THE ROLE OF MENTORING IN DEVELOPING BEGINNING PRINCIPALS'

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

A Dissertation presented to
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by
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dissertation entitled

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INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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DEDICATION

In honor of my mother, whose pride in me inspired the pursuit of a dream:

Barbara Jean Gettys

August 27, 1927 – January 10, 2001

"The only lifelong reliable motivations are those that come from within, and one of the strongest of those is the joy and pride that grow from knowing that you've just done something as well as you can do it."—Lloyd Dobens

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INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the type of support provided by mentors in helping new principals develop instructional leadership skills. Perceptions were investigated to determine if principals believed participation in mentoring programs (both statewide and district-created) was effective in providing the necessary support during their initial years as administrators to help develop skills needed to address the accountability measures in place for today's schools and to help principals become successful instructional leaders. Quantitative data were obtained through a researcher-created survey completed by forty-five beginning principals. Follow-up, semi-structured interviews with six principals provided qualitative data, along with optional comments from the survey.

The study findings revealed no significant differences between the two types of mentoring programs in the support provided to beginning principals to assist in developing instructional leadership skills. In addition, data indicated both programs were weak in providing the targeted support. Additional methods of developing these skills were also investigated.

Implications for practice were identified to assist in making improvements to both statewide and district-created mentoring programs. In addition, improvements to university preparatory programs and internship opportunities were suggested.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background

Bottoms and O'Neill (2001) recognized the need for changing the way new school leaders are trained to prepare them for meeting today's high-stakes accountability standards which have changed the focus of school leaders to center their efforts on student achievement. Bottoms and O'Neill declared,

> Increasingly, state accountability systems are placing the burden of school success—and individual student achievement—squarely on the principal's shoulders. The principal's job description has expanded to a point that today's school leader is expected to perform in the role of "chief learning officer," with ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of the enterprise.
> Today's principal must be prepared to focus time, attention and effort on changing what students are taught, how they are taught, and what they are learning. This formidable challenge demands a new breed of school leaders, with skills and knowledge far greater than those expected of "school managers" in the past. (pp. 5-6)

How do beginning principals develop the skills necessary to become a member of this new breed of school leaders? What programs are available to provide support to beginning principals during their first years as school leaders to help them develop necessary skills? These key questions address an important issue in the field of school leadership.

Effective leadership is the key to developing schools that are successful in the efforts to educate all students. When personnel in leadership positions build and maintain a climate that sets high expectations for everyone within the organization, the organization will grow in its effectiveness (Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 2000). Leaders need continual training to develop the

skills and competencies necessary to adapt to the changing environments within schools in order to build appropriate culture that encourages teachers and other staff members to move and grow in the direction needed to effectively deal with the changes and reform currently taking place (Yukl, 2006). Senge (1996) stated, "We are coming to believe that leaders are those people who 'walk ahead,' people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organizations. They lead through developing new skills, capabilities, and understandings" (¶ 8).

Three key skills have been identified for school leaders to be able to lead schools toward higher student achievement. These skills are to understand instructional practices that contribute to student achievement, be able to work with personnel to foster continuous student improvement, and provide the necessary support as teachers utilize appropriate curriculum and instructional practices (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). How are principals to learn these skills? Typical principal preparatory programs emphasize development of managerial skills relating to finance and supervision with little emphasis on developing a culture that promotes student learning (Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), 2000; Mazzeo, 2003). Some programs include internships where aspiring principals work within a school setting to gain experiences in leadership roles. However, few of these programs actually place interns in situations where they are able to gain valuable experience by leading school improvement activities (Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill, 2005). If principal preparatory programs are falling short of training future leaders in developing instructional leadership skills, how are these new leaders going to gain appropriate experiences to emphasize student learning within the school environment?

Beginning principals need assistance to provide guidance in developing these skills to become effective leaders in today's world of accountability (Education Alliance & National Association of Elementary Principals (NAESP), 2003). Professional development opportunities are available through many organizations covering a multitude of topics that often provide helpful information to administrators in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. However, little research has been documented to provide evidence that principals are developing appropriate skills through participation in these experiences (Hedgpeth, 2000).

Participation in effective mentoring programs is another avenue utilized to provide the support necessary for aspiring and developing leaders. Mentoring programs provide encouragement and assistance as experienced principals work with beginning principals throughout the first year or two in these new positions. Mentors provide guidance and feedback as new principals develop capacity to fulfill the new roles and responsibilities (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh, 2004; Educational Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Reyes, 2003; United States Department of Education (USDE), 2004). While research validated the effectiveness of administrator mentoring programs, little research connected development of specific instructional leadership skills with participation in mentoring programs. This study examined the development of instructional leadership skills as supported through the mentoring process.

Conceptual Underpinnings of the Study

Three constructs emerged from the review of the literature to demonstrate the need for effective mentoring programs for beginning principals in developing instructional leadership skills. First, changing roles of administrators were examined

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through the context of various leadership theories. In addition, accountability measures and school improvement efforts were discussed, along with establishing the organizational need for mentoring. Second, administrator training through preparatory programs, internships, and professional development were investigated. Finally, successful mentoring programs, challenges and obstacles of mentoring, and benefits and outcomes of mentoring were explored. Each construct was also examined through the lens of change. These constructs demonstrated the need for additional research regarding the effectiveness of mentoring programs in aiding new principals in developing instructional leadership skills to guide teachers toward a focus on improved student learning.

Changing Roles of Administrators

Various theories of leadership were found throughout the literature. Past leadership roles focused more on managerial skills, whereas, today's leaders need more emphasis on instructional skills that focus on student learning and achievement (IEL, 2000; Waters & Grubb, 2004; Yukl, 2006). Several leadership theories emphasized development of skills appropriate for improving student achievement.

Ethical leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership build on the premises of making changes that are morally right for the organization and benefit the organization as a whole (Yukl, 2006). Ethical leaders help teachers recognize problems that are occurring and lead teachers toward discovering solutions that will best fit the needs of the school. These leaders build integrity by ensuring the right things are being done for the right reasons and by following through with reinforcing implementation of improvement initiatives (Furman, 2003; Kouzes & Pozner, 2002; Yukl). Servant leaders

expand on this concept by identifying the needs of others within the organization as the top priority for change and improvement. The leader is in place to serve others as change is brought about to ensure the best opportunities are in place for all children, regardless of their needs and background (Davis, 2003; Kouzes & Pozner; Yukl). Transformational leaders emphasize change through common commitment and mutual purpose of improving practices to benefit the group as a whole. Leaders inspire teachers to go beyond meeting basic expectations through the use of empowerment and encouragement, creating conditions where all factions of the community desire to work to create situations leading to school improvement (Davis; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Duke, 1999; Leithwood et al., 2000; Yukl).

Instructional leaders focus their efforts on quality of teaching and the learning that takes place as a result of good teaching. Leaders must be able to hire teachers with appropriate knowledge and skills to effectively reach all students and must be able to lead teachers through the growth process to develop new skills resulting in improved student learning and achievement (Fink & Resnick, 2001). The growth process can be facilitated through the use of learning communities comprised of groups of teachers within a school or district (DuFour, 2002; Elmore, 2002; Fink & Resnick; Lambert, 2002). An online learning community of principals organized by the National Association of Elementary School Principals identified the following six standards that characterize instructional leadership: (a) leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; (b) setting high expectations and standards; (c) demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; (d) creating a culture of adult learning; (e) using multiple

sources of data as diagnostic tools; and (f) actively engaging the community (NAESP, 2001).

Principals need assistance from others within the school community to effectively bring about change in student learning. This can be accomplished by developing leadership capacity within various members of the organization to share decision-making processes. Participative, distributive, and balanced leadership result from this practice and lead to improved organizational effectiveness (Hackman & Johnson, 2000; Hallinger & Heck, 1999, 2003; Katzenbach & Smith, 2003; Kouzes & Pozner, 2002; Lambert, 2002; Schlechty, 2000; Yukl, 2006). In all three types of leadership, authority and influence are shared among members of the school community allowing a sense of ownership to form. The leader analyzes situations occurring within the change process to facilitate the conditions for empowerment and participation, often utilizing teams to develop common purpose and goals from which strategies emerge for various members of the teams to fulfill (Fullan, 1996; Katzenbach & Smith; Yukl). Collective accountability results as all members of the organization have an interest in the success of the entire population and work together to bring about change (Waters & Grubb, 2004; Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004).

The passage of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001 established new accountability measures for achieving improvements in student learning for public schools across the nation (McLeod, D'Amico, & Protheroe, 2003). To meet these increasing accountability standards, educational leaders must draw from the various leadership theories to utilize components from each that are most appropriate to fit the needs of the organization in order to bring about change (Bolman & Deal, 1997;

Seashore-Louis, Toole, & Hargreaves, 1999; Waters & Grubb, 2004). School reform

models and school improvement initiatives have emerged as tools to improve student

learning; however, many school districts have not met with success, even with these

available opportunities (Neuman & Simmons, 2000). Sustained school improvement is

dependent upon effective leadership (Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Fullan, 2002;

Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Harris, 2004; IEL, 2000; Mazzeo,

2003; Ousten, 1999; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Yukl, 2006). However, the

turnover of principals through retirement and mobility leave incoming principals with

little experience and expertise to handle the pressure of meeting accountability measures,

thus creating sustainability problems (Fink & Brayman, 2006). Programs to support new

principals at the preparatory level and within school districts need to emphasize the

development of appropriate skills for leading in today's schools (Education Alliance &

NAESP; IEL; USDE, 2004).

Administrator Preparatory Training

Traditional university preparatory programs for school administrators emphasize

developing skills in supervision, law, finance, and personnel with little emphasis on

improving student learning. Programs need to be redesigned to more effectively prepare

new leaders with opportunities for extensive internships and mentoring opportunities

emphasizing student achievement (Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Mazzeo,

2003; Reyes, 2003). Internships offering practices for preservice principals to observe,

participate in, and lead school improvement activities provide participants opportunities

to develop competencies in skills needed prior to serving in formal roles as instructional

leaders (Fry et al., 2005; USDE, 2004). Supervising principals often serve as mentors to

guide interns through constructive feedback and evaluation (Painter, 2001). However,

few programs exist to provide these types of opportunities for aspiring principals and

school leaders (Fry et al.).

Mentoring

Mentoring programs within school districts for beginning administrators were

developed to provide a support system and improve effectiveness for new leaders as they

begin their careers in school leadership (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh, 2004; Education

Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Reyes, 2003; USDE, 2004). Rapid

turnover of leaders along with changing roles of today's administrators demonstrate an

increased need for mentoring of new leaders (Fink & Brayman, 2006; Gilman &

Lanman-Givens, 2001).

Effective mentoring relationships are developed through a culture of collaboration

where mentors serve as role models and guides to expand knowledge and skills within

new leaders (Daresh, 2004; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000). Professional goals, learning

needs, and interpersonal styles as well as race and gender should be considered when

making appropriate matches between mentor and protégé (Daresh; Education Alliance &

NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson; Reyes, 2003). Organizational support is also

essential in creating effective mentoring relationships. Time, financial resources, and

support are necessary to sustain effective mentoring programs (Daresh; USDE, 2004).

Organizations gain from participating in mentoring programs by assisting new principals

in developing necessary skills as well as improving the skills and job satisfaction of

existing administrators (Daresh; Hopkins-Thompson). Although mentoring programs

have been effective in supporting beginning principals, little research documented the connection with developing appropriate instructional leadership skills.

Statement of the Problem

The role of school principals has changed with the passage of NCLB in 2001. Today's principals have the responsibility of school success and individual student achievement as the focus of all efforts within the system. The challenge of building and sustaining school improvement efforts leading to improved student achievement for all students requires knowledge of skills beyond those taught in traditional preparatory programs which in the past have focused more on developing managerial skills than instructional leadership skills (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; IEL, 2000; Mazzeo, 2003). Although internships during preservice training would assist aspiring principals in developing appropriate skills when given the opportunities to participate in and lead school improvement activities, such internship programs seldom exist (Fry et al., 2005; USDE, 2004).

Mentoring programs were developed to bridge the gap between preparatory programs and the real world of school leadership. Programs provide guidance and support for beginning principals as appropriate leadership skills are developed and refined. Experienced administrators serve as role models and guides to answer questions and provide feedback to developing principals (Daresh, 2004; Educational Alliance at Brown University & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; USDE, 2004). Mentoring programs for administrators vary from one state to another and are not even required in all states; however, they are increasing in use in both education and in the business world (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh). Although research indicates mentoring programs provide

support for beginning administrators during the initial phases of induction, little research

has been conducted to connect participation in mentoring programs with the development

of instructional leadership skills. Therefore, the problem guiding this study was: How

effective are mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the

development of skills necessary to become instructional leaders?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this two-phased, sequential mixed-methods study was to

investigate the type of support provided by mentors in helping new principals develop

instructional leadership skills. The researcher examined the perceptions of beginning

principals throughout a Midwestern state regarding the effectiveness of district-created

mentoring programs and the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program. Perceptions

were investigated to determine if principals believed participation in mentoring programs

was effective in providing the necessary support during their initial years as

administrators to help develop skills needed to address the accountability measures in

place for today's schools and to help principals become successful instructional leaders.

Statistical, quantitative results were obtained from a representative sample of beginning

principals through administration of a survey, and then followed up with personal

interviews with a smaller stratified sample to qualitatively clarify and expand on

information gathered from the questionnaires. Analysis of the perceptions of beginning

administrators regarding the effectiveness of mentoring programs in supporting the

development of appropriate instructional leadership skills will serve as guidance to those

working to evaluate and improve mentoring programs throughout the state and within

individual school districts.

Research Questions

A review of the literature revealed that administrator roles have changed in the last few years since the passage of NCLB in 2001, however, administrative preparatory programs in many universities have not shifted their focus toward preparing beginning principals for the new pressures and demands of their roles (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; IEL, 2000; Mazzeo, 2003). Mentoring programs are required in some states and have been created at the district level in other states (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh, 2004), yet little research has been conducted regarding perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs to guide in the development of appropriate instructional leadership skills.

Therefore, the major question for this study was: What is the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of instructional leadership skills? The following questions guided the research:

1. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning?

2. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

3. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement?

4. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

5. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

6. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

7. What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high expectations and standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; creating a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and actively engaging the community)?

8. What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

9. In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in an attempt to answer the research questions:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning.

2. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards.

3. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement.

4. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning.

5. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools.

6. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community.

Limitations and Assumptions

Mixed-method research design utilizing quantitative as well as qualitative methods captures the best of both approaches (Creswell, 2003). The mixed-method design was utilized to develop detailed generalizations concerning perceptions of beginning principals regarding the effectiveness of mentoring programs toward developing instructional leadership skills followed with in-depth descriptions of open-ended data relating to their perceptions. However, with any study limitations and assumptions need to be acknowledged to identify potential weaknesses of the study

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(Creswell). The following limitations and assumptions related to this study were identified by the researcher:

1. All participants in this study were beginning principals from a Midwestern state. Results may differ in states with different types of mentoring programs.

2. Participation in the study was limited to the beginning principals who consented to voluntary participation.

3. The statewide Administrator Mentoring Program, one of the mentoring programs principals participated in, has only been in place for one year at the time of this study. States with formal programs in place for longer periods of time may incur different results.

4. Survey instruments utilized in this study were created by the researcher. The survey questionnaire was piloted by a small population of administrators familiar with the mentoring process to improve validity and reliability. Modifications were made to the questionnaire based on feedback from the pilot participants.

5. It was assumed that responses were accurate and honestly represented their perceptions regarding various aspects of mentoring programs and the impact on developing instructional leadership skills.

6. The sample chosen for this study was representative of beginning principals throughout a Midwestern state was an additional assumption.

