www.aasa.org under the “Scholarships” section in “Awards and Scholarships.”

Scholarly Productivity: One Element in the Tenure Process in Educational Administration and Higher Education Programs

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In the academy, when scholarly productivity is considered, many words come to mind such as: research, journal articles, books and chapters in books, experiments and conference presentations among others. The literature often uses the term research as a synonym for scholarly productivity. For example, Boyer (1990), ASHE, (2001), Ramsey, Cavallaro, Kiselica and Zila (2002) identify many activities as scholarly productivity including: publications in peer-reviewed journals, other journal publications, creative works or performances, presentations at professional conferences, funded research proposals, book chapters and successful grant proposals.

This article is a report on the findings of a national research project that focused on the expectations tenure-track faculty face with regards to the concept of scholarly productivity. Although overlap may well exist between the three areas of teaching, service and scholarly productivity, the central research question posed in the study was “How is faculty scholarly productivity defined in the tenure processes adopted by selected departments of educational administration and higher education?”

Literature Review

A review of related literature revealed that tenure policies and practices vary greatly from institution to institution. Chait (2002) noted that “... many academicians, trustees and politicians speak often about the tenure ‘system’ as if there were just one. The research ... suggests the practice of tenure across the academy varies as much as Division I sports differ from Division III club sports.”

New tenure track faculty attempting to navigate the system, are reported to describe their experience with the tenure and promotion process as vague, elusive, unpredictable or undependable. The question facing the new faculty member is: “For what is tenure awarded?” (Rice and Sorcinelli, 2002, p. 101).

In an attempt to better define the tenure process of their own department, the authors designed a national study to collect and report on procedures related to the evaluation of

educational administration and higher education faculty. Because of the complicated nature of the tenure process, the researchers divided their study into three phases. Phase 1 (scholarly productivity) was conducted in the spring 2002. This article reports the results of phase 1. Phase 2 (teaching) and phase 3 (service) are scheduled to be completed during 2004.

Specifically, the researchers want to know answers to questions related to faculty scholarly productivity. Such as:

- How is scholarly productivity measured?
- What are the requirements relative to scholarly productivity?
- What is the minimum number of refereed publications required in order to achieve tenure?
- What are the standards for faculty to demonstrate success in scholarly productivity?
- Are tenure-track faculty made aware of the requirements for scholarly productivity as it relates to tenure and promotion?

In seeking to determine the existence of stated criteria and answers to the questions posed, the researchers intended to develop a set of criteria for fairly and accurately evaluating tenure-track faculty in the area of scholarly productivity.

Methodology

Because the interests of the researchers involved what was taking place relative to tenure and promotion decisions in higher education and in educational administration and supervision programs, the decision was made to collect data from university personnel familiar with these two programs. With the familiarity of one researcher to the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) the choice to survey member UCEA institutions made sense. In a similar fashion, the familiarity of the second researcher with the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) made the choice to survey members of this organization seem reasonable. A sample of 223 department chairs was developed from the membership lists located on the two associations’ websites.

Survey Instrument

With careful attention to validity, the researchers developed a survey instrument. Evidence of content validity (Haller and Kline, 2001) comes from a logical analysis of the survey items to determine how well these items represent a particular notion. This analysis, and using a panel of experts to evaluate the survey instrument provides evidence that the instrument created was valid. The survey instrument consisted of three areas:

- **General Characteristics:** This section allowed the participants to identify the department and identify the programs that were housed in the department. In addition, demographic data were collected related to the number and status of the faculty in the department.
- **Tenure:** This section provided information as to the process used to make decisions relative to tenure and promotion.
- **Scholarly Productivity:** In this section participants were asked to prioritize the various activities identified as scholarly productivity. Participants were also asked to identify minimum requirements with regards to tenure and scholarly productivity.

After the development of the survey instrument, the researchers asked selected colleagues to pilot test the data collection instrument. This was to insure that the test instrument was clear and user friendly. The researchers determined that the time required to complete the survey was appropriate and that the questions were straightforward and easy to understand.

Findings

In all, 91, or 41 percent, of the 223 institutions in the sample responded to the survey. The breakdown of participating schools was as follows:

- Sixty-two ASHE member schools completed surveys.
- Thirty-four UCEA member schools completed surveys.

The descriptive statistics reported for this paper were not separated by membership status. As such, the statistics reported include all participant institutions, both UCEA and ASHE schools.

The findings of the study are reported in the following three sections: General Characteristics, Tenure and Scholarly Productivity.

General Characteristics

- The programs housed within the department reporting included higher education, educational administration, policy and leadership, counseling and theory and social foundations. The great majority of the departments did contain educational administration (79 percent) and higher education (77 percent) programs. No clear picture emerged regarding the other programs located in the participating institutions.

- The faculty of the participating institutions ranged in number from 4 to 123 with an average number of faculty of 23.6 (S.D. 19.7).

Tenure

Several questions relative to tenure and the tenure process were asked. The findings related to these questions are listed below:

- The majority of departments had tenured or tenure track faculty (90.2 percent).
- Most (93.5 percent) of the schools completing surveys indicated that a mandatory review does occur during the tenure process. The most reported point for this review takes place during the 3rd year. The average year reported for this mandatory review takes place at 2.4 years (S.D. 1.0 year).
- The average length of the probationary period during the tenure process is 5.7 years (S.D. 1.0 year).
- The overwhelming majority (91.3 percent) reported that it is difficult for a person to achieve tenure if he or she does not publish.
- All three commonly reported activities, scholarly productivity (97.1 percent), teaching (94.2 percent) and service (94.2 percent), are evaluated in the tenure process.

Scholarly Productivity

In this section of the survey instrument, participants were asked to respond to questions specifically related to the importance of publications and research. Respondents were asked questions about the quantity and quality of scholarship and the importance of the kind and amount of scholarly productivity a faculty member has to produce in order to gain tenure. Subjects were also asked to prioritize various scholarly productivity activities with regards to their importance in the tenure decision-making process. Below are some of the more significant findings:

- The majority of participants did not have a published set of minimum standards (68.1 percent).
- Of those participants that did have a published set of minimum standards most did not respond to the request to share the requirements, or they stated that the requirements were vague.
- 62.3 percent of respondents had no minimum number of publications in refereed journals required for yearly renewal.
- A little more than half of the respondents (58 percent) had no minimum number of refereed journal publications required for tenure.
- Most participants (55.7 percent) indicated that other professional work cannot be substituted for refereed journal publications. However, other scholarly works are counted. This seems to indicate that other scholarly work is important, however, publication in refereed

Table 1: Other Scholarly Work Counted in Tenure, Promotion, and Renewal Decisions

Scholarly Work	Yes	No
Publication in non refereed journals	87.70%	12.30%
Successful grant awards	100.00%	0.00%
Books	98.50%	1.50%
Chapters in books	98.50%	1.50%
Presentation of papers at competitive national conference	95.50%	4.50%

journals is required for tenure and promotion. The majority of respondents reported that publications in non-refereed journals (88 percent), successful grant awards (88 percent) books (88 percent), chapters in books (88 percent) and presentation of papers at competitive national conferences such as AERA, UCEA, NCPEA, ASHE or other national associations (82 percent) counted in decisions of tenure, promotion and renewal.

- Most departments do not simply count publications for promotion and tenure decisions, but also qualitatively evaluate them (82.3 percent).
- 25 departments (29.3 percent) have a published minimum standard for scholarly productivity (see table 3).
- In the majority of departments (78.3 percent), newly appointed departmental faculty are formally notified of the minimum requirements for achieving tenure and

yearly renewal. This seems inconsistent with the report that in most institutions no minimum requirements are available. One must ask, “When or how are the newly appointed faculty notified about departmental expectations relative to scholarly productivity?”

