

A UTILIZATION-FOCUSED EVALUATION  
OF THE JOB-EMBEDDED COMPONENT OF THE  
COLLABORATIVE PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

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Doctor of Education

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by  
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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School,  
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A UTILIZATION-FOCUSED EVALUATION OF THE  
JOB-EMBEDDED COMPONENT OF THE COLLABORATIVE  
PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

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UTILIZATION-FOCUSED EVALUATION OF THE  
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PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

Kelly Dion Harris

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that was implemented in 2002 by Central University (a pseudonym).

Literature suggests that past practices and traditional approaches to school leader preparation have not resulted in a deep pool of candidates for school principal positions that are perceived to be highly qualified. Professional standards for school leader preparation programs are now in place and accrediting bodies now require that course and program curricula are aligned to these professional standards. Many school districts have sought to develop internal programs for the development of future school leaders.

This study reviewed and evaluated the job-embedded component of the CPPP by using a utilization-focused evaluation lens. Utilization-focused evaluation is based on the premise that evaluations should be judged by their actual use and utility and that assessments should be designed with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect

teaching methodology pedagogy (Patton, 1997). The focus ins on the intended use by clearly identified users.

The findings of most interest form the study were: (a) the need for more time to collaborate at the university and district level; (b) more structure in the syllabus regarding job-embedded activities, (c) additional training in the areas of special education, discipline management and curriculum and assessment, and (d) implementing a longer internship throughout the program.

Findings of this study suggest many implications for the job-embedded learning component of the CPPP. They include the following: (a) a meeting with the faculty and school district administrators should be scheduled to define the job-embedded learning component of the CPPP and the partnership with district administrators to create job-embedded learning activity opportunities; (b) effort should be made to provide a job-embedded learning activity in each course offered in the CPPP. Consider the timing of the courses and what job-embedded activities should be scheduled. School Improvement Plans should be concentrated on in the Fall semester, budget activities during the Spring semester when revising takes place and special education job-embedded activities such as appropriate paperwork, meetings, and developing a flowchart for their respective school district are suggestions; (c) procedures should be put in place to ensure that the job-embedded learning activity component is implemented at the district level. Signature pages between the mentor and student should exist for accountability purposes; (d) effort should be made by the university and school district administrators to provide practical job-embedded

learning activity opportunities; (e) each syllabus should contain a job-embedded learning activity section outlining the job-embedded activity that will take place. (f) develop a matrix of all job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP for all stakeholders involved. Faculty of the CPPP should meet prior to the next cohort beginning and collaborate to establish the job-embedded activities that should be concentrated on and the placement of those job-embedded activities throughout the program; (g) focus on emphasizing the special education component of administration through-out the curriculum and provide job-embedded activities that concentrate in this area. Develop an area in courses already taught to integrate special education activities to expose students to this arena of education; (h) lengthen the internship and implement internship sessions throughout the program by starting students at the beginning of the program in the first internship, place an internship in the middle of the program and finish with an internship at the conclusion of the program; (i) emphasize curriculum writing and assessment by reducing the number of redundant job-embedded learning activities from course to course. Look at the school improvement plan, code of ethics and reflection papers and replace with curriculum writing and assessment activities instead; and (k) meet with faculty members prior to each session to provide cohesiveness to the presentation of the curriculum in the CPPP to ensure that students are receiving a wide knowledge base.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

The job of school leader has been transformed by extraordinary economic, demographic, technological and global change (Levine, 2005). According to Levine, we are at a time when America's schools face a significant demand for effective principals and the majority of the programs that prepare school leaders vary in quality from insufficient to poor. The limited pool of potential school administrators is exacerbated by projections of significant turnover of current principals, resulting in critical shortages of qualified and committed principals, particularly in urban areas. Facing an increasing shortage of well-qualified school administrators and escalating pressures of accountability and criticism about significance and quality (McCarthy, 1999a), many university school leadership preparation programs are reexamining their practices and exploring the degree to which these programs prepare effective school leaders able to drive improvement of teaching and learning in their communities. There will be a unique opportunity and a significant challenge of recruiting, selecting, training, and motivating an entirely new group of leaders for school districts (Levine, 2005).

The ongoing shortage of qualified, quality school principals and assistant principals has forced many school districts to explore a range of options for increasing and strengthening their pool of site administrators. Some of these emerging alternative programs are located within the school districts themselves,

or are offered in partnership between districts and their neighboring university programs (Barber & Orr, 2003).

In 2003 Barber and Orr stated:

In addition to the pressure created by the competition of alternative credentialing routes, leadership preparation programs are also facing increased scrutiny about their quality and relevance. State agencies and professional educational groups, such as the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC), Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) have issued recommendations for an integrated framework of program standards and assessments to govern university-based leadership preparation programs. States are increasingly adopting these standards for credentialing programs, with 27 states currently using ELCC or ISLLC standards. (p. 4)

The influences of administrator shortages and retirements have caused university preparation programs to focus more on the design and delivery of their curricula. This includes utilizing theories in leadership development to guide the selection of course offerings, the type of coursework expected and experiences that prepare their candidates. In addition, universities are focusing on the means by which they evaluate the effectiveness of their programs (Barber & Orr, 2003).

The leadership of an effective principal is a crucial element of school reform. Though principals have not been the primary focus of recent reform efforts, they are needed to lead instructional improvement, foster effective change efforts, lead the implementation of new standards, and are central to shaping strong, professional school cultures (Deal & Peterson, 1994). The most effective principals do not lead in isolation. Encouraging and supporting teacher leadership is imperative to keep collaborative leadership alive. Before principals

can take on the dynamic challenges of school reform, however, they must become active learners and willing to change their own thinking and practice as they lead others in implementing reforms (McCay, 2001).

The principalship is a critical point of influence in systemic school reform efforts, representing the transfer of state and local policy into practice and the lever for shifting teaching and learning in the school community (Barber & Orr, 2003). Therefore, there is stress and scrutiny on the administrative position to improve student performance and meet standards. Joe Schneider, executive secretary of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), believes the ISLLC standards are changing the way departments of educational administration train future school leaders (Murphy, 2001a). Schneider indicated that an increased focus on instructional leadership has been long overdue in administrator-training programs and ISLLC has become the impetus for that change (Murphy). Murphy noted:

The current trend toward standards has found its way into administrator preparation programs and it is with great hope that we look to the efforts of such initiatives as the ISLLC standards to strengthen the profession and focus administrator preparation programs on those areas that lead to effective leadership and student achievement. (p. 3)

The disappointment with traditional and theory-based preparation programs, coupled with the public demand for increased expertise in the principalship, has produced a wave of new and redesigned principal preparation programs (Lauder, 2000). According to Murphy (2001b):

Educational leadership of today is being recast with materials from the intellectual and moral domains of the profession. A key element of the emerging vision is a deeper understating of the

centrality of learning, teaching and school improvement within the role of the school administrator, a shift in focus from educational administration as management to educational administration primarily concerned with teaching and learning. (p. 24)

Universities have traditionally focused on introducing potential administrators to the latest trends and theories in educational leadership, but have provided few practical skills for applying that knowledge to the real world (Buckner, Evans, Peel, Wallace, & Wrenn, 1998). Research indicates that the most effective programs use practical teaching methods such as role-playing, simulation activities, internships, and mentoring to encourage students to transfer their theoretical knowledge to the practice of educational leadership (Allen & Stacy, 1989; Cordeiro et al., 1993; Heller, 1989; Oldaker, 1995; Stewart, 1991 as cited in Buckner, et al, 1998). Over the past two decades, much has changed in the educational leadership profession and much has changed in the programs that prepared education leaders (Murphy, 2001b).

#### Statement of the Problem

Many aspiring administrators need opportunities that connect their coursework with practical field experiences. Job-embedded activities are a necessity to better prepare our future leaders. Central University (CU) initiated the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP), a pilot program, in a cooperative venture with six metropolitan Missouri school districts. (CU is a pseudonym used throughout the study to protect the identity of the institution being studied). To develop this program, faculty members from CU contacted superintendents from six school districts in the surrounding area to see if they

would consider working collaboratively to address leadership development for potential leaders within their district. The faculty members in charge of this initiative met with the superintendents on several occasions to engage in dialogue regarding this potential opportunity. The program began in August 2002 with 16 students. The pilot program sought to address the need for skilled, creative and effective leaders in suburban metropolitan school districts. The CPPP was created in response to criticisms of traditional principal preparation programs identified in the literature and included the following features: (a) students were carefully selected by the district administrators; (b) job-embedded learning activities were integrated in the curriculum; (c) each student was assigned an acting administrator as a mentor; (d) classes were held at the school district sites; (e) the university instructional team collaborated with area administrators; and (f) professional development activities were provided for district superintendents and/or their designees (Bowie, Clinefelter, Harris, & Woolsey, 2002). Students participating in the program fulfilled the requirements for a Master of Science in Education degree in the area of School Administration and completed the requirements for initial principal certification in Missouri in August 2004.

The district administrators from the collaborating school districts served in an advisory capacity to the CPPP coordinator and CU faculty members. The district administrators were responsible for recruiting students, selecting mentors, coordinating with CU, and implementing the program within their respective districts. The mentors, while satisfying administrative responsibilities, were



assigned/selected by school district representatives to provide mentoring support to students in the CPPP. Each student had at least one mentor during their program.

Students in the CPPP met for a period of two years for five hours every Wednesday night during each semester. They engaged in intensive coursework while maintaining their current positions within their school districts. Doctoral students evaluated the program after the first year of inception and determined that the CPPP was addressing the needs of area school systems and the findings suggested that sufficient support existed for continuing and expanding the program. Bowie et al., (2002) provided findings and recommendations in the areas of mentoring, recruitment, and job-embedded learning.

### *Mentoring*

Recommendations for improving the mentor component included the areas of training and communication. Discussion with current mentors and students helped establish guidelines and expectations for the relationship between the mentor and protégé for the purpose of developing a training program. Further recommendations were to provide mentors a copy of the course content and activities each semester, allowing them to connect theory with practice. Additional recommendations included exploring options for bringing mentors into the instructional component of the coursework and establishing direct lines of communication between university instructors and mentors (Bowie et al., 2002).

### *Recruitment*

Recommendations provided by Bowie et al., (2002) for the recruitment component included the process and communication utilized. While some districts may have established specific qualifications, students and mentors consistently reported that the process was unknown. It was recommended that the current district administrators establish general guidelines or criteria for the student application and selection processes. Once established, the guidelines, criteria, and process should be available to all stakeholders involved (Bowie et al., 2002)

### *Job-Embedded Learning*

Recommendations for the job-embedded component included content and time (Bowie et al., 2002). The evaluation established that students and mentors would like to create a closer bond between current course content and activities. It was recommended that mentors and students be provided an overview of the program including course content aligned with job-embedded learning. Additional recommendations included establishing clear guidelines for the amount and quality of time mentors and students engaged in job-embedded learning.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the job-embedded component in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that had been implemented in 2002 by a selected university. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses

for the evaluation of the job-embedded component in the CPPP. Currently, some universities have implemented the cohort model of principal preparation, while other universities in the state of Missouri continue to use a traditional model. The selected university has been in the process of implementing the CPPP for the past three years and the first cohort of students completed the program in August 2004. CU has committed to continuing and possibly expanding the CPPP. A second cohort group began the program in September 2004, while a third cohort began September, 2005. Additional in-depth research of the program is needed for ongoing program development.

This study reviewed and evaluated the job-embedded component of the CPPP by examining former students that received administration degrees and are currently practicing administrators by using a utilization-focused evaluation lens. Utilization-focused evaluation is based on the premise that evaluations should be judged by their actual use and utility and that assessments should be designed with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect teaching methodology pedagogy (Patton, 1997). The focus is on the intended use by clearly identified users. The identified primary users of the evaluation findings were CPPP stakeholders including Central University CPPP faculty members, former CPPP students currently serving as administrators, and district administrators from collaborating school districts. The evaluation is designed to be formative in nature with program improvement as the primary intended use of the findings. Patton asserted that utilization-focused evaluators should actively involve intended users in the evaluation process

throughout the life of the evaluation. Patton further stressed the necessity of aligning purpose and focus with intended uses and aligning data collection methods with understanding the needs of the intended users. The first stage of the study will involve the researcher meeting with key program stakeholders to identify the key questions to be examined and methods to be employed to collect and analyze data.

This study provides both a quantitative and qualitative approach to review and evaluate the quality and implementation of job-embedded learning in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. The study focused on the following practices for review: job-embedded learning and how mentoring, recruitment, and collaboration intertwine with the job-embedded learning component.

#### Research Questions

To address the purpose of the study, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum?
2. For those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program?
3. What do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP?

4. How do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

#### Significance of the Study

Hiring and retaining quality principals is complex and demanding. It involves not only identifying and selecting good leaders; it requires socializing them into the district culture and providing ongoing professional development and support (Kelley & Peterson, 2001). The purpose of this study analyzed the Central University CPPP faculty members; former CPPP students currently serving as administrators; and district administrators' perceptions of the job-embedded component in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. The study reviewed and evaluated the quality and implementation of job-embedded learning in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

The results of this study will be utilized to inform the users about implementing effective job-embedded learning activities and provide them growth and leadership opportunities. In addition, the study may assist the university faculty as they make future decisions related to ongoing program improvements in the area of principal preparation. Further, universities across the state can use the information as a basis for creating their own cohort program. Finally, the university can utilize the information for validation of the CPPP.

## Definition of Key Terms

*Assistant Principal:* The assistant principal is the person who has the position immediately below the principal and is responsible for the principal's duties if he or she is unable to do them.

*Cohort:* A group of graduate students that progresses together, from start to end, through a set of courses.

*Collaboration:* Collaboration is the act of working together with one or more people in order to achieve a common goal.

*Culture:* Culture is the shared beliefs, customs, practices, social behavior and values of a particular group.

*Curricula:* A curriculum is the group of subjects studied in a school or college.

*Internships:* An internship is an individual's partnership with an organization to work with them for a period of time to learn about a specific job.

*Job-Embedded Learning:* Job-embedded learning is the ability to experience real situations and address them accordingly by utilizing training that is being received in the principal preparation program.

*Leadership:* Leadership is the ability to guide, direct, or influence people.

*Leadership Preparation Programs:* Programs that are currently preparing administrators to take on the role of assistant principal or principal.

*Mentor:* A mentor is a person who gives another person help and advice over a period of time and often teaches them how to do their job. This includes

modeling, empathetic interactions, and an introduction to the best administrative practices.

*Network:* A network is a large and widely distributed group of people that communicate with one another and work together as a unit or system.

*Principal:* A principal is the head administrator of an elementary, middle, or high school.

*Recruitment:* Recruitment is the process to enroll somebody as a member, or to take on people as workers or members in a program.

*Reform:* Reform is the reorganization and improvement of something, especially a system that is considered to be faulty, ineffective, or unjust.

*Role Playing:* Role-playing is pretending to be someone else, especially as part of learning a new skill.

*Simulation Activities:* These activities assist in doing or making something that looks real but is not real.

*Trends:* Trends are a general development or change in a situation or in the way that people are behaving or addressing certain issues.

*Utilization-Focused Evaluation:* Utilization-Focused Evaluation (UFE) begins with the principle that evaluations should be judged by their utility and actual intended user use (Patton, 1997).

## Limitations

This study had the following limitations:

1. The study was limited to one university. This university was selected based on its implementation of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program and its location within a central state.
2. The study was limited by the number of students enrolled in the program and the availability of the students serving as administrators, CU faculty teaching in the CPPP, and school district administrators.
3. The study was limited in that it is contingent upon the respondents' perceptions.
4. The study was also limited in that the evaluator was part of the doctoral program that conducted the initial study of the CPPP in its first year of implementation.

## Summary

The purpose of this study was to conduct a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the job-embedded component in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that had been implemented in 2002 by a selected university. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the assessment of the CPPP. To begin this process, stating the problem was essential. The main focus was on the improvement of the job-embedded learning component as it relates to the curriculum.



The purpose of this study was to analyze the perceptions of the job-embedded component of the Central University CPPP by faculty members, students currently serving as administrators, and district administrators who collaborate in the CPPP. Currently, some universities have implemented the cohort model of principal preparation, while other universities continue to use a traditional model. The selected university has been in the process of implementing the CPPP for the past three years and recently issued Education Administration Masters degrees to their first cohort.

Chapter Two is a review of literature on principal preparation programs. The contents of Chapter Two include the historical perspective, current trends, benefits of collaboration, accountability and data driven decision making, effective principal training programs, and internships focusing on job-embedded learning. Chapter three consists of the research design and methodology. Topics discussed include purposes and overview, research questions, research design, data collection, and data analysis. Findings of the study are presented in Chapter four. Chapter five includes a discussion of the findings, as well as recommendations for future practice and research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Review of the Literature

It is critical for those interested in school administration to have adequate time to develop the necessary skills. The job is difficult and challenging. Without thorough preparation, individuals entering the administrative arena are bound to be less than effective. This would be both unfair to the individual and to the communities they are serving (Carr, 2000). Good schools need good leaders and effective approaches to preparing candidates to become school principals are necessary. However, many educators think that preparation programs for new principals have in large part failed to keep pace with the present intricate realities of what is expected of this vital leadership position (Casavant & Cherkowski, 2001).

In spite of the continuing efforts of many organizations, it has become increasingly apparent that many of the current leadership preparation programs are doing an inadequate job of preparing leaders for dealing with the problems and issues they will be facing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Clark & Clark, 1997). More than ever before, our nation's prosperity and democracy depend on whether we help all of our young people, not just a few, reach high levels of knowledge and achievement. Our educational system must achieve this fundamental goal to prepare all young people to become productive members of the 21st century workforce and active citizens who contribute to their community life.

The principalship continues to transform, gaining more attention as the key position in determining the success of the school. The latest trends toward

higher standards as measured by test scores, decentralization of decision making for schools, combined with the move toward school-based management, place even greater accountability on the principal (Ditzhazy & Moore, 2000).

Effective leadership is an essential ingredient to success in schools. Successful school improvement typically involves a talented, effective school principal that brings together teachers, parents, and students to define and accomplish a common mission to help all children reach high standards of achievement (Ditzhazy & Moore, 2000).

While public schools have made modest improvements in the face of significant challenges, we must dramatically accelerate the pace of progress so that we can help all of our children reach high academic standards and succeed (Drake & Mattocks, 2001). The average age of school principals is 50 years and 40% of all principals are eligible to retire within the next few years (Arnold, Hargadine, McCown, & Miles, 2000). Moreover, thousands of new schools will be created in response to record-breaking student enrollments and as part of the rapidly growing charter and small schools movements, creating a demand for even more principals ready to lead new schools (Bennett, Gooden, Leonard, Lindauer, & Petrie, 2003).

School principals today, mainly those in public schools, have a myriad of leadership and managerial responsibilities as they fulfill their roles (Lyons, 2003). Lyons believed that out of all of the responsibilities a principal encounters, none is more important than that of chief educational accountability officer. Rarely are there simple solutions to the many complex problems and demands inherent in

the principal's role. At times, the demands may seem overwhelming and the solutions difficult or impossible (Ditzhazy & Moore, 2000). Too many people with the potential to become great school leaders are not pursuing this opportunity. It is essential to provide talented potential school leaders with an attractive pathway to a successful principalship. If leadership is vital to the schools, preparation of those leaders is very serious business indeed, and graduate programs must move beyond the training of efficient managers to the preparation of visionary, moral, and transformational leaders (Siegrist, 1999).

Coursework and field experiences should be viable and valuable components of preparation programs. Topics most often rated by principals as essential or very useful were supervision and evaluation, instructional leadership, legal issues, technology, special education issues, program evaluation and curriculum development (Clark, Hackmann, Lucas, Nori, Petzko, & Valentine, 2002). Critics have attacked school administrator preparation programs for focusing on the academic dimensions of the profession to the near exclusion of actual practice. They also have lambasted programs for ignoring the ethical and moral dimensions of the job (Murphy, 2001b). The recent trends, perspectives, and recommendations for educational leadership programs reveals that the context of practice is changing, that practice is increasingly complex, and that efforts are underway to make training programs more relevant to practice (Fulmer & Muth, 2003).

Today, educational leadership is being recast with resources from the intellectual and ethical domains of the profession. A key component of the

emerging vision is a deeper understanding of the centrality of learning, teaching and school improvement. Shifting the focal point from educational administration as management to educational administration as instructional leadership is vital for the success of our students (Informed Educator Series, 2000). This chapter will provide an overview of the related literature on principal preparation programs, historical perspectives, current trends, benefits of collaboration, effective principal training programs, and internships focusing on job-embedded learning.