Design Controls

A two-phased, sequential mixed-method design was chosen as a means of conducting this study. In the first phase, a survey was utilized to describe perceptions of members of a target population regarding a particular phenomenon (Fraenkel & Wallen,

2003). The survey, consisting of close-ended questions, was administered to a population of beginning school principals and followed up in the second phase by personal interviews with a small sample of this population. This sequential mixed-method design was employed to collect quantitative data from results of the questionnaire followed with qualitative data obtained through personal interviews to further refine and triangulate the findings and allow for full investigation of the issue (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Creswell & Clark, 2007; Fraenkel & Wallen).

The participants for the study were chosen through purposeful sampling with the intent to select members of a group with experience in the key practices being explored (Creswell & Clark, 2007). For the quantitative phase of the study, participants were chosen based on characteristics (those participants in their first five years as principal) that would allow the study to be generalized to the population of beginning principals, defined as those within their first five years of the principalship. Samples of sufficient size typically yielded differences between the sample and the general population that were relatively insignificant. Sample size was determined to be "as large as the researcher can obtain with a reasonable expenditure of time and energy" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003, p. 106). For the qualitative phase, a small number of participants were chosen from those indicating their consent to participate in the interviews. Care was taken to choose participants from various building levels, building size, and geographical areas to provide in-depth information specific to each type of mentoring program across the population of beginning principals.

Locating a survey that would adequately measure the perceptions of beginning principals was problematic as there was no such instrument available. Therefore, a survey

was created by the researcher based on concerns identified in the review of the literature. The survey was piloted with a small population of administrators, all familiar with the mentoring process, to "reveal ambiguities, poorly worded questions, questions that are not understood, and unclear choices, and . . . indicate whether the instructions to the respondents are clear" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003, p. 404). Unclear questions and directions were corrected or eliminated prior to administration with the sample population.

Utilizing surveys in research carried the potential problem of lack of response (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). The researcher controlled for this through multiple items of correspondence with the participants. After obtaining permission from superintendents of identified beginning principals, a four-phase administration process (Creswell, 2003) was employed. The first contact with participating principals was an email sent to all participants to inform them of the study. Mailing of the actual survey and informed consent form with a preaddressed, stamped, return envelope took place about one week later. Simultaneously, the survey and informed consent form were emailed to all participants with the choice to respond through email or by completing the survey received through postal mail. A follow-up letter was mailed, along with a follow-up email, to all participants within 4-8 days after the initial questionnaire. A week later, a personalized cover letter with a handwritten signature was sent thanking administrators for returning the completed surveys and signed consents in the provided stamped envelopes.

Participants were asked to indicate on the survey if they would be interested in taking part in an interview to collect more in-depth information. From these responses, a

stratified sample was chosen to participate in the interview phase of the study. During the

interview process, open-ended, semi-structured questions were asked of the selected

principals. Each participant was asked the same set of questions in the same order with

flexibility to explore issues that may come to the surface during the interview (Merriam,

1998). Advantages of this type of interview included reduction of interviewer bias during

the interview and facilitation of organization and analysis of the data (Fraenkel & Wallen,

2003). Interviews were recorded and transcribed with transcripts given to the

interviewees to review for accuracy. Utilizing such member checks strengthened the

internal validity of the study. Comparison of interview transcripts with data from the

survey questionnaire provided for triangulation of the data (Merriam). Data from the

interviews were then analyzed through categorical sorting of themes.

Definitions of Key Terms

Definitions of the following commonly used terms should assist the reader in

better understanding the study:

Accountability measures. The passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

of 2001 established provisions for testing requirements. Yearly testing in reading and

math is required for all students in grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 10-12.

Additional science assessments are required at grade spans for elementary, middle, and

high school students. Students must demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on

these assessments to assure they are improving mastery of the designated material with

the goal of 100% of students at the proficiency level by 2014. Schools are required to

report results for their total population as well as for disaggregated subgroups. Provisions

are delineated in NCLB to address assistance to be provided to schools not meeting AYP,

followed up by sanctions if schools are still not improving after assistance (McLeod et al., 2003).

Administrator Mentoring Program. This statewide mentoring program is required for all administrators gaining certification in the selected Midwestern state after April 2005. New principals are matched with experienced principals who served as mentors to provide guidance and support through the first two years of principalship. Provisions are made for mentor training and guidelines specify the minimum amount of contact hours required between the mentor and protégé. This program began with the 2005-2006 school year.

Beginning principals. Participants serving as building administrators within the first five years of the principalship have been identified as beginning principals.

Formal district-created mentoring programs. Programs designed within individual school districts with specified guidelines are referred to as formal programs. Experienced administrators are connected with beginning administrators to provide varying degrees of support throughout the first and sometimes second year of principalship. The type of support and amount of contact time vary depending on the design of the mentoring program but guidelines typically exist for program activities (USDE, 2004).

Informal district-created mentoring programs. Programs designed within individual school districts where mentors are assigned to guide the beginning administrators but no guidelines are in place to specify what type of support to be provided are referred to as informal programs.

Instructional leadership skills. These skills are employed by principals to lead members of the school community through professional growth opportunities toward providing quality teaching resulting in improved student achievement of all students (DuFour, 2002; Fink & Resnick, 2001). The following six standards define instructional leadership skills for principals (NAESP, 2001):

1. Lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center.

2. Set high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults.

3. Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed-upon academic standards.

4. Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals.

5. Use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement.

6. Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success. (pp. 6-7)

Internships. Experiences provided for aspiring principals as a component of university preparatory programs are referred to as internships. Appropriate internships offer "a developmental continuum of practice that begins with the intern observing, then participating in, and then leading important school reform work" (Fry et al., 2005, p. 5).

Mentor. An administrator who typically serves as a role model, guide, and confidant fulfilled the role of mentor. A mentor provides support to answer questions,

provide guidance, and help develop new knowledge regarding the roles and

responsibilities of the new administrative position (Daresh, 2004). Mentors provide

feedback and helped protégés reflect on daily experiences as theories of leadership were

applied to practices, bridging the gap between theory and practice (Cushing, Kerrins, &

Johnstone, 2003; Daresh; Hibert, 2000; Reyes, 2003).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This reauthorization of the Elementary and

Secondary Education Act was passed in 2001 under the leadership of President George

W. Bush. This law established high standards for achievement with expectations

established that one hundred percent of students would demonstrate mastery of goals in

reading and math by 2014. The law also established that instructional strategies,

instructional methods, and staff development opportunities utilized by schools must have

research to prove their effectiveness (McLeod et al., 2003).

Organizational support. Release time and financial backing from the school

district of the beginning administrator as well that of the mentor administrator are

considered to be measures of support from the educational organization. Appropriate

support is recognized as an important means of professional development by the school

superintendent (Daresh, 2004; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000).

Preparatory programs. University programs designed to train aspiring

administrators in developing skills necessary to meet the competencies outlined in their

state's guidelines for certification are considered to be preparatory programs.

Professional development. Various types of training that help participants gain

new skills are provided through professional development opportunities.

Protégé. The new leader, serving in the capacity as a beginning administrator, works in this role with their assigned mentor.

Summary

The role of the principal has changed in the last few years with the passage of NCLB and the accountability measures created by this law. Principals now hold responsibility for ensuring that practices are in place within schools that lead to improved student achievement for all students. Managerial roles held by school administrators in the past are no longer appropriate with these new accountability standards. With numerous current principals retiring or moving on to other positions or careers, many new principals are beginning administrative careers without training in the appropriate instructional leadership skills for the accountability required of today's schools. Most administrator preparatory programs have not changed to meet the new standards or provided appropriate experiences to develop the necessary skills within their graduates. States and districts have created mentoring programs to match experienced administrators with novice principals to support and lead them through their continual development. However, there is little research documenting the effectiveness of such programs connected to instructional needs. Therefore, this study was developed to answer questions regarding the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of appropriate instructional leadership skills.

In Chapter Two, a comprehensive review of the literature is provided with three themes emerging. The changing roles of administrators demonstrates an organizational need for mentoring programs to assist new principals in meeting new accountability

standards; most administrator training programs have not changed from emphasizing

managerial skills as opposed to instructional leadership skills; and mentoring programs

have emerged as a way of filling in the gaps in training not addressed through preparatory

programs. Each theme is discussed in detail to provide rationale for this study. Included

in Chapter Three are a description of the research design and methodology, which

included research questions, population and sample, methods of data collection, and data

analysis. The rationale for selecting the design of the study, a mixed design, is also

described. In Chapter Four, the data findings and analysis of these findings are presented.

Findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research are described in Chapter

Five.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Schools of today must have a strong, effective principal at the helm to lead

students toward high student achievement. "In the era of standards-based education and

high-stakes accountability for the performance of students and adults in our schools, the

job of principal has never been more complex or more critical" (Education Alliance &

NAESP, 2003, p. 7). Many research studies have been conducted with results showing

that having an effective leader in place is critical for improving student performance

(Education Alliance & NAESP; Fullan, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Hargreaves &

Fink, 2004; Harris, 2004; IEL, 2000; Mazzeo, 2003; Ousten, 1999; Waters et al., 2003;

Yukl, 2006). Waters et al. conducted a meta-analysis of research on school-level

leadership and identified the leadership practices that principals use to fulfill

responsibilities that have significant impact on student achievement. Results of the

analysis indicated that "a one standard deviation improvement in principal leadership is

associated with a ten percentile difference in student achievement on a norm-referenced

standardized test" (Waters & Grubb, 2004, p. 2). With more importance being placed on

the job of being an effective principal, school district leaders can not leave the

development of beginning principals to chance. Novice principals need someone who

understands the challenges and complexities of the job to help guide them toward

developing the skills needed to be effective in today's world (Education Alliance &

NAESP). Effective mentoring programs can provide the support for novice principals

beginning new leadership careers (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Cromley, Kerr, Meister,

Patterson, & Woods, 2005; Daresh, 2004; Education Alliance & NAESP; McLeod et al., 2003; Reyes, 2003).

This review of the literature was conducted to demonstrate the need for effective mentoring programs for beginning principals that focus on developing the necessary skills to create a culture focused on teaching and learning within the school. First, the changing roles of administrators were discussed through the framework of various leadership theories. Next, the passage of NCLB, new accountability measures, and the renewed focus on school reform and school improvement were examined and the organizational need for mentoring for beginning principals was established. Further review focused on administrator training programs, ranging from preparatory programs to internships to professional development practices. Types of mentors, the role of the mentor and protégé, characteristics of successful mentoring programs, challenges and obstacles of mentoring, and benefits and outcomes of mentoring were discussed in the final section of the review.

Changing Roles of Administrators

Many responsibilities are important in running a school, such as maintenance, school law, finance, and safety. However, these tasks do not directly impact student achievement. Principals must be able to determine which responsibilities are essential to improve student achievement in order to prioritize the demands of the job (Waters & Grubb, 2004). The roles of principals and other educational leaders have expanded to include more emphasis on teaching and learning, data-driven decision making, accountability, and professional development (IEL, 2000; NAESP, 2001). Principals must work with teachers to provide professional learning experiences focused on

improvement of student learning, develop leadership capacity in various personnel within the school, and learn to use data from a variety of sources to guide decisions (King, 2002). Mazzeo (2003) suggested "many current and potential principals lack the skills necessary to lead in today's schools" (p. 1) because many principal preparatory programs continue to utilize a curriculum focusing on managerial roles as opposed to directing attention to theories based on developing instructional skills to help guide teaching and learning (Mazzeo).

Leadership Theories

Various theories of leadership were described throughout diverse sources of literature on the topic. School leaders in the past were expected to perform mainly managerial tasks as opposed to instructional leadership tasks required for today's world of high-stakes accountability, tasks that focus primarily on teaching and learning. Since the need for managerial roles has diminished, earlier leadership theories describing these roles were not discussed in this review. The focus instead was on theories that build instructional skills and impact student learning.

Transformational Leadership. "Transformational leaders make followers more aware of the importance and value of the work and induce followers to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization" (Yukl, 2006, p. 267). With transformational leadership, emphasis is placed on changing for the betterment of everyone involved through a raised level of commitment and mutual purpose. Teachers' commitment to change is improved through vision building, high performance expectations, developing consensus about group goals, and intellectual stimulation. Transformational leaders inspire teachers to commit additional effort and involvement to go beyond meeting basic

expectations. Capacity of all members of the organization is improved through empowerment and encouragement (Davis, 2003; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Duke, 1999; Leithwood et al., 2000; Yukl). When transformational leaders place emphasis on improving teaching and learning, followers are inspired to set goals and work together toward the common commitment of high student expectations. Second order change follows as transformational leadership focuses on creating conditions for others to work toward school improvement as opposed to primarily promoting specific instructional practices (Hallinger).

Ethical Leadership. As change takes place within an organization, "effective leaders engage members and other stakeholders in a dialogue to determine what type of changes are necessary and morally right for the organization" (Yukl, 2006, p. 407). Leaders help stakeholders acknowledge problems that are instigating changes and help facilitate problem-solving by providing relevant information and encouraging critical evaluation of the information to find the solutions that will be agreeable and profitable for everyone involved. A leader who is focused on moral and ethical behavior will seek to serve the followers and the organization itself, putting personal needs aside. Furman (2003) defined moral purpose as

> social responsibility to others and the environment. School leaders with
> moral purpose seek to make a difference in the lives of students. . . . They
> act with the intention of making a positive difference in their own schools
> as well as improving the environment in other district schools. (p. 17)

Leaders employ ethical and moral leadership in everything they do. All decisions are made with serving the needs of others as the goal. Leaders focus on always doing the right thing for the group being served, whether that is students, parents, staff, community, or a combination of these. Leaders develop credibility by following through on

commitments and ensuring the right things are being done for the right reasons. "Leadership is a reciprocal process between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. . . . Strategies, tactics, skills, and practices are empty without an understanding of the fundamental human aspirations that connect leaders and constituents" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 23).

     Servant Leadership. Ethical and moral behavior is the premise of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Yukl, 2006). A servant leader is one who works toward making sure the high-priority needs of others are met through empowering and nurturing the followers and encouraging them to become a part of the problem-solving process. Thus, the servant leader works toward what is good and right.

     Kouzes and Posner (2002) expanded on this concept of servant leadership by creating five practices of exemplary leadership that helped leaders guide organizations to reach their goals. Effective leaders empower followers to become leaders in their own sense. "You can't make people trust change and trust the system. You have to actually create a system that is trustworthy, then people will begin to move much, much faster when you're trying to elicit change" (Kouzes & Posner, p. 10).

     The central theme in educational leadership is shifting toward leadership with moral purposes (Furman, 2003). Leadership with an emphasis on moral purpose focuses on doing something that really matters to the children, all children, regardless of background and previous opportunities. Therefore, the essence of leadership is service (Davis, 2003). "Leaders are most effective when they are reminded frequently of the purpose and the people the institution serves" (Davis, p. 14).

Instructional Leadership. Most principals believe that all students are entitled to a high quality education and take responsibility for monitoring curriculum and instruction to ensure equitable opportunities are in place (NAESP, 2001). This model of leadership was developed in the early 1980's from the research on effective schools (Edmonds, 1979) with the focus on three dimensions of leadership—determining a school's mission, managing the instructional program, and developing a positive school-learning climate (Hallinger, 2003). "School principals contribute to school effectiveness and student achievement indirectly through actions they take to influence what happens in the school and in the classrooms" (Hallinger, p. 333). Instructional leadership is often viewed as a top-down approach to leadership where the principal controls the improvements in instruction within the school (Hallinger).