- Almost 70 percent (67.8 percent) of the departments prioritize scholarship activities. Publication in peer-reviewed journals holds the highest priority with book publication, chapters in books and securing external research grants all rated as high priority activities with regards to scholarly productivity. Table 2 indicates the priority of activities respondents reported relative to scholarly productivity.

Other findings of the study include:

- Mandatory tenure review and standards—The majority of respondents reported having a mandatory tenure process (97.8 percent). However,

Table 2: Perceived Priorities of Other scholarly Activities

High Priority	Mean Rank	Medium Priority	Mean Rank	Low Priority	Mean Rank
Publication in peer-reviewed journal	1.17	Presentation at national conference	4.41	Presentation at regional competitive competition	6.92
Book publication	2.3	Successful external service grant award	5.68	Presentation at invited regional conference	7.76
Successful external research grant award	2.77	Publication in non-peer-reviewed journal	5.8	Presentation at state competitive competition	7.84
Chapters in books	3.35	Publication in invited national conference	6.21	Presentation at invited state conference	8.97

Table 3: Mandatory Tenure Process and Published Set of Minimum Standards

		Published Minimum Standards		
		No	Yes	Total
Mandatory Tenure Process	Yes	3	2	5
	No	59	25	84
	Total	62	27	89

Table 4: Difficulty in Achieving Tenure when Not Published and Min. No. Refereed Journals

		Min. No. Refereed Journals Required for Tenure			
		None	1 thru 6	More than 6	Total
Difficulty Achieving Tenure when Unpublished	No	2			2
	Yes	46	15	4	65
	Total	48	15	4	67

only 29.3 percent had a published set of minimum standards. Only 25 respondents had both a mandatory tenure process and a published set of minimum standards.

- Importance of publishing with regards to tenure, and minimums for publication in refereed journals.
 - The majority of respondents reported that it was difficult to achieve tenure if not published (91.3 percent). However, 55.4 percent of respondents reported having no minimum requirement for publication in refereed journals.

Summary

After reviewing the participant responses the research team concluded that tenure and promotion decisions measuring scholarly productivity are quite subjective. Scholarly productivity is essential to successful promotion to a tenured position; however, the results of the survey indicate that an agreement about minimum requirements does not exist. Scholarly productivity includes many activities. Research presentations, grant writing and publications in refereed and non-refereed journals are all examples of scholarly productivity. In most institutions, as was expected, the awarding of tenure requires publication in peer-reviewed scholarly journals.

Scholarly productivity is measured in terms of quantity and quality. Although participants indicated that the number and quality of publications influence tenure decisions, no clear standards with regards to the quantity and quality of scholarly productivity have emerged.

In conclusion, although institutions reported that newly

appointed faculty are made aware of the expectations associated with scholarly productivity for achieving tenure and promotion, it is clear that questions remain regarding the specificity of those expectations. The survey utilized in this study requested copies of written departmental tenure guidelines. Further analysis of the guidelines that were submitted is expected to provide additional insight into the central question of how departments evaluate the scholarly productivity of its faculty when making tenure decisions.

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Shaping the Role of the Principal in Special Education: What Do We Know and Where Do We Need to Go?

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What do principals know about special education?

The power of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) (1997) lies in the rights of students with disabilities to a free, appropriate public education. From *P.A.R.C. vs. the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (1971), to the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) (1975), through IDEA in the year 1997, the needs of students with disabilities have been addressed in federal and state legislation with supporting rules and regulations for implementation.

For individuals exercising their rights under this legislation, the reality is that services are sometimes hampered and limited even with legislated rights. In spite of evidence (Goldman, 1998; Dunklee, 2000; Levine, 1990; Murphy and Hallinger, 1992; Pigford, 1995) that in effective schools the principal is a key element to improving instruction, the role of the principal in addressing issues related to students with disabilities is rarely addressed in the leadership literature. Sage and Burrello (1994) found that in addition to the historical responsibilities of school principals, they are now expected to lead, manage and implement programs for students with disabilities. A lack of knowledge on the part of school principals may well contribute to the way in which students with disabilities are served. Winewski and Alper (1994) found that building-level principals have shown mixed support for inclusion; but, in general, they support having students with special needs in general education classes. As reported by Heumann and Hehir (1998) "... the requirements with the strongest links to improved educational results for students with disabilities include those addressing: involvement and progress of students with disabilities in the full range of curricula and programs available to nondisabled children (and the supports, services and modifications that they need to learn effectively in those curricula and programs, as determined through the development of an Individualized Education Plan [IEP]), including general curricula and vocational education and work-experience programs" (p. 2).

In order to ensure that students benefit the most from their federally mandated rights, it is important to examine what we know from the literature about principals and their knowledge, perceived roles and training relative to special education. Thus it is necessary to engage in dialogue, determine a research agenda for assessing the role of the principal in special education and determine how to change preparation and professional development practice.

What do we know about principals' attitudes towards special education?

"The school principal plays a critical role in shaping an educational climate that provides opportunities for interaction between nondisabled and disabled students" (Dyal, Flynt and Bennett-Walker, 1996, p. 32). Specific perceptions, much less student achievement effects, of principals regarding students with disabilities and those who serve them have limited evidence in the literature. According to Gollery (1991), "An extensive review of the professional literature revealed a paucity of empirical data on the role and function of the principal in the education of handicapped pupils" (p. 21). However, Bradley (1999) reported that the personal value system of a principal regarding students with disabilities and the programs that serve them has a significant impact on his or her ability to provide leadership for special education programs and the faculty serving them. Van Horn, Burrello and DeClue (1992) stated that the behavior exhibited by principals towards students with disabilities is guided by their beliefs and attitudes towards special education. Further, Van Horn, *et al.*, indicated that traditional principals have demonstrated little commitment to special education programs. DeClue (1990) identified factors affecting the role of principals related to special education programs, reporting that principals are not actively involved with these programs on a daily basis and rely on central office staff for much of the decision making within this realm. DeClue also found that the beliefs and attitudes of the principal are key factors in determining their behavior related to issues surrounding special educa-

tion programming. Praisner (2003) found that among elementary principals 21 percent were clearly positive about the practice of inclusion of students with disabilities, with only 2.7 percent negative. However, over 76 percent were uncertain, particularly when the wording related to inclusion becomes mandatory compliance versus voluntary participation.

In a major study utilizing a meta-analysis of the effects of educational leadership on student achievement from existing empirical studies, Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) found that there is little evidence for the connection between student achievement and educational leadership, except in defining and communicating mission. And, although special education is not specifically identified in the analyses of these studies, it stands to reason that if a principal's leadership in defining and communicating mission has an effect on student achievement, then that mission must include specificity about students with disabilities if achievement for these students is to be affected. Patterson, Bowling and Marshall (2000) found that principals are ill-trained for inclusion and special education leadership.