#### Historical Perspective on Principal Preparation Programs

Painter (2003) suggested that the problem with principal preparation programs is directly related to the admission standards that universities are requiring. Painter believed that this has resulted in unqualified students, the watering-down of the curriculum, diminished status of educational administration programs, and graduates unprepared for the demands of their jobs in school administration. Few would expect a principal's day to be leisurely and contemplative, yet being overwhelmed by the various demands experienced by leaders was shared by several principals and superintendents in the Public Agenda report, funded by The Wallace Foundation (Duffet et al., 2001). According to Duffet et al. 69% of the 909 principals from randomly selected public schools responding to in-depth surveys indicated that traditional leadership preparation programs were out of touch with the realities of what it takes to run today's schools. Hale and Moorman (2003) stated the following:

The general consensus in most quarters is that principal preparation programs (with few notable exceptions) are too

theoretical and totally unrelated to the daily demands on contemporary principals. The course work is poorly sequenced and organized, making it impossible to scaffold the learning. Because clinical experiences are inadequate or non-existent, students do not have mentored opportunities to develop practical understanding or real-world job competence. (p. 6-7)

All too often, new principals are armed with theory and overwhelmed with reality. Universities have traditionally focused on introducing potential administrators to the latest trends and theories in educational leadership, but provide few practical skills for applying that knowledge to the real world (Buckner, et al., 1998).

The old model of leadership with its strict separation of management and production is no longer effective. Principals must serve as leaders for student learning. They must know academic content and academic techniques. They must work with teachers to strengthen skills. They must collect, analyze and use data in ways that fuel excellence (Hale & Moorman, 2003). The past decade has seen some serious and confrontational dialogue among observers and students of educational leadership. While the traditional models of communication have served us well, we must acknowledge that the world has moved closer to an uncanny culture with information growing exponentially and bombarding us at the speed of light (Siegrist, 1999).

Traditionally, college and university-based educational leadership programs have emphasized management and administrative issues rather than curricular and instructional issues (Hale & Moorman, 2003). The intense pressure for principals to be instructional leaders who can more effectively implement

standards-based reform has given unprecedented prominence and political visibility to preparing school principals.

Many universities are embracing the cohort model because of the structural and organizational benefits it promises and because of the expectation of stronger bonds to form among the students that would lead to increased retention. Over the past two decades, much has changed in educational leadership development and much has changed in the programs that prepare education leaders.

#### Current Trends of Principal Preparation Programs

Several of the most prevalent recent changes in educational leadership programs, while structural in nature, reflect more fundamental shifts in program orientation (McCarthy, 1999a). Murphy (2001b) suggested the current trend toward standards has found its way into administrator preparation programs and it is with great hope that we look to the efforts of such initiatives as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards to strengthen the profession and focus administrator preparation programs on those areas that lead to effective leadership and student achievement.

Forged from research on productive educational leadership and the wisdom of colleagues, the standards were drafted by personnel from 24 state educational agencies and representatives from various professional associations. The consortium's vision of leadership was based on the premise that the criteria and standards for the professional practice of school leaders must be grounded in the knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning. The purpose of the

consortium was to provide a means through which states could work together to develop and implement model standards, assessments, professional development, and licensing procedures for school leaders. The overarching goals of ISLLC were to raise the bar for school leaders to enter and remain in the profession, and to reshape concepts of educational leadership (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). According to Murphy (2001a), the standards are as follows:

Standard 1: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

Standard 2: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Standard 3: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Standard 5: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Standard 6: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. (p. 3-4)



Standards alone, however, are not enough to restructure leadership programs. To be most effective, the new standards should lead to a basic rethinking of content, delivery, and assessment (Lashway, 2003b). It is important to note that practitioners should be able to see the relationship between the ISLLC standards, administrative skills, and important leadership concepts (Cox, 2002). As we prepare future leaders, there is some assurance that the standards are, by and large, perceived as supportive of some of the core concepts presently emphasized in administrator preparation programs (Educational Research Service, 2002).

A principal preparation program must attract those educators with the potential and the aspiration to lead. The key changes in preparation programs include emphasis on the effectiveness and efficiency of the preparation program, advocacy for application of adult learning methodology, focusing on the participant's skills and the results produced, and support for curricular choice based on diagnosis of individual needs (Lauder, 2000).

As Lauder (2000) looked at principal preparation programs, she identified seven trends in new programs and their role in the success and failure of principals and their ability to affect student achievement. These seven programs have incorporated the following components: 1) entrance requirements aligned with the demands of the principalship, 2) cohort models, 3) clear performance-based standards, 4) opportunities for individualization, 5) development and assessment of skills, 6) emphasis on reflective practice, and 7) continuous program review with input from current practitioners.

Education will be negligent if it does not take meaningful action to influence the next age of leaders. The high quality of principal preparation programs plays a considerable role in the continuing success or failure of principals and their capability to positively influence student achievement. (Lashway, 2003a)

### *Cohort Model*

An example utilized by McCarthy (1999b) focused on students being admitted to degree programs in cohort groups. Cohorts provide support systems and foster a sense of community among students and faculty. Jackson and Kelly (2002) provided a positive and forward-looking perspective on programs of educational leadership that have moved beyond traditional leadership preparation and pedagogical strategies. Characteristics of exemplary programs described include problem-based learning, cohort delivery models, collaborative partnerships, field experiences, and the use of technology (Clark & Clark, 1997). Cohort groups provide a valuable model to improve principal preparation as students work together (Buckner et al., 1998). The cohort design stresses the shared experiences among participants and decreases the anxiety many feel while caught between the administrative and teaching roles. By nurturing a cohesive cohort, programs display the significance of teamwork and collaboration and create a network of peers. As universities address their principal preparation programs, the utilization of cohorts is increasing. The cohort structure has been found to increase the academic performance of group members and promote their reflective abilities (Cordeiro & Kraus, 1995, as cited in Krueger & Milstein,

1997). According to Barnett et al., (1996) the perceptions of students indicated that working through cohorts enabled them to mesh theory with reality and to better clarify their personal beliefs.

Additionally, Krueger and Milstein (1997) cited three reasons why they believe cohorts are powerful. First, cohorts can provide peer support and motivation to get through difficult times that inevitably will be confronted by students during preparation for leadership positions. Second, cohorts promote networking in both the short term (during the program) and the long term (over the members' years as administrators and beyond). Finally, because the cohort structure can model adult learning in supportive environments, it can enhance the probability that students will promote this approach when they become school leaders. Teitel (1997) understood from the literature and from talking to colleagues that cohort groups supported student learning and laid the basis for networks that might benefit students as they became change agents in their schools and school systems. Staff support of the principal is important, but principals must find fulfillment principally from their own accomplishments (Caddell & Malone, 2000). Cohorts are a way for the principal to receive the intrinsic motivation through networking and having professional conversations that validate and enhance their current practice (Teitel).

The cohort model provides an opportunity for classes to dig deeper on sensitive issues. To take advantage of the opportunity, the programs must ensure that explorations on issues critical to the development of transformational leaders take place and are not dependent on the dynamics of a particular cohort

(Teitel, 1997). According to Teitel, the meaningful conversations that take place between cohort members are vital to the success of each individual in their own growth and satisfaction with this type of model. According to Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2001), the positive effects of cohort structured learning experiences include enhanced feelings of group affiliation and acceptance, social and emotional support, motivation, persistence, group learning, and mutual assistance. Cohorts can help learners build group and individual knowledge, think creatively, and streamline problems from numerous perspectives. Cohorts model the type of team building that is increasingly encouraged among school faculty (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth). Browne-Ferrigno and Muth also indicated that cohorts can foster improved academic learning and program completion rates among administrative credential candidates.

#### *Grow Your Own Philosophy*

According to Potter (2001), the best solution over the long term for the principalship crisis is for districts to concentrate on growing and nurturing their own candidates. Ben Hix, the principal of Thompson Valley High School in Loveland, CO, has created a culture in the building for growing principals (Frieler, Hix, & Wall, 2003). Frieler, Hix, and Wall proclaimed:

Those teachers who aspire to be principals have a common knowledge that there is a possibility for them to become an administrator if they demonstrate potential leadership and are willing to make some personal sacrifices to get there. Teachers who show leadership potential are encouraged to consider administration or additional responsibilities during the goal-setting process of their evaluation. (p.22)

Districts are beginning to recognize that potential leaders within the district need growth and leadership opportunities and developing a grow-your-own philosophy is one way to address this concern. The candidates can get a feel for the culture for the district and the experience allows the current administration the opportunity to evaluate whether or not the candidate would be a good fit for their district (Hutchinson & Mohn, 2002). By finding effective ways to grow your own leaders, districts can make sure they have the talent they need and can reduce time and resources that they devote to attracting outside talent. Through these experiences, the future administrators develop a sense of being able to capitalize on their strengths to achieve a goal. Aspiring school leaders help their peer teachers see the principalship as a positive experience and help promote and support the role of the principalship (Frieler, Hix, & Wall, 2003). By growing their own leaders, school districts give high-potential people the chance to pick up new skills and knowledge and take on new responsibilities.

By giving clear opportunities to reach for bigger and better things people tend to stay with the district (Byham, Paese, & Smith, 2002). Byham, Paese, and Smith provide

a systematic and targeted method for identifying and developing high-potential individuals. Compared to the traditional approaches, it is: faster and simpler, requiring less paperwork and management time. More accurate in terms of getting the right person in the right job at the right time to meet organizational needs. More developmental, with improved diagnoses of development needs, a sharper focus on building skills and knowledge, and better support for change and growth. Fairer by providing greater integrity and transparency, minimizing “old boy network” influences, and creating more diversity by encompassing talented people wherever they are in the district. (p.1-2)

The focus is on the development of leaders who can run the organization as it will be, not necessarily as it is now. The grow-your-own participants decide whether they want to join, share in the responsibility for creating and executing their development plans, and are consulted relative to their assignments. This method is more flexible because it can accommodate late bloomers and work-life conflict considerations. Those individuals that possess leadership talent are provided job challenges as well as the appropriate support for those challenges. The job challenges assist future leaders with the feeling that they are growing in terms of skills and responsibilities which in turn help in retention (Byham et al., 2002).

The grow-your-own philosophy can have a multiplying effect if those who are trained this way become principals who in turn create similar environments in their schools (Frieler, Hix, & Wall, 2003). Districts need to end relying on the uncertain pool of “self-selected” people with administrative credentials but little inclination or talent for leadership. Districts need to develop criteria and methods to choose high-quality candidates for leadership preparation. School districts should identify those leaders in the district who demonstrate knowledge of curriculum and instruction, as well as a passion for assisting students to meet high standards.

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) assists state leaders by directing attention to key issues; collecting, compiling and analyzing comparable data; and conducting broad studies and initiating discussions that help states and institutions form long-range plans, actions and policy proposals. The SREB

suggested that progressive districts are discovering that a formal process for identifying those with potential to be good principals can encourage high-performing teachers to pursue administrative credentials. This formal recruitment process may include incentives such as tuition grants and priority for leadership positions. However, while districts can identify promising candidates, district leaders typically have little influence over the formal preparation that these candidates receive (Frieler, Hix, & Wall, 2003).

The philosophy of having a grow-your-own culture has huge benefits according to Frieler, Hix and Wall (2003). Empowering teachers improves the school's culture. The benefits include staff members who are able to utilize their strengths to achieve goals after receiving training, the principal has the opportunity to identify candidates who would make great principals, it helps teachers identify if they are the right fit for administration, and realizing that the principalship provides another career opportunity to challenge master teachers. Hix stated that growing your own principals can be a very rewarding experience and that we would never face a principal shortage if every principal adopted the philosophy of perpetuating the principalship through an intensive, in-school training program.

#### Benefits of Collaboration

The lack of partnerships between universities and school districts affects the selection and admission of candidates and the design and conduct of the preparation program (Hale & Moorman, 2003). Schools and universities must work together to recruit and prepare diverse cohorts of highly qualified

candidates. To better prepare future administrators, universities, national professional associations, and schools are working collaboratively to develop programs that more appropriately address the tasks encountered by the principal (Buckner, Evans, Peel, Wallace, & Wrenn, 1998).

Buckner et al., (1998) discussed a program created by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) entitled the Potential Administrator Development Program (PADP) that would unite key elements of administrator preparation. The research conducted indicated four areas relevant to improving preparation programs through improved job-embedded experience by utilizing theory-to-practice, mentoring, internships, and cohort study.

Theory-to-practice focuses on practical classroom activities and is directly related to successful programs. Students are placed in situations where they must react to typical administrative tasks while being evaluated. Mentoring potential administrators has become a primary component of many leadership programs, as current administrators guide future leaders through the daily happenings of the administrative position. Collaboration between universities and K-12 school districts during the internship will help to provide a meaningful experience. Educational leadership training is imperative and will not happen if the preparation program at the university does not incorporate collaboration to its curriculum requirements. Lastly, to improve collaboration with principal preparation programs, many universities are relying on cohort programs where the candidates are selected by their school districts for leadership ability (Garcia, McGovern-Robinett, Nolly, & Wehring, 2003).



According to Garcia et al., (2003), collaboration is essential to the transformation of principal preparation programs and their effectiveness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Focusing on specific components such as theory-to-practice, mentoring internship and cohort groups in a collaborative arena can only strengthen the programs for future leaders.

Collaborative programs between universities and school districts are becoming a new trend in educating our future leaders. Instructional leadership is a primary focus of the programs due to the fact that principals are being held accountable for student achievement. Universities are looking at their curriculum and embedding this component as part of their delivery. In addition, universities are taking a hard look at the shortage of principals and methods to attract quality candidates. These two factors influence collaborative principal preparation programs as they try to transform the way they train potential administrators (Garcia et al., 2003).

#### Accountability and Data Driven Decision Making

At the top of the leadership agenda, instruction has become a prominent item, driven by the growth of standards-based accountability systems. Precise standards of learning, coupled with heavy pressure to provide concrete evidence of success, have reaffirmed the significance of instructional leadership. According to Lashway (2002b), there is a general agreement that instructional leadership is a critical skill for which few principals have had in-depth training, especially in a standards-based environment.

Instead of encouraging teachers' efforts, principals now must lead teachers to produce tangible results on ambitious academic standards. Success in standards-based reform clearly requires sophisticated skills, exerting pressure on preparation programs to sharpen their focus on instructional leadership (Lashway, 2002a). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has responded with new performance-based standards based on the assumption that the purpose of leadership is to improve teaching and learning. Administrator preparation programs must prove that their students can develop a vision, design comprehensive professional growth plans, provide effective instructional programs, and apply best practices to student learning (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2002).

### *Instructional Leadership*

The new conceptualization of the school administrator as the "leader of student learning" has opened the doors to changes in practice and preparation. Years of critique and experimentation have produced blueprints for change in preparation programs (Hale & Moorman, 2003). The principalship continues to change, gaining more attention as the key position in determining the success of the school. The recent trends toward higher standards as measured by test scores, decentralization of decision making for school, combined with the move toward school-based management, place even greater responsibility on the principal. When principals improve their performance, it has positive effects on a school's culture and structure (Norton, 2000). According to Eckley et al., (1998), principals continue to be liable for improving the teaching available to all students

and to raise the learning of those students, while they also attempt to transform the roles and responsibilities for themselves and their teachers.

Instructional leadership should be one of the primary focuses of leadership preparation programs. District administrators responsible for leadership development voiced concern over the failure of new administrators and expressed hope that a responsive internship could assist in allaying failure of those who have potential, but who are promoted very quickly. District leaders identified the areas of greatest need among new administrators to be instructional leadership, organizational ability and multi-task ability (Taylor, 2001).

The State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) is part of the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds' larger educational leadership initiative designed to prepare, support and sustain a leadership cadre in each state that can transform schools and school systems to produce improved academic performance for low-income youth (Carr, Greenfield, Mehas, Ruhl, & Schneider, 2003). The state government and educational leaders compete for grants through SAELP while they support research. In addition, the state government and educational leaders must also analyze and prepare the legislative and administrative actions that support and sustain current educational leaders.

The state of Missouri has been awarded this three-year grant, with the goal of establishing an overall vision and expectation for the practice of educational leadership, which focuses on improved teaching and learning at the district and school level throughout the state (Carr et al., 2003). Initiatives such as SAELP are aiding in the preparedness of leaders in addressing instruction.

Fink and Resnick (2001) declared that principals should serve as instructional leaders, not just as generic managers. As principals' days are filled with many activities of the managerial essence, few act as genuine instructional leaders. Since many managerial items inevitably occur in schools, many principals spend relatively little time in classrooms and even less time analyzing instruction with teachers. When a superintendent works on instructional leadership with a principal, Fink and Resnick suggested remembering that the superintendent and the principal are focusing on leadership, not just on the specifics of instruction. Principals must be able to judge the teaching they see and therefore must have content knowledge.

As instructional leaders, principals must be able to help teachers in expanding their ability to teach students. They need to relay what types of professional development would be appropriate. The principal must lead by creating a culture of learning and by providing the right kinds of specialized professional development opportunities (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Instructional leaders immerse themselves in the core technology of teaching and learning, use data to make decisions, and align staff development with student learning needs (Lashway, 2002b). It is important for future leaders to understand that creating a school in which student learning is continuously progressing is in direct relation to the idea that faculty members are continuously learning and the principal needs to provide those opportunities.

### *Shortage of Principals*

The principalship has always been a hot seat. But in years past the position attracted strong candidates motivated by a yearning to help youth, as well as the accountability, prestige and income that went with the job. Today, however, the belief that a principal can directly affect the lives of children is bogged down by the reality of reports, federal and local mandates, and increasing criticism of public education (Potter, 2001). Fullan (1996) believed that strong leadership is required to manage the various issues that surface in education as well as the potential opportunities to make major reforms. A 1998 survey conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals found that increased responsibilities, long work days, difficult parents, pressure from school boards, and low pay made the principalship less desirable than ever before (Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001).

Teachers comprise the usual pool of principal candidates, but they are becoming less willing to pursue administrative certification. Gilman and Lanman-Givens (2001) identified six issues that are holding these potentially promising candidates back. The reasons include too little pay, costly and irrelevant requirements to obtain a degree, too many pressures, too many hats to wear, not enough time to do the job, and too little authority.

The question now becomes, what can we do to alleviate these problems?

Gilman and Lanman-Givens (2001) respond with these:

- 1) Principals' salaries must increase to a level that is appropriate for their efforts and responsibilities,

2) universities must develop meaningful training programs for principals and focus on relevant professional issues rather than offer the traditional collection of old classes,

3) school districts should identify and recruit capable teachers who have leadership abilities,

4) school districts need to restructure the principal's role to allow principals to focus on student learning and instructional leadership and to face fewer demands for managerial tasks,

5) school districts need to offer generous vacation policies and allocate time for professional renewal,

6) principals must have authority commensurate with their responsibilities. (p. 73)

Certification is not proof of quality in today's society. While school district leaders frequently report that the supply of principals is diminishing rapidly, the problem is not the lack of certified principals but rather a lack of quality principals (Ditzhazy & Moore, 2000).

According to Archer (2003), the real challenge facing the nation is getting the right leaders to the right schools. Districts are inclined to draw fewer applicants for vacancies at schools serving the most disadvantaged populations. Many of those applying for the principalships appear to lack some of the essential skills that district leaders now view as imperative (Caddell & Malone, 2000). Schools are in dire need of capable and caring principals who can recognize problems and address them with inspiring leadership by working hard. The leader's vision and determination will lead them in the direction to make progress in their school and in their students' lives (Kirkpatrick, 2000).

## Effective Principal Training Programs

Effective principal training programs are noted for their focus on four different components within their curriculum. These programs look at mentoring, recruitment, collaboration, and job-embedded learning in addition to the traditional courses that are part of an educational administration degree (Clark & Clark, 1997).

### *Mentoring*

Administrative mentoring has become an increasingly popular strategy for developing effective in-school leadership. Although mentoring has existed for thousands of years, it is only in the last 30 years that mentor-protégé relationships have received increasing academic and professional interest (Malone, 2001). A mentor is a more experienced person who is in a position to lead, help, and guide a less experienced person in his or her professional development (Casavant & Cherkowski, 2001). The idea that protégés feel more confident about their professional ability and are able to enhance their communication skills while learning the tricks of the trade is a strong component of mentoring programs. According to Crocker and Harris (2002), even in this new millennium where education is highly accessible, an important component of training occurs through the mentoring process. In well-structured mentoring programs, the mentor and protégé make a mutual commitment to work collaboratively toward the accomplishment of an independently customized professional development plan (Daresh, 2001). The main goal of the mentor is to guide the learner in his or her search for strategies to resolve dilemmas, to

enhance self-confidence, and to create a broad range of leadership skills. Competent mentors do this through 1) modeling, 2) coaching, 3) gradually removing support as the protégé's competence increases, 4) questioning and probing to promote self-reflection and problem solving skills, and 5) providing feedback and counsel (Daresh).

During the past decade situating students in field experiences with public school practitioners as mentors has become a component of most principal preparation programs. In cooperation with universities and other training programs, such as educational service centers, practitioner mentors serve as guides throughout the experiential learning process. Strong internship models provide candidates with a concentrated, extended opportunity to wrestle with the day-to-day demands of school administrators under the watchful eye of an expert mentor, with reflection tied to theoretical insights through related coursework. (Daresh, 2001).