Instructional leadership can be defined as a principal who "understands the instructional programs that the district has adopted well enough to actively guide teachers. He or she must be able to judge the quality of teaching in order to select and maintain a good teaching staff" (Fink & Resnick, 2001, p. 600). Instructional leaders need to have enough knowledge of content to help evaluate the teaching behaviors observed. They must then be able to determine what should be done to help each teacher grow and improve. Instructional leaders must be able to develop learning communities within the schools to build the skills and knowledge of those within to improve students' learning and achievement (DuFour, 2002; Elmore, 2002; Fink & Resnick; Lambert 2002).

Elementary and middle school principals, working together with NAESP, identified six standards that defined the basic tenets of instructional leadership.

According to a publication by NAESP (2001), principals who embody these standards

were known to take the following actions:

> 1) lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center; 2) set high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults; 3) demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed-upon academic standards; 4) create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals; 5) use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement; and 6) actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success. (p. 2)

These six standards helped define quality in relation to curriculum, instruction,

and learning experiences. Principals who focused on implementing these

standards let student learning drive all decisions made within the school

(NAESP).

Fullan (2002) described instructional leadership as only a part of what is

needed to meet today's accountability standards by stating the following:

> Characterizing instructional leadership as the principal's central role has been a valuable first step in increasing student learning, but it does not go far enough. . . . we need leaders who can create a fundamental transformation in the learning cultures of schools and of the teaching profession itself. The role of the principal as instructional leader is too narrow a concept to carry the weight of the kinds of reforms that will create the schools that we need for the future. (p. 17)

Principals alone cannot fulfill the needs of everyone within the school. Teachers and

other members of the school community must develop leadership capacity (Lambert,

2002; Leithwood et al., 2000; NAESP, 2001; Waters & Grubb, 2004).

Participative, Distributive, and Balanced Leadership. Participative leadership is

defined as a style that assumes that "the decision-making processes of the group ought to

be the central focus for leaders" (Leithwood et al., 2000, p. 12). Authority and influence

are shared among members of the organization, rather than held by a central

administrative role. Shared decision-making is connected with healthy, effective

organizations (Furman, 2003; Leithwood et al.; Schlechty, 2000).

Empowering those within the organization to become part of the decision-making

process leads to improved organizational effectiveness (Hackman & Johnson, 2000;

Hallinger & Heck, 1999, 2003; Katzenbach & Smith, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2002;

Schlechty, 2000; Yukl, 2006). Benefits of participative leadership include "higher

decision quality, higher decision acceptance by participants, more satisfaction with the

decision process, and more development of decision-making skills" (Yukl, p. 83).

Through sharing the power and giving others authority and responsibility for making

decisions, a sense of ownership is gained (Yukl). The leader's role in empowerment is to

analyze each situation in order to determine when to encourage participation, when to

delegate, and how to facilitate the conditions for empowerment. The leader does not

assume that everything will go their way, but instead is willing to let go of the control and

listen to all opinions. Early disagreement generates new ways of thinking and more

productive actions resulting in positive change (Fullan, 1996).

The creation of high-performing teams is one way to empower participants in the

organizational change process. A team is a small number of people with complementary

skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for

which they hold themselves mutually accountable (Katzenbach & Smith, 2003). By

developing common purpose and goals, strategies are developed for various members of

the team to carry out. When all stakeholders have a part in establishing the goals and

strategies, common commitment and trust in the team to perform develops. Mutual

accountability holds everyone responsible for the overall performance of the individuals and the team as a whole (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Katzenbach & Smith). Lencioni (2002) described five dysfunctions of teams. One of these was lack of commitment that often occurs when team members do not air their opinions in order to develop buy-in and commitment to decisions. This lack of commitment then leads to avoidance of accountability where team members do not force others to follow through on actions. The leader works to develop shared team responsibilities where all team members hold each other accountable so teams are effective in bringing about change.

According to Schlechty (2000), "participatory leadership will be the mode of operation in healthy school districts committed to student success" (p. 198). Results-oriented, shared decision-making encouraged throughout the organization develop a healthy organization that is capable of growing and changing (Schlechty). By promoting a culture where everyone works together and all are important to the functioning of the organization, a culture of belonging and responsibility and commitment develops (Rafaeli & Worline, 2000; Schein, 2000; Schlechty).

Distributed leadership shares many components with participative leadership. In the most effective schools, everyone in the educational community has the responsibility and authority to take leadership roles. This creates more buy-in during problem-solving situations. The best person is recruited to take the lead in each particular situation, matching expertise to need. Greater commitment to the mutual goal is established in this manner (Neuman & Simmons, 2000). The emphasis in distributive leadership is on the interactions between people and situations, developing interdependency as multiple leaders work in a coordinated manner, at times overlapping each other's work (Spillane,

2005), while simultaneously developing leadership capacity in multiple members of the

school community (Lambert, 2002; Spillane; Waters & Grubb, 2004). "The concept of

shared leadership strengthens collective accountability for it envisions that all members

of the school community can become leaders in achieving the desired results. Leadership

becomes a distributed property" (Zmuda et al., 2004, p. 169).

Balanced leadership is similar to distributed and participative leadership.

Effective leadership means more than knowing what to do – leaders must know "when,

how and why to create learning environments that support people, connect them with one

another, and provide the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to succeed. This

combination of knowledge and skills is the essence of balanced leadership" (Waters et

al., 2003, p. 2). Principals must be able to determine which responsibilities can be

distributed to others within the organization to provide the necessary support for all

involved. As a result, sharing responsibilities and balancing the leadership capacity

throughout members of the organization can be instrumental in bringing about

improvements necessary in student achievement in schools (Waters & Grubb, 2004).

Summary of Leadership Theories. Each of these theories has components that are

effective, depending on the context of the situation existing within the organization.

Morgan (1997) described organizations as the following:

> Organizations are mini-societies that have their own distinctive patterns of
> culture and subculture. . . . such patterns of belief or shared meaning,
> fragmented or integrated, and supported by various operating norms and
> rituals can exert a decisive influence on the overall ability of the
> organization to deal with the challenges that it faces. (p. 129)

Effective leaders need a repertoire of different skills, the ability to examine conditions

and situations through multiple frames, and the knowledge to choose the approach best

fitting to the needs of people within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Seashore-

Louis et al., 1999). Strong leadership is not enough to effectively lead an organization.

Equally important, the principal must have the knowledge to be able to determine which

leadership responsibilities need to be emphasized throughout the change processes

constantly occurring in education today (Waters & Grubb, 2004).

No Child Left Behind and Accountability

The passage of NCLB initiated the need for change in many schools as it

established high standards for achievement. Expectations established that one hundred

percent of students would demonstrate mastery of these achievement goals by 2014.

Educational leaders within each state were given the task of setting benchmarks and

methods of measuring student achievement of these benchmarks. The use of

scientifically-based research methods resulting in increased student learning and

achievement were also required to be in place in schools across the nation. Instructional

strategies, instructional methods, and staff development opportunities utilized by schools

must have research to prove their effectiveness (McLeod et al., 2003).

Lashway (2002) related this standards-based accountability system to an

> 800-pound gorilla of school reform—highly visible, hard to control, and
> impossible to ignore. Since negotiating with gorillas is not in the
> curriculum of most administrator preparation programs, school leaders are
> having to find their own way through uncharted territory.
>   Because the current accountability systems foster a sense of
> urgency, the first question most principals ask is, "How do we get the test
> scores up?" But a narrow focus on boosting scores overshadows a more
> fundamental question: "How will I lead?" (p. 15)

The rules have changed with more focus on leading for student learning (IEL,

2000). Principals must lead in different ways than in the past. Educational leaders must

work toward influencing the outcomes of schooling that are being held to higher

standards of accountability. Environmental factors are now more complex and present new challenges; pressure is being placed on everyone—students, teachers, principals, and district leaders; and student learning outcomes are being tied more directly to teachers' and school leaders' performance (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). "The changing needs of educational systems can be met at least in part by improvements in leadership capacity and practice" (Leithwood & Riehl, p. 6).

Lashway (2002) described four ways principals can provide such leadership to meet these growing demands of accountability. One is to be a champion for standards— principals must consistently send the message to teachers that meeting the standards is the priority and insist that everyone work together to resolve any problems that arise. Second, learning, not performance, must be emphasized. If learning is occurring, then higher performance will be the outcome. Third, the public must be educated. Principals must inform parents and communities about goals for the school, what is happening to achieve these goals, what the results are, and what the results mean. Finally, principals must protect the things that matter. Only activities and strategies that emphasize learning and improved student achievement should take place within schools. What is not working needs to be eliminated in order to spend more time focusing on what makes a difference (Lashway).

Collective accountability, another necessary component of effective leadership in the change process, establishes responsibility among all members of the school community to improve student learning within schools (Zmuda et al., 2004). Everyone must "see themselves as collectively and individually responsible for building a competent system, fulfilling the shared vision, and achieving the desired results. They

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must all commit to being accountable for enhanced learning and achievement for all students" (Zmuda et al., p. 163).

Focus on School Reform and School Improvement

School reform models and school improvement initiatives have spread rapidly throughout the country's schools to assist schools in meeting these new accountability standards. However, many school districts are not being successful in helping all students learn, in spite of the emphasis on school reform efforts to improve student achievement (Neuman & Simmons, 2000). School improvement efforts need to focus on what is needed to improve learning, why changes are being made, and how the improvement can best be implemented. These efforts need to focus on bringing about lasting change in the collective group of teachers within a school, not in any one individual (Fullan, 2002; Ousten, 1999). School improvement must also be planned around analysis of data to determine what works. Strategies to implement change must be based on the data analysis (Seashore-Louis et al., 1999).

Sustainability of such school improvement efforts occurs when many within the school are given leadership responsibilities (Fullan, 2002; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Waters & Grubb, 2004). Sustainability is defined as "the likelihood that the overall system can regenerate itself toward improvement" (Fullan, p. 19). Organizations must create cadres of leaders at various levels within the organization to generate sustained improvement. Leaders must have time and opportunities to network and learn from each other to develop areas of expertise (Hargreaves & Fink). Encouraging participative leadership is an effective way of building a culture of trust and support where shared decision-making contributes to creating successful leaders (Schlechty, 2000).

The turnover of principals through retirement and mobility and the pressures of

the accountability agendas create problems that threaten this sustainability and can

undermine the capacity of incoming principals to effectively lead schools (Fink &

Brayman, 2006). Succession plans can bring about continual improvement within an

organization where leaders at many levels are constantly being nurtured and cultivated to

carry on the work when current leaders retire or move elsewhere (Fink & Brayman;

Fullan, 2002; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000). Leaders emerging from within the organization

are aware of the reform efforts and change that have already been established, allowing

for better transition of leadership roles. "Strong leaders build cultures that outlive them;

they lead even when they are gone" (Schlechty, 2000, p. 183).

New leaders who are successful at sustaining reform efforts already in place

"visualize successful student learning, understand the work necessary to achieve it, and

have the skills to engage with others to make it happen" (USDE, 2004, p. 3).

Organizational Need for Mentoring

School improvement is a journey—the type of leadership pertinent to each phase

of the journey may not be appropriate during another phase (Fullan, 2002). Leaders must

be able to examine each phase and determine the type of leadership needed. New

principals and leaders may not have the skills or experience necessary to determine how

to lead others in the school improvement initiative. Organizations need structures in place

to create knowledge within the new leaders to enable them to make good decisions as

they lead staff members toward improvement.

Knowledge is created when information is shared and when conversation takes

place among those involved (Bruffee, 1999; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Multiple steps

are involved in the knowledge creation process, beginning with sharing tacit knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi) and having conversations with others (Bruffee). Tacit knowledge is defined as "something not easily visible and expressible . . . highly personal and hard to formalize . . . difficult to communicate or share with others" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, p. 8). This first phase of sharing tacit knowledge through socialization "starts by building a team whose members share their experiences and mental models. The externalization mode is triggered by successive rounds of meaningful dialogue" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, p. 225). Externalization takes place during the second and third phases of the knowledge creation process, where concepts are created and justified as tacit knowledge is converted to explicit knowledge through continued dialogue (Bruffee; Nonaka & Takeuchi). Explicit knowledge is "formal and systematic . . . easily communicated and shared in the form of hard data, scientific formulae, codified procedures, or universal principles" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, p. 8). Bruffee referred to this process as the "craft of interdependence" (p. 8), where beliefs become knowledge as they are justified. In the fourth phase of knowledge creation, this newly formed explicit knowledge merges with explicit knowledge already in place to allow team members to begin constructing a model. Combining these bodies of explicit knowledge begins to create links to new communities of knowledge (Bruffee; Nonaka & Takeuchi). Internalization builds in the fifth phase as the new knowledge created expands from individuals to teams to organizations and even across organizations (Nonaka & Takeuchi). This reacculturation of individuals and organizations into new knowledge communities takes place after much conversation and collaboration among the people involved (Bruffee).

The knowledge creation process described above could be implemented through participating in an effective mentoring program. "Learning is maximized through opportunities to share individual knowledge and experiences with others" (Preskill & Torres, 1999, p. 23). Effective organizations build learning communities and cultivate social opportunities for learning. Learning from others provides valuable insight into how the organization works and helps build skills to benefit the organization as a whole (Preskill & Torres).

Mentoring programs should be based on needs of the organization to accomplish these goals, as well as needs of the new administrator (Hopkins-Thompson, 2000). Programs to support these new principals such as networking, mentoring, and coaching at both the school and district levels need to be in place. Principals need to develop the vision for high-quality education for all students and are responsible for progress in moving students toward higher proficiency. Novice administrators need the training, tools, and skills necessary to become successful leaders focused on improving instructional practices (Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; IEL, 2000; USDE, 2004).

Administrator Training

Research discussed above reinforced the idea the principals must learn strategies that concentrate on leading teachers toward focusing on student learning. However, there is little emphasis on building these skills in most professional preparatory programs or in professional development activities (IEL, 2000). "Leadership preparatory programs have in the past lacked rigorous standards and a systematic approach to recruiting and training leaders. This philosophy is changing" (USDE, 2004, pp. 2-3).

Preparatory Programs

Traditional university principal preparatory programs, however, often train new leaders for a top-down role, with emphasis on developing skills such as law, finance, personnel, schedules, and supervision. Little emphasis is placed on learning how to learn or on developing relationships and environments that promote student learning (Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Mazzeo, 2003). Courses seldom provide experiences that connect with the realities of life within today's schools (Hedgpeth, 2000; USDE, 2004). "There is more research on what educational leaders must do to create empowering conditions in schools that lead to greater levels of student performance than there is on how to build preparation programs that prepare these kinds of leaders" (Grogan & Andrews, pp. 240-241). Programs must be redesigned to more effectively prepare tomorrow's educational leaders for the relevant issues they will be facing (Daresh, 2004; Fry et al., 2005; Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001; Grogan & Andrews). Universities must work collaboratively with school districts to develop internships and mentoring opportunities for preservice principals (Grogan & Andrews; Mazzeo; Reyes, 2003). Standards and expectations for principals in these programs need to be raised. One of the common approaches to improvement is adoption of the *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium* (ISLLC) standards, which often serve as a starting point for developing more meaningful programs. All preparatory programs need to be held accountable for training principals to develop the skills necessary to impact student learning (Fry et al.; Mazzeo). Practitioners and researchers must "turn attention toward improvement of leadership development and support" (Daresh, p. 496).

Internships

"The capstone of a good preparation program is a carefully designed and supervised internship in which aspiring principals are placed in a school and asked to function as a principal" (Sherman, 2000, ¶ 29). Internships can provide significant learning experiences for new leaders, depending on the skill of the supervising principal. Interns need to be involved in the daily work of the principal and need to hear the thinking that takes place prior to decision-making. Supervising principals must provide frequent constructive feedback and help interns evaluate their work (Painter, 2001). Knowledge and experience must be shared and opportunities created for interns to take the lead in various aspects of the leadership role (USDE, 2004). Internships can also enlarge the existing pool of administrative candidates and help provide continual experiences to help new principals manage the challenges they encounter (Cromley et al., 2005; Morrison, 2005). The educational administration within public schools must work together with universities to establish methods to provide high-quality, reality-based internships (Hale & Moorman, 2003; Pounder & Crow, 2005).