While the perceptions of principals themselves, and empirical effects of the principal on student achievement for students with disabilities, are not well documented in the literature, a number of studies (Amos and Moody, 1977; Billingsley, 1995; Bradley, 1999; Fulk and Hirth, 1994; Gersten, *et al.*, 1995; Grosenick and Huntze, 1983; Idol and Griffith, 1998) have addressed teacher perceptions of the role of the principal in special education. As early as 1977, one year after the implementation of P.L. 94-142, Amos and Moody found that teachers indicated principals needed to be cognizant of the characteristics of children with mild handicaps and that there was a need for cooperative planning in developing a rationale for mainstreaming. This research was followed by a study (McCaskill, *et al.*, 1979) that surveyed teachers who indicated that the principal did not offer enough individual assistance and was not available often enough. In a study by Grosenick and Huntze (1983), teachers indicated a staff development need for assistance in coping with job-related stress, while principals ranked individual counseling for students and behavior management as highest needs for teachers. Thus, it is evident principals were not sensitive to the needs as perceived by teachers. Fulk and Hirth (1994) reported that teachers felt that improved services would result from building principal support for inclusion. Gersten, *et al.*, (1995) reported that principal support is critical to job satisfaction and that it is associated with stronger teacher commitment to special education and a lower likelihood of leaving the profession. They also discussed the importance teachers gave to the role of the principal in a survey of special educators regarding working conditions. Billingsley, *et al.*, (1995) found that special educators' perceptions of

administrative support, related to the principal, indicated a lack of understanding of what teachers do in their classrooms, gave limited assistance with specific problems, failed to recognize the significance of teachers' work challenges and accomplishments, and often reported that they did not feel fully included in their schools. Brownell and Walther-Thomas (2002) discussed the importance of collaboration among teachers, particularly related to special education and indicated that "... administrators sometimes do not understand the complexities of collaboration, and consequently, they are not sure how to nurture it, assess it and determine the type of professional development needed to make it happen (p.223)." However, Idol and Griffith (1998) found that teachers in four urban schools perceived that principals were doing a good job of working with and supporting the teachers relative to special education.

Although this one study found positive movement by principals in their role in special education as perceived by teachers, there is little to suggest that there is a ground swell of positive perceptions by principals about special education. And, in fact, the perceptions of teachers continue to raise questions about lack of support, interest and involvement in special education on the part of the principal.

Do principals have the knowledge they need about special education?

Determining which drives our actions, attitudes/perceptions or knowledge, is often difficult to assess. Nevin (1979) was one of the first to address the competencies required of the general education administrator (principals, in particular) relative to administration of special education programs. Her study was followed by Cline (1981) who addressed the attitudes and knowledge of principals in a large school district. Burrello and Zadnik (1986) categorized principal competencies in special education into three broad domains: a basic knowledge of special education, a working knowledge of related laws and a working knowledge of best practices. And, more recently, Nelson and Benz (1995) conducted a knowledge inventory of administrators-in-training to determine how well they know and understand IDEA.

Having a basic **knowledge of special education** appears to be fundamental to a principal's ability to supervise special education programs. Administrators are responsible for a multitude of duties related to special education. Burrello and Zadnik (1986) identified the need for knowledge in how to provide effective leadership, resolve conflict, evaluate effective programs and determine staff functions and qualifications. Even though a principal might delegate many of the duties, the administrator should have a working knowledge of each in order to provide effective supervision. In addition to learning about the duties, "... the administrator must be knowledgeable about special education programs and the handicapped children involved"

(Ireland, 1985, p 15). Lietz and Kaiser (1979) stated that the administrator must provide a plan for the whole school, which integrates services for students with disabilities in a positive light and not set it aside as a separate entity. Principals have a vision of what their schools can be and the goals that can be achieved (Chance and Grady, 1990). Gameros (1995) suggested, "That vision should include educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE)" (p. 15). Gameros suggested that visionary principals accept the challenge to create an inclusive environment for all students. Stainback and Stainback (1989) stated, "As inclusive principals, they accept the ownership of all students, support inclusive placement decisions, promote the policy that students with disabilities are the responsibility of all school personnel and work to ensure an effective environment for all students" (p. 17). Burrello (1988) provided guidelines for supervisors of special education relative to their role as the cultural leader including that the attitude of the building principal helps determine the attitude of the staff toward the special education program. He also suggested the importance of communicating the value of a shared responsibility for all students, setting high expectations that all students can learn and a willingness to learn about individual differences as part of the role of the principal. Principals also need to understand the importance of "parent, student and regular education personnel participation in the development and implementation of educational programs for children with disabilities" (Heumann and Hehir, 1998, p.3) and the importance of "... strengthening the role of parents and ensuring that families of children with disabilities have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children" (Heumann and Hehir, p. 3).

What do principals know about special education law?

The literature does not provide enough evidence to determine the basic knowledge of special education principals have, nor what impact their role has on student achievement of students with disabilities. However, there is evidence that they need the ability to create and implement a mission (Witziers, *et al.*, 2003) or vision (Gameros, 1995) for student achievement, which is inclusive of all students, including students served through special education.

The principal's **working knowledge of special education laws**, the underpinning of current special education services, is, at best, generally part of a more comprehensive law course that is required in a principal training program. In one study (Hirth and Valesky, 1991), 74 percent of the universities surveyed stated that they devote 10 percent or less of their instructional time to special education law. In fact, Hirth and Valesky (1989) found that many administrators and supervisors of special education did not have the basic knowledge of special education law needed to per-

form their jobs effectively and efficiently. Specific essential competencies that have surfaced over time include knowledge of due process and abilities to interpret federal and state laws (Burrello and Zadnik, 1986).

In a survey of building administrators, Montieth (1994) found that 75 percent of the administrators had no formal training in special education and that what they did know came from memos sent to them from the administration office or state or through "making mistakes." And, in spite of this lack of special education training and knowledge of special education law, Montieth stated that over 75 percent of principals had exclusive or shared responsibility for supervising and evaluating special education teachers in their school.

Hirth and Valesky (1990), in a study of educational administration department chairs at 66 universities, found that 27 percent of administrators' endorsements required some knowledge of special education law and only 33 percent required *any* special education course. Unfortunately, that leaves a staggering 73 percent of educational administration programs that do not require any knowledge of special education law. Hirth and Valesky (1991) stated: "In response to this trend toward greater accountability for special education, state certification requirements and university preparation programs for school administrators must ensure that school administrators are ready to face the challenges posed by this education reform effort" (p. 5).

Bateman and Bateman (2001) discussed the role of the principal in the implementation of federal regulations related to students with disabilities. Specifically, they identified the need for principals to have training in the IEP and the role of the principal in the process of facilitating IEPs. Baker (2002) found that principals expressed a need for training related to state regulations for special education.

It is apparent that there is a need for training in special education law for administrators. As the stream of accountability gets wider and longer and legislative mandates become more extensive, it is critical, if not vital, for administrators to know the legal requirements and how to make them work in an instructional environment.

What do principals know about supervising instruction in special education?

For meaningful change to occur in the instructional programs in special education, principals need a basic **knowledge of best practices** in order to supervise and support the teachers who are serving students through those programs. Leibfried (1984) stressed the principal's role in fostering and facilitating staff acceptance of mainstreaming. Bonds and Lindsey (1980) identified the need for increasing classroom visitations and more attention to scheduling. Additionally, Brennan and Brennan (1988) urged principals to develop a deeper understanding of the goals, needs and motivation of

those involved in special education and to be guided by “situation ethics” (p. 15). Kaufman and Walker (1993) reported that special education teachers found five irritating behaviors exhibited by school building administrators, including being more interested in the appearance of the program than in its quality. Gameros’ (1995) position that visionary principals accept the challenge to create an inclusive environment for all students supports the work of Stainback and Stainback (1989) that concluded “the principal’s role is important in achieving inclusion—the integration of regular and special education into a unified educational system capable of meeting the needs of all students” (p.15).