Therefore, it is critical for principal training institutions to adequately prepare mentors for this responsibility. Yet, attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of these types of mentoring processes is a challenge that requires an identification of the expectations for mentoring and the mentoring relationship. Effective mentoring is a complex process. Problems associated with effective mentoring include supporting, assisting, and guiding the process; finding time to communicate effectively; facilitating self-reliance; and training (Davis et al., 2004).



In the teaching phase of a preparation program it is essential that the mentors and mentees have a perception of an effective mentoring relationship. Being a mentor requires certain characteristics which include a willingness to share knowledge, honesty, competency, a willingness to allow growth, a willingness to give positive and critical feedback, and directness in dealings with the mentee (Davis et al., 2004). Additional individual traits that contribute to positive mentoring for the mentor or mentee or both participants are confidence, a high energy level, and a gregarious personality.

Components necessary for creating a positive mutual mentor connection are trust and respect, value of the relationship, and a supportive atmosphere. Mentors must recognize that after a number of years in the principal position, it is possible that one could suffer from frustration and can tend to be negative and cynical (Sheets & Young, 2003). It is imperative that mentors relay positive information of the principalship.

Rationale for the implementation of mentoring programs in principal preparation programs is based on the assumption that the role of the leader is a lonely endeavor and that having the capability to communicate to peers concerning personal and professional concerns is one way to decrease the sense of seclusion. Mentoring enhances a principal preparation program by enabling individuals to find a colleague in the real world who will be accessible to offer realistic solutions to problems faced in the profession, to depict procedures and policies, and to provide instant feedback to mentees concerning how

successfully the skills connected with being an administrator are addressed (Sheets & Young, 2003).

Daresh and Playko (as cited in Crocker & Harris, 2002) identified seven important characteristics of mentors in a program of professional development for either aspiring or beginning administrators. The criteria include:

- 1) having experience as practicing school administrators;
- 2) demonstrating leadership qualities of intelligence, good oral and written communication skills, acceptance of multiple alternative solutions to complex problems, decisiveness, clarity of vision, and well developed interpersonal skills and sensitivities;
- 3) being able to ask the right questions;
- 4) being willing to accept "another way of doing things;"
- 5) wanting to see people go beyond their present levels of performance;
- 6) modeling the principles of continuous learning and reflection;
- 7) exhibiting awareness of the political and social realities of life in at least one school system. (p. 12)

Crocker and Harris (as cited in Holloway, 2004) gathered information from mentors and mentees in a principal preparation program to explore the participants' views on the important components of successful mentoring programs. These researchers concluded that the mentoring programs should

- 1) provide mentors with extra time to spend with their mentee, perhaps by releasing the mentor from other duties,
- 2) make specific guidelines available to mentors outlining meaningful activities and ways to involve mentees in these experiences,
- 3) require mentors to participate in formal training that emphasizes relationship building and professional collaborative behaviors. (p. 2)

Mentoring should not only be considered an essential part of principal training, but should be a component of the induction process. Planned induction programs often end with the presentation of a set of keys and an office. At this

point the new principal is easily overwhelmed by the pressure, responsibility, and ambiguity inherent in this position. It is incumbent upon educational leadership programs to help prospective principals utilize their resources and mentors to guide them (Neely & Stader, 2002). Not only do future administrators need experience on the job, they also need someone to serve as a guide through the process, a guide who is concerned in the future administrator's progress and would like him or her to do well. Too often, school districts seem to assume that new principals possess all the skills and abilities needed to lead their schools successfully; however, the task of the new school leader can be lonely and intimidating. An effective mentoring program can greatly improve the isolation felt by new administrators if it includes trained and competent mentors who engage their mentees in structured, thoughtful activities and experiences (Holloway, 2004). The benefits of mentoring far outweigh its limitations and provide experienced leaders with an opportunity to share talent and to prepare new effective leaders (Casavant & Cherkowski, 2001).

### *Collaboration*

According to Clark and Clark (1997), renewed efforts on the part of school district and university administrators, university faculty, professional administrator organizations, and state and federal government officials to collaborate in the improvement and support of educational leadership preparation programs are essential. They must address the inadequacies of preparing leaders for dealing with the problems and issues they will be facing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Many dilemmas are faced as universities seek to bring congruence to the demands of practitioners for viable, hands-on, labor-intensive approaches to leadership preparation. School districts that are serious about attracting and keeping quality principals must find ways to train potential principals before they take the jobs. School districts and university collaborations must begin to address items such as being an instructional leader prior to being forced to learn on-the-job (Gallegos, 1999). Many existing educational administration programs support strong notions about instructional organization, instructional delivery, instructional time, and student evaluation. These notions are often archaic, unsupported by learning theory, and inappropriate for the development of successful professionals (Murphy as cited in Clark & Clark, 1997).

The lack of partnerships between universities and school districts make identifying the best candidates or individuals who have shown the greatest promise of future success as a principal difficult. Today's partnerships must focus on the areas of greatest need (Hale & Moorman, 2003). School districts and universities must work together to recruit and prepare diverse cohorts of highly qualified candidates, men and women who can serve in urban or rural settings; lead low-performing schools; and prepare their communities to meet changing demographic, social, economic and political change (Hale & Moorman).

Faculty and other program staff work together, often with school district administrators, to develop and integrate the principal preparation program in ways that enable students to master identified critical competencies. These types of programs tend to be more demanding of participants and have more careful

selection and screening processes in place. In addition, the collaboration allows the universities and school districts to focus and pay attention to the sequencing and scheduling of courses (Jackson & Kelley, 2002).

According to Hale and Moorman (2003) the lack of strong working relationships with school districts makes it impossible to develop learning laboratories in which student-principals can make protected or mentored mistakes from which they can develop and learn. Jackson and Kelley (2002) believed that the important features of collaboration between school districts and universities should have a clear, well-defined curriculum focus. Significant collaboration must exist to assure that the sequencing of courses, scheduling structure and recruitment of students for the program are in the best interest of the school district and the university. Jackson concluded that what may be difficult to replicate is the time and effort expended by the university faculty and the school district to discuss, plan and agree upon a direction for the principal preparation program. This collaboration is what determines the success of a principal preparation program.

### *Recruitment*

Traditionally, rookie principals have been left to sink or swim. Having finished a university training program, they are assumed to be equipped, and get little direction beyond bland encouragement or an occasional practical tip (Lashway, 2003a). But that attitude is changing as schools realize that scarcity of high-quality principals means promising leaders should not only be energetically recruited but also carefully nurtured once they are on board (Lashway).

Creighton and Jones (2001) submitted that the difficulty in finding a capable and diverse pool in educational leadership programs stems, in part, from the way that programs recruit and select students in the first place.

The selection process for the principalship is the most significant factor in assuring quality candidates (Kirkpatrick, 2000). There is a shortage of quality candidates for openings in principalship (Potter, 2001). There has been great emphasis placed on finding and retaining good administrators. Increased difficulty and perceived undesirability of the job have been identified as factors that can lead to administrator turnover (Fields, 2002). The recruitment of outstanding individuals to serve as principals has become a challenging task for superintendents and school boards, largely because the principal's job is so demanding. The principal is expected to be a manager, instructional leader, motivator, lay psychologist, and public relations expert (Caddell & Malone, 2000).

How does one convince teachers who are transformational leaders to leave the security of the classroom for the unknowns of the principalship? It becomes the task of current administrators and university faculty to explain the broad perspective of the principalship so it is attractive to teachers (Caddell & Malone, 2000). Administrators need to focus on the positive characteristics of the principal's job. The principal has the opportunity to make fundamental, structural change. Sound constructive change not only improves the lives and education of students in the school; it also improves the lives of teachers and support staff. The desire to implement fundamental change is a part of the transformational

leader's mission. Personal mission can become the school's mission (Caddell & Malone).

In a classroom the teacher may affect the lives of a few hundred students; the principal of a building has the opportunity to affect thousands through the teachers he or she leads. Whether the leader is the teacher in the classroom or the principal of a building, both must have passion for education and the school to affect change. The leader must know where change needs to occur (Caddell & Malone, 2000).

When hiring and retaining quality principals, Kelley and Peterson (2001) found that districts need first to identify and prepare a strong pool of candidates for the position. The pool needs to have many candidates who have strong skills. Simply having a university degree is not sufficient. The second item is for districts to identify and select quality candidates. This means significant approaches to discovering and selecting people, more than simple interviews and paper credentials. Third, following selection, districts need to socialize new leaders into the norms and values of the culture as well as prepare them for the specific administrative tasks they require. Fourth, during the first year as a principal in the district the new administrator should enjoy the support, coaching and socialization that will make their coming years highly productive and matched with the district. Every school deserves a high-quality principal. In the coming years, districts and states have the opportunity to recruit, motivate and provide ongoing professional development for thousands of new leaders (Kelley & Peterson, 2001). Districts must develop ways to recruit and prepare exceptional

and aspiring principals, design programs to ease the transition in the first year, and establish excellent, career-long professional development programs.

### *Job-embedded Learning*

One of the most promising new approaches to professional growth in education is job-embedded learning, or learning that occurs as administrators engage in their daily work activities. Job-embedded learning is the result of educators sharing what they have learned from their teaching experiences, reflecting on specific work experiences to uncover new understanding, and listening to colleagues share best practices they have discovered while trying out new programs or planning and implementing a project (McQuarrie & Wood, 1999). Educators are keenly aware that the most powerful learning occurs when authentic experiences are embedded into the curriculum (Lovely, 2004).

Providing real-world knowledge and experience within a university program with the limited time allocation is an issue that continues to be addressed. Internship experiences as part of administrator preparation programs are increasing due to their value in bridging the gap between knowledge, skills, theory, and practice (Taylor et al., 2001). One obvious purpose of the internship is to provide on-the-job experience under the mentorship of a high-performing principal or district administrator. Taylor cited another rationale as being the opportunity for the intern administrator to observe and reflect on what the high-performing administrator does.

The mentor-intern relationship can serve to provide that bridge from theory to practice as well as relationship building that will assist in beginning the



administrative career. For this form of training to take place, universities and public schools must work collectively to coordinate university classes with practical field experiences. The ongoing commitment of the school system to leadership growth is essential to support the challenges that new administrators will face in the future (Harle, 2000). Implementing job-embedded learning for future leaders in their preparation programs is essential. Providing in-basket situations and requiring future leaders to address these situations help to form the mental reality of the job of a principal.

Job-embedded learning is learning by doing, reflecting on the experience, and then generating and sharing new insights and learning with oneself and others. Such things as study groups, action research, mentoring, and coaching have frequently been identified as examples of job-embedded learning. However, almost any interaction between two or more educators provides an opportunity. Both formal activities designed to promote job-embedded learning and the formal and informal interactions within a school can be employed to promote important professional learning (McQuarrie & Wood, 1999).

#### Internships Focusing on Job-Embedded learning

University courses and job-embedded learning opportunities need to be redesigned with one focus: student achievement. Graduates of preparation programs and the programs themselves must be assessed using performance standards tied directly to student achievement. Aspiring principals need to experience authentic settings and real-world problems and dilemmas through the curriculum of leadership programs to meet the demands of the acting principal's

daily routine. The need to create authentic and replicated leadership experiences for students in preparation programs is growing. There is a considerable body of research that suggests most adults learn best when exposed to situations requiring the application of acquired skills, knowledge, and problem-solving strategies within real settings, and when guided by critical self-reflection (Davis, Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2004).

Prospective principals need hands-on experience by working with school leadership teams as they investigate achievement gaps and work to solve them. The aspiring leaders would get practice in planning and initiating changes in curricula, teaching practices, student support services, and school organization through these experiences. By working on real problems and witnessing the results of strategic interventions, they would attain the practical knowledge and understanding that are impossible to duplicate in a lecture course (Southern Regional Education Board, 2004). Implementing a real-world, problem-based curriculum at the university level requires a shift from exclusive ownership by the university faculty to sharing with school district personnel the responsibility for developing the curriculum.

According to the Southern Regional Education Board (2005), making job-embedded experiences a high priority and a central focus of principal preparation programs is essential. Most talented principal candidates enter leadership preparation programs with their eyes open. They recognize the challenges that school leaders face and the importance of acquiring practical skills and knowledge to meet those challenges. Current principals believe the most

valuable components of their training were well-designed field experiences that provided opportunities to observe effective school leaders, work with others to improve curricular and instructional problems, and gain practical and research-based knowledge from university faculty (Southern Regional Education Board).

Field experiences may include opportunities to shadow principals as they go about their daily work, but high-quality job-embedded learning also includes a great deal of hands-on involvement. If aspiring principals are to develop the skills to do the actual work of instructional leadership, they need numerous opportunities to engage in that work under the supervision of a proficient mentor (Southern Regional Education Board, 2005). Job-embedded practice needs to be integrated throughout a leadership preparation program.

Integrating school-based learning requires compromise. Most principal preparation programs recommend job-embedded learning as a concluding experience at or near the end of leadership training. As universities and school districts work together to revamp curricula, the challenge is to make school-based learning a regular, continuous part of an aspiring principal's preparation. A properly redesigned program will intermingle rigorous academic learning with field projects that require leadership students to apply their learning in the real world (Southern Region Education Board, 2005).

According to the Southern Region Education Board (2005), integrating high-quality field experiences into a revitalized, results-oriented curriculum is a complex task that only the strongest university/district partnerships will accomplish. These decision-makers collectively must choose schools where

master principals will work with university leadership faculty to identify significant problems with student achievement. Decision makers then must create opportunities for aspiring principals and their professors to work closely with job-embedded learning activities to assist in addressing these problems.

High-quality, job-embedded curricula require significant investments by universities and school districts. Universities need to find ways to evaluate and reward faculty members who spend considerable time working in the field. School districts need to encourage and support future principals by underwriting release time for academic study and job-embedded learning (Southern Region Education Board, 2005).

The Southern Region Education Board (2005) stated the following:

When we put principal preparation programs to the test, we need to ask questions like these: Are the internships aligned with the requirements of the job? Are the activities anchored in real-world problems that principals face? Are principal interns given opportunities to first observe, then participate in, and finally lead real school-change activities? Are interns working under the direction of an accomplished principal who can model key leadership behaviors and guide interns to higher levels of performance? Are interns placed in diverse settings? Do interns receive frequent, meaningful feedback that lets them know how they need to improve? Are they rigorously evaluated on mastery of essential leadership responsibilities? (p. 8)

The internship seems to be the ultimate performance test or the final rite of passage before gaining certification to lead. A well-designed internship expands the knowledge and skills of candidates while also gauging their ability to apply new learning in authentic settings as they contend with problems that have real-world consequences. According to SREB, there is a lack of purposeful “hands on” experiences that would prepare aspiring principals to lead the

essential work of school improvement and higher student achievement prior to being placed in a principalship.

### Summary

This review of literature provided information and various views about principal preparation programs. Six major topics were addressed, including an overview of the related literature on principal preparation programs, historical perspectives of leadership training, current trends, benefits of collaboration, effective principal training programs, accountability and data driven decision making, and internships focusing on job-embedded learning.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Research Design and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP). CPPP was implemented in 2002 by a selected university in Missouri. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the CPPP. At the time of the study, some universities had implemented the cohort model of principal preparation, while other universities in Missouri continue to use a traditional model. This study analyzed the perception of students, district administrators, and CPPP faculty members on the effectiveness of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

The CPPP began in August 2002 with 16 students. The pilot program sought to address the need for skilled, creative and effective leaders in suburban metropolitan school districts. The CPPP was created in response to criticisms of traditional principal preparation programs identified in the literature and included the following features: (a) students were carefully selected by the district administrators; (b) job-embedded learning activities were integrated in the curriculum; (c) each student was assigned an acting administrator as a mentor; (d) classes were held at the school district sites; (e) the university instructional team collaborated with area administrators; and (f) professional development activities were provided for district superintendents and/or their designees

(Bowie, Clinefelter, Harris, & Woolsey, 2002). Students participating in the program fulfilled the requirements for a Master of Science in Education degree in the area of School Administration and completed the requirements for initial principal certification in Missouri in August 2004. A second cohort began in 2004 and received their degrees in 2006, while the CPPP began cohort three the summer of 2006.

Doctoral students conducted a study in 2001, after the first year of implementation, that provided recommendations for future success. The recommendations for improving the mentor component included the areas of training and communication. Discussion with current mentors and students helped establish guidelines and expectations for the relationship between the mentor and protégé for the purpose of developing a training program. Further recommendations were to provide mentors a copy of the course content and activities each semester, allowing them to connect theory with practice. Additional recommendations included exploring options for bringing mentors into the instructional component of the coursework and establishing direct lines of communication between university instructors and mentors. These recommendations were implemented prior to cohort two.

Recommendations for the recruitment component included the process and communication utilized. While some districts may have established specific qualifications, students and mentors consistently reported that the process was unknown. It was recommended that the current district administrators establish general guidelines or criteria for the student application and selection processes.

Once established, the guidelines, criteria, and process should be available to all stakeholders involved (Bowie et al., 2002, p. 6-8). The CU faculty has addressed this recommendation and the guidelines, criteria, and process are now available to all stakeholders.

Recommendations for the job-embedded component included content and time. The evaluation established that students and mentors would like to see a closer bond between current course content and activities. It was recommended that mentors and students be provided an overview of the program, including course content aligned with job-embedded learning. Additional recommendations included establishing clear guidelines for the amount and quality of time mentors and students engaged in job-embedded learning. The researcher will provide the results of the utilization-focused evaluation of the job-embedded component to provide insight for the CPPP and the university.

This study provided a quantitative and qualitative approach to review and evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. The study focused on the following practices for review: job-embedded learning and how mentoring, recruitment, and collaboration intertwine with the job-embedded learning component.

#### Purpose and Research Questions

To address the purpose of the study, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum?



2. For those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program?
3. What do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP?
4. How do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

### Methodology

Utilization-focused evaluation (UFE) principles (Patton, 1997) provided the basis for the evaluation of the Cooperative Principal Preparation Program. According to Patton, utilization-focused evaluation starts with the concept that evaluations should be judged by their usefulness and actual use.

Utilization-focused evaluation involves the primary intended users in the selection of the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses based on their particular situation. It will be the responsibility of the intended users to interpret and make value judgments. followed by recommendations for changes.

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research components was utilized to enhance the UFE. In an initial interview, Central University (pseudonym) educational leadership faculty members identified the instructors, students currently serving in administrative roles, and collaborating district administrators as key stakeholders. The CPPP faculty wanted to know the perceptions of their

former students currently serving in administrative roles of the job-embedded component of the program. In addition, the faculty desired an aligning of those job-embedded activities within the current curricula based upon the perceptions. The researcher utilized multiple data sources, including surveys, in-depth one-on-one interviews, observations, and document analyses to satisfy the identified purpose of the evaluation.

The university selected for the study was chosen because of its initiative to begin the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP). Educational Leadership faculty members at Central University were aware of the need to create a principal preparation program to produce quality principal candidates. The CPPP was initiated as a result of dialogue between the creators and area superintendents to develop a pilot program that would assist school districts in developing potential leaders within their districts. Central University is noted for its ability to prepare teachers and administrators for school districts and has been nationally recognized for both their principal and superintendent preparation programs (Bowie, Clinefelter, Harris, Hutchinson, Mohn & Woolsey, 2003). In addition, Central University uses performance driven standards and assessment to prepare school leaders by using the Educational Leadership Constituents Council (ELCC). This group, which includes many practitioners, has rigorous standards for educational administration that include a substantial and meaningful internship experience for candidates so that they get a strong dose of what it's like to lead a school or district (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2005). The objective was to examine the job-embedded

component of the CPPP in relation to the research and formulate adjustments that would improve their current traditional principal preparation program.

### Instrument

This study was conducted as a utilization-focused evaluation. As such, it was designed to involve the intended users in evaluating and determining the utility of results (Patton, 1997). The researcher conducted a meeting of the CPPP professors at the university to determine the specific direction of the study and the program's greatest need. This study included both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data came from a list of questions generated by the primary users. Based on the list of questions, further responses were requested from Central University CPPP faculty members, students currently serving as administrators, and district administrators (Appendices A, B, C). More specific questions were developed to elicit responses during the qualitative phase of the study (Appendices D, E, F). The data were collected and triangulated to provide feedback to the intended users for evaluation.

### Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

The study involved surveying the Central University CPPP faculty members, students currently serving as administrators, and district administrators. This included a total of five faculty members, nine students, and six district administrators.

Guided by discussions with the program faculty members, the researcher developed surveys for nine students currently serving in administrative roles, six district-level administrators in collaborating school districts, and five CPPP faculty

members. One current CPPP student, one university faculty member, and one district-level administrator (none associated with the research) piloted tested the surveys.

Surveys (Appendices A, B, C) were e-mailed to nine former CPPP students currently serving as administrators, six school district administrators, and five CPPP faculty members for a total of 19 surveys. Prior to administering the surveys, the researcher explained the purpose of the survey and guaranteed confidentiality of participants by utilizing a cover letter and informed consent electronically (Appendices A, B, C). The respondents were asked to complete and return the survey declaring an understanding of the conditions outlined in the informed consent and their willingness to voluntarily participate in the study electronically.