One example of an appropriate internship opportunity is provided through the Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago (LAUNCH) in conjunction with Northwestern University. The university has a partnership with the Chicago Public Schools and the local principals association to give aspiring principals experience in the field (Duffrin, 2001). Leadership standards, established by the district, guide the skills developed by the interns throughout the experience with the supervising principal. Activities in the program are modeled after good professional development guidelines and provide opportunities for practicing school management and instructional leadership.

"LAUNCH graduates who became principals say the program has made a difference in how they do their jobs" (Duffrin, p. 45). First-year principals continue to receive assistance from LAUNCH with networking opportunities provided through a support group. Similar programs are in place in Boston, New York, Washington, D.C., Memphis, and San Francisco (USDE, 2004).

In contrast, many internships offered through university preparation programs in the states within the Southern Regional Education Board fail to provide opportunities for aspiring principals to participate in authentic leadership opportunities. Only "a third of the programs surveyed put interns into situations where they can gain a comprehensive understanding of what they must know and do to lead changes in school and classroom practices that make higher student achievement possible" (Fry et al., 2005, p. 5). Few programs in these states offer practices for interns to observe, participate in, and lead school improvement activities which enable participants to develop competencies in skills needed as they begin as leaders in their own schools (Fry et al.).

Professional Development

Although internships are one avenue to begin the professional development process for new principals, professional development programs for aspiring leaders and for principals currently in place also can serve to help develop the skills needed by all of today's leaders to be successful. Such programs need to be developed based on research that has proven what knowledge and skills are necessary to be a successful leader (Waters & Grubb, 2004). Research has identified four types of knowledge that can enhance the ability to build skills for success. Declarative knowledge helps principals learn what to do to fulfill leadership responsibilities; experiential knowledge aids principals in knowing

why these responsibilities are important; procedural knowledge helps principals know

how to fulfill the responsibilities using research to guide them; and contextual knowledge

helps principals develop the skills to know when to use various strategies (Waters et al.,

2003). Addressing these four types of knowledge through professional development

opportunities for new administrators as well as administrators currently in the field will

assist leaders in developing the research-based responsibilities and practices that are

significant in the connection with student achievement (Waters et al.).

One such type of professional development training is the School Leadership

Program, a grant funded under Title IIA, designed to provide support to recruit and retain

principals in high-need districts. Professional development can be provided to build

instructional leadership skills and management training as well as funding stipends for

mentors (McLeod et al., 2003).

To assist administrators throughout the state in improving leadership skills, the

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in one Midwestern state sponsors

two professional development opportunities. The Satellite Academy Program is a year-

long professional development opportunity for new and practicing school building and

district leaders. Four statewide meetings are held through the year with regional cohort

meetings held in other months. The focus of the Satellite Academy meetings is built upon

the ISLLC Standards with recent sessions concentrating on the professional learning

communities, change agent skills, and effectively utilizing data (Missouri Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006b). The second opportunity is the professional

development series offered each year through the Leadership Academy. These sessions

offer development in skills for teachers and professional development committee

members in addition to administrators with the focus on building capacity within schools

to improve student performance. Strands of sessions typically include school leadership,

curriculum, assessment, instructional strategies, and instructional leadership and

collaboration (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). While

these sessions provide helpful information for building and district administrators, little

research has been conducted to provide evidence regarding how the instructional role of

the principal is enhanced through participating in these opportunities (Hedgpeth, 2000).

Mentoring

Mentoring programs are one type of professional development for new principals

and educational leaders where research has been conducted to demonstrate effectiveness

(Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh, 2004; Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-

Thompson, 2000; Reyes, 2003; USDE, 2004). Administrative mentors typically serve as

a support system to help new administrators apply the theories learned in preparatory

programs to daily practices and reflect on the outcomes of the experiences (Cushing et

al., 2003; Hibert, 2000). Mentoring is increasing in use in the business world, as well as

in education, to build learning and skills in new employees to help develop more

effective leaders (Allen & Poteet).

Attracting and retaining competent and caring leaders within a school system also

requires a network of support that is often provided through an effective mentoring

program (Cushing et al., 2003; Daresh, 2004; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Pounder &

Crow, 2005; Reyes, 2003; USDE, 2004). The rapid turnover of principals along with the

changing roles of today's principals demonstrates a need for mentoring of new leaders

(Fink & Brayman, 2006; Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001). Organizational socialization

thus occurs where new leaders are inducted into the school culture. The school becomes a

learning organization as these new leaders are mentored and supported each step of the

way as they learn along with the organization (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Fink &

Brayman; Zellner, Jinkins, Gideon, Doughty, & McNamara, 2002). Reyes summarized

the literature to define mentoring as the following:

> a career development opportunity that socializes new members of the
> profession while developing the skills and behaviors of dynamic leaders
> . . . mentoring begins by matching an experienced and knowledgeable
> principal with a novice or preservice principal to bridge the gap between
> theory and practice. Other mentoring activities include providing support
> through advice, guidance, practical applications, listening, and reflection.
> (p. 46)

Thirty-five states require these mentoring programs for first year teachers and principals

(Daresh, 2004).

One Midwestern state began to require participation in the Administrator

Mentoring Program (AMP) in the summer of 2005 for beginning school leaders with the

goal to enhance the development of leadership skills through mentoring new school

leaders (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006a).

Experienced administrators were encouraged through their professional organizations to

apply to serve as mentors. Administrators were selected to go through mentor training

based on demonstration of leadership capabilities, outstanding credentials, and

recognized accomplishments in leadership positions. Mentors and their protégés attended

orientation prior to the beginning of the school year to learn expectations and

requirements of the two-year program. Mentors were encouraged to visit the new leaders

monthly to observe on-the-job experiences and provide feedback to enhance professional

growth of the protégés. In addition, mentors were to assist the new leaders in developing

professional development plans and monitor progress throughout the year toward meeting

the goals described on the plans. Mentoring was to be continued through the second year

of the new leaders' career (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary

Education). Results of the effectiveness of this program are not available at this time as

the program is still in its infancy.

Role of Mentor and Protégé

Successful mentors are administrators with knowledge of the organization,

patience, the ability to understand others, and good listening and communication skills.

Daresh (2004) explained how mentoring relationships used to help protégés were

developed long ago in history with the following description:

> The concept of the mentor serving as a wise guide to a younger or less
> experienced protégé dates back to Homer's *Odyssey*. Mentor was the
> teacher entrusted by Odysseus to tutor his son, Telemachus. On the basis
> of this literary description, we have been provided with a lasting image of
> the wise and patient counselor serving to guide and shape the lives of
> colleagues. (p. 498)

Mentors typically fulfill the role of sponsor, role model, guide, and confidant; a person

who is available to answer questions and provide guidance along the path to developing

new knowledge regarding the roles and responsibilities of the new administrative position

(Daresh, 2004). Mentors provide feedback to protégés and help them reflect on the daily

experiences as theories of leadership are applied to the practices in place within districts,

bridging the gap between theory and practice (Daresh; Hibert, 2000; Reyes, 2003).

"Training people to be good leaders is a balance between guiding them through their

experiences and letting them make mistakes" (Hibert, p. 18).

Most effective mentoring relationships occur where an open communication

system is in place with provisions for feedback, trust is developed, and goals and

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expectations are established from the beginning (Allen & Poteet, 1999). A culture of collaboration and collegiality between mentor and protégé cultivate a relationship where appropriate skills can be developed (Hopkins-Thompson, 2000).

Characteristics of Successful Mentoring Programs

The effectiveness of the mentor depends on characteristics of the mentor and whether an appropriate match has been made between the mentor and protégé (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh, 2004; Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Pounder & Crow, 2005; Reyes, 2003). Professional goals, interpersonal styles, learning needs, and other variables must be accounted for in matching mentors and protégés to develop appropriate relationships, rather than making matches based on convenience or location (Daresh). Mentors must be respected within the field of administration, believe in and be committed to the professional development process, and be able to work with the protégé to center learning on needs of the protégé and needs of the organization. Good mentors must be able to help protégés set goals, identify opportunities for learning, provide constructive feedback, and encourage reflection of experiences (Hopkins-Thompson).

Organizational support is also essential as is continual monitoring and evaluation of the process to develop a culture of continuous improvement (Daresh, 2004; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; USDE, 2004). Mentors and protégés must both be allowed to make the investment of time and commitment to the program. Sharing of information must go beyond just answering questions, and emphasize reflection of the experiences. Organizations that provide support to all involved in the mentoring process will gain as everyone involved will grow through the new knowledge gained. Relationships that are

mutually beneficial will create the most effective results (Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003).

Challenges/Obstacles of Mentoring

Challenges exist in implementing mentoring programs effectively. One type of challenge is lack of resources to sustain and maintain programs which can impact the effectiveness of programs in many areas. The financial demands on a district to assume all costs related to mentoring may cause central office administration to seek applicants with experience or work hard to entice current administration to remain with the district. Financial cutbacks often cause money to be directed toward critical issues like teacher shortages instead of focusing on professional development for administrators (Daresh, 2004). Time demands may be another issue with mentors being assigned to groups of protégés instead of individuals. In these cases, meetings may be held infrequently with reflection logs being submitted electronically and discussion groups facilitated through electronic blackboards (Hopkins-Thompson, 2000). Under these circumstances, mentoring could be enhanced through the use of technology to develop an on-line learning community. In the New Jersey EXCEL program, mentoring was done through a combination of face-to-face meetings and on-line discussion groups with arrangements made for peer reviews, on-going self-assessment, and reflection of personal growth (USDE, 2004).

Too much reliance on the mentor can also be detrimental to protégés. Protégés' growth can be stifled when they rely on their mentors for too much guidance. Mentors can not provide all the answers to conflicts experienced by protégés; rather they must

guide the protégé toward exploring possible solutions to problems and reflecting on outcomes (Daresh, 2004).

Race and gender issues are an additional factor that can impact the formation of effective mentoring relationships. Protégés need to feel supported in the new roles which may be more difficult when race and gender are not accounted for in selecting appropriate mentors. Furthermore, power issues need to be avoided as the mentor serves as advocate and sponsor of the protégé. Flexibility to change mentors must be built into the selection process for cases where the match does not work (Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Reyes, 2003).

Even more important is training of mentors which often impact the effectiveness of mentoring programs if they are not conducted properly. Training programs must be well-designed to guide mentors as they develop commitment to the professional development process for beginning administrators and as they learn to provide appropriate feedback. Mentors should be selected to serve as guides based on the quality of their characteristics and not on convenience or availability (Daresh, 2004; Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003). In addition, mentoring must be respected as a legitimate method of learning and must be supported by other administrators within districts. New ideas should be valued when they are brought in by the protégés as they help move a district toward the future and enhance the programs and practices already in place (Daresh).

Benefits of Mentoring Programs

Learning and developing skills through the guidance of a mentor can assist new leaders, along with the mentors and the respective school districts. Beginning

administrators participating in mentoring programs are often more likely to advance in

the careers with higher levels of overall compensation and career satisfaction (Allen &

Poteet, 1999). These protégés often develop a network of support they can utilize

throughout their careers as they acquire new skills, knowledge, and behaviors that foster

the abilities to achieve success in their careers (Allen & Poteet; Daresh, 2004; Howley,

Chadwich, & Howley, 2002; Reyes, 2003).

Communication skills are developed through sharing, discussions, and reflections.

Protégés learn the tricks of the trade and more easily establish a sense of belonging when

guided by mentors. Theory is translated into practice as mentors help protégés interpret

problems and apply appropriate solutions while providing moral support (Daresh, 2004;

Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003).

Mentors often gain just as much from the relationship as the protégés. Mentors

feel satisfaction in seeing values passed on new administrators. They receive new ideas,

perspectives, and new sources of knowledge as well as gaining recognition from peers. A

sense of job satisfaction is frequently enhanced through the challenging and thought-

provoking experiences shared with protégés (Daresh, 2004; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000;

Reyes, 2003).

Equally important, school districts gain benefits from effective mentoring

programs through the development of both experienced and novice administrators. The

district culture becomes that of lifelong learning with the cultivation of higher levels of

staff motivation. Greater productivity and improved self-esteem are also benefits gained

by districts (Daresh, 2004).

Outcomes of Mentoring Programs

Mentoring programs provide ongoing professional development for leaders in order to help schools become more effective. Building capacity of new administrators is the key to providing leadership for improved student achievement (Daresh, 2004; Miller, 2003). While beginning administrators often focus on survivorship at the beginning of their careers, mentoring programs can assist in developing the skills needed to enhance professional development as well as personal development (Daresh). According to the NAESP (2001),

> A successful principal, no matter how new or senior in the field, also appreciates the value of and need for mentoring within the principal profession. The principal learns valuable lessons from other leaders. Just as a principal should institute a mentoring program for teachers within the school, today's principal should also view principal mentoring as a valuable tool resulting in improved leadership skills and, ultimately, a stronger learning environment. (p. 50)

Mentoring programs also help diminish the effect of administrator turnover through better preparation for effective leadership which helps build efficacy and retains administrators in positions for longer periods of time (Cromley, Kerr, Meister, Patterson, & Woods, 2005; Miller).

<div align="center">*Summary*</div>

This review of the literature revealed the need for administrator mentoring to prepare new administrators for the changing roles in an era of school reform and school improvement. More demands are being placed on today's school leaders in regard to improved student achievement; however, preparatory programs seldom provide the experiences and opportunities to develop skills to lead in this direction. Leadership theories were described detailing components that are effective for leaders in a variety of

situations. Effective leaders need the knowledge to determine which theories and practices fit the situations they encounter on a day to day basis.

Identified in the literature were effective mentoring programs as an appropriate avenue to provide the professional development for beginning administrators to help develop the skills necessary to be successful leaders in today's schools. Although other states have had mentoring programs for administrators for a number of years, the selected Midwestern state's program began this past year, during the 2005-2006 school year. Little research has been conducted to connect the effectiveness of participation in mentoring programs with the development of skills necessary to bring development of appropriate instructional leadership skills. This study examined the effectiveness of district-created mentoring programs and the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program through the perceptions of beginning administrators throughout a Midwestern state.

Discussed in Chapter Three is a description of the research design and methodology. This discussion includes research questions, population and sample, methods of data collection, and data analysis. The rationale for selecting the design of the study, a mixed design, is described. Presentation of the data findings and analysis of these findings are presented in Chapter Four. Findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research are described in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research has identified effective leadership as a key component in creating

instructional environments within today's schools necessary to bring about changes

required to meet increasing accountability standards established through the passage of

NCLB (Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Fullan, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1999;

Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Harris, 2004; IEL, 2000; Mazzeo, 2003; Ousten, 1999; Waters

et al., 2003; Yukl, 2006). As new leaders replace retiring principals and take over to

guide schools through change and reform, training must be provided to help new leaders

develop skills appropriate for their instructional roles. Many beginning principals are

completing preparatory programs without participating in internships that allow for

practice in the daily work of leading teachers toward improved student achievement

(Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Hedgpeth, 2000; Mazzeo).

Mentoring programs have emerged as a method of training new school leaders

and providing support in developing appropriate skills (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh,

2004; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Reyes, 2003). Mentoring programs vary in their

requirements and expectations as well as in their emphasis on developing managerial

skills versus instructional leadership skills. Little research has been conducted to

document the effectiveness of mentoring programs on increasing principals' instructional

leadership skills.