Zadnick (1992) characterized instructional supervisory roles as including those that examine the extent to which criterion-based evaluations are used for identifying teacher competencies. A consequence of consistent, planned, consultative interaction is trust. Trust relationships are developed through non-threatening, supportive behaviors demonstrated by the supervisor. Trust between the administrator and the teacher is important during the processes involved in instructional supervision. Zadnick found that the behaviors of instructional supervisors of special education were characterized by the observation of a lesson, drawing conclusions, presenting a critical analysis and telling the teacher how to improve. Although research on the characteristics and competencies of effective teachers is extensive in general education, principals often find great difficulty in identifying these competencies in special education teachers because of the wide range of skills and cognitive abilities exhibited.

Thus the traditional role of supervision, the vertical system of authority based on formal organizational roles, does not work well for special education teachers and suggests that another model might be more appropriate. A less formal structure than the vertical system exists under the facilitative structure of supervision. The facilitative model may be useful and acceptable in the realm of special education where the administrator or building supervisor is not responsible for most of the decisions, which means limited knowledge, and expertise in special education is not as critical. Taylor-Dunlop and Norton (1997) stated that facilitative supervision describes both what is occurring and what probably should occur in special education: collaboration.

Collaboration may come in many forms. One presented in the literature is that of the mentor/mentee. The work of Mateja (1992) supported the development of a mentor who would not be an evaluator of the protégé. The mentor would listen to the protégé regarding issues covering a variety of topics. The school’s principal would be a fundamental part of the mentorship success. The principal had to be open to the mentoring process and allow the mentorship relationship to flourish. “One way my principal did this was by not imposing her authority on the mentor situation. The principal allowed the mentor and the protégé to meet

and discuss a variety of issues in order to expand each other’s skills. By doing this, the principal became a resource for further role playing, problem solving and problem identification (Mateja, 1992, p. 300). Dyal, *et al.*, (1996) suggested there is evidence to support the content of professional development of teachers that principals should provide, including “Areas where principals need to focus more attention: acquainting the teachers with PL 94-142 and its provision, increasing classroom visitations, more attention to scheduling and serving on the placement committee” (p. 9). In a survey (Gameros, 1995) principals indicated four determinants for their support of a placement decision: “1) If social development is a factor, a part-time or full-time regular education placement should be considered. 2) The student’s ability to compete academically in the regular education classroom must be considered. 3) The severity of the student’s disability must be weighed. 4) The perception of the self-contained classroom is a factor in the support of a self-contained placement.” (p.17)

In the most recent study (Witziers, *et al.*, 2003) of the role of the principal on student achievement, the meta-analysis of empirical studies did not reveal any specific supervisory behaviors that account for student achievement. Yet many principals make concerted efforts to support, through supervision, the teacher’s role in student achievement.

Inclusive principals accept ownership of all students and enact and support policies and practices to ensure individual student success regardless of what the student brings to the environment.

What do we know about training for principals relative to special education?

Training relative to knowledge and laws in special education is paramount to the efficient and effective operation of special education programs for both administrators and teachers. Determining the types of preservice and in-service training needed will be necessary because “the principal’s role is important in achieving inclusion—the integration of regular and special education into a unified educational system capable of meeting the needs of all students” (Stainback and Stainback, 1989, p. 15). Monteith (1994) found that over 90 percent of the administrators surveyed indicated that formal special education training was needed in order to be an effective school leader and 89 percent indicated that they would be interested in participating in a training program. To support the claim that administrators do have the competency with special education laws to make accurate decisions concerning special education, Monteith reported that 97 percent of administrators surveyed indicated that course work in administration of special education programs would be useful to extremely useful, and 95 percent reported that coursework in administra-

tion/supervision of learning disabled programs would also be very beneficial in terms of performing their job duties. Dyal, *et al.*, (1996) reported that a sizable number of principals (44.5 percent) in Alabama reported that their inclusion training was inadequate. During this time in Alabama a new certification program, the position of collaborative teacher, had been established. If the collaborative teacher is going to make positive contributions to an inclusive school, the principal will have to pave the way for their success (Dyal, *et al.*, 1996). "Eight out of ten principals do not believe that they have adequate information or training about the nature and use of teachers with the new special education certification (collaborative teacher)" (p. 6) and, "95 percent of the respondents believe that their faculty needs in-service training on how to work effectively with teachers that [*sic*] have the new collaborative teacher certification" (p. 6).

Fenton (1977) stated that "In-service training could increase placement team members' awareness of the differences between their role expectations and the expectations that others have for their role and perhaps reduce the differences in some cases by providing an opportunity for members to assess their expectations, examine the origins of different expectations and role play to explore the effects of these differences" (pg 11). According to Dyal, *et al.*, (1996) "Of utmost importance is the principal's ability to share leadership with others regarding curriculum, materials, instructional practices and staffing" (p. 32). Westling (1989) suggested steps principals need to take to create inclusive schools and stated that special education teachers should assume the role of synthesizing the input of others along with their roles in direct instruction, all of which may require training to develop. This expanded role will require knowledge for principals in what the role encompasses and how to evaluate those in it. Schattman and Benay (1992) identified problem-solving teams and flexible time schedules as necessary components of an inclusive school. Haas (1993) suggested that planning teams should include the principal, special education teachers and consultants, regular education teachers, parents and students.

Although the needs are apparent for training of both principals and teachers in serving students with disabilities, Patterson, Marshall and Bowling (2000) found that only five states require any coursework in special education for pre-service administrators, which is generally a "survey of exceptionalities" course. And, there are no identified requirements for in-service principals. Certification programs for principals, which may touch upon special education law, rarely provide or require preparation for principals to deal with the instructional needs of students receiving special education or the needs of their parents. The same is true of re-certification of school administrators.

Furthermore, there is evidence that most universities do not require a course in special education in initial adminis-

trative certification programs. So, the evidence suggests that there has been little opportunity for administrators to learn about special education, whether it is basic knowledge of disability classifications, the law related to disabilities or instructional services for students with disabilities.

Where does this leave us?

As early as 1982, Crossland, *et al.*, found that principals were almost perfectly in congruence with each other on the formal designation of their own professional responsibilities relative to special education. However, "the data show that it is the role of the school principal that is most often subject to differential perceptions between teachers and principals" (pg 537).

It is apparent that in order for students with disabilities to exercise their rights under IDEA (1997) school principals must be knowledgeable about many basic issues in special education and the supervision of those programs. Little is known about what principals believe about special education, what training can provide the education to bring them up to speed *and* generate a positive change in leadership behavior, and the viability of disseminating such training.

Principals cannot just seek to comply with demands from the law (e.g., No Child Left Behind (2001), IDEA), central administration, staff or parents. Through good training and a willingness to be educated, principals can develop a sense of ownership of their students served in special education in the same way they do for their general education students and work to ensure programs and support systems that lead to student success.

Thus, it seems the challenge for professional development of principals and superintendents and the preparation of those who aspire to be, is to consider ways to incorporate the knowledge base in special education practice and law, support of general and special education teachers relative to serving students in special education and how to provide leadership for special education programs. The challenge for researchers in educational leadership is to determine what practices on the part of the principal positively impact success for students receiving special education services in meeting the goals and objectives of the Individual Education Programs: a goal of federal legislation some 25 years ago!