Demographic information collected for students, district administrators, and faculty included current position in the district, years in teaching, years of experience, and highest degree held. Students, school district administrators, and CPPP faculty members completed 10 Likert-type scale items. All three groups responded to three open ended questions, based on suggestions offered by Bicklen and Bodgen (1998), related to job-embedded components for the CPPP.

An electronic mail message was sent to the nine students currently serving in administrative roles, the six district administrators and the five CPPP faculty members as a follow-up one week following the distribution of the survey requesting they return the survey or if they had already returned the survey

thanking them for the quick return. Another message was sent two weeks later following the distribution of the survey, again requesting the survey be completed and returned.

### Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

After receiving and analyzing the data from the survey, the researcher contacted the nine students currently serving in administrative roles, the six district administrators and the five CPPP faculty members and arranged to interview each of them at separate times. One current CPPP student, one university faculty member, and one administrator (none associated with the research) field tested the interview protocol. The researcher informed all interviewees that the information obtained was for evaluating the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program and that pseudonyms would be used to protect identities of those involved.

The interviews were conducted at each of the collaborating school district sites. An interview date and time were secured via phone or e-mail contact with each participant. Each participant was again contacted by electronic mail or phone the day prior to the interview to confirm the interview time and location. Each participant signed an informed consent (Appendices A, B, C ). Semi-structured interviews were conducted utilizing an interview protocol and each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Responses and non-verbal languages were recorded throughout the interviews and each interviewee agreed to be audio-recorded. The audio-recorded tape was then compared to the verbal and non-verbal language recorded during the interview. The researcher created a

summary of the interviews to review at a later time. Additionally, the interviewer made field notes to denote the setting and comfort of the participant.

The interview tapes were transcribed verbatim and associated field notes were compiled. As the transcripts were analyzed, the researcher identified common themes and concepts through color-coding as they emerged from the data. Each audio tape and field note transcript was open coded. Corbin and Strauss (1998) defined open coding as the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data.

Interview data were analyzed to provide an understanding of the job-embedded component of the CPPP. A thematic approach (Biklen & Bogdan, 1998) using open and axial codes was employed for this phase of analysis. The goal from the beginning was to assess each interview looking for concepts that might eventually form themes. As transcripts were analyzed and coded, differing concepts were assigned different colors and coded on the transcript. Each interview was reviewed in the same manner. Concepts remained color-coded using the same codes throughout review of each transcript. When new concepts emerged, previous transcripts were reviewed to ensure those concepts were not omitted in previous analyses. During the analysis, the evaluator was aware that the data would be triangulated to form information useful to the intended users.

Artifacts reviewed for the evaluation included the CPPP mission and program criteria, each course syllabus for review of the job-embedded component only, and two previous studies of the CPPP done by doctoral

students. The researcher conducted a document analysis to determine consistency between the mission, program criteria, course syllabi, and practices as described in the interviews. The primary use of the document review was to triangulate the data and eliminate concerns of validity and reliability.

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP). CPPP was implemented in 2002 by a selected university in Missouri. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the CPPP.

The utilization-focused evaluation provided the intended users a means of reviewing the job-embedded component and provides data with which to make necessary changes.

This study addressed four research questions. To answer the first research question, what job-embedded learning activities have been built into the CPPP curriculum, surveys and semi-structured interviews were conducted with students currently serving in administrative roles, district administrators from collaborating school districts, and CPPP faculty members involved with the CPPP.

The second research question concerned those nine students in Cohort One and Cohort Two currently serving in administrative roles' perceptions of the

job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the CPPP program. A survey was e-mailed for completion and a face-to-face interview was conducted.

The third research question studied what school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities. A survey was e-mailed to the six school district administrators serving as liaisons between the school and Central University, followed by an interview of those administrators following the completion of the survey.

The surveys were e-mailed to nine practicing administrators and six district administrators. Follow-up interviews were also held with nine practicing administrators and six collaborating school district administrators.

The final research question addressed how the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university. This question was answered through a survey and semi-structured interviews with the six collaborating school district administrators and the six CPPP faculty.

Findings from the study will be presented in Chapter 4. A discussion, conclusions and recommendations will be presented in Chapter 5.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Findings

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the job-embedded component in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that had been implemented in 2002 by a selected university. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the evaluation of the job-embedded component in the CPPP. The utilization-focused evaluation provided the intended users a means of reviewing the job-embedded component and provides data with which to make necessary changes.

This study reviewed and evaluated the job-embedded component of the CPPP by using a utilization-focused evaluation lens. Utilization-focused evaluation is based on the premise that evaluations should be judged by their actual use and utility and that assessments should be designed with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect teaching methodology pedagogy (Patton, 1997). The focus is on the intended use by clearly identified users.

The identified primary users of the evaluation findings were CPPP stakeholders including Central University CPPP faculty members, former CPPP students currently serving as administrators, and district administrators from collaborating school districts. The evaluation was designed to be formative in nature, with program improvement as the primary intended use of the findings.

Patton asserted that utilization-focused evaluators should actively involve intended users in the evaluation process throughout the life of the evaluation. Patton further stressed the necessity of aligning purpose and focus with intended uses and aligning data collection methods with understanding the needs of the intended users. The first stage of the study involved the researcher meeting with key program stakeholders to identify the key questions to be examined and methods to be employed to collect and analyze data.

This study provides both a quantitative and qualitative approach to review and evaluate the quality and implementation of job-embedded learning in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. The study focused on the following practices for review: job-embedded learning and how mentoring, recruitment, and collaboration intertwine with the job-embedded learning component. More specifically, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum?
2. For those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program?
3. What do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP?
4. How do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-

embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

This chapter will report the results of the nine students currently serving in administrative roles, the six district administrators and the five CPPP faculty member's responses to an evaluation questionnaire and the results of follow-up interviews conducted with each of them. Also detailed in the chapter is the analysis of document data. This chapter was organized into the following sections: introduction, survey results, CPPP demographics, document analysis, interviews, description of interview subjects, original research questions, emerging themes, and summary.

### Survey Results

Research began with four questions that helped to focus the data collection and analysis. Survey questions were developed to help collect data that would assist in answering the four research questions (see Appendix A, B, C). A coding system was used to identify themes that emerged with the surveys. Surveys were held with seven of nine students currently serving in administrative roles, three of six district administrators and four of five CPPP faculty members. Data were collected and analyzed which resulted in findings related to four main areas. These areas included: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) for those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program? (c) what do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning

activities for the CPPP? And (d) how do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

### CPPP Demographics

The demographic information requested from the CPPP students and district administrators included the following: gender, current position, years of classroom experience, years of administration experience, years in current position, current placement in district, and highest degree held. Current placement in district was categorized as elementary, middle school, high school, and central office. Highest degree held was categorized as Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, Specialist Degree, and Doctorate Degree. The demographic information requested from the CPPP faculty included the following: gender, years of classroom experience, years of administration experience, years in current position, and highest degree held. Highest degree held was categorized as Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, Specialist Degree, and Doctorate Degree.

Table 1 reports demographics of CPPP students. Nine students were contacted in an initial e-mail with a cover letter, the informed consent, and the link to the survey questions. A friendly reminder e-mail for the survey was sent three weeks later and reminders were given at the time of the interviews. Seven students out of nine participated in the survey. Of the seven students responding to the survey, 6 (85.7%) were male and 1 (14.3%) was female. Five of the seven

(71.4%) students were Assistant Principals while one of the seven (14.3%) was a Principal and one (14.3%) was other. Of seven students, 1 (14.3%) had 11 years of classroom experience, 1 (14.3%) had 10 years of classroom experience, 1 (14.3%) had 8 years of classroom experience, 2 (28.5%) had 3 years of classroom experience, 2 (28.5%) had 4 years of classroom experience.

Of seven students, 1 (14.3%) had 5 years of administration experience, 1 (14.3%) had 3 years of administration experience, 2 (28.5%) had 2 years of administration experience, 2 (28.5%) had 1 year of administration experience, and 1 (14.3%) had 0 years of administration experience.

Of seven students, 1 (14.3%) had 0 years in their current position, 4 (57.1%) had 1 year in their current position, 1 (28.5%) had 2 years in their current position, and 1 (14.3%) had 3 years in their current position. Four (57.1%) of the students had high school placement within their district, 2 (28.5%) had middle school placement within their district, and 1(14.3%) had elementary placement.

The final demographic category asked respondents to select the last degree they had completed. Six (85.7%) students had a Master's Degree, while 1 (14.3%) had a Bachelor's Degree.

Table 1

Demographic Summary Data of CPPP Students

---

Demographic Category	<u>Students</u>	
	N	%
	N = 7	
	N	%
Male Respondents	6	85.7
Female Respondents	1	14.3
Principal	1	14.3
Assistant Principal	5	71.4
Other	1	14.3
0-5 Years of Classroom Experience	4	57.1
6-10 Years of Classroom Experience	2	28.6
11-15 Years of Classroom Experience	1	14.3
0-5 Years of Administration Experience	7	100
0-5 Years in Current Position	7	100
Bachelor's Degree	1	14.3
Master's Degree	6	85.7

---

Table 2 reports demographics of the CPPP district administrators. Six district administrators were contacted in an initial e-mail with a cover letter, the informed consent, and the link to the survey questions. A friendly reminder e-mail for the survey was sent three weeks later and reminders were given at the time of the interviews. Three district administrators out of six participated in the survey. Of the three district administrators responding to the survey, 3 (100%) were male. Of three district administrators, 1 (33.3%) was a Superintendent, 1 (33.3%) was an Assistant Superintendent, and 1 (33.3%) was a Director.

Of three district administrators, 1 (33.3%) had 2 years of classroom experience, 1 (50%) had 3 years of classroom experience, and 1 (33.3%) had 6 years of classroom experience.

Of three district administrators, 1 (33.3%) had 7 years of administration experience, 1 (33.3%) had 12 years of administration experience, and 1 (33.3%) had 15 years of administration experience. Of three district administrators, 2 (66.7%) had 4 years in their current position, and 1 (33.3%) had 7 years in their current position,

The final demographic category asked respondents to select the last degree they had completed. One (33.3%) had an Education Specialist Degree, while two district administrators (66.7%) had Doctorate Degrees.

Table 2

Demographic Summary Data of CPPP District Administrators

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	<u>District Administrators</u>	
	N = 3	
Demographic Category	N	%
Male Respondents	3	100
Superintendent	1	33.3
Assistant Superintendent	1	33.3
Director	1	33.3
0-5 Years of Classroom Experience	2	66.7
6-10 Years of Classroom Experience	1	33.3
6-10 Years of Administration Experience	1	33.3
11-15 Years of Administration Experience	2	66.7
0-5 Years in Current Position	2	66.7
6-10 Years in Current Position	1	33.3
Specialist's Degree	1	33.3
Doctorate Degree	2	66.7

---



Table 3 reports demographics of the CPPP faculty members. Five faculty members were contacted in an initial e-mail with a cover letter, the informed consent, and the link to the survey questions. A friendly reminder e-mail for the survey was sent three weeks later and reminders were given at the time of the interviews. Four faculty members out of five participated in the survey. Of the four faculty members responding to the survey, 3 (75%) were male and 1 (25%) was female.

Of four faculty members, 1 (25%) had 18 years of K-12 classroom experience, 2 (50%) had 14 years of classroom experience, and 1 (25%) had 6 years of classroom experience.

Of four faculty members, 1 (25%) had 28 years of administration experience, 1 (25%) had 23 years of administration experience, 1 (25%) had 21 years of administration experience, and 1 (25%) had 16 years of administration experience. Of four faculty members, 1 (25%) had 7 years in their current position, 1 (25%) had 5 years in their current position, 1 (25%) had 4 years in their current position, and 1 (25%) had 3 years in their current position.

The final demographic category asked respondents to select the last degree they had completed. Four out of the four faculty members (100%) had Doctorate Degrees.

Table 3

Demographic Summary Data of CPPP Faculty Members

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	<u>Faculty</u>	
	N = 4	
Demographic Category	N	%
Male Respondents	3	75
Female Respondents	1	25
6-10 Years of Classroom Experience	1	25
11-15 Years of Classroom Experience	2	50
16+ Years of Classroom Experience	1	25
16+ Years of Administration Experience	4	100
0-5 Years in Current Position	3	75
6-10 Years in Current Position	1	25
Doctorate Degree	4	100

---

Table 4 contains the percentage of respondents selecting each response option for the rating of the perceptions of CPPP students currently serving as administrators of the job-embedded component of the program. Responses to the questions rank from 1 to 5 with 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing.

When analyzing the distribution of students' responses concerning the program, 100% of the students agreed that the job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university, that job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical, and that job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders.

Eighty-three percent of the students rated the quality of the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP as strong. The students also agreed that they developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP. The students' mentors assisted them with the job-embedded activities, and the students agreed that the school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written. In addition, students agreed that sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity and that they had a good relationship with their mentor.

Thirty-three percent of the students agreed that the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum needed to be adjusted, while 50% did not believe adjustments need to be made to the curriculum.

Table 4

## Perceptions of Job-Embedded Component-Student Responses

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8. The overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate.	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50%
9. Students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP.	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50%
10. My mentor assisted me with the job-embedded activities.	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	33.3%	50%
11. The school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written.	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	33.3%	50%
12. The job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50%	50%
13. Job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
14. Sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity.	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	50%	33.3%
15. Job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%
16. The job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.	16.6%	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%
17. I had a good relationship with my mentor.	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%	66.6%

Table 5 contains the percentage of respondents selecting each response option for the rating of the perceptions of CPPP district administrators of the job-embedded component of the program. Responses to the questions rank from 1 to 5 with 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing.

When analyzing the distribution of district administrator's responses concerning the perceptions of the job-embedded component of the CPPP, 100% agreed that the job-embedded learning activities are relevant and meaningful, while 67% agreed that the overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate. The district administrators also agreed that students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP and that the job-embedded learning activities were integrated throughout the CPPP curriculum.

In addition, 67% also agreed that the school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written and the job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university. The district administrators also agreed that the job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical, sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity, and the school district and university collaborated in the development of the CPPP job-embedded learning activities. Thirty-three percent of the district administrators agreed that the job-embedded activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.

Table 5

## Perceptions of Job-Embedded component-District Administrators Responses

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8. The overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate.	33.3%	0.0%	0.00%	33.3%	33.3%
9. Students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
10. Job-embedded learning activities were integrated throughout the CPPP curriculum.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
11. The school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
12. The job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
13. Job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%
14. Sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%
15. The school district and university collaborated in the development of the CPPP job-embedded learning activities.	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%
16. The job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
17. The job-embedded learning activities are relevant and meaningful.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50%	50%

Table 6 contains the percentage of respondents selecting each response option for the rating of the perceptions of CPPP faculty members of the job-embedded component of the program. Responses to the questions rank from 1 to 5, with 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing.

When analyzing the distribution of faculty member's responses concerning their perceptions of the job-embedded component of the CPPP, 100% agreed that the overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate.

One hundred percent of the faculty also agreed that students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP, job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical, and job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders. In addition, the 100% of the faculty agreed that the job-embedded learning activities are relevant and meaningful to the students and that the course work was relevant and meaningful to them.

Seventy-five percent agreed that the school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written and 50% fifty percent agreed that the job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university. Additionally, 50% believe the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.

Table 6

## Perceptions of Job-Embedded Component-Faculty Member Responses

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. The overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	75%	25%
7. Students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	75%	25%
8. Job-embedded learning activities were integrated throughout the CPPP curriculum.	0.0%	0.0%	25%	50%	25%
9. The job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university.	0.0%	0.0%	50%	25%	25%
10. The school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written.	0.0%	0.0%	25%	75%	0.0%
11. Job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50%	50%
12. Sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity.	0.0%	0.0%	50%	25%	25%
13. Job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50%	50%
14. The job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.	0.0%	25%	25%	25%	25%
15 The job-embedded learning activities are relevant and meaningful to the students.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25%	75%
16, The course work was relevant and meaningful to me.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50%	50%



Each survey contained three open-ended questions. The student survey included: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) what job-embedded learning activities were not practical during your program and why? and (c) what are your perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities? The responses to each question are below.

The first question dealt with what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum?

One student responded, "I had a wide range of experiences based on my position during the CPPP. My experiences ranged from a variety of duties, coordinating professional development, designing schedules, supervising student activities, discipline, parent communication, and school board relations."

Another student stated, "...working on budget, creating district and building level SIP plans, hiring process, working to learn and use evaluation tools, MAP scoring, various tasks involving the supervision process."

The next student responded, "...facilitate faculty meetings, coordinate MAP committee, and assist with student discipline."

Another stated, "...observations, leadership opportunities within the school (SIP, Activity Supervision, Data Analysis). While the final student stated, "teacher evaluations, curriculum, scheduling, supervision of extra curricular events, professional development planning, conducting staff meetings, and substituting for the administration."

Another question wanted to know what job-embedded learning activities were not practical during your program and why?

One student stated, "There was nothing I considered unpractical due to the administration position I held during this process." While another responded, "The substituting for the administration was good experience; however, there was not a mentor present for guidance. Additionally, I was not familiar with the office procedures for discipline."

Students were asked about their perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities.

One student stated, "The school district and the CPPP faculty worked very well together. The district has a very positive view of the program and believes the professors are providing many applicable experiences."

Another student responded, "The school district is a strong supporter of the program and always made necessary resources available and created opportunities that helped to complete job-embedded activities."

The next student said, "I felt that the relationship with the district developed over the two year period I was in the program. District leadership was more on board with the CPPP by the time that I left."

Another student stated, "Our district and CPPP faculty cooperated together very well. I had support from both sides."

While the final student stated, "During the first cohort, I felt that the effort by the district and the CPPP could have been better. Often times the mentor was

not aware of their role in the learning activities. However, the district administration was very willing to allow us to carry out these activities.”

The district administrator survey included the following questions: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) what are your perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities? and (c) what additional information would assist your school district while participating the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program? The responses to each question are below.

School district administrators were asked what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum?

One district administrator stated, “Time working in the office with mentor principal/assistant principal. Activities are designed in collaboration with the university, the student and the mentor administrator.”

Another district administrator responded, “The students participated in various activities with the administrators such as scheduling, evaluation, supervision, etc.”

In addition, the school district administrators gave their perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities.

One district administrator stated, “They have been very beneficial. The university staff has been accommodating to the needs of the students to ensure

they get the appropriate amount of job-embedded experience during their program.”

Another responded, “There should probably be more conversation, guidance, and expectations with the administrators on activities for the students to do. Provide a check-list of activities to be completed.”

The faculty members were asked about what additional information would assist your school district while participating the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

The only response stated was to provide a “Check-list.”

The faculty member survey included the following questions: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) what is your perception of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty of implementing job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university? and (c) what job-embedded activities should be removed from the current curriculum? The responses to each question are below.

The faculty members were also asked about what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum.

One faculty member stated, “...law; what's in the news; newspaper, Education Week, and popular magazine articles; administrator interview; relating legal info/concepts to building/district

The other faculty member that responded said, “Included case studies on Ethics and Ethical Dilemmas as well as case studies in legal issues.”

In addition, faculty members expressed their perception of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty of implementing job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university.

The first faculty member said, "Good." Another faculty member said, "We need to do more mentor collaboration." While the last faculty member responded, "The collaboration between the school districts is very strong and continues to grow in strength. More work needs to be done to ensure job-embedded activities are incorporated into each course. Grant money has provided substitutes for the students to work closely with their mentors - so time is not as big a factor."

Another area that the faculty concentrated on was what job-embedded activities should be removed from the current curriculum.

The first faculty member said, "...doubtful that any need to be removed, more consideration to adding." Another faculty member stated, "None." While the last faculty member responded, "I don't know of any that need to be removed. Probably more need to be added."

#### Document Analysis

The review of important documents included the syllabi currently utilized in the CPPP. Documents were analyzed to assist the researcher in understanding job-embedded learning components for each course in the program. According to the current CPPP brochure, a student must take the following classes to earn an administrative degree: Fall 2006: Foundations of Education Administration and Elementary or Secondary Administration; Spring 2007: Public School Finance

and School Supervision; Summer 2007: School Law and School Personnel; Fall 2007: Introduction to Research and Fall Internship; Spring 2008: Ethical Systems/Learning Theory and Spring Internship; Summer 2008: Curriculum Development & Assessment and Administration of the Middle Grades.

The definition of job-embedded learning is the ability to experience real situations and address them accordingly by utilizing training that is being received in the principal preparation program. An analysis of syllabi documents job-embedded activities within the syllabi learning component revealed a few similarities. Those similarities included: (a) interviewing individuals regarding in-basket situations and writing reflection papers; (b) conducting observations of in-basket situations and writing reflection papers; and (c) working with a group of students on an in-basket activity and giving a presentation.