In Chapter Three the rationale for the study's design and methodology are

described. Critical design elements were chosen to address the question, How do

beginning administrators perceive the effectiveness of mentoring programs in which they participated? Review of the study's problem and purpose present background for the research questions and rationale for using a mixed-method design. In addition, the study population and sampling procedures are described and grounded in established research techniques. Data collection procedures, instrumentation, and data analysis are described in ample detail to support analysis and facilitate replication.

Research Questions

Questions emerged from the literature review regarding the effectiveness of various mentoring programs which led the researcher in the quest to determine differences between programs in existence in a Midwestern state. The major question for this study was: What is the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of instructional leadership skills?

Questions were developed for investigation in two phases. The first phase consisted of questions one through six to identify differences in perceived effectiveness of beginning principals regarding the mentoring program in which they participated. The second phase, questions seven through nine, explored in-depth personal perceptions of administrators regarding the support provided to them during the mentoring program that helped them develop appropriate instructional leadership skills along with the administrator training experiences that aided their development of these skills. The following questions guided this study:

1. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop

instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and
adult learning?

2. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide
   Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the
   kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop
   instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

3. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide
   Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the
   kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop
   instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures
   student achievement?

4. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide
   Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the
   kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop
   instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

5. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide
   Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the
   kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop
   instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

6. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide
   Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the
   kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop
   instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

7. What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high expectations and standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; creating a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and actively engaging the community)?

8. What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

9. In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in an attempt to answer the research questions:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning.

2. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards.

3. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement.

4. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning.

5. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools.

6. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community.

Rationale for Using Mixed-Method Design

A two-phased, sequential, explanatory mixed-method design (Creswell, 2003; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003) was selected for the purpose of this study, which was to

investigate the type of support provided by mentors in helping new principals develop instructional leadership skills. Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods of research originated in 1959 as researchers used multiple approaches to the data collection in studying validity of psychological traits (Creswell). Soon other researchers began to mix qualitative methods such as interviews with quantitative methods such as surveys to triangulate the data, with results from one technique expanding and refining the results of the other (Creswell; Fraenkel & Wallen).

The strategy of a mixed-method research approach was "to use qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a primarily quantitative study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 215). In studies utilizing this method, quantitative data was collected and analyzed to begin the study followed by collection and analysis of qualitative data. Both methods were incorporated into the interpretation phase of the study. The strength of this design was in the use of results from one method to assist in analyzing the findings of the other method, providing ease in describing and interpreting the overall results. A weakness of this design was the time required to conduct both quantitative and qualitative data collection (Creswell). The researcher chose this method to provide rich qualitative detail to further explain the results found through quantitative data analysis.

Population and Sample

The population for this study included beginning principals throughout a Midwestern state. Principals were identified based on their participation in the Administrator Mentoring Program or those within their first five years of the principalship. The Missouri School Directory 2006-2007 (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006c) was utilized to randomly select districts

and identify principals in the early years of their principalship. Emails were sent to principals to verify years of experience and identify the type of mentoring program in which they participated. A database of 100 beginning principals was thus developed to be utilized for this research study.

The sampling was two-phased, based on the sequential, explanatory mixed-method design of the research study. The first phase involved a quantitative questionnaire distributed to all beginning principals who were within their first five years of principalship. A cover letter explaining the study (see Appendix A), informed consent form (see Appendix A), and the questionnaire (see Appendix B) were mailed to each beginning principal.

Phase two involved a purposeful sampling of those participants returning the questionnaire. Merriam (1998) based purposeful sampling on the premise of wanting "to discover, understand, and gain insight . . . [to] select a sample from which the most can be learned" (p. 61). Principals were asked to indicate at the end of the questionnaire if they would be interested in participating in an interview to gather additional information. Interview participants were selected from this pool to represent both district-created mentoring programs and the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program. The sample included participants from small schools as well as large schools, elementary as well as secondary principals, and male as well as female participants. By choosing participants with varied backgrounds and experiences, descriptive information shared during the interview process allowed various voices to be heard and included in the data. A purposeful sampling method was utilized in this study to assist the researcher in gaining insight into the perceptions of beginning principals regarding their mentoring experiences

in the different types of mentoring programs through conducting interviews with selected participants.

<center>*Data Collection and Instrumentation*</center>

Three ethical guidelines were followed to protect the human subjects of research involved this study. Protection of participants from harm, assurance of the confidentiality and security of research data, and avoidance of deceiving subjects involved in the research (Creswell, 2003; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003) were addressed. Superintendents of all participating principals received and signed consent forms, granting permission for principals' participation in this study. Permission was received from forty-two superintendents to include a total of sixty-nine principals in the study. All participants also received and signed consent forms describing their rights to voluntarily participate in the study, to withdraw from participation at any time, to ask questions, and to have confidentiality respected throughout the research project (Creswell). These consent forms met with the approval of the Internal Review Board of the University of Missouri, Columbia (see Appendix F). No research was conducted without signed letters of informed consent during both survey and follow-up interview phases. All responses were coded to assure that confidentiality of subjects was protected.

A survey instrument, *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey* (see Appendix B)**,** was created for this study to determine the extent of emphasis on developing instructional leadership skills in beginning principals through participation in an administrator mentoring program. Survey statements were based on strategies to meet six standards identified as characterizing instructional leadership developed by principals from the National Association of Elementary School Principals

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(NAESP, 2001). The six standards were leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning, setting high expectations and standards, demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement, creating a culture of adult learning, using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools, and actively engaging the community. Similar lists of instructional leadership skills were described by other researchers (Fry et al., 2005; King, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005). A Likert scale, commonly used in research to measure attitudes and perceptions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003), was utilized for responses to categorize perceptions of beginning principals regarding assistance provided by their mentor in helping develop instructional leadership skills. A six-point scale was used to indicate strong agreement (6) to strong disagreement (1). Each survey statement was coded to one of the six standards related to instructional leadership skills in order to allow for data collection related to each standard. Each standard had five statements describing strategies principals could utilize to meet the standard. Statements 1, 11, 13, 24, and 29 connected to leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; statements 9, 19, 22, 26, and 30 related to setting high expectations and standards; statements 3, 4, 12, 17, and 25 were associated with demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; statements 2, 8, 16, 20, and 27 were linked to creating a culture of adult learning; statements 6, 10, 14, 21, and 23 related to using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and statements 5, 7, 15, 18, and 28 connected to actively engaging the community. The following names and acronyms were given to each standard for ease in reporting: Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning (StALrn), High Expectations and Standards (HExpSt), Demanding Content and Instruction (CntIns).

Culture of Adult Learning (CulALrn), Data as Diagnostic Tool (DTool), and Engagement of Community (EngCom).

The survey was pilot tested and retested with a group of administrators familiar with the mentoring process and its impact on assisting new principals in developing appropriate skills. The participants of the pilot test were provided with instructions on how to complete the survey and asked to provide feedback regarding the general appearance of the survey, clarity of directions, ease of comprehension, and length of survey. Participants were asked to complete the survey a second time within a period of one week to establish reliability of scores. Internal consistency was calculated resulting in an overall alpha reliability coefficient of .989. Reliability coefficients were also calculated for each standard with the following results: 1) StALrn .968; 2) HExpSt .951; 3) CntIns .949; 4) CulALrn .982; 5) DTool .966; and 6) EngCom .960. All reliability coefficients were significant at the 0.01 level. The five statements relating to each standard were examined to determine the item with the lowest item total reliability, resulting in two statements being removed from the survey. The resulting survey contained four statements for HExpSt and EngCom and five statements for StALrn, CntIns, CulALrn, and DTool, totaling twenty-eight statements. Feedback was utilized to revise and clarify directions for completing the survey and improving overall appearance. A time frame for completing the survey was also determined. This feedback helped the researcher confirm validity of the survey based on content-related evidence (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

After obtaining permission from superintendents of beginning principals, an email was sent to all participants informing them of the study (see Appendix C). The *Support of*

Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey (see Appendix B) and

informed consent letters (see Appendix A) were then mailed to the principals about a

week later to begin the first phase of the data collection. Principals were asked to sign the

informed consent if they agreed to participate, complete the survey, and return both in the

enclosed stamped envelope. Simultaneously, the survey and informed consent form were

emailed to all participants with the choice to respond through email or by completing the

survey received through postal mail. A follow-up letter was mailed to all participants a

week later, along with a follow-up email, reminding them to return the informed consent

and survey if they wished to participate in the research study (see Appendix C). A fourth

mailing consisted of thank you letters sent to those completing and returning the consent

form and survey (see Appendix C). A total of forty-five completed surveys were

returned, with four additional surveys returned indicating the principal had no mentor for

support.

Analysis of the data from phase one was conducted to refine the questions for

follow-up interviews. The survey concluded with an option to indicate interest in

participating in a follow-up interview. Principals were randomly selected from these

surveys for interviews with care taken to obtain a stratified sample representative of both

types of mentoring program along with representatives of the various backgrounds and

experiences from the total group. The researcher contacted the selected principals to

schedule the interview time and location. A letter of confirmation (see Appendix C), the

interview questions (see Appendix D), and a letter of informed consent (see Appendix A)

were emailed to each interview participant to confirm the date and time of interview and

to provide time for the participants to review and reflect on the questions. Providing

questions prior to the interview allowed principals time to reflect on their experiences in the mentoring process and prepare for the interview, a practice seldom found to skew the results of the interview (Seidman, 1998).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted consisting of experience and opinion open-ended questions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003) relating to the effectiveness of the participant's mentoring program, support from school district personnel throughout the mentoring process, and skills gained through various training opportunities. Each interview was audio-taped and later transcribed by the researcher. Member checking was conducted to verify the accuracy of the transcripts and confirm for each participant that their stories were portrayed as intended (Fraenkel & Wallen). Participants were instructed to contact the researcher to make necessary corrections. Changes were made to comply with the requirements delineated in the letter of informed consent. Field notes were taken by the researcher during the interview process to record information not reflected on the audio-tapes. Triangulation of the data occurred through the use of rich, thick descriptions provided from the interviews to further explain data obtained from the surveys (Creswell, 2003; Fraenkel & Wallen; Merriam, 1998).

Data Analysis

The purpose of this mixed-method design study was to determine if principals believed mentoring programs were effective in providing the necessary support during their initial years as administrators to help develop necessary instructional leadership skills. Although research supported the use of mentoring programs to assist new leaders in carrying out roles and responsibilities, little research was found directly relating to

emphasis on developing instructional leadership skills. Two phases of data analysis were chosen to describe numerical findings and descriptive information.

Phase one consisted of quantitative research that examined statistical differences between experiences provided by different mentoring programs as investigated in research questions one, through six. The quantitative data was collected through administering a survey to beginning principals regarding their perception of mentoring programs and entering the results into the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 11.0. To determine if there were significant differences between the experiences provided by each type of mentoring program, *t*-tests for independent means were conducted (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Mean scores of each of the six standards were determined by averaging the scores from the four or five statements describing each standard. For each standard, *t*-tests were calculated to determine if significant differences existed between district-created mentoring programs and the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program. The results were presented in Chapter Four.

Phase two involved qualitative data analysis of follow-up interviews and survey comments to answer research questions seven, eight, and nine utilizing the constant comparative method (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Merriam, 1998). Data from the interviews was also used to triangulate the data obtained from the surveys to answer research questions one through six. Interviews were transcribed in order to assist in the process of making sense of the data. The transcripts were read in their entirety to obtain an overview of the principals' perceptions. The transcripts were coded for statements related to the six standards of instructional leadership used in creating the *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey* and the themes reflected in research

questions seven through nine. Also included in the qualitative data were written comments found on the surveys. The data gradually evolved into patterns which allowed the researcher to analyze the resulting information in each category (Creswell & Clark; Merriam). These patterns were used to provide support and substance to the quantitative statistical analyses. Patterns were reviewed through the framework of the research questions and narrative descriptions were utilized to portray the findings and interpretations regarding the effectiveness of the mentoring programs in developing instructional leadership skills in beginning principals. Member checking and triangulation of data were used to validate the findings (Creswell, 2003; Merriam).

Researcher's Biases and Assumptions

One underlying assumption made by this researcher was that principals want to become strong instructional leaders to provide the opportunities for students to meet high expectations required through federal and state mandates. Acknowledging the impact principals have on everything that happens in a school, principals work with teachers and students to impact learning. This assumption was based on the researcher's personal experiences as a principal and on perceptions through contacts made in working with other principals.

Another underlying assumption, based on research and personal experiences, was that many new principals begin in administrative positions unprepared to meet federal and state mandates regarding accountability standards. School districts are often left with the responsibility of training new administrators and assisting them as they develop into instructional leaders. Although the state recently created a statewide mentoring program for administrators, the program has not been in place long enough to impact recent

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graduates of administrative programs. This assumption resulted from the researcher's current role as curriculum director and her work with administrators in the district in focusing on improving student achievement, curriculum, and instructional practices. Although principals often expressed the desire to focus on these instructional areas, too often other responsibilities took precedence, resulting in visiting classrooms and working with teachers to improve classroom practices being put on hold to complete managerial-type tasks.

An addition assumption was the researcher's belief that teachers want to do what is best for their students and many seek guidance from their administrators to validate their classroom instructional strategies or to provide assistance toward improving practices. Helping teachers improve the use of appropriate instructional strategies will impact student learning and corroborate the importance of the principal as instructional leader.

Summary

Provided in Chapter Three was information related to the design and methodology used to carry out this investigation of perceived effectiveness of administrator mentoring programs. A rationale was provided for the use of a mixed-method research design. The population and sample were described, along with data collection and instrumentation. Details of the two-phased data analysis were explained, along with the researcher's biases and assumptions. Data analysis and research findings are presented in Chapter Four. Information in Chapter Five concludes with a discussion of the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The intent of this study was to examine the perceptions of new principals regarding the impact of mentoring programs in assisting with the development of instructional leadership skills. Research has documented the importance of effective leadership in impacting instructional environments to bring about reforms necessary to meet today's required standards (Edmonds, 1979; Education Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Fullan, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Hargreaves & Fink, 2004; Harris, 2004; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 2000; Mazzeo, 2003; Waters et al., 2003; Yukl, 2006). New leaders must have training to help develop appropriate instructional leadership skills to lead in this world of accountability, however, many administrative training programs are lacking in this focus (Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Hedgpeth, 2000, Mazzeo). Mentoring programs have emerged as one method of providing training and support for new leaders as they begin to develop the necessary skills to work with teachers in bringing about improved student achievement (Daresh; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Reyes, 2003). However, little research has been conducted in relation to the effectiveness of administrator mentoring programs and their impact on new leaders' instructional leadership skills.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the type of support provided by mentors in helping new principals develop instructional leadership skills. Perceptions were investigated to determine if principals believed participation in mentoring programs was effective in providing the necessary support during their initial years as

administrators to assist in developing skills needed to address the accountability measures in place for today's schools and to help principals become successful instructional leaders. In addition, various types of administrator training programs such as preparatory coursework, internships, and professional development, were studied to identify training methods effective in developing principals' instructional leadership skills.

Data for this investigation were gathered through the researcher-created *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey*, which measured the support provided through mentoring for beginning principals as they develop instructional leadership skills. Principals responding to the survey were within their first five years of beginning the principalship. Statistical differences between experiences provided by the statewide Administrator Mentor Program (AMP) and district-created mentoring programs were analyzed by conducting *t*-tests for independent means. The mean scores for each of the six instructional leadership standards were compared to determine differences between mentoring programs for each standard. The mean scores for each standard and each individual question were also analyzed to determine effectiveness of mentoring programs.