Experience tells us that whatever changes are adopted to provide services to all children enrolled in a school will necessitate full, enthusiastic support of its principal. No matter what plan is ultimately fashioned, it will be contentious and thus contended. Without the endorsement of a school's principal, the plan, regardless of merit or promise, will fall flatter than a French crepe. Indeed, without the open arms of the principal, the plan will not be heard, much less implemented. (Crockett and Kauffman, 1999, p. 161)

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Leaders for Learning: A Collaborative Learning Process

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The Missouri Professors of Educational Administration (MPEA) initiated the Leaders for Learning project to create technology based instructional materials aligned with the standards of the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). With funding from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), faculty from 14 institutions that prepare school leaders formed annual cohorts to collaborate on the development of vignettes, case studies and problem-based learning modules to prepare aspiring principals. Since the program's inception in 1999, it has expanded to include the development of an adjunct faculty-training module; portfolio frameworks and scoring guides; and instructional materials focused on the superintendency. The instructional materials are located at www.umsl.edu/~mpea.

Faculty and Learning Organizations

Can professors from 14 different institutions form a learning community? While forming a learning community was not the original intent of the Leaders for Learning project, it was the end result. During the 1999 to 2000 school year, faculty from Missouri institutions volunteered to meet for five one-day workshops to develop instructional materials to prepare school leaders to focus on the knowledge, dispositions and performances needed to become successful administrators centered on student learning. Out of the rich and substantive discussions and collaborative learning during the first two years of Leaders for Learning, a strong foundation was built that has allowed a learning community to develop and to grow.

MPEA had a tradition of collaborative learning evidenced by the publication of *Renewing the Spirit of Liberty: Preparing Principals for Missouri Schools* (Walter, 1997). Beginning in 1995, MPEA sponsored a series of conversations among practicing administrators, state agencies such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), university faculty and professional organizations. Out of the conversations among various stakeholders, MPEA developed program recom-

mendations for preparing school leaders. The recommendations focused on three areas: foundational, theoretical and operational. The following are a summary of the knowledge, understanding and problem solving capacity that evolved as necessary for school leaders.

Foundational

- Ideals of the Enlightenment which informed the founding of our nations;
- Social, economic and political conditions that constrain or encourage the realizations of these ideals;
- Political implications of differing conceptions of justice, fairness and equality that inform ethical beliefs and actions;
- Conflicting expectations for schools, as agents of the state, in the political and economic sectors of our society;
- Differing philosophical perspectives that inform various value systems in a diverse society;
- Characteristics of representative governance, legal and educational requirements of citizenship, the balance of powers;
- Historical development and philosophical premises of theories and research methodologies; and
- Processes by which our society determines what counts as knowledge, how it is transmitted, what are the intended outcomes, the process of control and the bases of justification. (p. 26)

Theoretical

- Different approaches to understanding emerging issues and trends, changes in beliefs and value systems and economic conditions in the local community, nationally and globally;
- The social and political uses of language in creating cultural symbols and social belief systems;
- Various communication models and their uses in consensus building and managing conflict among individuals/groups with differing values;

- Knowledge of systems theory and its uses in planning, implementing and managing including information sources, data collection and data analyses;
- Models of home-school-community relations including relating to other agencies that can contribute to the school's goals and objectives;
- Various models of organizing and managing structures, processes, resources and change;
- Constructs related to student growth and development, various learning and motivation theories and instructional methods and encouraging students to participate more fully in their own self-formation;
- Various approaches to curriculum design, implementation, evaluation and refinement;
- Knowledge of the uses of computer-based technologies for instruction, management and communications; and
- Models of staff development, professional growth and recognizing contributions. (p. 27)

Operational

- The legal and technical aspects of evaluating instructional and support staff, dealing with student behaviors and assigning students to instructional settings;
- Operating a safe and clean building, equipment and grounds with attention to use of space for instructional purposes;
- Federal, state and local operating procedures;
- The fiscal operations of school management;
- Relating to instructional and support staff organizations in the context of negotiated personnel policies; and
- Informing publics about the conditions and operations of the school. (p. 27)

The collaborative effort of assessing the role of the principal and the role of all stakeholders in developing successful school leaders encouraged MPEA to continue developing a learning community through the development of instructional materials.

After the publication of *Renewing the Spirit of Liberty*, MPEA invited Ed Bridges of Stanford University to its annual fall conference. Bridges presented information on preparing school leaders using the problem-based learning approach. He stated that few educational administration preparation programs developed a meaningful connection among theory, research and practice and that problem-based learning (PBL) could fill in that gap. Effective PBL modules for preparing school leaders have the following characteristics: focus on problems that school administrators will face in the future, content is organized around problems not disciplines, working in small groups students take responsibility for learning and instructors act as facilitators (Bridges and Hallinger, 1997, p. 132-133). The first two cohorts of Leaders for Learning used Bridges and

Hallinger's model of problem-based learning as a starting point in the discussion of how best to construct materials to bring together the ISLLC standards, theory, research and practice. Hallinger provided guidelines for developing a PBL module on his website. He recommended that a PBL module include an introduction, problem, learning objectives, resources, product specifications, guiding questions, assessment exercises and time constraints (Hallinger, 1999, p. 3). Bridges' presentation and Bridges and Hallinger's writings helped provide a framework for the development of instructional materials and provided a focus for the third year of Leaders for Learning.

Common Understandings

While it sounds like a simple task to develop instructional materials to prepare aspiring principals, it became a rich learning experience. In developing common purposes and understandings, a frame for developing instructional materials was developed to include a range of courses, topics and issues. Some common understandings had to be agreed upon to facilitate a collaborative working model. The 1999 cohort created and defined three categories of instructional materials: vignettes, case studies and problem-based learning modules. The definitions may appear to be arbitrary, nevertheless they provide a way of thinking about the materials in instructional settings. "Complexity" was the main heuristic for organizing the materials. As a general rule, the user can expect that:

Vignettes: Both the problem presented and the expected responses will be less complex. A short vignette deals with only one knowledge, disposition or performance indicator in one of the six ISLLC standards. A long vignette will reference two or more knowledge, disposition or performance indicators in one of the six ISLLC standards.

Case Studies: A case study will be relatively more complex and draw upon experiences and knowledge familiar to the student. Cases can be used prior to a learning experience to assess student understandings. They can also be used after a unit of instruction to assess changes. A case study will probe into several knowledge, disposition and performance indicators within one of the six ISLLC standards or across the standards.

Problem-Based Learning Modules: PBL modules will introduce situations for which students are likely to be unprepared by prior experiences. Students will have to search for knowledge, consider several dispositions and choose from among alternative performances. Scoring is more problematic than for vignettes and case studies. These are high in complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty as to outcomes of decisions. Problem-based learning experiences are usually provided within a con-

text of other kinds of learning opportunities.

The cohorts also had to agree upon some general understandings about the role of the school leader. The following propositions were developed in the first year:

1. When individuals assume the role of education administrator, their influence on the direction of schooling will have an effect on how each student leaves school with the capacity to engage, as an adult, in self-governance and to access the economic benefits of our society.
2. The most important relationship in a school setting is that between the teacher, student and knowledge.
3. The primary obligation of the principal is to serve, protect and nurture those magical moments when learning occurs and nurtures in each student the capacity to participate in her or his own development.

The cohorts also struggled with the issue of how to construct the instructional materials to facilitate ease of use, adaptability and meaning. The cohort wanted the materials to do more than just address the ISLLC standards. They wanted the materials to aid students preparing for the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA), practicing administrators engaged in leadership decision making and professors preparing school leaders. It was the inclusion of notes to the instructor that provided extra support to the instructors preparing students.