There were also some differences noted regarding the job-embedded component of each syllabus. The definition of job-embedded learning is the ability to experience real situations and address them accordingly by utilizing training that is being received in the principal preparation program. Regarding actual hands-on experience, there was only one specific job-embedded learning activity found in the syllabi. School Supervision required the student to conduct a pre-observation conference, observe one lesson and conduct a post observation conference with a teaching colleague. The student was actually simulating what a practicing administrator would be required to do and receiving feedback. While there were activities such as developing school improvement plans, creating a floor plan and inventory, these were hypothetical situations that did not deal

directly with the data from the students' school with the assistance or guidance from their mentor. The syllabi did not have students embedded in the activity, but only reporting on an interview or observation of the activity. The syllabi did not reflect the definition of job-embedded learning or provide students the opportunity to be embedded in activities that would be typical of the principalship. In addition, opportunities for feedback from the mentor after the job-embedded learning activity was not discussed.

### Interviews

Research began with four questions that helped to focus the data collection and analysis. Interview questions were developed to help collect data that would assist in answering three of the four research questions. A coding system was used to identify themes that emerged during the interviews. Interviews were held with nine students currently serving in administrative roles, six district administrators, and five CPPP faculty members. Data were collected and analyzed which resulted in findings related to four main areas. These areas included: (a) for those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program? (b) what do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP? and (c) how do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

## Description of Interview Subjects

The evaluator interviewed nine of nine (100%) students currently serving in administrative roles, six of six (100%) district administrators and five of five (100%) CPPP faculty members in which the utilization-focused evaluation was conducted.

## Original Research Questions

Data were collected and analyzed which resulted in findings related to four main areas. These areas included: (1) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (2) for those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program? (3) what do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP? (4) how do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university? These findings are described in the following section.

### *Preparedness of Students*

One question asked if the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program job-embedded learning activities prepared students for the job they are currently in. Interview data regarding the CPPP job-embedded learning activities were recorded. Many of the students agreed that the job-embedded component of the program did prepare them. One student said,

Very much so from the beginning class, which was our Foundation of Administration class. It really actually provided me with a foundation base



to work with. I think most classes, Foundations of Administration and School Law in particular I was able to apply the learning I was getting from those classes and apply it to the building here. Particularly on leadership, just the qualities that are exemplified by leaders in addition to various decision-making models and some decision-making models came from those classes that I felt really allowed me to immediately apply it to what I was doing.

Another student reflected and stated,

I had to do things with staffing and I had to figure out who was going to teach what the next year. The principal at work was a great mentor and allowed me to do many of the responsibilities throughout the day like lunch duty and I started a reading project. The study groups met once a month and talked about reading strategies that should be implemented in the classroom. I was also allowed to go observe, although it's not technically my job. I can invite ways to give feedback on the strategies they were implementing. Giving feedback on that was pretty much the majority of my internship, but there were some classes through the cohort that help develop school improvement plans. That helped me with what the job I'm in right now, because that helped me understand what school improvement plans would be geared towards the process. And professional development, we developed our professional development plans that helped me to know what professional development should look like and seeing that the district really isn't doing it the way that is most for teachers. So there are several classes plus the internship.

This particular student appeared to be confident and said, "The program provided a look into some general areas of administration. I felt comfortable heading into my new position as administrator." While another praised experience as being the key by stating:

The job-embedded activities helped by providing me a practical experience. As you know, there is no substitute for experience. Probably the most significant activity I learned from dealt with the school improvement plan. I worked with the high school administrators and leadership team to design the SIP through staff/student input and data analysis. The SIP plan is the backbone for any school improvement and the leadership experiences I gained from this has helped me in my current position. Other activities included student supervision, working with budgets, and walk-through supervision.

Two district administrators agreed that the job-embedded component of

the CPPP program prepared students for their current jobs. One district administrator stated:

The job-embedded activities within the CPPP program prepare the students for and provide the students with a comprehensive view of the principalship. The activities are wide and varied, and truly expose the students to a myriad of challenges, pitfalls, and successes that the principal faces daily. A great set of experiences.

While another commented that:

Traditional graduate courses cannot replicate the many activities that occur day-to-day in the principalship. These job-embedded activities are a valuable part of the real world learning that can take place for the CPPP students.

Faculty members agreed that they were moving in the right direction and were at a higher level teaching the students because of the job-embedded activities. One faculty member stated the following:

I think that we are moving in that direction. I think that a real honest evaluation after doing the survey on-line, we probably need to work to embed more things into the courses. I don't think that we are there yet. I think we have done some real positive things with the students and the feedback we have gotten from the students is positive and the feedback we have gotten from the administrators in the district are positive, but I don't know that they're directly related to the job-embedded activities. We have done some good things but I don't think the volume of job-embedded activities is where it needs to be or the number of job-embedded activities is where it needs to be and that is what we are going to work on. We have been fortunate enough to get some more Wallace Foundation money and districts are now realizing the value in allowing the students to take sub days to work with their mentor and this is just taking a lot more time than I had anticipated. I mean this is a change in how we operate and this is also a change in how districts operate. And I am taking a long time to answer this question, but I don't think we are where we need to be and a number of the things we have done have been effective and I think it helps the students get an idea of how the theory plays out in the building.

Another faculty member believed:

...it's a much higher level of preparation. We can teach a lot of things in coursework when they have real-life, hands-on experience. This is much

more supportive of retention and it is going to be much more relative to the students.

*Types of Job-Embedded Learning Activities Needing Greater Focus.*

When asked what types of job-embedded learning activities should have received more emphasis in the CPPP, students began reflecting on whether the CPPP prepared them then realized that they needed more training in specific area on in-basket activities that assistant principals deal with on the daily basis.

One student said:

I think when I went through the program; the mentor component could have been stronger. I think the mentor piece could have been stronger and could have provided more learning opportunities throughout the CPPP.

Another student stated,

Probably more in-basket activities. Maybe having a part of the job-embedded program more focused on teacher evaluations. This comes tough with the confidentiality issues when you are a teacher in the building and working with your mentor. You try to develop some way to help with teacher evaluations.

The area of special education was an emerging theme and one student stated:

I think that some areas, it's kind of tricky defining job-embedded activities. But definitely I have been saying that they need to include more special education experience. A component of special education, at least a six-week course. It is such a big huge part of our job and the huge legal risk for us to mishandle something, so that would be something that they need to look at doing.

While another student remarked:

You know, the CPPP does such a good job of preparing you for so many things you do as an administrator, but it's some of those issues like sped and IEP meetings and things that are normally associated with being an administrator which are really not covered at all.

Another emerging theme addressed the curriculum and assessment component of an administrator's responsibility. A student impressed that:

I would've liked the opportunity to practice curriculum and assessment. In addition to research, I think those two classes were probably my favorite classes, and I feel like I gained a lot of information from those classes, and I wish I would have more time to spend in those classes, particularly the curriculum and assessment classes.

While another student thought:

Probably more practice scenarios or hands-on activities on best practices, you might see that in the internship, so I think I'll get some of that through the internship.

The internship gave students the opportunity to be emerged in the daily responsibilities of an administrator. The students agreed that this theme would be beneficial to any student going through the program. One student reflected and stated:

Because of my internship it's hard for me to say that there's anything that I felt like I lacked. If I didn't have this position, it would be difficult because you are teaching on top of getting your degree. I think there needs to be more things at the beginning of the school year and into the school year to see what you do to start your year off and how things are done. When you finish the year I really I felt like the CPPP provided a range of activities for shadowing in other school districts and looking at how other school districts are. Having people come in and speak helped and for me was easy to apply.

Faculty members identified job-embedded activities that need more focus and stated the following:

The focus is to start them at an earlier point in time thinking about what the needs are rather than waiting for them to gather this from the textbooks. So for example, I start them out on a shadowing experience but asked them to ask fundamental questions about what should a person know as they go into the principalship or where can he get that experience from. The other thing that I asked them to do is collect administrator résumés for the very first course. So that they get to see what these folks look like before they obtain an administrator position.

Another faculty member stated:

I think what we need to do is to look at each semester and outline activities that would be relevant to the courses that the students are taking that semester. And make sure that we have a comprehensive approach to job-embedded activities. What I think is happening is that some courses focus more on the job-embedded activities than others and it could be possible that the students have a semester where there are very few, if any, job-embedded activities. I think we almost need to set up a matrix where we identify those job-embedded activities and make sure each semester that we are providing a quality experience back in the building.

While another said:

Well, I think with all preparation programs, one that we tend not to use real-life experiences as much, conflict resolution that occurs in the preparation of the training. I know that one is tough as you're looking at confidentiality issues...but a big part of being a principal is working with people and all the people problems that exist, so I think that would be one that we'd need to concentrate more on some. I think school districts need to concentrate more on on-site level management where they actually have more control of the budget. And that would be a skill that many principals probably could use more.

District administrators believe that they have been able to communicate job-embedded activities with the university and the university has implemented job-embedded activities that better prepare students. The district administrators agree that it is the practice of ensuring that there are opportunities for the job-embedded activities in the curriculum.

### *Suggested Job-Embedded Learning Activities*

When students were asked about suggested job-embedded learning activities that would better prepare students as they enter the principalship, one student responded:

That's going to be difficult with me in this internship. This is the most beneficial thing that I have done. I don't feel like I would have been ready to take on the next job of being an assistant. I have been nervous about it, but if the program had a year-long internship where you are in charge of

things I think it would be beneficial. It would be difficult to go into an elementary building and be a principal right away. I've learned from my mistakes. The pros and cons in dealing with staff, parents and students. I think that as a principal you need to know your environment. That's one fortunate aspect of being here again next year, because I have gone through that and I know how the parents are here. I know how the students are here. I know the staff. So I feel like now I'm going into an assistant role. I have more knowledge to take with me.

Still concerned about the special education process as it relates to new administrators, a student stated,

Maybe shadowing a special education coordinator or a process coordinator.....maybe something they can have them design by them interviewing or have them work with the process coordinator to put together some type of a flow chart for special education procedures, timelines, those sorts of things. One can take a class in school law and view a lot about cases, but that is not always in your own state. I think that special education is different, and they do a lot of big picture things they try to understand the real nuts and bolts of special education to be very challenging. The term analogy that they use and we should know and I talk to people about the acronym LEA. I use it all the time and I don't even know what it means. I thought I knew what it was, but I didn't.

The theme of special education continued as a district administrator remarked:

I think some component from IDEA and special education. When people go into the principalship with zero special-education background and they are sitting through an IEP meeting, they need to be able to communicate with students, parents, and staff. They need to be able to communicate verbally and nonverbally. I think training in the decision-making process, training in the change process. I am very much a proponent of just pure old-school leadership training. The irrefutable laws of leadership and the balance of management and leadership. I think that the sessions that I have participated in over the years, and I participate once or twice a year. I think the students learn a lot with visiting from the practitioners in person. I know that when we went in to do HR segments they were really focused, tuned in on how do they get their first job. I think as far as job-embedded learning activities they need to identify early in their aspiring administrative careers, what their special niche is going to be as far as selling themselves when they get to interviewing for those particular positions, whether they are the MAP guru, whether they are in the know with special education, or the technology person. I think that the other thing that is really important in

the CPPP program is the fact that the majority of these people are training to be an assistant principal, not a principal, and the two training veins are completely different. The principal aim is great but need to be trained for what their next job will be and I have heard some criticism over the years that this was great, if I was going to go be a principal of a small school somewhere and be the person in charge, but I know I am not going to be in charge. I'm going to be in a suburban school district and nobody is going to hire me to be a principal. If they hire me as an intern, to developed the vision is not going to be my job and nurturing the culture is not going to be my job. Sometimes they are hungry for some grass-roots things on student discipline, teacher evaluations and things like that.

Still wanting to improve the job-embedded component of the program, students focused on the length and placement of the internship. One student offered the following,

I think that one way to spend some time on specific job-embedded things is to have a year-long internship. That really gives you a lot of activities that you do according to the ISLLC standards. It would be nice if some of the interviews were shadow activities and built into the internship to give insights into what it's like to be an administrator. This district really supports you and they work to give you experience, so I think that would fit in perfectly.

Another student stated:

This is more about hands-on learning experiences that you have, I think it's good from real-world topics and issues that we discuss. I just think that most of the application is going to have to be when you're actually in the position. I don't think there is anything else that they can actually add to what they are doing.

Another student commented:

I think that one way to spend some time on those things is to have their year-long internship. That really gives you a lot of activities that you do according to the ISSLC standards. It would be nice if some of the interviews or shadow activities were built into the internship to give insights into what it's like to be an administrator.

I wish we had more time to actually go visit more facilities. I don't know how it could be coordinated in the evenings, but having the opportunity to visit some other school buildings and the facilities would have been a good activity for us. In order to kind of see those buildings

and structures, site visits. I also would have liked to have practiced writing curriculum and assessments.

One of the district administrators suggested:

One job-embedded activity might be some sort of public relations/political landscape exploration. Most beginning principals are better prepared instructionally than ever before, but an exercise that is “real”- focusing on public relations issues faced in the principalship would only enhance an already great program.

The faculty members commented on special education and internships by stating:

Through the internship. More contact or more observation, what goes on the classrooms for instance, they don't have experience with special education, and they need to know a little bit more about special education. Job-embedded experience outside of their own school such as in a high school to look at a block schedule or different type of schedule. To see what it is like in other school environments other than suburbia. We tend to focus on suburbia, there's a whole world out there on education and rural education and urban education, and they need leadership. We need to focus on those areas as well.

Another faculty member remarked:

I think that it is very difficult for students to finish a master's degree and have the skills and abilities needed to jump into a principalship regardless of what we do. Now, the internship and job-embedded activities are important, I think, but I don't think they're sufficient enough for the students to gain the first-hand knowledge that they need. The model that I really like and I don't know how to incorporate except to promote it with other districts is the one that a collaborative school district uses where they promote within their own school district to work for a year in an administrative position, although they pay at teacher salary. We have had six or seven. We have had five or six, I guess, cohort students who have gone into administrative internship positions in a collaborative school district, and they are moving from that internship to assistant principal positions. I think a year-long commitment in an administrative position while working close to a mentor is huge. I have promoted that within the other districts, and I know that some of the districts are looking at that model. So it's cost prohibitive, but there are some districts doing that now and I think that is what we need to do in our cohort. What we need to do is try to approach that as best we can, but it is very difficult to do when they are full-time teachers and taking classes.



In addition, another faculty member remarked:

Scheduling takes so much time in the spring, and so directly related to fiscal considerations, and I know that especially in the suburban districts. That is just a big crossword puzzle that what happens in one building impacts what happens in another building in central offices trying to be equitable, and I think just having interns immersed in that process, you don't want them to control too much of it, but it would help prepare them to be better principals.

*Program Outline or Syllabi.*

The feedback on the outline or syllabi was similar between the students and the district administrators. They felt comfortable with the expectations and logic of the work. One student commented:

I think the outline actually provided us with more information. Let me preface that by saying that I really did feel challenged in the program. I was expecting a little bit more rigor from some of the courses. So, I feel as if it was presented in this fashion that the ejection was provided.

Another student stated:

We were the first group to go through. There were some alterations along the way but we generally covered what was expected. The program was well rounded and thorough.

One of the district administrators said:

I think not only does the outlying syllabi, cover, I think that the professor in charge does a great job of working with the district and the mentors to provide these opportunities for the students.

While another stated:

They are covered, if the participating administrators help with the necessary components.

The faculty members on the other hand thought that improvements could be made in the area of the syllabi. Most of the faculty members focused on their own syllabi, but noted that they should know what is going on in the other

classes. One professor commented:

We have worked so hard to align them with the ISSLC standards that I don't think you could look at the syllabi and align them to job-embedded activities. I list activities for each of the objectives, but it doesn't specifically say job-embedded. So I would say we could probably do a better job with our syllabi.

Another faculty member stated:

I think that that's the case. I guess we'll find out from your research, if that's the case. I feel real credible that that we are really specific about it, and the reason I feel that way, is that we have talked to practicing administrators. We've taken the theory, we've looked at the ISSLC standards, and we tried to integrate all of those into a package and then I think the faculty go over what the expectations and requirements are at the beginning of the semester for each course so that should give them a pretty good understanding of what's expected and what's required from the beginning.

Another commented:

I'd have to say yes, because I develop the syllabi for my class, but I don't think it's identified as job-embedded. I don't think it is marked with an asterisk that says job-embedded experience.

The following faculty members thought that they should improve their syllabi and stated:

No, no that's another thing that you do for the cohort group is in the syllabus or syllabi identify what those job-embedded activities are and then again at the initial session with the students. And when meeting with their mentors talk about what those mean and how the mentor can help the student accomplish what they're trying to accomplish.

and

My syllabus does not do justice to that component of it. We have our syllabi and the traditional syllabi and we do look at some of the things that we are going to be talking about discussing, but it often is created within the coursework and what facilities are open. Many of my students are elementary and secondary and this is the first introduction to some of the first-hand middle school issues with that we do some basic survey of needs assessment, so it is merely that the syllabi does not cover it fully, and it's probably one area that needs to be enhanced.

### *Duplication of Job-Embedded Learning Activities Between Courses*

Many of the students voiced that there was very little duplication of the job-embedded courses in the program, but they did see some redundancy.

Students believe that job-embedded activities were being enhanced, yet felt as if their time could have been spent in other areas. One student explained:

Yeah, I think so, if I had to do one more plan, floor model and textbook inventory....I think there's a lot of room for other projects such as coming up with special education activities, dealing with parents, doing in-basket discipline projects with decent scenarios, but I think they had too many things where we have a building design, inventory design and a budget. I've used this example before: Go into the police academy and they don't teach how to investigate a murder because you are not going to investigate a murder for several years... Budgeting and building design is not practical for someone going into an assistant principalship. They need something that deals with parents. More management on leadership, but I don't think there's as much management as there could be.

Another student remarked:

Building from scratch school improvement plans gets very repetitive.

While another commented:

The only thing that may have been duplicated may have been supervision. Some of the extracurricular activities, but that's, I think that's a given for some of the supervision anyway. Some of things that maybe were not as practical was developing the school improvement plans that we had because it wasn't necessarily in the districts that you work in and it was taking data from hypothetical districts. But I think the practice was practical, being able to analyze the data, and I think that part was good. Maybe doing a little bit more information on your own districts where you can see it and work with a mentor to development.

One student said:

I didn't see that as redundant. I just saw it as enhancing the activities. Teachers were utilizing the jigsaw method, cooperative learning groups; those types of things weren't bad. But as far as our job responsibilities, nothing really jumps out in my mind. I do see other things are being reinforced.

A few of the students made statements such as, "There is that connection, you can see a connection or alignments which aren't repeating anything," and "The classes did a pretty good job of not overlapping and I did not sense redundancy throughout the cohort," and "I didn't feel like we repeated activities – dialogue stayed consistent throughout the program. The same terminology was used semester to semester in order to drive home educational theory and practice."

When interviewing the faculty members, one stated, "I don't know."

Another commented:

I think there could have been some duplication in certain components. For example, we require students in the law class to complete a code of ethics, and we require them in the ethics class to also do that. But the rationales that go with those codes are different. And so in fact, I go on and encourage them to use the one they already did if they're satisfied with it. But in fact you have an ethics rationale and in the law class you have case law in statutes as rationales...you have two different kinds of reasoning that should go into the code, so they should be really strong on the code of ethics, but there are things that duplicate that way. But we could have possibly had that happen in with elementary and secondary education, but I really think it happened early on, and I think it's been corrected.

Another faculty member explained:

The gross duplication that I see is more role-playing kinds of experiences. The school improvement activity is done at the end of every class. I just stopped doing it in the same way, because they do it in every class because that's role-playing, but role-play in the same activity may really get better and better at it after how many times.

While another stated:

I think that that's a tough one to the answer. I think from the perspective of the student there could be duplication, but my understanding is that we don't duplicate. But some courses do some of the same types of activities at different levels. But to be honest with you, I probably don't know the

answer to that question. My perception is that we don't. I think the student's perception is that we do and what we need to do is to develop a matrix so we know if there are job-embedded activities in each one of the courses and if we are doing something that is very similar to another course that we need to incorporate some other type of activities.

There are a lot of different kinds of things we can do and if we are focusing only on a few areas we were not doing as good a job that we could with the students. I think that's probably the weakest link of the whole program. When I went to the university but I think they made adjustments to it now, but it seem like the administrators of the school districts were just there to kind of supervise. They didn't have the knowledge of what you are doing in the classes. I don't know what the answer is, but I would say more regular meetings between the school district administrators and the faculty members. I think that would be extremely helpful and have an idea as so they would have an idea of what's coming out and what you want to accomplish out of that.