Follow-up interviews were conducted with a smaller stratified sample to qualitatively clarify and expand on information gathered from the questionnaires. Six principals from various parts of the state were interviewed. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were coded for statements related to the six standards of instructional leadership used in creating the *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey* and the themes reflected in research questions seven, eight, and nine. Also included in the qualitative data were written comments found

on the surveys. The data gradually evolved into patterns which allowed the researcher to analyze the resulting information in each category. These patterns, as well as excerpts from the interviews, were used to provide additional substance to the quantitative statistical analyses.

The major question for this study was: What is the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of instructional leadership skills? The foregoing data were used in this study to answer the following research questions guiding this study:

1. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning?

2. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

3. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement?

4. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

5. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

6. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

7. What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high expectations and standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; creating a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and actively engaging the community)?

8. What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

9. In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

Presented in this chapter are a description of the sample population, including demographic data, and a description of the data collection instruments. In addition, analysis of the research questions and hypotheses are included, followed by a summary of the findings.

Data Analysis

Population

The population involved in this study consisted of principals throughout a Midwestern state who were within the first five years of the principalship (n=45). Of the sixty-nine surveys sent out to principals whose superintendents had given permission for participation in the study, forty-nine were returned, yielding a return rate of 71%. Of the surveys returned, four principals indicated they had not had a mentor and returned the survey unmarked as requested in the instructions. Forty-five surveys (65%) were thus available for utilization in this study. Twenty-three of the principals had participated in district-created mentoring programs; twenty-two principals had participated in the statewide AMP. Demographics of the participants are shown in Table 1. Categories included gender, age, years of experience, and level of education. Participants were split into fairly equal distributions of male and female principals. Almost half of the principals were between the ages of 30 and 40, with the others split between age spans of 20-30 years, 40-50 years, and over 50 years. Over three-fourths of the participants were within their first two years of beginning the principalship; and over 70 percent held a master's degree.

Demographics relating to the schools of the principals participating in this research are shown in Table 2. Participants were grouped by size of school, level of

school, and school location. Approximately 50 percent of the participants were from schools with less than 350 students. Almost 58 percent of principals were from elementary schools, with the next largest segment from high schools (17% of principals). Sixty-two percent of the principals identified their school districts as rural.

Six participants who completed the survey were interviewed using follow-up semi-structured questions. The six participants were chosen to provide a cross-section of the demographic population. Numbers in parentheses in Tables 1 and 2 indicate demographics of the interview participants. Four of the principals interviewed had participated in district-created mentoring programs and two participated in the statewide AMP. In addition, interview participants represented various geographical areas of the state—Belton, Bowling Green, Springfield, Wellsville, and West Plains.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Principals Responding to Survey

Demographic	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	24 (3)	53.3%
	Female	21 (3)	46.7%
Age	20-30	8	17.8%
	30-40	19 (4)	42.2%
	40-50	11 (1)	24.4%
	50 +	7 (1)	15.6%
Years of Experience	1 year	15 (3)	33.3%
	2 years	20 (2)	44.4%
	3 years	5	11.1%
	4 years	2 (1)	4.4%
	5 years	3	6.7%
Level of Education	M.Ed.	32 (5)	71.1%
	Ed.S.	9	20.0%
	Ed.D.	3 (1)	6.7%
	Ph.D.	1	2.3%

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate interview participants.

Table 2

School Demographic Information of Principals Responding to Survey

Demographic	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
School Size	<350	23 (3)	51.1%
	351-650	14 (1)	31.1%
	>651	8 (2)	17.8%
Level of School	Elementary	26 (3)	57.8%
	Middle School	2 (1)	4.4%
	Junior High	2	4.4%
	High School	8 (1)	17.2%
	Junior High/High School	5	11.1%
	Elementary/Middle School	1 (1)	2.2%
	K-12	1	2.2%
School Location	Urban	5 (2)	11.4%
	Suburban	12 (1)	26.7%
	Rural	28 (3)	62.2%

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate interview participants.

Data Collection Instrumentation

Survey

The *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey* was used to measure the perceptions of beginning principals regarding the effectiveness of

mentoring programs in providing support as new leaders developed instructional

leadership skills. The survey was created by the researcher based on information gleaned

from a review of the related literature (DuFour, 2002; Educational Alliance & NAESP,

2003; Elmore, 2002; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Fullan, 2002; Hallinger, 2003; Lambert,

2002; NAESP, 2001; Waters & Grubb, 2004). Items related to instructional leadership

skills focused on six standards found in the literature. The six standards identified were

leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning, setting high

expectations and standards, demanding content and instruction that ensures student

achievement, creating a culture of adult learning, using multiple sources of data as

diagnostic tools, and actively engaging the community. Four to five statements related to

each standard were ranked on a six-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (6) to

Strongly Disagree (1).

The survey was pilot tested and retested by a group of administrators familiar

with the mentoring process. Each administrator was asked to take the survey, indicating

the length of time needed to complete the survey. The administrators were then asked to

take the survey again within one week's time period. Feedback was also solicited

regarding general appearance of the instrument, clarity of instructions, and ease of

comprehension of the survey and the individual items in order to refine the survey prior

to its administration with beginning principals. Reliability of the items was determined by

comparing the responses of the survey as administered on the two separate occasions. To

check test-retest reliability, correlations of subscale totals on the two administrations of

the test were calculated. These correlations were Pearson product moment correlations

between the two sets of scores. The test-retest correlations for the six standards ranged

from a low of $r = .949$, the correlation for Demanding Content and Instruction standard

totals, to $r = .982$, the correlation for Culture of Adult Learning standard. Results were

reported in Table 3. All correlations in the test-retest were significant at the .01 level.

Table 3

Test-Retest Reliability of Survey Instrument by Standard

Standard	*r*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning	.968**	<.001
High Expectations and Standards	.951**	<.001
Demanding Content and Instruction	.949**	<.001
Culture of Adult Learning	.982**	<.001
Data as Diagnostic Tool	.966**	<.001
Engagement of Community	.960**	<.001
Total Test	.989**	<.001

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Internal consistency of the items within each standard was also calculated through

the split-half procedure (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003) to determine the degree to which the

two portions of each standard provide the same results. Unequal-length Spearman-Brown

reliability coefficients were utilized to determine internal consistency due to the uneven

number of items in each standard. Results were reported in Table 4. Values for

coefficient alpha and the split-half coefficient all indicated satisfactory reliability.

Table 4

Internal Consistency of Survey Instrument by Standard

Standard	α	Unequal-length Spearman-Brown
Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning	.9131	.9069
High Expectations and Standards	.8916	.8948
Demanding Content and Instruction	.8556	.8511
Culture of Adult Learning	.8096	.8107
Data as Diagnostic Tool	.9043	.9663
Engagement of Community	.8564	.8140

Note: $\alpha \geq$ .80.

In addition, correlations of each item in each subscale were calculated to determine the reliability of each individual item. These correlations were again Pearson product moment correlations between the two sets of scores. Results are reported in Table 5 with results grouped by the six instructional leadership standards. Items with significance at the .01 level were retained for the survey. The remaining two items were removed prior to administration with beginning principals.

Table 5

Test-Retest Reliability of Survey Instrument by Question

Questions Grouped by Standard	r	Sig. (2-tailed)
StALrn Question 1	.880**	<.001
StALrn Question 11	.976**	<.001
StALrn Question 13	.781**	.003
StALrn Question 24	.779**	.003
StALrn Question 29	.925**	<.001
HExpSt Question 9[+]	.645*	.023
HExpSt Question 19	.921**	<.001
HExpSt Question 22	.834**	.001
HExpSt Question 26	.816**	.001
HExpSt Question 30	.874**	<.001
CntIns Question 3	.913**	<.001
CntIns Question 4	.980**	<.001
CntIns Question 12	.923**	<.001
CntIns Question 17	.839**	.001
CntIns Question 25	.978**	<.001
CulALrn Question 2	.969**	<.001
CulALrn Question 8	.797**	.002
CulALrn Question 16	.795**	.002
CulALrn Question 20	.901**	<.001
CulALrn Question 27	.954**	<.001
DTool Question 6	.963**	<.001
DTool Question 10	.919**	<.001
DTool Question 14	.921**	<.001
DTool Question 21	.931**	<.001
DTool Question 23	.915**	<.001
EngCom Question 5[+]	.615*	.033
EngCom Question 7	.927**	<.001
EngCom Question 15	.939**	<.001
EngCom Question 18	.938**	<.001
EngCom Question 28	.979**	<.001

Note: **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed). [+]Items removed from initial survey.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol used to gather qualitative data from the participants

focused on how mentors supported the development of the six standards of instructional

leadership, how central office administrators provided support for the mentoring

program, and how other administrator training opportunities impacted the development of

instructional leadership skills. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed for use

in the research. Transcripts were provided to the interviewees for member checking to

determine accuracy of the recorded information. Corrections were made based on

feedback from the participants. Using this triangulation method allowed for elaboration

and produced more in-depth data which was not possible to achieve strictly through the

use of questionnaires (Creswell, 2003; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

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Research Questions: Analysis of Data

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Responses from the *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership*

Skills Survey collected from beginning principals were entered into SPSS 11.0. Data were

first analyzed using *t*-tests for independent means to determine if significant differences

existed between district-created mentoring programs and the statewide AMP. Analysis

was conducted on the entire survey and on each of the six standards. Mean scores for

each standard and each question were also investigated to determine the strength of

support provided through mentoring programs to assist new principals in developing

instructional leadership skills.

Follow-up interviews of six beginning principals were conducted to triangulate

the data from the statistical procedures. The transcripts were coded for statements related

to the six standards of instructional leadership used in creating the *Support of Mentors in*

Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey and the themes reflected in research

questions seven through nine. Also included in the qualitative data were written

comments found on the surveys. The researcher noted patterns in the responses from the

surveys and interviews as they related to the framework of the research questions. These

patterns, as well as excerpts from the interviews, were used to provide additional

substance to the quantitative statistical analyses and to guide the researcher in addressing

the following research questions:

Research Question 1

   Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide

Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind

of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional

leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning?

   An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate differences between the

AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the kind of support provided by mentors

in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools

based on the standard of emphasis on student and adult learning. Equal variances were

assumed for each test. The test showed no significance between the two programs, $t(43) =$

.315, $p = .754$, as reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Comparison of Statewide AMP and District-Created Mentoring Programs by Standard

Subscale	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning	.315	43	.754
High Expectations and Standards	.014	43	.989
Demanding Content and Instruction	.208	42	.836
Culture of Adult Learning	.437	43	.664
Data as Diagnostic Tool	.420	43	.667
Engagement of Community	.238	43	.813
Total Survey	.344	42	.733

Note: No significance in any standard, *p*>.05.

Although there was no statistical difference between the two programs, mean scores yielded information of interest relating to effectiveness of both programs. The mean scores for the StALrn standard were 3.94 for the statewide AMP, 4.05 for district-created programs, and 3.99 for both programs combined, as shown in Table 7. These mean scores fell within the range of Slightly Agree answers (3.51-4.50), indicating neither program was strong in helping the principals build skills relating to an emphasis on student and adult learning.

Table 7

Mean Scores for Six Instructional Leadership Standards and Total Survey

Standard	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning	3.94	4.04	3.99	1.27	1.00	1.13
High Expectation and Standards	4.14	4.14	4.14	1.04	0.81	1.15
Demanding Content and Instruction	3.96	4.07	4.02	1.23	1.00	1.10
Culture of Adult Learning	4.30	4.45	4.38	1.35	0.97	1.16
Data as Diagnostic Tool	3.79	3.95	3.87	1.34	1.16	1.24
Engagement of the Community	3.92	4.00	3.96	0.98	1.01	1.11
Total Survey	3.99	4.11	4.05	1.26	0.95	1.10

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. N=45.

In addition, all mean scores for each question within this standard fell within the range of Slightly Agree. Mean scores for the five questions related to this standard were ranked by the total mean in Table 8 and were analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses within this standard.

Table 8

Mean Scores for Questions in Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning Standard

Question	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
My mentor helped me create and nurture a community of learners where adults as well as students are continually learning.	3.86	4.39	4.13	1.28	1.20	1.25
Through working with my mentor, I learned to seek leadership opportunities from multiple sources.	3.86	4.26	4.07	1.49	1.10	1.30
Through the mentoring process, I learned to tie daily operations of the school-house to school and student learning goals.	4.00	4.04	4.02	1.41	1.02	1.22
My mentor helped me to align financial, human, and material resources to the school goals.	3.82	4.00	3.91	1.36	1.38	1.36
My mentor encouraged me to embody learner-centered leadership by providing examples of my own learning as a model.	4.14	3.52	3.82	1.61	1.27	1.47

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. N=45.

One of the relative strengths of district-created programs, as determined through the survey data, was creating and nurturing a community of student and adult learning, where adults as well as students within a school setting are always learning and

developing. The principle behind this statement reflects the belief that when adults stop learning, so do the students (NAESP, 2001). Communication was identified in the interviews as a strategy that was helpful in developing this skill. One of the principals indicated, "In creating a community of students, I think the number one is just the communication between my mentor and myself, being able to talk about activities at the start of the school. . . . and just the sharing of ideas" (P4-2-58). Another principal indicated this was a personal strength, so he did not have many questions in this area. However, "if I would have had questions, [my mentor] would have been there—he was very productive in helping me" (P3-2-60). Communication was in place in this mentoring relationship to assist wherever there was a need. A third principal focused with her mentor on team building ideas to learn what the staff was thinking regarding what was working in the building and what was not working. "She helped me with some ideas on survey-type things that I used with the staff to get a feel for what they think and what their opinions are and how things are going" (P5-2-83).

Although this tenet was identified as a strength from the statistical data, information gleaned from the interviews indicated this was not the case everywhere. One of the participants felt their overall mentoring program was ineffective and expressed the following comment regarding experience related to this standard:

> If I am honest, I didn't get strong mentoring in this area. When we were looking at the documents that talked about what we were supposed to be doing, I felt like I was being told to make it look like we were complying on paper. There didn't seem to be respect for professional development processes, or even the belief that systematic professional development was necessary. I got the feeling that I needed to keep the status quo and leave things as they were. (P1-2-53)

Another participant indicated this was not a strength of the district-created program at the time he was involved with it, but the program goals had evolved over time. He said,

> When I went through, it was more about managing the school, managing your time. I kind of felt it was more focused on keeping and retaining quality people and giving them the support to flourish in their position. I think now that the program has progressed . . . they probably are looking at student learning and adult learning and how to do professional development with your staff, but I personally didn't get those benefits of the mentoring program. (P2-2-75)

An additional participant felt the overall mentoring program was "unfocused and very confused" (P6-1-28) and reflected on the help received toward this standard with the following comment:

> It's really not been a very instructional process for me, other than I've had someone who has had experience and talked about common experiences we've had. . . .[but] his realm of experiences was totally different than mine, so in that respect, he didn't offer me much. (P6-1-45)

Data from the survey identified the strength of the statewide AMP was in using the principals' learning as a model that all members of the system should be learners. The principal became a model of public learning as a model for all members of the school community (NAESP, 2001). While this skill was a strength of the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program, this same skill was a weakness within district-created programs. There was no specific data from the interviews to substantiate or refute this finding.

Research Question 2

Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

Independent *t*-tests indicated there was no significant difference at the $p<.05$ or $p<.01$ levels between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools based on the standard of setting high expectations and standards. Equal variances were assumed for each test. The test showed no significance between the two programs, $t(43) = .014$, $p = .989$, as reported in Table 6.