Notes to the Instructor

The following guidelines were developed to present materials on the website:

Notes to the instructor were written from the point of view of the author to provide the original intent of the instructional material and to suggest alternative approaches to the materials. Notes to the instructor may include the following:

1. Issues in the vignette, case study or problem-based learning module are identified from the author's point of view.
2. Discussion addresses the various perspectives relevant to the instructional material.
3. Additional information may be provided to put a different twist on the instructional material. For example, an attendance policy may be provided.
4. Extended learnings provide additional suggested learning activities.

Scoring Guides

The cohorts believed that one of the strengths of the instructional materials website was providing scoring guides for each vignette, case study or problem-based learning module. Developing the scoring guides was one of the best learning experiences of the project. Most professors have plenty of stories or scenarios to share and have questions or learning activities that relate to the scenarios.

The challenge came in trying to develop a scoring guide that addressed the ISLLC standards including the knowledge, dispositions and performances. The cohort found it easier to start with the standard and work backwards toward the scenario. The scoring guides use the following format:

1. Developed around the primary ISLLC standard, knowledge, disposition or performance addressed.
2. Depends on some type of scale or number.
3. Additional scoring guides may be included to address extended learnings or additional ISLLC standard.

Development to Implementation

During the third year of Leaders for Learning, MPEA shifted the focus from development to implementation. After two years of cohorts or learning communities from the various institutions around the state working collaboratively to develop instructional materials, it was felt that the structure for continued development of materials and for the initiation of new projects was in place. While several vignettes and case studies were developed for each ISLLC standard, only a few PBL modules were developed the first two years. This is understandable since PBL modules are considerably more complex and time intensive than vignettes or case studies.

Problem-Based Learning Modules

During the third year of Leaders for Learning one PBL module for each of the ISLLC standards was developed and placed on the MPEA website. A large PBL module was defined as taking up 20 percent of a course and was appropriate to be implemented within a larger context of learning. The complexity of PBL modules requires students to seek out information, consider several ISLLC knowledge and disposition indicators and choose among performances. The collaboratively developed common understandings about PBL modules developed the first two years of the project remained in place during the third year.

Adjunct Faculty-training Module

With 14 universities in Missouri offering degrees in educational administration, the variety of programs crosses the spectrum from departments comprised of one full time faculty member with many courses taught by adjuncts to departments with primarily full time faculty teaching courses with the occasional course taught by an adjunct. However, all universities in the state are seeing an increase in term or adjunct faculty appointments. Through discussion at the annual fall and spring MPEA conferences, it became apparent that the training and preparation of adjunct faculty was a concern shared by universities, professional organizations, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and practicing administrators. Leaders for Learning supported the development of a

one-half day in-service module. The adjunct faculty module focused on preparing faculty to teach using the ISLLC standards and how that could be done with the use of technology, primarily the MPEA instructional materials on the website. Once the module was developed three workshops were conducted to train and prepare adjunct faculty for the classroom. As with all of the Leaders for Learning products, the effort was collaborative among faculty across the state and included the Regional Professional Development Centers, professional organizations in the state and DESE. MPEA hopes to make the materials available on CD-ROM.

Portfolio Scoring Guide

Part of the initial grant from DESE was to develop ISLLC related guidelines for preparing and evaluating portfolios for school leader preparation program graduates. The 1999 cohort considered the issue but did not act because of advice received from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) who served as consultants for the project.

The portfolio committee produced two documents. The first was the "Framework for Principal Portfolio Review" (Valentine, Arnold, Ewing, Johnson and Kern, 2002) that provides a "content framework" for portfolio design and review. This document will help in the development and evaluation of principalship portfolios. Because there are three levels of certification in Missouri, "Framework" addresses the Initial Certification level, the Initial Certification Renewal level and the Advanced Certification Renewal level. The second document developed was the "Scoring Guides" (Valentine, Arnold, Ewing, Johnson and Kern, 2002) that provide descriptors for rating each expectation for each of the six ISLLC Standards. The guides are flexible and can be used for many purposes. After the development of these materials, workshops were presented in each region of the state for regular and adjunct faculty. Professors, DESE staff and practitioners from the state's major administrative organizations reviewed the materials. The portfolio scoring frameworks should be mounted on the website in 2003. The portfolio committee continues to expand their work on issues involving portfolios and is currently discussing implementing the frameworks on a statewide basis with DESE.

Evaluation and Assessment of Website

An evaluation of the instructional materials on the MPEA website was conducted in the spring of 2002. The evaluation focused on the use, content, validity and user friendliness. The website was accessed by 72.7 percent of those surveyed monthly or more often and was perceived as user friendly. The content and validity of the website was found to be appropriate. The website was very helpful or helpful in teaching the ISLLC standards using the vignettes (86.3 percent), case studies (100 percent) and problem-based learning units (71.4 percent). The components of the web-

site were perceived to reflect the reality of situations and as helpful to student learning. Overall the website was perceived to be highly effective or effective by 77.2 percent in supporting instruction of the ISLLC standards and in preparing students for the SLLA. The following recommendations were made to improve the website:

1. Strengthen the content as it relates to the ISLLC standards in the vignettes and the problem-based learning units. Even though all components were ranked highly in content relating to the ISLLC standards, continuing attention should be paid to the content of all components.
2. Overall attention should be paid to the continuing development of materials that support instruction of the ISLLC standards. Even though 77.2 percent of the respondents rated the site as very effective or effective in supporting instruction of the ISLLC standards, that is a major goal of the website.
3. Continue to develop vignettes, case studies and problem base learning units that reflect reality and lead to student learning.
4. The user friendliness of the scoring guides and the notes to the instructor need to be evaluated. No one in the study perceived either component to be very user friendly. (Dalton, Petersen and Roberts, 2002)

A Solid Foundation for the Future

Due to the success of the first three years of the project, DESE agreed to fund Leaders for Learning for a fourth year. The goals for 2002-2003 are:

1. Improve the existing instructional materials on the website by adding information such as additional URL addresses and to conduct an evaluation to determine the degree to which students are aware of the knowledge, dispositions and performances in critical areas.
2. Develop instructional materials focused at the superintendent level. The instructional materials will be similar in format to those already on the website aimed at principals and will include vignettes, case studies and problem-based learning modules.
3. Develop guidelines for selecting and training mentors, guiding school districts' use of mentors and for relating mentoring to university-based programs. Continue to refine the adjunct faculty-training module and conduct additional workshops. The portfolio committee will continue its work on implementing portfolio guidelines.
4. Conduct a statewide conference focusing on the future of schooling and the implications for administrator preparation. Create four task forces to prepare papers for the conference. The task forces will focus on:
 - Policies related to alternative routes to administrator certification;

- Policies and conditions needed for full-time clinical internships;
- Policies and conditions for implementing a mentoring program;
- Characteristics of programs that prepare administrators to anticipate social, political and economic changes and begin the process of changing schools before a crisis occurs. (p. 3-5)

Conclusion

MPEA developed a collaborative working relationship with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, professional organizations in the state, practicing administrators and 14 universities that prepare school leaders. Effective leader preparation and effective school change will only occur when all stakeholders come together and develop a learning community focused on what is best for all involved and more importantly focused on student learning. Materials produced by MPEA through the Leaders for Learning project are designed to facilitate school change through their focus on student learning. While MPEA believes the instructional materials produced are valuable, the process used to develop the products was equally valuable. MPEA chose to take a proactive stance in developing a learning community involving all stakeholders focused on leadership preparation and on student learning.