### *Practicality of Job-Embedded Learning Activities*

Students reflected on the practicality of the job-embedded learning activities throughout the program and some did not agree that the activities were practical at first but ended up as being good experiences for them. One student stated, "The job-embedded activities were practical. There were components of the program that I did not feel were practical, but they were not job-embedded activities-Ethics." and "I thought at the beginning there was a lot of repetition, towards the end of the program they were asking for the same thing one more time; it wasn't as practical." Another student explained:

I questioned the importance of going into other districts and trying to do some of the things we were expected to do because you don't have relationships with those people. I didn't really go in and do anything in the schools. But it gives you a different feel. In those districts compared you can see a lot of weaknesses. So it was good to know that not every district is perfect, regardless of the image that they have out. That was the only thing that I question is why, why do we need to do this. And after I did I saw the big picture, so it all came together in the end.

One student was in a different educational setting and stated the following:

For me particularly, not all were practical from the standpoint of being in an alternative school and working in a maximum facility. Some of the things that were suggested I filtered to see how they applied to my building. In most cases I was able to provide a different perspective for some people in the class. But if I typically had a specific question that applied, others were just getting some information on the side since they are not in an environment like this.

The district administrators and the faculty members had the same perceptions of the practicality of the job-embedded component. Both agreed that all activities were practical. One faculty member commented, "I feel like they are. So I really don't have any that I can see that aren't of practical importance." Another faculty member stated:

We tried to make them as practical as possible. I think it's just real difficult to incorporate effective job-embedded activities because you have to have the cooperation of not only the student, but you have to have the cooperation of the mentor or someone in the district that has the knowledge base. I think that is getting stronger, over time. I think the culture that we are establishing with the districts has improved and everybody now has a pretty good idea of what we're trying to accomplish. We've had difficulty in the past getting a commitment on the part of some of the mentors to work effectively with the students. So somehow we have to do a better job of emphasizing the importance of the job-embedded activities and getting everybody on board.

One district administrator said, "Yeah, I think, so, I don't remember thinking anything was a waste of time or not applicable." While another district administrator commented, "From my standpoint, all of the job-embedded activities were practical and helped the students' understanding and apply 'real world' situations to their pre-service academic work."

#### *Collaboration between District Administrators and the CPPP Faculty*

The collaboration needed between the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members was an area that offered great insight from the

individuals who were interviewed. Many had suggestions to enhance the process. One of the district administrators stated:

I've been able to visit with the professor who started the program when he visited with some of the administrators and he is just a wealth of knowledge on present issues and current events. These topical components would be really rich to enhance the curriculum and the things we teach, so I think if we could meet on a regular basis with the other school administrators that would be beneficial. Just to have a roundtable, what are the hot issues on your plate right now, what do your vice principals need in terms of more information and have that more detailed and thorough discussion? And of course, I have to say that tongue-in-cheek because it is a time issue for faculty. It's difficult to get more than one or two professors free to visit with the administrators about their course and their time is so taxed. We would have to think through this to see how often and make sure it's meaningful and relevant to everybody.

Another district administrator said, "None. I think things are going pretty well. The lines of communication are open."

One faculty member commented:

What we are currently doing, as you know, is that we have regular meetings with district administrators in the district and we have a luncheon and we spend time trying to figure out what we are trying to accomplish and get feedback from them. If there are areas we should be focusing on or if there are areas that they would like to see us spend grant money on, that would not only help the students but help the districts. So we have regular conversations with the CPPP administrators. We bring in a number of district administrators to work with the students on a regular basis. So they are seeing people from the various districts coming in and speaking to them. The students are having an opportunity to communicate with the district administrators on the regular basis. One was for new administrators, and what do you need to know that first year, or how your first year in administration was and what you need to know when you get into that position. So that was really good, and to bring in personnel directors to talk about how to get ready to apply for a position in administration, that was really powerful. So we're bringing the practitioners in on a regular basis into the classrooms and the student administrators think it's pretty good. The district administrator connection is good with me, what is missing is involving in the other faculty. We need to get them involved with the district administrators. One way we can do that is invite other professors to the regular meetings or we could invite the CPPP administrators to campus and have them give us feedback at the campus.

This is a missing link.

Another faculty member remarked:

You know, I think that the relationship with the professor who is basically in charge of CPPP and those district administrators that participated are excellent. As far as the district administrators, we have not really met with those other school members. Now when we first started looking at this CPPP as a faculty person I was involved in the initial meetings to just kind of talk about the process. But once the program got started, we had our main contact. So the rest of us haven't had any contact with the school districts as such.

While another faculty member stated:

We could do a more focused advisory group than what we've done the past. We need folks like you that have gone through the program and graduated in and are practicing measures and come back in and help. I had a group of administrators come in and talk about the interview process and how they go about that and I thought that was really good for them. They really enjoyed that session they were really prepared for that, but we need an ongoing advisory group that we are calling on to advise us in terms of changing needs and the curriculum, I believe.

Students had a different outlook on the collaboration between district administrators and CPPP faculty members. The students wanted more collaboration dealing with the mentors they were assigned. One student stated:

I think maybe the selection of the mentor would be something helpful. I know it may not be possible to do that within your district, but have a selection process or criteria to find really strong mentors in the area that you are looking at and find a very strong secondary principal, whether it's in your building or a neighboring district. It would be very helpful if it was in your building that has some type of criteria that we are going to select that mentor, so it's not just convenience. So we have good mentors.

Another student commented:

I think that the key piece there is through the internship. Because different people experience different things depending on whom their mentor is. I think that if the faculty members and administrators can get together at some point in time and collaborate on a plan for each other. The interns need to have a specific function or role. Some got a wide range of mentoring, and then some got nothing and so the further into the year they



have no idea what they're supposed to do because it had nobody help them along the way.

One student said, "Probably some in-service training for administrators by providing them a mentoring program and have them work with their district level administration." Another student commented, "Conversations should persist about the mentor component and the expectations of each mentor."

#### *Interviewee Recommendations.*

The students, district administrators and CPPP faculty members had several suggestions for recommendations to improve the program. One student stated, "I think we could have done more with curriculum and assessment. The curriculum class was held during the summer, when it is more difficult for job-embedded activities."

One student offered the following:

I think the thing that needs to be changed the most is the mentor piece for the job-embedded activities. I felt as if my mentors...didn't have the information to the guided part as you're going through. I had access to do staff evaluations. The walk-through, but I didn't have much time to debrief with him, to analyze how I handled the situation and compare it to how he would have handled the situation and for what reasons. So heads-up on what they need to do and what their role as a mentor is would be very helpful.

Another student commented:

I would probably say that to extend the internship and maybe do more since it's a two-year program when you first start. So they are doing internships throughout the whole program, instead of just at the end. I think the internships will help us as well as prepare us for behind the scenes that teachers don't really understand that administrators have to deal with... I think that also might assist students in making a decision if that is something that they want to do.

One student said:

The only thing I can see changing is during the summer classes, and I don't know if it was this way for yours as they were for ours. We did two courses in one month and they put all those activities in that one-month. It is not enough time to really get to do a related project. I would just look at changing the way that the projects are done during the summer courses.

While another commented:

I am not a big fan of portfolios, and I know that kind of became the sacred cow of higher ed. I don't know if that's something they have to do. It's funny because every administrator I talk to laughs about bringing in your portfolio, because no one ever looks at it. If there's a purpose then I will do it. It's not practical, so I think you need to reevaluate the portfolio and having them look that. I also think you look from day one and say these are things that need to go in your portfolio, versus waiting till the end in trying to find everything. There are a lot of papers that you could identify as you go through with some kind of coding system versus waiting until the end.

One student suggested:

I think it's a good program and I understand why we do a portfolio. I guess the only change I would make is that there are few professors that like to do article reviews, and when you have to do 12 to 15 article reviews it gets redundant. I think when you're in this program, you understand the process of staying current about what's happening in education and in leadership magazines. I just think it's a burden to have to write an article review on everything you read.

Another student stated:

I think it's a great program. A small break in the cost of the program would help us get through it and include a nice or cheap laptop computer.

One student remarked:

I really feel that this course has helped me greatly and since I was an administrator, I was able to come back and apply a lot of the job-embedded learning from the course. I think for the second year for me a guide to the point where I just need to slow down with some of the things that I was learning, but the first year was just tremendous in helping me gain. Truly a foundation of being an administrator for school. Those first two classes helped me out, as well as the law class. In addition, the research class helped and the rest of classes were management.

A faculty member stated:

I would say that we could probably structure it a little bit more, so that each of the professors involved with the CPPP would know what activities we were looking at per course. And not only have items that correlated standards.

and

That would probably be the main one because I think we've worked really hard to get feedback from the students. Studies like yours is getting information back from the students about how they felt about the CPPP program and our first cohort group now has graduated and some others students have taken administrative jobs. Of course there's some in this cohort that are in administrative positions now and I think that would be a good test of how many are hired. Their confidence level etc. so continuing to study like with your degree. I think, will it give us more feedback on how the students perceived it as well as their administrators.

Another faculty member said:

Given where we are, in especially all the classes that I taught, I really feel pretty comfortable. I really don't see any need for changes except where we need to look at doing new things that we haven't done before. Clearly we need to keep looking toward new embedded and new tasks for students. There is a difference in the urban and rural, and I think we have got to continue to make sure we have a nice balance with that, too. Some of our rural students could possibly be saying that the courses typically go to the urban setting.

and

None, except that we stay open to the communication and the sort of reports and these types of studies so we can find out what to change with where the students are. We could possibly add additional advisory groups and bring in our community and their kinds of perceptions about the changing needs of administrators and see if there's anything else that we are missing, but I think within a school that we are probably getting pretty good that.

One faculty member commented:

That's a major problem because I am not that far away from being a school district administrator. As a school administrator I wanted to develop these young people, but I didn't want to have the jump through the hoops of the university to do it. I think it's the major responsibility of the school superintendent to develop young talent. But I didn't necessarily want to document and offer grades. I just think that's one of the purposes of being

a school district administrator. I think it's a dire responsibility to develop the next generation of school leaders

Another faculty member stated:

We just need an organized effort to make sure that we are incorporating as many relevant job-embedded activities as we reasonably can with the mentors and the students.

and

What has proved to be the most effective, the most effective job-embedded thing that we have done, I think was collaboration and job-embedded was the walk-through supervision and if we can develop activities like that, where we can get the mentors and the students in attendance at a training session and then they follow-up back at the school was something that would be helpful to the school, then that's a real powerful piece. And we have done two of those that we think are really powerful. One was the walk-through supervision and one was coming in last fall and working with them in School Level Factors at Work. The problem was that we wouldn't have all the mentors attending the sessions and I understand that because they were busy. But that is a model that is really powerful if we can incorporate that again and get the mentors in attendance. So before we start to plan for that, one of the things I need to do is talk to the administrative team.

and

This is not easy. It's really easy to talk about collaboration and working well together and communicating on the regular basis and doing a high-quality job with the students. I think the students think that we have done what we said we're going to do. And I think the administrators think that we have done well with them...but it takes a lot of work. Where I would like to get to? I think it is where, when we have a meeting, that everybody is throwing out ideas of "well we can do to strengthen the program." The way it works now is that I will throw out ideas and people will usually endorse. What I say is we will have a discussion, but most of it comes from us, which is to be expected, as everybody else has a full-time job and they are busy. But the job-embedded piece is one of the most difficult pieces to put in place because you have to have a strong plan, and you also have to have a local cooperation of the districts and the mentors within the schools.

I will say that we are probably further than I anticipated when I started this program. We started this program with six school districts and 16 students and the idea of what would make a stronger program for students and that was in the fall of 2002. We are going to be in the fall of 2006 and

starting our fourth cohort with 28 students, and we are working with 14 school districts. So we have expanded, and I think we have expanded without sacrificing the quality. But every time we do something different, there are new challenges.

When we started the southern cohort, I still have difficulty getting a hold of people, because I don't know them as well. One of the real challenges is getting all the people that you need to talk to. I got a call back today from a personnel director I had called three weeks ago. Well, it didn't do me any good to talk to that person since I already had everything that I needed. So, one of the tough parts in operating and doing what we need to do is establishing those relationships with people, and it was easy for me to do the first cohort and build on that because I know those people I've worked with the people. When I needed something they would just call me back. This other group I don't know these people as well, why would you want to talk to someone who wants you to do additional work when you're in a duel in the morning. So, there are all kinds of challenges, the new challenge is going to be 28 students and I think we are committed to splitting that and doing 14 person cohorts. And now the question, then, is how to divide them. What works location-wise, all kinds of logistical things that have to work and not sacrifice the quality of the program. But those are all good kinds of problems to have, because the program is flourishing and a lot of the former students are still in the program, and they have administrative positions, and they're talking to students and I'm getting calls from students all over the place when we begin the program, and they can't get into the program, they have to be recommended.

So I think we have a good product, I think we have grown significantly in the last three or four years. We're not where we need to be. I don't know that you ever get there. The job-embedded piece has been one of the significant challenges for the program, but it will make it stronger as we strengthen that the program will get stronger. You don't ever learn what you need to learn in the classroom and be ready to become a building administrator.

A faculty member remarked:

Well, as we work with the districts, and we start having follow-up and different cohort groups from the same districts, it is going to be nice to see some of the same people for the same issues that we can be better prepared to present our students and have them learn from those situations, so I think the more meaningful interactions with the actual practitioners and school district administrators, the better prepared are the students. So I see that as a rich component for the upcoming years.

and

Other than just getting to meet and discuss the course and get feedback.

It would be good to get the follow-up from the students. We haven't had that many graduated courses, and of those they haven't gotten in there to see how they actually do has a practicing administrator except for maybe the first and second year, and you go back in year 3 or 4 and 5 and you can reflect a lot better known what I did now, what I didn't know, what I wish I'd known on those early couple of years, because everybody does the best they can. So with that said, I think time would be a good ally for the program that as we see our young people get into the buildings and become practitioners that we will see how successful they are and what contributions they are able to make to their districts. In a more rampant transition that they're not going through learning on the job, as we all did when we were practitioners. There's always some component of that because you really never know the pressures of school administration until you're there and having to face them. Each job is different, each building is different, each town is different.

Of the district administrators interviewed, one said:

It seemed to be fine when I was there. I don't know what changes you would make, well, I guess I should but I just stated about more. Not necessarily the principalship, but also focus on the Assistant principalship.

While another stated:

We went through a good recruitment process to share what we have and we have more this next year than we've ever had; we always have four to five in the program. At some point, as it catches on, they may have to get to the point where they do more screening. Everyone gets into the program at this point. Everyone who has applied from our district has been able to get into the program. There really hasn't been a selective process of putting people into the program. We always have candidates for the program and it has been extremely productive and successful for the people who have gone through that. They are at the highest place they can possibly be; we have our own Principal Academy. It dovetails beautifully with the CPPP program. In that a lot of the same people are in that, a couple of those folks are going to the leadership Academy at the state level next year.

We are immersing them from all directions, of course. The CPPP program of courses is out of pocket, and that's what they're working on for their master's degree, whereas we are financing the other set of themes with the broader leadership picture of aspiring administrators. Not only administrators, but upcoming leaders and reading intervention specialists, those kinds of people. We have got a great relationship with them and these folks that are coming out are very well-prepared. Three of the four people highlighted in the latest first-year brochures are highlighted from our school district. So it is obviously working as people are moving into

positions very quickly. As a matter of fact, there are very few people who have been through the CPPP program that are not in some type of administrative or up-and-coming administrative role. We do have a couple that are still in the classroom but they want to be there. We are certainly into nurturing and developing administrators within. I can tell you as the HR person that seeing CPPP on the résumé tells me a lot about their drive and their experience and who they've worked with and their job-embedded activities that they've done at the time. I've had a good experience, I've had good teachers and protégés over the years.

One district administrator suggested, “Expanding the panel discussion format to involve as many topics as practical. This would enhance interaction between those practitioners and those aspiring administrators.” Another district administrator said, “The program is heading in the right direction. Continued communication between the CPPP and school administration will lead to a stronger program.”

As changes and recommendations emerge for the CPPP, one student believes, “There is no substitute for experience, and any opportunity for job-embedded activities will help aspiring principals grow professionally.”

### Emerging Themes

One of the more common themes surfacing among the students, district administrators and faculty members was special education. The perception of not enough time being spent in this area was critical to the preparedness of new administrators as this area is one that is dealt with on the daily basis. The fact that IDEA and reauthorization is such a big part of an administrator’s job impressed the need for more training.

Another prevailing theme was the need to assist future administrators in the area of discipline management. In-basket scenarios and role-playing how to

handle difficult situations were among the most common training ideas. More skills on communication with students, parents as well as the community were seen as a focus area where more training was wanted.

Curriculum and Assessment emerged as a theme as part of the instructional leadership component. Training more extensively in this area would benefit new administrators as the principalship is changing from most of the time being spent on the management side and moving to the supervision side.

The internship was focused on as another prevalent theme that would take care of some of the special education issues, in-basket scenarios, and curriculum and assessment if it were lengthened and placed throughout the CPPP. The most valuable component stated by the students was “learning by doing.”

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the job-embedded component in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that had been implemented in 2002 by a selected university. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the evaluation of the job-embedded component in the CPPP.

These findings were the result of a utilization-focused evaluation using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Multiple sources of evidence were utilized to address the four research questions posed by the intended users. Triangulation of data through the use of multiple data sources enabled the



investigator to verify findings. A summary of findings, discussion, implications for practice and recommendations for further research are included in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion and Conclusions

Universities have traditionally focused on introducing potential administrators to the latest trends and theories in educational leadership, but have provided few practical skills for applying that knowledge to the real world (Buckner, Evans, Peel, Wallace, & Wrenn, 1998). Research indicates that the most effective programs use practical teaching methods such as role-playing, simulation activities, internships, and mentoring to encourage students to transfer their theoretical knowledge to the practice of educational leadership (Allen & Stacy, 1989; Cordeiro et al., 1993; Heller, 1989; Oldaker, 1995; Stewart, 1991 as cited in Buckner, et al, 1998). Over the past two decades, much has changed in the educational leadership profession and much has changed in the programs that prepared education leaders (Murphy, 2001b).

Many aspiring administrators need opportunities that connect their coursework with practical field experiences. Job-embedded activities are a necessity to better prepare our future leaders. Central University (CU) initiated the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP), a pilot program, in a collaborative venture with six metropolitan Missouri school districts. To develop this program, faculty members from CU contacted superintendents from six school districts in the surrounding area to see if they would consider working collaboratively to address leadership development for potential leaders within their district. The faculty members in charge of this initiative met with the superintendents on several occasions to engage in dialogue regarding this

potential opportunity. The program began in August 2002 with 16 students. The pilot program sought to address the need for skilled, creative and effective leaders in suburban metropolitan school districts.

The CPPP was created in response to criticisms of traditional principal preparation programs identified in the literature and included the following features: (a) students were carefully selected by the district administrators; (b) job-embedded learning activities were integrated in the curriculum; (c) each student was assigned an acting administrator as a mentor; (d) classes were held at the school district sites; (e) the university instructional team collaborated with area administrators; and (f) professional development activities were provided for district superintendents and/or their designees (Bowie, Clinefelter, Harris, & Woolsey, 2002). Students participating in the first cohort of the CPPP fulfilled the requirements for a Master of Science in Education degree in the area of School Administration and completed the requirements for initial principal certification in Missouri in August 2004.

The district administrators from the collaborating school districts served in an advisory capacity to the CPPP coordinator and CU faculty members. The district administrators were responsible for recruiting students, selecting mentors, coordinating with CU, and implementing the program within their respective districts. The mentors, while satisfying administrative responsibilities, were assigned/selected by school district representatives to provide mentoring support to students in the CPPP. Each student had at least one mentor during their

program. In the fall of 2006, CU will be starting their fourth cohort with 28 students, and they are working with 14 school districts.

The purpose of this study was to provide a utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1997) of the job-embedded component in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that had been implemented in 2002 by a selected university. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the evaluation of the job-embedded component in the CPPP. The utilization-focused evaluation provided the intended users a means of reviewing the job-embedded component and provides data with which to make necessary changes.

This study reviewed and evaluated the job-embedded component of the CPPP by using a utilization-focused evaluation lens. Utilization-focused evaluation is based on the premise that evaluations should be judged by their actual use and utility and that assessments should be designed with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect teaching methodology pedagogy (Patton, 1997). The focus is on the intended use by clearly identified users.

The identified primary users of the evaluation findings were CPPP stakeholders, including Central University CPPP faculty members, former CPPP students currently serving as administrators, and district administrators from collaborating school districts. The evaluation is designed to be formative in nature with program improvement as the primary intended use of the findings.

Patton asserted that utilization-focused evaluators should actively involve intended users in the evaluation process throughout the life of the evaluation. Patton further stressed the necessity of aligning purpose and focus with intended uses and aligning data collection methods with understanding the needs of the intended users. The first stage of the study involved the researcher meeting with CPPP faculty to identify the key questions to be examined and methods to be employed to collect and analyze data.