Although there was no statistical difference between the two programs, mean scores generated information of interest relating to the effectiveness of both programs. The mean scores for the HExpSt standard were 4.14 for the statewide AMP, 4.14 for district-created programs, and 4.14 for both programs combined, as described in Table 7, indicating identical support from both types of programs. These mean scores fell within the range of Slightly Agree answers (3.51-4.50), indicating neither program was strong in helping the principals build skills relating to setting high expectations and standards. In addition, all mean scores for each question within this standard fell within the range of Slightly Agree. Mean scores for the four questions related to this standard were ranked by the total mean in Table 9 and were examined to identify strengths and weaknesses within this standard.

Table 9

Mean Scores for Questions in Setting High Expectations and Standards Standard

Question	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
My mentor guided me in articulating a clear vision that reflects the beliefs, values, and goals of the school community with a clear agenda for action.	4.32	4.26	4.29	1.39	1.18	1.27
My mentor encouraged me to communicate the vision and mission of the school to staff, parents, students, and community members.	4.18	4.7	4.18	1.59	1.23	1.40
My mentor assisted me in developing skills to ensure that all students have adequate and appropriate opportunities to meet high standards.	4.18	4.13	4.16	1.33	1.01	1.17
My mentor helped me ensure that that barriers to student learning were identified, clarified, and addressed.	3.86	4.00	3.93	1.32	1.00	1.16

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. N=45.

Data from the surveys identified the strength of both programs for this standard as

developing an appropriate vision for the school that reflected the school culture and

served as a guide for everything that happened within the school community. This

strength established a clear direction for the members working together within the

organization to enable members to focus all efforts on the agenda for action. No data was gleaned from the interviews to confirm this area as a strength.

The interview question for this standard addressed the support provided by the mentor to ensure appropriate opportunities were in place to allow all students to meet high standards. Survey data indicated this was the lowest of the four areas focused on through this standard for both types of mentoring programs and data from the interviews supported this concept. One principal commented,

> I won't say that we didn't talk about it, but as far as providing and insisting that we have high standards, I think probably a lot of the things we would talk about were high standards as far as student behavior, not necessarily academics. . . . Some of that probably beat around the bush quite a bit, but as far as hitting this target right on the head, that really didn't happen. (P2-3-97)

Another principal, whose superintendent served as the mentor, echoed the lack of emphasis in this area through the following response:

> I really did not receive support as far as making sure that our school programs were providing students with what they needed to meet high standards. Again, it was not a priority for my superintendent. . . . It was said that we wanted our students to do the best that they could, but there wasn't an emphasis on coming up with a consensus on how we would measure student progress or what we even meant by students meeting high standards. (P1-2-72)

One of the principals indicated little to no time was spent on this standard because the need was not there. "In fairness to him [mentor], he wasn't asked about a lot of those things. The district already does a lot of those things, which has been very helpful to me" (P6-2-66). Another principal communicated the support was for an awareness of the opportunities available for students by saying, "He shared the programs, he helped make me aware of programs we had within and resources in [the district] to assist students in realizing success" (P3 -2-70).

Only one principal felt the support had been adequate to support students in meeting high standards with communication between mentor and protégé being the key to success. "The communication of us talking about—my mentor saying here is where the district was at . . . talking through some of the strategies of ways to move them and to know what the expectations are, from a leadership perspective" (P4-2-74).

Research Question 3

Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement?

Independent *t*-tests indicated there was no significant difference at the *p*<.05 or *p*<.01 levels between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools based on the standard of demanding content and instruction. Equal variances were assumed for each test. The test showed no significance between the two programs, *t*(42) = .208, *p* = .836, as reported in Table 6.

Although there was no statistical difference between the two programs, mean scores yielded information of interest relating to effectiveness of both programs. The mean scores for the CntIns standard were 3.96 for the statewide AMP, 4.07 for district-created programs, and 4.02 for both programs combined, as shown in Table 7. These mean scores fell within the range of Slightly Agree answers (3.51-4.50), indicating neither program was strong in helping the principals build skills relating to setting high expectations and standards. In addition, most mean scores for each question within this

standard fell within the range of Slightly Agree. The exception was the question relating to mentors helping new principals gain skills to evaluate student work to ensure students are being taught to high standards. The mean score on this question from principals participating in district-created programs was 3.39, falling in the Slightly Disagree range (2.51-3.50). Mean scores for the five questions related to this standard were ranked by the total mean in Table 10. Further analysis was conducted to determine strengths and weaknesses of the components of this standard.

Table 10

Mean Scores for Questions in Demanding Content and Instruction Standard

Question	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
My mentor helped me learn the importance of observing classroom practices to assure that all students are meaningfully engaged in active learning.	4.36	4.48	4.42	1.40	1.27	1.32
My mentor guided me in locating resources to provide up-to-date technology, training, and instructional materials.	4.14	4.17	4.16	1.55	1.19	1.36
My mentor guided me in hiring and retaining high-quality teachers and holding them responsible for student learning.	3.86	4.39	4.14	1.35	1.27	1.32
Working with my mentor helped me develop skills to monitor alignment of curriculum with standards, school goals, and assessments.	3.68	3.91	3.80	1.29	1.20	1.24
Through the mentoring process, I gained skills to review and analyze student work to determine whether students are being taught to standards.	3.86	3.39	3.62	1.39	1.56	1.48

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. N=45.

Learning the importance of observing instructional practices was a relative strength for both types of mentoring programs, according to survey data. This responsibility of principals was common across all types of schools—whether schools are small or large, rural or urban, elementary or secondary. Effective principals were required to learn how to hone this skill early in the year to meet the requirements of their district's teacher evaluation process and to gain a first-hand view of what was actually happening in classrooms throughout the school. Learning how to effectively observe and give feedback to teachers was a focus of both mentoring programs.

This common theme was corroborated throughout data obtained from the interviews. Five of the six principals interviewed felt their mentor provided good encouragement and assistance as they refined their skills in observing and giving feedback to the teachers. One mentor emphasized the need to be in the classroom regularly to really determine if students were engaged and if the curriculum content was being taught. This same mentor encouraged "having the teachers do a reflection after the observation, by themselves—how they felt about it [their lesson]. It gets them thinking on their own" (P5-3-107).

In one situation, the principal and mentor examined student work and conducted walkthroughs together, providing time to talk about instruction and good teaching practices and teacher feedback.

> Walking through the building with her and being able to say, these are some of the conversations that I have with my teachers that I see doing this. This is what it looks like, so more of the one-on-one conversations [with the mentor] (P4-2-91).

Another principal had the opportunity to work with different mentors each of his first two years through the district-created mentoring program. After receiving

information on walkthroughs and talking a lot about giving teachers feedback with the

first mentor, he chose to work with another mentor the second year whose expertise was

in Performance-Based Teacher Evaluations (PBTE). He described his experience as

follows:

> We got to sit in a teacher's class that she non-renewed and I had never
> done one of those yet. The teacher showed slides 65 minutes of animals.
> When we got back, we talked about 1) Is this in the curriculum? Well, no,
> not really. 2) There was no variety of learning strategies. Her method was
> all talk; students sat there and had heads down on the desk. So that was
> very valuable for me to see different perspectives. . . . It really helped me
> to get better, and be a better instructional leader seeing how other people
> operate. (P2-3-124)

Only one of the principals did not have good support in this area and was not

encouraged to observe in the classroom. Evaluations were done by the superintendent

without involvement from the principal. A Reading First grant was written after the

principal had been in the building for two years and required weekly walkthroughs by the

principal and the reading coach. "I wasn't mentored or encouraged to do them

[walkthroughs] and they weren't used for teacher evaluations. We did use the

walkthroughs frequently in collaborations because the teachers craved that feedback . . .

but they wanted real and honest feedback" (P1-3-97).

Survey data identified two weaknesses within this standard, monitoring alignment

of curriculum with standards and assessments (AMP weakness) and reviewing/analyzing

student work to determine whether standards were being taught (district-created

mentoring programs weakness). Both skills required principals to have a strong

understanding of the curriculum and standards for their respective grade levels, skills that

require time to develop. Only two principals referred to curriculum and student work as a

connection with observations and feedback. One principal had worked through her

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mentor with the teachers to write common assessments and felt that was a valuable

process to work with teachers in identifying what students needed to know. The

following details reflected her experience:

> Coming from a district that had common assessments and being able to
> provide some of that knowledge as a leader. As a district, to be able to
> have common assessments and truly analyze data and how we as leaders
> are going to lead our teachers in conversations about that data. How are
> we going to move them in directions using that data? (P4-2-85)

The other principal indicated that the need for being in the classroom on a regular basis

was critical, "Otherwise, how do you know if the students are engaged and what exactly

is going on with the curriculum and those kinds of things" (P5-3-104). The other four

principals did not verbally make the connection between observing in the classroom and

monitoring curriculum and student learning.

Research Question 4

    Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide

Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind

of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional

leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

    Independent *t*-tests indicated there was no significant difference at the $p<.05$ or

$p<.01$ levels between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the

kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop

instructional leadership skills to lead schools based on the standard of creating a culture

of adult learning. Equal variances were assumed for each test. The test showed no

significance between the two programs, $t(43) = -.437$, $p = .644$, as reported in Table 6.

Although there was no statistical difference between the two programs, mean scores produced information of interest relating to effectiveness of both programs. The mean scores for the CulALrn standard were 4.30 for the statewide AMP, 4.45 for district-created programs, and 4.38 for both programs combined, as conveyed in Table 7. These mean scores fell within the range of Slightly Agree answers (3.51-4.50), indicating neither program was strong in helping the principals build skills relating to creating a culture of adult learning. Although the scores fell in the range of Slightly Agree, these scores were the highest of the six instructional leadership standards. In addition, most mean scores for each question within this standard fell within the range of Slightly Agree. One exception was the question related to the principals' needs to continually improve their own practice, with scores ranging from 4.68-4.96 and falling in the Agree range (4.51-5.50). Mean scores for the five questions related to this standard were ranked by the total mean in Table 11. Additional analysis identified strengths and weaknesses of components of this standard.

Table 11

Mean Scores for Questions in Culture of Adult Learning Standard

Question	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
My mentor helped me recognize the need to continually improve my own profess- ional practice.	4.68	4.96	4.82	1.59	0.98	1.30
My mentor encouraged me to develop opportunities for teachers to learn from each other through observations, demonstra- tions, and collaboration.	4.23	4.43	4.33	1.60	1.16	1.36
My mentor encouraged me to provide time for reflection as an important part of improving practice.	4.23	4.43	4.33	1.51	1.24	1.38
My mentor assisted me in locating resources (time, opportunity, and funding) for professional development aligned to improving student achievement.	4.36	4.04	4.20	1.47	1.19	1.47
Through collaboration with my mentor, I learned to connect professional development to school learning goals.	4.00	4.39	4.20	1.66	1.27	1.32

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. . N=45.

Creating a Culture of Adult Learning was the standard with the highest mean

scores overall from the survey data. The strength of recognizing the need to continually

improve the principals' own professional practice was identified by both mentoring

programs. Successful principals identified areas they needed to improve and sought out

professional development opportunities to build their capacity to be more effective.

Attending faculty professional development activities also strengthened principals' skills

as well as building connections between principals and their teachers (NAESP, 2001). All

survey questions for this standard related to various aspects of professional development,

both for the principal and for teachers, and connecting professional development to

improved student learning. Although this was recognized as a strength on the surveys,

only two principals indicated during the interviews that they were encouraged to take

advantage of opportunities to strengthen their own skills in various areas. However, one

principal shared that discretion in choosing the appropriate opportunities was critical with

the following comment:

> There are many wonderful opportunities for professional development
> that, between that and the meetings, you have to decide what kind of
> administrator you're going to be, because you could be gone all the time.
> . . . So, they have assisted me in understanding what are the most
> important, the most beneficial things to be a part of and when it's okay to
> say, hey, we're going to step out of this one. (P3-3-92)

The weakest area identified by survey data from the statewide AMP was in

connecting professional development to school learning goals. A related weakness was

identified for district-created mentoring programs in locating resources for professional

development aligned to student improvement. Both skills were necessary to build the

capacity of the teachers within the organization in improving their expertise in crafting

appropriate learning situations for the students to achieve. Only two principals made a

connection between professional development and student learning. One principal

worked in a district that implemented Whole Faculty Study Groups, working through this

process as a teacher and then as an administrator. His mentor assisted him in analyzing

the process to determine how best to support the process. He indicated,

> After talking to my mentor and talking to the people I worked with the
> second year, I kind of came across my personal view that they are best if
> you can group them by subject, in my opinion, and they are best if you
> structure them a little bit, not give them a clearly defined target, but a little
> bit of structure to guide them towards your SIP [School Improvement
> Plan]. If you can do that, they would take the ball and run with it. I think it
> will make our school better. That whole philosophy was developed during
> that mentoring time when I was able to talk to multiple people about this.
> (P2-4-149)

The other principal made the connection between professional development and student

achievement, however, her mentor did not support these efforts and in fact steered her

away from working with the committee to improve instructional improvements, as

described in the following passage:

> My mentor guided me away from aligning professional development with
> student learning to the point where he actually suggested that I not
> "interfere" with the professional development meetings nor attend them. . .
> . It gave a very strong message to the PD committee that, even though we
> were being asked by the state to align PD with student achievement, that
> wasn't important to him. (P1-3-109)

Although this mentor did not seem to support the work of the professional development

committee, he did commit money from other funds that the principal was able to utilize

for "working towards one common purpose" (P1-3-112).

The issue of locating sufficient resources for adult learning was only mentioned

by one principal. This principal was from a small district where financial resources were

limited and was mentored by a principal from a much larger district with many more

financial resources available for various professional development opportunities.

Although the mentor was very supportive, the principal described the situation as

follows:

Because of the differences in our worlds, his take on what was feasible and what wasn't were completely different. With a large school district, they can bring in a variety of outside resources because they have the financial capability to do that and they have the staff to support large programs like that. Staff like mine—I've got a total of twenty-four certified people. You get a totally different realm of professional development. (P6-2-87)

One other principal explained how she and her mentor sat down with a budget to analyze how much was available for professional development to structure learning opportunities throughout the year. She did not indicate that lack of resources was an issue.

Research Question 5

Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

Independent *t*-tests indicated there was no significant difference at the $p<.05$ or $p<.01$ levels between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools based on the standard of using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools. Equal variances were assumed for each test. The test showed no significance between the two programs, $t(43) = .420$, $p = .667$, as reported in Table 6.

Although there was no statistical difference between the two programs, mean scores generated information of interest relating to effectiveness of both programs. The mean scores for the DTool standard were 3.79 for the statewide AMP, 3.95 for district-created programs, and 3.87 for both programs combined, as described in Table 7. These

mean scores fell within the range of Slightly Agree answers (3.51-4.50), indicating

neither program was strong in helping the principals build skills relating to using multiple

of sources of data as diagnostic tools. These mean scores were the weakest of the six

instructional leadership standards. In addition, most mean scores for each question within

this standard fell within the range of Slightly Agree. The exception was the question

related to the mentor encouraging new principals to examine schools with similar

demographics to identify strategies for improving student achievement. The mean score

on this question from principals participating in district-created programs was 3.48,

falling in the Slightly Disagree range (2.51-3.50). Mean scores for the five questions

related to this standard were ranked by the total mean in Table 12 and were investigated

to determine strengths and weaknesses within the standard.

Table 12

Mean Scores for Questions in Data as Diagnostic Tool Standard

Question	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
My mentor supported me in utilizing a variety of data sources to measure performance.	3.91	4.13	4.02	1.48	1.39	1.42
Working with my mentor strengthened my skills in using data as tools to identify barriers to success, design strategies for improvement, and plan daily instruction.	3.82	4.04	3.93	1.30	1.33	1.30
My mentor helped me develop skills to analyze data with staff using a variety of strategies.	3.73	4.09	3.91	1.55	1.50	1.52
My mentor assisted me in creating a school environment that is comfortable using data.	3.64	4.00	3.82	1.43	1.21	1.32
My mentor encouraged me to examine successful schools with similar demographics to identify strategies for improving student achievement.	3.86	3.48	3.67	1.49	1.12	1.31

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. N=45.