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Guidelines for Successful Collaborations Among Professors

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It was our first year as tenure-track assistant professors in higher education and we were attending our first national conference in that capacity. Neither of us knew anyone in the room. All others at the conference (or so it seemed) were busy greeting long lost friends and talking with interest. We looked across the table at one another, smiled, and offered a tentative “Hello.” Somewhat haltingly, we introduced ourselves and began to visit briefly until the program began.

After the speakers had finished, we were dismissed to small roundtable discussions. We ended up at the same table where the discussion leader was an experienced professor. She began to ask leading questions to help us become engaged in a more directed conversation. We began to talk about our different universities. The professor queried us about research projects and we noted our similar interests in studying the principalship and other topics. She suggested that we might consider collaborating on a project in a joint intellectual effort.

When the roundtable session ended, we continued our discussion and exchanged business cards. While at the conference, over the next several days, we continued the idea exchange and talked about collaborating on several education projects together. As new professors, we were eager to consider this notion of collaboration and felt that it offered a way to enhance our individual experiences, demystify the research and writing process and help us in the task of publishing our work. Teaming with someone seemed a wonderful way to “jump-start” our new careers as university professors and, at the same time, contribute to the profession. The conference ended and we went back to our respective universities in two different states, many miles apart, with a promise to continue designing a collaborative study that we might pursue.

This decision to collaborate with a colleague from another campus probably sounds all-too familiar. While sometimes this promise of collaboration results in an actual project, too often, ideas for school improvement that we discuss when we are together at professional conferences never result in a final collaborative project.

Obstacles to the Collaborative Process

There are challenges in doing any type of collaborative research. In fact, the very “culture of higher education” is one where status comes from individual accomplishments rather than from group success (Hutchens, 1998). This high value placed on individual achievement often leads to fostering a work environment where competition is fierce (Ostrow, 2002). This leads to questions of intellectual ownership in collaboration, such as who will be listed as the first author, second author, and so on. After all, “A scholar’s reputation depends upon what, where and how much he or she publishes” (Kennedy 1997, p. 208). Consequently, while we proclaim the importance of collaboration in our education leadership classes based on state and national standards, too often, for university professors, collaboration falls victim to individual competition.

Other issues also must be considered that make the collaborative process a challenge. For example, different work habits among the authors or conflicts on how the piece should be written often occur (James-Enger, 2001). Still another obstacle is that colleagues are often just not interested in collaboration and prefer to work alone. Of course, there is also the issue of having time available to work and plan together. Certainly, all of these concerns, as well as other unforeseen obstacles, must be addressed before beginning the process of collaboration. But, when a possible collaboration project is faced with a distance of hundreds of miles, the challenges often become even greater.

Our Experience with a Long-Distance Collaboration

We found the collaborative process to be one that benefited us both professionally and personally. Through our collaborative efforts, we have published our studies in refereed journals and presented them at conferences nationwide. As we have talked on those rare times when we were at the same location and e-mailed across the miles, simple ideas have grown almost effortlessly into research projects. For example, in a random conversation, it became apparent that

we both traveled many miles to work. Out of that conversation came a research project, followed by papers and presentations that focused on educators in commuter marriages.

Professionally, our work has been enhanced. When we were both doing work at our universities on the principal shortage, we combined our efforts and surveyed principals in both of our states, a much more interesting project than if we had been working alone. This task had seemed difficult initially, but it became manageable by dividing the work. Additionally, the broader scope of the research and data made our projects much more interesting.

We found that each of us brought different strengths to the process. One of us actually enjoyed doing literature reviews, while the other enjoyed data entry and analyzing the statistics. Additionally, rather than designing our study, implementing it and then writing it up in isolation, we shared these roles. All too often writing is done in isolation (Ostrow, 2002). By collaborating with someone where a trust relationship had grown, we were able to learn from and build on each other's strengths.

The editing process was a catalyst for continued technical learning. After several years of sending papers back and forth via e-mail and pointing out where revisions had been made, we discovered Track Changes, a useful tool in Word. Today, when we read a paper we are co-writing, we go to Tools in Word, click on Track Changes and click on Highlight Changes. This highlights text changes and final edits are much more accurate.

There have been personal benefits too. As we have worked together, we have forged a friendship that goes beyond age, gender and the miles. Now it is not unusual, when we are not working on a specific project, to occasionally get an e-mail message that just says, "Just wondered how you were doing, I haven't heard from you in awhile." This social support encourages us to become more resilient, increases our confidence and leads to accomplishing more (Ostrow, 2002).

Beginning a Collaboration

For us, the collaborative experience has been richly rewarding. As we reviewed our collaborative process, we identified four components that led to maintaining a successful collaboration experience that worked well for us. These notions included discussing ideas openly, deciding projects specifically, defining parameters clearly and demonstrating professional integrity.

- 1) Discussing ideas openly. Talk about the research that you are doing, but also discuss other research areas that are appealing. Sometimes as university professors, we are almost reluctant to share our ideas for fear that others may "steal" them. There really are enough ideas for everyone, so do not let this fear diminish the willingness to share openly with some

colleagues. The very process of verbalizing and discussing our work leads to reflection, refinement and revision, all necessary to the collaborative process. Discussion often results in a discovery of common interests. Once common interests have been identified, we can do three things: do nothing at all, jump on an idea and develop it by yourself or work together to bring the project to fruition.

- 2) Deciding projects specifically. Make decisions that are specific. Too often, we say, "One of these days, let's do a project together." But it never happens. If we really want to do a project together, we should say something like this, "Let's do that paper that we have been talking about before Christmas. I'll meet you for dinner and we will map out the details." Collaborative projects rarely happen if the project is too broad. Instead, take the idea a step further and develop the idea more specifically. For example, in the first project that we did, we knew that we wanted to study an aspect of our principal preparation programs. After discussing several ideas at length, we specifically agreed that our project would be to describe how our different universities were implementing the use of portfolio assessments in our administrator preparation programs.
- 3) Defining parameters clearly. Once a project has been identified and key points developed, the next step is to define the roles that each person will have. For example, who will write what, who will start the literature review, who will begin the construction of a survey instrument, and so on. Identify a reasonable timeline. Decide when the data should be collected, when the literature review should be completed and when each collaborator is expected to complete their part. At this point, collaborators must determine who will serve as first author or second author. In our collaboration, from the beginning, we determined who would take the lead, what that role would be and what the other individual would do to support the project.
- 4) Demonstrating professional integrity. Once the brainstorming begins, collaborators must demonstrate professional integrity in building trusting relationships so that they can say what needs to be said, edit what needs to be edited and revise what needs to be revised, without feelings getting in the way. This relationship should be discussed and agreed on at the beginning of the collaborative process. If an idea does not sound feasible, or is one in which you are not particularly interested, speak up. Collaborators communicate often and with honesty.

An important component of professional integrity is follow through. Collaborators should do what they say they will do. A partner may be hundreds of miles away working diligently to complete his or her part of the project. When

the partner fails to uphold his or her part of the bargain, barriers are created which can ultimately undermine the working partnership. Be sensitive and share the workload. For example, if one partner makes the transparencies, perhaps, the other should offer to make copies of the paper to bring to a conference. Before any completed paper is sent out for review or shared publicly in any way, always be sure that each collaborator has had an opportunity to read and give input to the final project.

In the four years since that first conference, we have tried to follow these four principles when we have collaborated, as well as when collaborating with others. When we discuss our ideas openly, decide on specific topics, define the parameters clearly and demonstrate professional integrity, we have enjoyed a satisfying collaboration. These collaborations have resulted in implementing three research projects, publishing six papers and presenting

eight papers at different national and state conferences. What started as a simple roundtable conversation among strangers, has evolved into a long-distance collaboration that has broadened our lives professionally and personally.