This study provides both a quantitative and qualitative approach to review and evaluate the quality and implementation of job-embedded learning in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. The study focused on the following practices for review: job-embedded learning and how mentoring, recruitment, and collaboration intertwine with the job-embedded learning component. More specifically, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum?
2. For those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program?
3. What do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP?
4. How do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-

embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

### Summary of Findings

Nine students were contacted via an initial e-mail with a cover letter, the informed consent, and the link to the survey questions. A friendly reminder e-mail for the survey was sent three weeks later and reminders were given at the time of the interviews. Seven students out of nine participated in the survey. Of the seven students responding to the survey 6 (85.7%) were male and 1 (14.3%) was female. Five of the seven (71.4%) students were Assistant Principals while one of the seven (14.3%) was a Principal and one (14.3%) was other. Of seven students, 1 (14.3%) had 11 years of classroom experience, 1 (14.3%) had 10 years of classroom experience, 1 (14.3%) had 8 years of classroom experience, 2 (28.5%) had 3 years of classroom experience, 2 (28.5%) had 4 years of classroom experience.

Of seven students, 1 (14.3%) had 5 years of administration experience, 1 (14.3%) had 3 years of administration experience. 2 (28.5%) had 2 years of administration experience, 2 (28.5%) had 1 year of administration experience, and 1 (14.3%) had 0 years of administration experience.

Of seven students, 1 (14.3%) had 0 years in their current position, 4 (57.1%) had 1 year in their current position, 1 (28.5%) had 2 years in their current position, and 1 (14.3%) had 3 years in their current position. Four of seven (57.1%) of the students had high school placement within their district, two of

seven (28.5%) had middle school placement within their district, and one of seven (14.3%) had elementary placement.

The final demographic category asked respondents to select the last degree they had completed. Six of the seven (85.7%) students had a Master's Degree, while one of the seven (14.3%) had a Bachelor's Degree.

Six district administrators were contacted in an initial e-mail with a cover letter, the informed consent, and the link to the survey questions. A friendly reminder e-mail for the survey was sent three weeks later and reminders were given at the time of the interviews. Three district administrators out of six participated in the survey. Of the three district administrators responding to the survey 3 (100%) were male. Of three district administrators, 1 (33.3%) was a Superintendent, 1 (33.3%) was an Assistant Superintendent, and 1 (33.3%) was a Director.

Of the three district administrators, 1 (33.3%) had 2 years of classroom experience, 1 (33.3%) had 3 years of classroom experience, and 1 (33.3%) had 6 years of classroom experience.

Of three district administrators, 1 (33.3%) had 7 years of administration experience, 1 (33.3%) had 12 years of administration experience, and 1 (33.3%) had 15 years of administration experience. Of three district administrators, 2 (66.7%) had 4 years in their current position, and 1 (33.3%) had 7 years in their current position,

The final demographic category asked respondents to select the last degree they had completed. One of the three (33.3%) had an Education

Specialist Degree, while two out of the three district administrators (66.7%) had Doctorate Degrees.

Five faculty members were contacted in an initial e-mail with a cover letter, the informed consent, and the link to the survey questions. A friendly reminder e-mail for the survey was sent three weeks later and reminders were given at the time of the interviews.

Four faculty members out of five participated in the survey. Of the four faculty members responding to the survey 3 (75%) were male and 1 (25%) was female. Of four faculty members, 1 (25%) had 18 years of classroom experience, 2 (50%) had 14 years of classroom experience, and 1 (25%) had 6 years of classroom experience.

Of four faculty members, 1 (25%) had 28 years of administration experience, 1 (25%) had 23 years of administration experience, 1 (25%) had 21 years of administration experience, and 1 (25%) had 16 years of administration experience. Of four faculty members, 1 (25%) had 7 years in their current position, 1 (25%) had 5 years in their current position, 1 (25%) had 4 years in their current position, and 1 (25%) had 3 years in their current position.

The final demographic category asked respondents to select the last degree they had completed. Four out of the four faculty members (100%) had Doctorate Degrees.

CPPP student respondents were asked to rate their perceptions of the job-embedded component of the CPPP program. Responses to the questions rank from 1 to 5 with 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing.



When analyzing the distribution of students' responses concerning the program, one hundred percent of the students agreed that the job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university, that job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical, and that job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders.

Eighty-three percent of the students rated the quality of the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP as strong. The students also agreed that they developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP and their mentor assisted them with the job-embedded activities. They also agreed that the school districts allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written. In addition, students agreed that sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity and that they had a good relationship with their mentor. Thirty-three percent of the students agreed that the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum needed to be adjusted while fifty percent disagreed with adjustments to the curriculum.

School district administrators were asked to rate their perception of the job-embedded component of the program. Respondents were asked to rank their perceptions from 1 to 5, with 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing.

When analyzing the distribution of district administrator's responses concerning the perceptions of the job-embedded component of the CPPP, one hundred percent agreed that the job-embedded learning activities are relevant

and meaningful, while 67% agreed that the overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate. The district administrators also agreed that students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP and that the job-embedded learning activities were integrated throughout the CPPP curriculum.

In addition, 67% also agreed that the school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written and the job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university. The district administrators also agreed that the job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical, sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity, and the school district and university collaborated in the development of the CPPP job-embedded learning activities. Thirty three percent of the district administrators agreed that the job-embedded activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.

Faculty members were asked to rank their perception of the job-embedded component of the CPPP. Faculty was asked to rank their responses from 1 to 5, with 1 as strongly disagreeing and 5 as strongly agreeing.

When analyzing the distribution of faculty member's responses concerning their perceptions of the job-embedded component of the CPPP, 100% agreed that the overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate. One hundred percent of the faculty also agreed that students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP, job-embedded

learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical, and job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders. In addition, 100% of the faculty agreed that the job-embedded learning activities are relevant and meaningful to the students and that the course work was relevant and meaningful to them.

Seventy-five percent of the faculty agreed that the school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written and 50% agreed that the job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university and that the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.

Each survey contained three open-ended questions. The student survey included: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) What job-embedded learning activities were not practical during your program and why? and (c) What are your perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities. The summary to the questions are below.

When it came to what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum, students had wide ranges of experiences from a variety of duties, coordinating professional development, designing schedules, supervising student activities, discipline, parent communication, and school board relations. In addition, students commented on working on the budget, creating district and building level SIP plans, the hiring process, working to learn and use evaluation tools, MAP scoring, various tasks involving the supervision process

The job-embedded learning activities that were not practical during the student's our program were few as there was nothing students considered unpractical due to the administration position each held during coursework. Students commented on the lack of a mentor present for guidance. Student perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities had a positive view of the program and believed the professors provided many applicable experiences.

The district administrator survey included the following questions: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) What are your perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities? and (c) What additional information would assist your school district while participating the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program? The summary to the questions are below.

District administrators focused on the job-embedded learning activities utilized in the CPPP curriculum and valued the time working in the office with mentor principal/assistant principal and the students participated in various activities with the administrators such as scheduling, evaluation, supervision, etc.”

District administrators perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities was beneficial. School district administrators

believed there should probably be more conversation, guidance, and expectations with the administrators on activities for the students to do and provide a check-list of activities to be completed.

The faculty member survey included the following questions: (a) what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum? (b) What is your perception of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty of implementing job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university? and (c) What job-embedded activities should be removed from the current curriculum? The summary to the questions are below.

The job-embedded learning activities utilized in the CPPP curriculum include the law; what's in the news; newspaper, Education Week, and popular magazine articles; administrator interview; relating legal info/concepts to building/district. In addition, other job-embedded learning activities included case studies on Ethics and ethical dilemmas, as well as case studies in legal issues.

The faculty's perception of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty of implementing job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university is very strong and continues to grow in strength. More work needs to be done to ensure job-embedded activities are incorporated into each course. Grant money has provided substitutes for the students to work closely with their mentors - so time is not as big a factor. The idea of removing any job-embedded learning activities

was discarded and more consideration to adding to the curriculum was a general consensus,

The researcher conducted a review of important documents, including the syllabi currently utilized in the CPPP. Documents were analyzed to assist the researcher in understanding job-embedded learning component for each course in the program. According to the current CPPP brochure, a student must take the following classes to earn an administrative degree: Fall 2006: Foundations of Education Administration and Elementary or Secondary Administration; Spring 2007: Public School Finance and School Supervision; Summer 2007: School Law and School Personnel; Fall 2007: Introduction to Research and Fall Internship; Spring 2008: Ethical Systems/Learning Theory and Spring Internship; Summer 2008: Curriculum Development & Assessment and Administration of the Middle Grades.

The definition of job-embedded learning is the ability to experience real situations and address them accordingly by utilizing training that is being received in the principal preparation program. Analysis of syllabi documents job-embedded learning component revealed a few similarities. Those similarities included: (a) interviewing individuals regarding in-basket situations and writing reflection papers; (b) conducting observations of in-basket situations and writing reflection papers; and (c) working with a group of students on a project of an in-basket activity and giving a presentation.

There were also some differences noted regarding the job-embedded component of each syllabus. The definition of job-embedded learning is the

ability to experience real situations and address them accordingly by utilizing training that is being received in the principal preparation program. Regarding actual hands-on experience, there was only one job-embedded learning activity found in the syllabi. School Supervision required the student to conduct a pre-observation conference, observe one lesson and conduct a post observation conference with a teaching colleague. The student was actually simulating what a practicing administrator would be required to do and receiving feedback. While there were activities such as developing school improvement plans, creating a floor plan and inventory, these were hypothetical situations that did not deal directly with the data from their school with the assistance or guidance from their mentor. The syllabi did not have students embedded in the activity but reporting on an interview or observation of the activity. The syllabi did not reflect the definition of job-embedded learning or provide students the opportunity to be embedded in activities that would be typical of the principalship. In addition, opportunities for feedback from the mentor after the job-embedded learning activity was not discussed.

During the interview phase, research began with four questions that helped to focus the data collection and analysis. Interview questions were developed to help collect data that would assist in answering three of the four research questions. A coding system was used to identify themes that emerged during the interviews. Interviews were held with nine students currently serving in administrative roles, six district administrators and five CPPP faculty members. Data were collected and analyzed which resulted in findings related to four main

areas. These areas included: (a) for those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles, what are their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program? (b) what do school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP? And (c) how do school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?

One interview question asked if the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program job-embedded learning activities prepared students for the job they are currently in. Interview data regarding the CPPP job-embedded learning activities were recorded. Many of the students agreed that the job-embedded component of the program did prepare them. One student appeared to be confident and said, "The program provided a look into some general areas of administration. I felt comfortable heading into my new position as administrator." While another praised experience.

Two district administrators agreed that the job-embedded component of the CPPP program prepared students for their current jobs and faculty members agreed that they were moving in the right direction and were at a higher level teaching the students because of the job-embedded activities.

When asked what types of job-embedded learning activities should have been concentrated on more in the CPPP, students began reflecting on whether the CPPP prepared them, then realized that they needed more training in specific



area on in-basket activities that assistant principal's deal with on the daily basis. The area of special education was an emerging theme, while another emerging theme addressed the curriculum and assessment component of an administrator's responsibility.

The internship that a few of the students had the opportunity to be involved with at their current schools emerged as a theme that would be beneficial to any student going through the program.

District administrators believe that they have been able to communicate job-embedded activities with the university and the university has implanted job-embedded activities that better prepare students. The district administrators agree that it is the practice of ensuring that there are opportunities for the job-embedded activities in the curriculum.

When asked about suggested job-embedded learning activities that would better prepare students as they enter the principalship, there was concern about the special education process as it relates to new administrators. The theme of special education continued as well as thoughts on the CPPP process.

Wanting to improve the job-embedded component of the program, students and faculty members focused on the length and placement of the internship. Both wanted more emphasis on the special education component in the program.

The feedback on the outline or syllabi was similar between the students and the district administrators. They felt comfortable with the expectations and logic of the work. The faculty members, on the other hand, thought that

improvements could be made in the area of the syllabi. Most of the faculty members focused on their own syllabi, but noted that they should know what is going on in the other classes.

Many of the students voiced that there was very little duplication of the job-embedded courses in the program, but they did see some redundancy. Students believed that job-embedded activities were being enhanced yet felt as if their time could have been spent in other areas.

Students reflected on the practicality of the job-embedded learning activities throughout the program and some did not agree that the activities were practical at first but ended up as being good experiences for them.

The district administrators and the faculty members had the same perceptions of the practicality of the job-embedded component. Both agreed that all activities were practical.

The collaboration needed between the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members was an area that offered great insight from the individuals that were interviewed. Many had suggestions to enhance the process. These suggestions included more time to meet, developing the job-embedded activities together, meet more frequently, more input from the district administrators, and continued training for administrators serving as mentors.

Students had a different outlook on the collaboration between district administrators and CPPP faculty members. The students wanted more collaboration dealing with the mentors they were assigned.

The students, district administrators and CPPP faculty members had several suggestions for changes or recommendations to improve the program. They were congruent across the board on enhancing the special education component, management in discipline, curriculum and assessment and lengthening the internship.

### Discussion

This utilization-focus evaluation provided the opportunity to review the perceptions of the job-embedded component of the CPPP at Central University. The study provided the university a process by which the intended users selected the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for the CPPP (Patton, 1997). The researcher reported the findings related to what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum, what are the perceptions of cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program, what school district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP, and how school district administrators and the CPPP faculty perceive the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university. Three methods of data collection, including a survey, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews, were employed in a utilization-focused evaluation to answer the four research questions.

Research question one asked about what job-embedded learning activities are utilized in the CPPP curriculum. The researcher collected the data

through a survey and found that students were very knowledgeable about the job-embedded learning activities and the students were able to list them. The district administrators seemed familiar with the some of the job-embedded learning activities, but were not certain of which ones were implemented. The faculty members were vague on what job-embedded learning activities were implemented and could only comment on their specific class. The job-embedded activities discussed were supervision, writing reflections, developing a code of ethics and continual work with School Improvement Plans that did not deal directly with the school that the student was involved in.

Research question two asked about those cohort one and cohort two students who currently serve in administrative roles and their perceptions of the job-embedded learning activities as they relate to the current program. The researcher collected the data through interviews and found that the students perceptions of the job-embedded learning component of the CPPP was practical in most cases but had a tendency to be redundant at times. The students would like to focus on other topics regarding administration such as special education, curriculum and assessment training, and management of students and parents. In addition, the students felt that lengthening the internship and placing throughout the program would be practical and allow more experience prior to being placed in an administrative position.

Research question three focused on what district administrators perceive as appropriate job-embedded learning activities for the CPPP. The researcher collected the data through interviews and found that the district administrators

agreed more emphasis should be placed on the special education component. Details included special education meetings, terminology, communication skills; both verbal and nonverbal, paperwork, and deadlines.

In addition, the district administrators focused on the internship and the length and placement of it. Hands-on experience on the day-to-day issues assists students in gaining experience for the principalship. The district administrators would also like to see more emphasis on training new leaders for the assistant principalship, as this position is the most common when students earn their principalship license. Focusing on speakers that are practicing administrators was found to be a valuable component of the program as students went information and feedback from individuals who are currently serving in the roles that they are studying.

Research question four asked the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members about the collaborative efforts that contribute to the implementation of job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university. The faculty members and a few of the district administrators thought it would be beneficial to meet on a more regular basis. Time is a hindrance, but both felt it was necessary to enhance the preparedness of our future administrators.

Faculty members would like feedback from the district administrators on what they are trying to accomplish within the program and to ensure that they are focusing on the components that school districts see as vital to the success of future administrators.

## Implications for Practice

The researcher will present the findings of this study to the CPPP faculty at Central University. Findings of this study suggest many implications for the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

They include the following:

1. A meeting with the faculty and school district administrators should be scheduled to define the job-embedded learning component of the CPPP and the partnership with district administrators to create job-embedded learning activity opportunities.
2. Effort should be made to provide a job-embedded learning activity in each course offered in the CPPP. Consider the timing of the courses and what job-embedded activities should be scheduled. School Improvement Plans should be concentrated on in the Fall semester, budget activities during the Spring semester when revising takes place and special education job-embedded activities such as appropriate paperwork, meetings, and developing a flowchart for their respective school district are suggestions.
3. Procedures should be put in place to ensure that the job-embedded learning activity component is implemented at the district level. Signature pages between the mentor and student should exist for accountability purposes.
4. Effort should be made by the university and school district administrators to provide practical job-embedded learning activity opportunities.

5. Each syllabus should contain a job-embedded learning activity section outlining the job-embedded activity that will take place.
6. Develop a matrix of all job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP for all stakeholders involved. Faculty of the CPPP should meet prior to the next cohort beginning and collaborate to establish the job-embedded activities that should be concentrated on and the placement of those job-embedded activities throughout the program.
7. Focus on emphasizing the special education component of administration through-out the curriculum and provide job-embedded activities that concentrate in this area. Develop an area in courses already taught to integrate special education activities to expose students to this arena of education.
8. Lengthen the internship and implement internship sessions throughout the program by starting students at the beginning of the program in the first internship, place an internship in the middle of the program and finish with an internship at the conclusion of the program.
9. Emphasize curriculum writing and assessment by reducing the number of redundant job-embedded learning activities from course to course. Look at the school improvement plan, code of ethics and reflection papers and replace with curriculum writing and assessment activities instead.
10. Meet with faculty members prior to each session to provide cohesiveness to the presentation of the curriculum in the CPPP to ensure that students are receiving a wide knowledge base.

## Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations are suggested for further research:

1. A quantitative study on the job-embedded component of principal preparation programs should be conducted at universities with principal preparation programs. This study could be used to measure impact that job-embedded learning has on leadership.
2. A comparative case study should be conducted at another university with a similar program.
3. A follow-up study of the job-embedded component of the principal preparation program in the university to determine the long-term benefits and any changes resulting from this study. This will provide the university additional validation of successful job-embedded components.
4. A comparative study of other universities that have successful principal preparation programs with authentic job-embedded learning activities. This would provide validation of these results and a better understanding of the impact of job-embedded learning for future leaders.

## Summary

High-quality, job-embedded curricula require significant investments by universities and school districts. Universities need to find ways to evaluate and reward faculty members who spend considerable time working in the field. School districts need to encourage and support future principals by underwriting release time for academic study and job-embedded learning (Southern Region Education Board, 2005).



This study reviewed and evaluated the job-embedded component of the CPPP by using a utilization-focused evaluation lens. Utilization-focused evaluation is based on the premise that evaluations should be judged by their actual use and utility and that assessments should be designed with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect teaching methodology pedagogy (Patton, 1997). The focus is on the intended use by clearly identified users.

The findings of most interest from the study were: (a) the need for more time to collaborate at the university and district level; (b) more structure in the syllabus regarding job-embedded activities, (c) additional training in the areas of special education, discipline management and curriculum and assessment, and (d) implementing a longer internship throughout the program.

Findings of this study suggest many implications for the job-embedded learning component of the CPPP. They include the following: (a) a meeting with the faculty and school district administrators should be scheduled to define the job-embedded learning component of the CPPP and the partnership with district administrators to create job-embedded learning activity opportunities; (b) effort should be made to provide a job-embedded learning activity in each course offered in the CPPP. Consider the timing of the courses and what job-embedded activities should be scheduled. School Improvement Plans should be concentrated on in the Fall semester, budget activities during the Spring semester when revising takes place and special education job-embedded activities such as appropriate paperwork, meetings, and developing a flowchart

for their respective school district are suggestions; (c) procedures should be put in place to ensure that the job-embedded learning activity component is implemented at the district level. Signature pages between the mentor and student should exist for accountability purposes; (d) effort should be made by the university and school district administrators to provide practical job-embedded learning activity opportunities; (e) each syllabus should contain a job-embedded learning activity section outlining the job-embedded activity that will take place. (f) develop a matrix of all job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP for all stakeholders involved. Faculty of the CPPP should meet prior to the next cohort beginning and collaborate to establish the job-embedded activities that should be concentrated on and the placement of those job-embedded activities throughout the program; (g) focus on emphasizing the special education component of administration through-out the curriculum and provide job-embedded activities that concentrate in this area. Develop an area in courses already taught to integrate special education activities to expose students to this arena of education; (h) lengthen the internship and implement internship sessions throughout the program by starting students at the beginning of the program in the first internship, place an internship in the middle of the program and finish with an internship at the conclusion of the program; (i) emphasize curriculum writing and assessment by reducing the number of redundant job-embedded learning activities from course to course. Look at the school improvement plan, code of ethics and reflection papers and replace with curriculum writing and assessment activities instead; and (k) meet with faculty members prior to each

session to provide cohesiveness to the presentation of the curriculum in the CPPP to ensure that students are receiving a wide knowledge base.

## Appendices

Appendix A

Electronic Survey Cover Letter, Informed Consent, Collaborative Principal  
Preparation Program Student Survey

## Appendix A

Name:

I am a Doctoral student at the University of Missouri-Columbia as well as the Principal at Harrisonville High School. I am in the process of researching the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that you instruct at Central Missouri State University using a utilization-focused evaluation approach.

