

Public Abstract

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Title:An Examination of How Principals Lead Instructional Change in Rural High Schools

The purpose of this study was to discover how principals of rural high schools lead instructional changes in their school. Reeves's (2009) concepts for leading change in schools is the conceptual framework for this study. The research questions are based around Reeves's conceptual framework of a four-stage process for bringing about change in schools. Interview questions were used to determine how the principals led the change process in their schools by setting the stage for change, planning the change process, implementing the changes, and sustained the changes. Participants for the study included the principals of three rural high schools, an assistant superintendent from one school, and a focus group of 3-6 teachers from each school.

The findings of this study revealed how principals led their school's faculty to change the way instruction was conducted in the classrooms. The process for each school varied, but there were common themes from the schools at each stage of the process that provided implications for practice by future leaders wishing to lead a change process in their own schools. The findings and discussion of the findings led to recommendations for school leaders to utilize data, collaborate with teachers, reduce and address resistance, be aware of available resources for the change process, and use time effectively.