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Journal of Scholarship & Practice

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Words to Lead By

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It has been two years since I retired from the superintendency, and yet, I cannot seem to shake the habit of jotting down phrases from books, writing provocative questions and thoughts from my own musings as I travel, meet with family and friends, see a play or watch a movie. This in preparation for the all important opening-day speech to the faculty—the speech that I no longer present, but as a professor of educational leadership and administration, I have included in the training of future leaders.

I always wondered if every superintendent spent hours of thought and reflection as I did in formulating just the right words which would evoke the hearts and minds of the faculty as they anxiously, excitedly faced the prospects of the new year. We have all heard the proverb, “Actions speak louder than words.” However, it has always seemed to me that the power of words connected to deliberate, meaningful activity inspired a shared vision that moved systems to honestly and courageously make changes to improve teaching and learning. How does one convey passion, not the red-hot passion that may be the mark of infatuation, but the passion that keeps the flame burning within even when the challenges are so ominous that they cloud our vision?

Today, education has become politicized with many government officials believing that answers to some of the problems faced by educators can be eradicated by higher standards, more arduous assessments, hours of staff development from out-of-district “experts” and additional certification requirements. Yes, there is merit in aspects of each of these strategies. However, I am convinced that there is no formula, no magic potion except for the magic that lies within, the passion and the hard work fueled by the passion that create the electricity, the energy to connect all the stakeholders in the real labor of finding the pathway to every child’s mind.

And so I return to the almighty word. We have all experienced the heightened emotions prompted by the charismatic spiritual leader to be only disillusioned by the disappointments of the behaviors of the same individuals. Yet, how good it felt to be ignited by these thoughts propelled into positive motion and buoyed by the others who joined in the cause. Coupling these emotions with a plan to address the priority issues and a process to continue to reflect and adjust the course when it appears to be deficient is not only logical, it has proven to work.

In the instruction of the Core I course in which the objectives focus on elements of leadership, I spend much time in

having students, future leaders, begin the soul searching process of determining who they are and what they believe. This process entails developing a vocabulary that they can use to articulate their being to others who they may one day lead. As an outgrowth of extensive leadership study groups, online reactive discussions about actual school dilemmas and the development of a case study and a process for resolution with possible outcomes, students are required to, by the end of the semester, write their own opening-day speech which provides them with a clarity of their own purpose and an understanding of their own passions. The assignment as it appears in the students’ syllabus is noted below:

The Opening-Day Speech is one section of the final exam. For this speech, the students should assume they are new administrators and are addressing their department/faculty for the first time, and therefore, want to provide the teachers and staff with some understanding of who they are and what they believe about good schools. Students may want to reflect on the following points and include some aspects of these items in their address

- **Reflections of who you are**—your likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses. Talk about how you learn, how you interact with others, your irritants, your joys ...
- **Reflections of who you are as a leader** in your current role, your traits, your skills, the rewards, the frustrations ...
- **Reflections on your vision of a good school, a good school district.** Describe the look and feel of the school, how teachers teach, how students learn, the purpose of school, of education ...
- **Reflections regarding your role as a leader in this school, school district.** Discuss your behaviors as you lead, facilitate and support teaching and learning, educational reform ...

In addition, a one-page essay about what the student has learned about him or herself as an educator and a leader from his or her studies is also required.

In this reflective reality-based exercise, students who cannot find their own flame quickly learn that it will prove impossible to spark others and that the difficult and sometimes disheartening road of the school administrator may not be right for them. Educational leaders, those school administrators, who “walk the talk” have always been respected and truly make a difference in the lives of all the people, children and adults alike that are touched by their souls. In a world where education is our strongest hope to combat illiteracy as well as intolerance, leaders of this ilk—ones who lead by the words they articulate and embrace—should be the norm.

Conflict Resolution for School Personnel: An Interactive School Safety Training Tool

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Conflict Resolution for School Personnel: An Interactive School Safety Training Tool, a 2-CD-ROM set by Materials, Communication and Computer Inc. (MAT-COM Inc.), the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, October 2002. NCJ 194198.

Those with experience in schools understand the necessity of thinking through frightening or shocking situations and beneficial responses long before such events present themselves.

This CD-ROM set helps school administrators, teachers and staff do just that: approach a wide variety of potentially dangerous and/or volatile situations with the best available response. The set contains practical advice for successfully dealing with occurrences that typically take place in middle and secondary schools. Although not shown, elementary schools and staff deal with many of the same challenges and could also gain from the set. The programs' explanations include tips for school administrators, teachers and other school personnel. Navigation is easy to use. The CD-ROM set includes a total of five modules on the themes of anger, threats, attacks with weapons, suicide and weapons on campus. Each module contains both scenarios and tutorials.

Scenarios provide a sharp focus for each of the themes. There are from two to four scenarios per module. Scenarios address safety issues inductively, asking the viewer to choose the best option for action from a variety of possible choices. When the wrong answer is chosen, actors and actresses play out the results of the incorrect response, with additional commentary. Then the user is asked to choose another option.

The first group of scenarios deals with anger. "Angry Student in Computer Lab" explains how to calm someone down. "Angry Parent in Classroom" discusses how to avoid escalating someone's anger and how to protect oneself in an isolated environment. "Fight in Library" lists key points of

stopping a fight. While not explaining how to set up a conflict resolution or peer mediation program, the program does encourage the school to do so.

"Fire Drill," "Bomb Rumor" and "Internet Hit List" comprise the scenarios on threats. The module's tutorial titled "Threat Assessment" offers excellent advice to reduce risk and deescalate conflict. "Anonymous Threats" and "Specific Threats" are treated separately.

The third theme concerns attacks with weapons. "Isolated Attack," "Lovers' Quarrel," "Attack with Scissors" and "Gun in Cafeteria" provide critical information for maintaining the safety of all involved. Observations after each of the plays bring understanding of the most appropriate response in each situation.

The scenarios on suicide include the ambiguity inherent in real-life situations, such as assessing the level of a suicide threat. Classification of threats is explained. "Note from a Friend" gives specific advice and prompts to school personnel. This type of in-depth treatment of suicide threats should be mandatory viewing for all school personnel.

The last theme is weapons on campus. "Concealed Weapon" and "Gunshots in Hallway" give solid advice to anyone who would work in schools, public and private.

For those who prefer learning via a direct approach, tutorials deliver the same information succinctly, then quiz the audience and give proper feedback about their answers. Correct answers are explained further. When an incorrect answer is given, the program restates the correct ideas and returns the user to the same quiz. Much vital information is found in the each tutorial, including scripted comments that personnel can use to deescalate situations.

The credible performances in scenarios show teachers and principals acting in a responsible manner, and making rational, positive decisions. Thus the set is particularly suitable for pre-service teachers and beginning administrators.

A specific plus is the flexibility in delivery. The set could be a discussion starter in large or small meetings, a stand-alone offering or an individual tutorial for new employees.

Developed by MATCOM Inc., National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, the set will also be useful in establishing and updating policies to reflect best practice in school safety.

This CD-ROM set is a "must have" for administrators, teachers and other staff. While no professional development program can ever completely prepare staff for the shock of a violent situation, "Conflict Resolution for School Personnel" makes the difficult task less onerous. The consistently positive role models handling such tasks in constructive ways could help launch a struggling school's fresh approach and attitude. The set is free and may be obtained from the National Institute of Justice at puborder.ncjrs.org/Content/search.asp.



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