The purpose of the study is to provide a user-intended evaluation instrument to collect information regarding the job-embedded component of the CPPP. Central Missouri State University faculty in the Education Leadership department will use the results to evaluate the effectiveness and promote changes for the CPPP. Other universities may also employ procedures used in the study to duplicate the process.

Please complete and return the attached Former CPPP Student Survey by March 20, 2006. It was designed to take only a few minutes to complete. There are no risks involved with responding as individual responses will be confidential and individual school district responses will not be reported in the findings. Further, your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without fear of penalty.

If you have any questions concerning the survey or the study, you may contact Dr. Sandy Hutchinson at Central Missouri State University, telephone number 660-543-4720, or me, telephone number 816-380-3273, ext. 300 (w) or 816-380-7342 (h). If you have any questions about human subject research you can contact the University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board at 573-882-9585.

I look forward to receiving your survey response very soon. Thank you very much for your willingness to assist me in this endeavor. Your efforts will be beneficial in determining the current status of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program at Central Missouri State University.

Sincerely,

Kelly D. Harris, Principal  
Harrisonville High School  
1504 E. Elm  
Harrisonville, MO 64701  
816-380-3273 ext. 300

## Appendix A

### Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Kelly D. Harris, a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university.

**Request for participation:** You are invited to participate in a study on the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

**Exclusions:** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

The research involves completing a short survey. The survey will ask you about your perceptions with the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. This survey will take approximately 15 minutes to finish. You may be selected to participate in an interview at a later date. The interview would take about 45 minutes and arranged at a mutually agreeable date and time. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Kelly D. Harris at [harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us](mailto:harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us) or (816)380-3273 ext. 300.

**Privacy:** All information collected will be kept confidential. Your name or any information that could be used to identify you or your institution will be protected.

**Risks:** The risks of the study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

**Benefits:** This study will inform others of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

**Questions about Your Rights:** If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri, Columbia Institutional Research Board office at (573) 882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please click on the link below for the survey.

## Appendix A

### Collaborative Principal Preparation Program Student Survey



## 1. Premise

This survey is designed to study your perception of the effectiveness of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

The rating scale for section 2 is as follows:  
(Strongly disagree) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (Strongly Agree).

### 1. Gender

- Male
- Female

### 2. What is your current position in your district?

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Classroom Teacher
- Other

### 3. How many years of classroom experience?

### 4. How many years of administration experience?

**5. Number of years in your current position?**

**6. Current placement in your district?**

- Elementary
- Middle School
- High School
- Central Office

**7. What is your highest degree held?**

- Bachelors
- Masters
- Education Specialist

**[Next >>](#)**

Please mark the appropriate response on the scale with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

**8. How would you rate the overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

**9. Students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded learning activities offered in the CPPP.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. My mentor assisted me with the job-embedded activities.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**11. The school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**12. The job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**13. Job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**14. Sufficient time was give during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**15. Job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

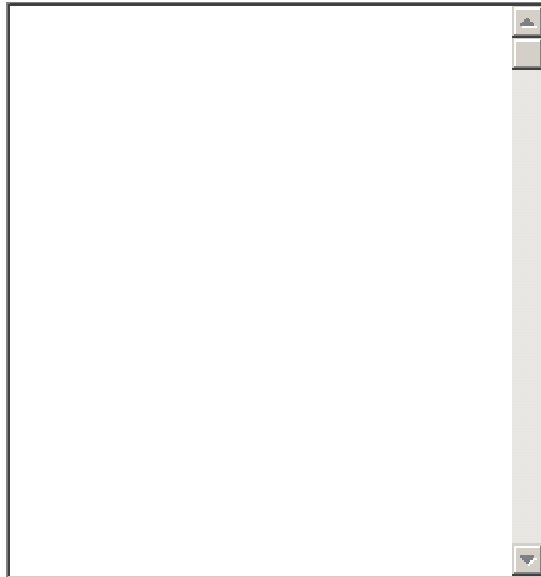
**16. The job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

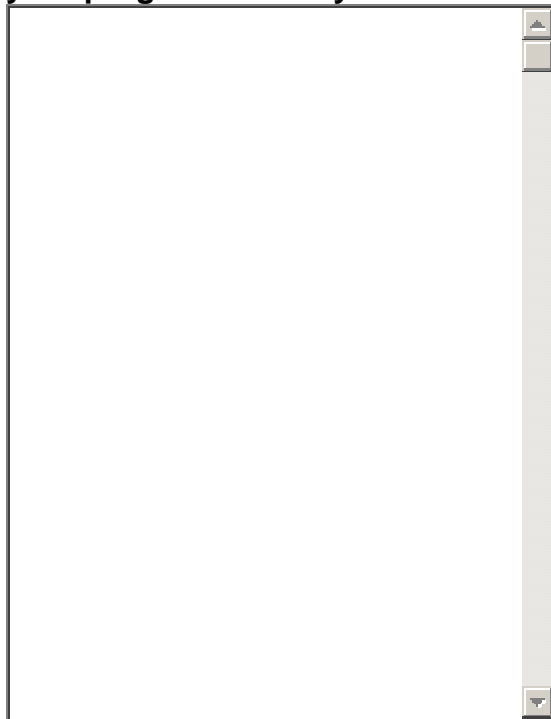
**17. I had a good relationship with my mentor.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

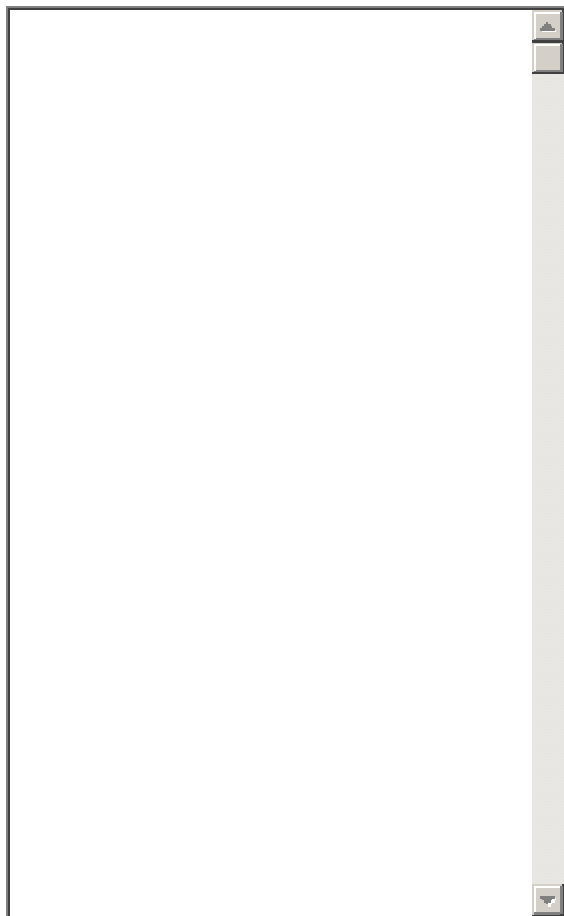
**18. What job-embedded learning activities were included in the CPPP curriculum?**

An empty rectangular text input box with a thin black border. On the right side, there is a vertical scrollbar with a small upward-pointing arrow at the top and a downward-pointing arrow at the bottom.

**19. What job-embedded learning activities were not practical during your program and why?**

An empty rectangular text input box with a thin black border. On the right side, there is a vertical scrollbar with a small upward-pointing arrow at the top and a downward-pointing arrow at the bottom.

**20. What are your perceptions of the collaborative efforts between the school district administration and the CPPP faculty to implement practical job-embedded learning activities?**



[<< Prev](#)

[Next >>](#)

**Collaborative Principal Preparation Program Student Survey**

[Exit this survey >>](#)

**3. Thank you!**

[<< Prev](#)

[Done >>](#)



Appendix B

Electronic Survey Cover Letter, Informed Consent, and District Administrator  
Survey



## Appendix B

Name:

I am a Doctoral student at the University of Missouri-Columbia as well as the Principal at Harrisonville High School. I am in the process of researching the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that you instruct at Central Missouri State University using a utilization-focused evaluation approach.

The purpose of the study is to provide a user-intended evaluation instrument to collect information regarding the job-embedded component of the CPPP. Central Missouri State University faculty in the Education Leadership department will use the results to evaluate the effectiveness and promote changes for the CPPP. Other universities may also employ procedures used in the study to duplicate the process.

Please complete and return the attached District Administrator Survey by March 20, 2006. It was designed to take only a few minutes to complete. There are no risks involved with responding as individual responses will be confidential and individual school district responses will not be reported in the findings. Further, your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without fear of penalty.

If you have any questions concerning the survey or the study, you may contact Dr. Sandy Hutchinson at Central Missouri State University, telephone number 660-543-4720, or me, telephone number 816-380-3273, ext. 300 (w) or 816-380-7342 (h). If you have any questions about human subject research you can contact the University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board at 573-882-9585.

I look forward to receiving your survey response very soon. Thank you very much for your willingness to assist me in this endeavor. Your efforts will be beneficial in determining the current status of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program at Central Missouri State University.

Sincerely,

Kelly D. Harris, Principal  
Harrisonville High School  
1504 E. Elm  
Harrisonville, MO 64701  
816-380-3273 ext. 300

## Appendix B

### Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Kelly D. Harris, a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university.

**Request for participation:** You are invited to participate in a study on the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

**Exclusions:** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

The research involves completing a short survey. The survey will ask you about your perceptions with the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. This research will take approximately 15 minutes to finish. You will be asked to participate in an interview at a later date. The interview would take about one hour and arranged at a mutually agreeable date and time. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Kelly D. Harris at [harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us](mailto:harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us) or (816)380-3273 ext. 300.

**Privacy:** All information collected will be kept confidential. Your name or any information that could be used to identify you or your institution will be protected.

**Risks:** The risks of the study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

**Benefits:** This study will inform others of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

**Questions about Your Rights:** If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri, Columbia Institutional Research Board office at (573) 882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please click on the link below for the survey.

## Appendix B

### Collaborative Principal Preparation Program District Administrator Survey

### 1. Premise

This survey is designed to study your perception of the effectiveness of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

The rating scale for section 2 is as follows:  
(Strongly disagree) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (Strongly Agree).

#### 1. Gender

- Male
- Female

#### 2. What is your current position in your district?

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- Director
- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Other

#### 3. How many years of classroom experience?

**4. How many years of administration experience?**

**5. Number of years in your current position?**

**6. Current placement in your district?**

- Elementary
- Middle School
- High School
- Central Office

**7. What is your highest degree held?**

- Bachelors
- Masters
- Education Specialist
- Doctorate

**Next >>**

## 2. Perceptions

Please mark the appropriate response on the scale with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

---

**8. The overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities of the CPPP is adequate.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. Students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded activities offered in the CPPP.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. Job-embedded learning activities were integrated throughout the CPPP curriculum.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**11. The school district allowed the job-embedded learning activities to occur as written.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**12. The job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**13. Job-embedded learning activities integrated into the curriculum were practical.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**14. Sufficient time was given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**15. The school district and university collaborated in the development of the CPPP job-embedded learning activities.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**16. The job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**17. The job-embedded learning activities are relevant and meaningful.**

1	2	3	4	5	Not certain
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**18. What job-embedded activities were included in the CPPP curriculum?**

**19. What are your perceptions of the collaborative efforts of implementing job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?**



20. What additional information would assist your school district while participating in the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program?

[<< Prev](#)      [Next >>](#)

**Collaborative Principal Preparation Program District Administrator Survey**

[Exit this survey >>](#)

**3. Thank you!**

[<< Prev](#)      [Done >>](#)

## Appendix C

Electronic Survey Cover Letter, Informed Consent, and Collaborative Principal  
Preparation Program Faculty Survey

## Appendix C

Name:

I am a Doctoral student at the University of Missouri-Columbia as well as the Principal at Harrisonville High School. I am in the process of researching the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program (CPPP) that you instruct at Central Missouri State University using a utilization-focused evaluation approach.

The purpose of the study is to provide a user-intended evaluation instrument to collect information regarding the job-embedded component of the CPPP. Central Missouri State University faculty in the Education Leadership department will use the results to evaluate the effectiveness and promote changes for the CPPP. Other universities may also employ procedures used in the study to duplicate the process.

Please complete and return the attached CPPP Faculty Survey by March 20, 2006. It was designed to take only a few minutes to complete. There are no risks involved with responding as individual responses will be confidential and individual school district responses will not be reported in the findings. Further, your participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without fear of penalty.

If you have any questions concerning the survey or the study, you may contact Dr. Sandy Hutchinson at Central Missouri State University, telephone number 660-543-4720, or me, telephone number 816-380-3273, ext. 300 (w) or 816-380-7342 (h). If you have any questions about human subject research you can contact the University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board at 573-882-9585.

I look forward to receiving your survey response very soon. Thank you very much for your willingness to assist me in this endeavor. Your efforts will be beneficial in determining the current status of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program at Central Missouri State University.

Sincerely,

Kelly D. Harris, Principal  
Harrisonville High School  
1504 E. Elm  
Harrisonville, MO 64701  
816-380-3273 ext. 300

## Appendix C

### Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Kelly D. Harris, a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university.

**Request for participation:** You are invited to participate in a study on the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

**Exclusions:** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

The research involves completing a short survey. The survey will ask you about your perceptions with the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. This research will take approximately 15 minutes to finish. You will be asked to participate in an interview at a later date. The interview would take about one hour and arranged at a mutually agreeable date and time. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Kelly D. Harris at [harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us](mailto:harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us) or (816)380-3273 ext. 300.

**Privacy:** All information collected will be kept confidential. Your name or any information that could be used to identify you or your institution will be protected.

**Risks:** The risks of the study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

**Benefits:** This study will inform others of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

**Questions about Your Rights:** If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri, Columbia Institutional Research Board office at (573) 882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please click on the link below for the survey.

## Appendix C

### Collaborative Principal Preparation Program Faculty Member Survey

## 1. Premise

This survey is designed to study your perception of the effectiveness of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

The rating scale for section 2 is as follows:  
(Strongly disagree) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (Strongly Agree).

### 1. Gender

- Male  
 Female

### 2. How many years of classroom experience?

### 3. How many years of administration experience?

### 4. Number of years in your current position?

### 5. What is your highest degree held?

- Bachelors  
 Masters  
 Specialist  
 Doctorate

**[Next >>](#)**

## 2. Perceptions

Please mark the appropriate response on the scale with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 representing strongly agree.

**6. The overall quality of the job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP are adequate.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. Students developed knowledge and skills associated with strong instructional leadership through job-embedded activities offered in the CPPP.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. Job-embedded learning activities are integrated throughout the CPPP curriculum.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. The job-embedded learning activities were well-defined by the university.**

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. The school district allowed the Job-embedded learning activities to occur as written.**

1

2

3

4

5



**11. Job-embedded learning activities integrated into the CPPP curriculum are practical.**

1

2

3

4

5



**12. Sufficient time is given during the program to effectively address each job-embedded learning activity.**

1

2

3

4

5



**13. Job-embedded learning activities are essential to the success of future leaders.**

1

2

3

4

5



**14. The job-embedded learning activities in the CPPP curriculum need to be adjusted.**

1

2

3

4

5





**15. The job-embedded learning activities were relevant and meaningful to the students.**

1



2



3



4



5



**16. The course work was relevant and meaningful to me.**

1



2



3



4



5



**17. What job-embedded learning activities were included in the CPPP curriculum?**




**18. What is your perception of the collaborative efforts between the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members of implementing job-embedded learning activities between the school district and the university?**

19. What job-embedded activities should be removed from the current curriculum?

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Collaborative Principal Preparation Program CPPP  
Faculty Survey

[Exit this survey >>](#)

**3. Thank you!**

## Appendix D

### Informed Consent, Student Interview Questions

## Appendix D

### Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Kelly D. Harris, a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university.

**Request for participation:** You are invited to participate in a study on the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone and will only be reported in a way in which they will not be able to be identified. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

**Exclusions:** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

The research involves participating in an interview. You will be asked about your perceptions with the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. This interview will be audio-taped and will take approximately 45 minutes. The results of this study will be shared with the selected university. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Kelly D. Harris at [harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us](mailto:harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us) or (816)380-3273 ext. 300.

**Privacy:** All information collected will be kept confidential. Interview tapes and transcripts will be locked in a file cabinet in the evaluator's office for security purposes until the study is complete. Your name or any information that could be used to identify you or your institution will be protected.

**Risks:** The risks of the study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

**Benefits:** This study will inform others of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

**Questions about Your Rights:** If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri, Columbia Institutional Research Board office at (573) 882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please sign a copy of this letter and return to me. The other copy is for you to keep.

I have read this letter and agree to participate.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Student Interview Questions

1. Did the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program job-embedded learning activities prepare you for the job you are currently in?
2. What types of job-embedded learning activities should have been concentrated more on in the CPPP?
3. What are some suggested job-embedded learning activities that would better prepare students as they enter the principalship?
4. Did you feel that the program outline or syllabi covered what job-embedded learning activities would be expected and when?
5. Was there duplication of job-embedded learning activities from course to course? If so, please describe.

6. Did you feel as if all job-embedded learning activities were practical? If not, why?
  
7. What kind of collaboration would you like to see between the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members?
  
8. What changes, if any, would you make in the job-embedded learning component of the program?
  
9. Are there other changes or recommendations you would like to make?
  
10. Is there anything else you would like to add?

## Appendix E

### Informed Consent, District Administrator Interview Questions

## Appendix E

### Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Kelly D. Harris, a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university.

**Request for participation:** You are invited to participate in a study on the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone and will only be reported in a way in which they will not be able to be identified. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

**Exclusions:** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

The research involves participating in an interview. You will be asked about your perceptions with the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. This interview will be audio-taped and will take approximately 45 minutes. The results of this study will be shared with the selected university. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Kelly D. Harris at [harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us](mailto:harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us) or (816)380-3273 ext. 300.

**Privacy:** All information collected will be kept confidential. Interview tapes and transcripts will be locked in a file cabinet in the evaluator's office for security purposes until the study is complete. Your name or any information that could be used to identify you or your institution will be protected.

**Risks:** The risks of the study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

**Benefits:** This study will inform others of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

**Questions about Your Rights:** If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri, Columbia Institutional Research Board office at (573) 882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please sign a copy of this letter and return to me. The other copy is for you to keep.

I have read this letter and agree to participate.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix E

### School District Administrator Interview Questions

1. Do the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program job-embedded learning activities prepare students for the principalship?
2. What are some suggested job-embedded learning activities that would better prepare students as they enter the principalship?
3. Do you feel that the program outline or syllabi covers what job-embedded learning activities are expected and when?
4. Did you feel as if all job-embedded learning activities were practical? If not, why?
5. What additional collaboration would you like to see between the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members?
6. What changes, if any, would you make in the job-embedded learning component of the program?

7. Are there other changes or recommendations you would like to make?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add?

## Appendix F

### Informed Consent, CPPP Faculty Member Interview Questions

## Appendix F

### Informed Consent

This research is being conducted by Kelly D. Harris, a doctoral student in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Missouri, Columbia.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university.

**Request for participation:** You are invited to participate in a study on the evaluation of the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program in a selected university. It is up to you whether you would like to participate. Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone and will only be reported in a way in which they will not be able to be identified. If you decide not to participate, you will not be penalized in any way. You can also decide to stop at any time without penalty. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions, you may simply skip them.

**Exclusions:** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this research.

The research involves participating in an interview. You will be asked about your perceptions with the job-embedded component of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program. This interview will be audio-taped and will take approximately 45 minutes. The results of this study will be shared with the selected university. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Kelly D. Harris at [harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us](mailto:harrisk@harrisonville.k12.mo.us) or (816)380-3273 ext. 300.

**Privacy:** All information collected will be kept confidential. Interview tapes and transcripts will be locked in a file cabinet in the evaluator's office for security purposes until the study is complete. Your name or any information that could be used to identify you or your institution will be protected.

**Risks:** The risks of the study are similar to the risks of everyday life.

**Benefits:** This study will inform others of the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program.

**Questions about Your Rights:** If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri, Columbia Institutional Research Board office at (573) 882-9585.

If you would like to participate, please sign a copy of this letter and return to me. The other copy is for you to keep.

I have read this letter and agree to participate.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F

### CPPP Faculty Interview Questions

1. Do you feel that the Collaborative Principal Preparation Program job-embedded learning activities prepare students for the principalship?
2. What job-embedded learning activities should be concentrated more on in the CPPP?
3. What job-embedded learning activities should have been concentrated on less in the CPPP?
4. What are some suggested job-embedded learning activities that would better prepare students as they enter the principalship?
5. Did you feel that the program outline or syllabi covered what job-embedded learning activities would be expected and when?
6. Was there duplication of job-embedded learning activities from course to course?

7. Did you feel as if all job-embedded learning activities were practical? If not, why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What kind of collaboration would you like to see between the school district administrators and the CPPP faculty members?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What changes, if any, would you make in the job-embedded learning component of the program?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Are there other changes or recommendations you would like to make?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. Is there anything else you would like to add?

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