Using Multiple Sources of Data as Diagnostic Tools was the standard with the

weakest mean scores overall. However, the strongest measure within this subscale for

both types of mentoring programs was learning to use a variety of data sources to measure student progress as documented by survey data. With today's accountability standards, looking at data, both quantitative and qualitative, has become a necessity and was somewhat supported through both programs.

Two of the six principals interviewed indicated they had support and assistance from their mentor in looking at various sources of data to make decisions about school and student learning. Several principals had help from other sources, such as the assistant superintendent in charge of curriculum and other principals within the same district. Participants from both types of mentoring programs responding on the surveys identified utilizing a variety of data sources to measure performance as a relative strength. Data from the interviews supported this finding through discussions of various sources such as MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) test results, IBD (Item Benchmark Description) reports from MAP tests, common assessment results, and data gathered through walkthroughs. One principal whose mentor was supportive in this endeavor described their work as follows:

> Beyond common assessments, I spent time with her [mentor] and our assistant superintendent looking at MAP data and I think that this was my first real taste of data on a large scale. How I would present this and disaggregate it as a leader and present it to a staff and have that conversation as a leader? It was a lot of showing me how to do it. It was a lot of saying, these are the numbers you want to look at, these are the graphs I'm going to present to my staff. I think your staff is ready for that one, too, but you might not want to show them this one yet, because you're still trying to build their trust. It was definitely some talking and showing examples. (P4-3-110)

Another principal indicated his work with the mentor centered on using walkthroughs to generate data in addition to looking at test results. A third principal did indicate plans had been made to look at the IBD reports at their next meeting to identify specific areas on

which to focus attention, however, this had not happened at the time of the interview in late February.

The survey indicated district-created mentoring programs were weak in supporting the study of schools with similar demographics to identify strategies for improving student achievement. This skill would be utilized as principals identify ineffective practices and seek to find practices intended to bring about improved results. Only two other statements on the entire survey ranked with lower mean scores than this item. There was no mention in any of the interviews of identifying ways of improvement through looking at similar schools. The weakness identified by the statewide AMP participants was in creating a school environment comfortable with data. This concept was not addressed by any principal participating in this mentoring program. Only one principal discussed training the staff in the ongoing data review process, which was conducted after receiving a Professional Learning Communities grant. In this case, the data review process was not supported by the mentor, however, he "has received feedback from the staff on how important it has been to have that time together which has influenced him in a positive way" (P1-3-132).

Research Question 6

Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

Independent *t*-tests indicated there was no significant difference at the $p<.05$ or $p<.01$ levels between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the

kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop

instructional leadership skills to lead schools based on the standard of actively engaging

the community. Equal variances were assumed for each test. The test showed no

significance between the two programs, $t(43) = .238$, $p = .813$, as reported in Table 6.

Although there was no statistical difference between the two programs, mean

scores produced information of interest relating to effectiveness of both programs. The

mean scores for the EngCom standard were 3.92 for the statewide AMP, 4.00 for district-

created programs, and 3.96 for both programs combined, as shown in Table 7. These

mean scores fell within the range of Slightly Agree answers (3.51-4.50), indicating

neither program was strong in helping the principals build skills relating to actively

engaging the community. In addition, most mean scores for each question within this

standard fell within the range of Slightly Agree. Exceptions were on the question relating

to the mentor helping the new principal establish relationships with area businesses, high

education institutions, and community groups. The mean score on this question from

principals participating in district-created programs was 3.35 and the total mean for both

programs combined was 3.44. Both scores were within the Slightly Disagree range (2.51-

3.50). Mean scores for the four questions related to this standard were ranked by the total

mean in Table 13. Further analysis identified strengths and weakness of this standard.

Table 13

Mean Scores for Questions in Engagement of Community Standard

Question	Mean Scores			Standard Deviation		
	AMP	DC	Total	AMP	DC	Total
Through the mentoring process, I learned to share leadership and decision-making.	4.18	4.39	4.29	1.44	1.25	1.32
My mentor supported me as I encouraged parents to become meaningfully involved in the school and in their own children's learning.	3.95	4.26	4.11	1.46	1.25	1.35
Through the mentoring process, I learned to engage the community to build greater ownership for the work of the school and to keep them informed of school progress.	4.00	4.00	4.00	1.23	0.95	1.09
Through working with my mentor, I learned to establish partnerships with area businesses, institutions of higher education, and community groups to strengthen programs that support school goals.	3.55	3.35	3.44	1.41	1.34	1.36

Note: Likert scale ranged from 1=Strongly Disagree to 6=Strongly Agree. DC=District-created mentoring programs. N=45.

Shared leadership and decision-making were identified as relative strengths from

the survey data; connecting again to the theory of distributed leadership as discussed in

the first standard, Emphasis on Student and Adult Learning. Building the capacity of all members of the learning organization in this sixth standard included parents, community and business leaders, and policy-makers in addition to the tradition roles of students and staff (NAESP, 2001). However, this statement did not specify the stakeholders in the shared leadership and was not identified as a statement within the standard of engagement of community, leaving it open to interpretation as to who would be involved in the shared decision-making. Thus, we can better understand how a similar concept was identified as a weakness for both programs. Establishing partnerships with business and community groups to strengthen support for school goals was identified as the lowest skill within this standard.

The only mention during the interviews of anything related to shared leadership and decision-making was working with PTA groups. Commonalities among several principals were the importance of open communication with various constituents of the community to build relationships so parents and community members feel comfortable and welcome in the school buildings. One principal indicated her mentor "modeled the importance of keeping an open door policy with community members and emphasized that the community should not feel alienated from the school. It's really made a difference there. . . . It has helped build community trust" (P1-4-146). Another principal shared that she had conversations with her mentor about "how important it is to be involved in the community and to have that support from the parents" (P5-4-147). Specific strategies were not identified, but the importance of community involvement was emphasized. A third principal commented that his mentor "was very open about how he was going about involving the community. He didn't want to keep anything secret . . .

You've got to know what the community values, what the community considers taboo"

(P3-3-119). The mentor shared how he had conducted open houses and various types of

meetings and addressed different social issues in the community.

A weakness identified for both types of mentoring programs was in establishing

partnerships with area business and community members to strengthen programs

supporting school goals. This concept was not mentioned by any of the principals. One

principal even indicated they were from very small, rural district with no local businesses

from which to solicit support.

Research Question 7

What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective

in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading schools

by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high expectations and

standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; creating

a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and

actively engaging the community)?

Several successful strategies emerged from the interviews and survey comments

relating to effective mentoring programs. The strategies included communication, making

a proper match to develop a supportive relationship, amount and method of support

provided, and the need for guidelines for content within the program. Most of the

principals also identified gaining techniques for observation and feedback as an effective

strategy. Reflections on the overall value of the program were also addressed in relation

to this research question.

Communication. A strategy essential in providing support to help protégés develop their skills in instructional leadership was effective communication. All six principals indicated the support they received through having a sounding board throughout their first years as the principal helped them negotiate successfully through various situations in those initial years. Providing a support system was identified as a critical need of beginning principals "The value I found in my mentorship program came from opportunities to 'talk' or 'debrief' with a peer as various events arose" (S-34) was a comment included on one of the surveys. All but one of the interview participants indicated at different points in the interview that they could contact their mentor at any time for assistance. One principal felt he could call his mentor at any time and commented,

> I've called and asked what is this and what do I need to do. . . . The budget
> was due last month and I had never seen one. So she walked me through
> that and told me what she was doing and gave me ideas that I could go
> back and ask my staff if they would be interested in. . . . She calls and asks
> how things are going or I call her with an issue. (P2-5-214)

Another principal added, "He was always available for me to ask questions" (P3-3-131) and felt like the communication was open through phone calls, emails, and physical meetings. A third principal indicated, "I feel like I've had a great first year because, anytime I struggled, I've been able to call and say, I'm struggling—help me out" (P4-3-133). This principal had the theme of communication running through just about every answer on the interview, demonstrating that communication was definitely in place in her mentoring experience.

Making a proper match. A second common strategy among the interview participants and comments on the surveys was making a proper match between mentor

and protégé, a key ingredient necessary in developing a successful mentoring relationship. One interview participant was from a small rural district and was matched with a mentor from a school with more students than the protégé's school building. Although the mentor was very knowledgeable and had many experiences to share, their experiences were so different, "what he knows how to do, for the most part, wouldn't be feasible for a school our size. . . .I probably would have done better and moved faster if I had a different mentor" (P6-4-147). Another interview participant worked through the program with her superintendent as her mentor. She expressed concern with having an evaluator as the mentor and described throughout the interview several problems that had occurred as a result of the mentoring relationship.

Several comments written on the surveys also focused on having a good match between mentor and protégé. One respondent said, "The idea of having a mentor is a very good one. However, mine was about ninety miles away. Someone in a similar district and closer would have been more beneficial" (S-30). Another survey respondent echoed these feelings by saying,

> My mentor is excellent as a sounding board. However, his experience in education was so different from my situation that his advice, help, and ideas were of limited value. He was a principal at an affluent urban high school with an enrollment in excess of 2,000. I am a principal at a rural elementary with less than 250 students. (S-15)

A third survey respondent commented, "I know the state means well, but rural school districts are not getting what they need from the design of the program. It is hard to find mentors . . . and maintaining a good working relationship is hindered because of this" (S-40).

Protégés who indicated their mentoring program was helpful often commented on the positive relationship they had developed with their mentor. One principal said, "She has been an awesome mentor. . . . Anything I've asked for, she's sent it right out or told me—this is a good resource. So I just really feel like she's been a strong mentor for me" (P5-4-156). Another principal interviewed described a similar experience, "we have built that bond together that we like our monthly talks and I certainly appreciate that going into changes of a second year" (P4-4-140).

One participant expressed the need to have a mentor from outside the district, "Anytime I've had any kind of an issue or concern or question, I feel like she's been great because of her being removed from my situation—kind of a neutral party" (P5-2-67). Another participant described the opposite situation as being ideal,

> In other schools, you have principals from other conferences, but you really can't air your dirty laundry because you don't want to tell them what's going on in your school, so you're afraid to really be forthright, but with [mentor}, I can let it all hang out and get his input. (P3-1-35)

Amount/method of support. A third component of effective mentoring revolved around the amount of support received. The amount of time required for contact varied between programs from twenty-six hours throughout the year to monthly meetings with two additional contacts in between to no specific requirements. One principal interviewed described the process as follows: "We meet formally maybe once a month, but I feel my mentoring really takes place everyday of every week. That happens because I can, at any time, pick up the phone and call any of our other principals" (P4-1-34). This principal had the support of three other elementary principals within the district and indicated, "I truly feel the process has been enriched because of the group of mentors that I have in the

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district. . . . It's been a very fluid mentoring experience" (P4-1-38). Another principal

portrayed his experience in the following way:

> We have to meet so many hours in a formal setting and nonformal
> settings, so many contact hours –an email counts as so many hours and a
> phone call counts as so many. We also have to have four all day meetings
> we have to be at which we cover different items. (P3-1-39)

This principal also indicated the program would increase next year to include eight full

days of training, based on district initiatives that would be in place next year. A third

principal indicated the program was very informal, "The mentoring occurred when I

approached him about something that I was unsure about or that I questioned—situations

I needed guidance on. . . . and is probably still there if I needed help" (P1-1-33). There

was no consistency among programs from the principals interviewed.

Need for program guidelines. The need for guidelines for content covered in

mentoring programs was a fourth pattern identified in the data, especially by various

participants who did not feel their program was successful. One of the principals

completing a survey felt guidelines would have improved the mentoring experience and

shared the following insight: "As a new administrator four years ago, I would have truly

benefited from a structured mentoring program with clear guidelines. It would have

helped define the role of the principal versus the role of the superintendent" (S-18). One

of the participants interviewed also believed guidelines would improve the process and

suggested,

> The mentor program probably should have some sort of benchmarks,
> items that are important issues across the state that are important to
> schools of all levels. Mentors should get with their mentees and set up an
> itinerary for the course of the two years and make sure they get those
> topics. . . . If they would focus the mentoring program a little bit better as
> far as specific requirements, specific areas they expect the mentees to

work on and demonstrate proficiency. . . . that would probably be more beneficial. (P6-3-126)

Another principal interviewed indicated her mentoring program had no guidelines. "I think it's pretty much anything that either one of us thought we needed. Any time I've had any kind of an issue or concern or question, I feel like she's been great" (P5-2-66). A third principal interviewed had an experience that had prescribed guidelines but was also open to discussion based on needs. "We had specific things and we also had the ability to do whatever was on our mind, but we had a list of things we should talk about" (P2-2-53).

Techniques for observation and feedback. Five of the six principals interviewed focused on how their mentor helped them develop techniques utilized in observations and walkthroughs to identify appropriate instructional strategies in place in classrooms throughout the buildings. Learning what to look for during these classroom visits and how to have the feedback conversations afterward with the teachers was of great benefit to the beginning principals. One mentor emphasized the need to be in the classroom regularly to really determine if students were engaged and if the curriculum content was being taught. This same mentor encouraged "having the teachers do a reflection after the observation, by themselves—how they felt about it [their lesson]. It gets them thinking on their own" (P5-3-107). More details regarding this strategy were discussed in research question 3.

Overall value of mentoring programs. The final concept included comments relating to the overall effectiveness of the mentoring programs, ranging from exceptional to not worth the time involved. Comments on the surveys were split with equal numbers reflecting poor experiences and beneficial experiences. Positive comments included the

following: 1. "I am thankful that I have this valuable resource as a first year principal"

(S-29). 2. "Very much needed and appreciated" (S-36). 3. "My situation was that I had an

in-district and an out-of-district mentor my first two years. This was very beneficial! I

arranged the out-of-district myself. Both mentors were very helpful" (S-3). Negative

comments contained the following: 1. "It's not very worthwhile as it is. If the state plans

on keeping the program, it needs MAJOR help" (S-11). 2. "I was assigned a mentor. He

made contact with me 3-4 times and I've never heard back from him. The mentoring

program, for me, was not effective or valuable" (S-42). 3. "Very superficial, lacked

contact time necessary to be effective" (S-43).

Results from the interviews substantiated these findings with experiences also

split between those that principals felt were beneficial and those with poor experiences.

One principal whose mentoring process was not positive shared the following feeling:

> I also don't feel like he understood the mentoring process—thought it was
> more "I'm going to guide the principal until she gets used to the way we
> do things around here" rather than I want to model and show the principal
> about school leadership. (P1-4-160)

Another of the interviewees indicated the mentoring program was "unfocused and very

confused. Having said that, I don't want it to reflect on my mentor because he has been a

very knowledgeable individual. He and I come from and work in two entirely different

worlds" (P6-1-28). The problem with this mentoring process was due to a poor fit

between mentor and protégé as described earlier in this question.

Other principals had positive mentoring experiences as expressed by the

following: "Our entire mentoring program, there are several people involved, and it is a

top-notch program. It's second to none" (P3-3-132). Another commented that the process

"has been a very good growing experience" (P4-1-42).

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Research Question 8

What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

Four interview participants indicated support was provided from various central office administrators. Support ranged from financial support for the mentoring program to release time to meet with their mentor to providing specific opportunities for growth in areas of curriculum, professional development, and data analysis. The type of support provided varied among school districts, often depending on the size of the district. One principal worked with a group of elementary principals from within the district and had support from the entire group. She described her support as follows:

> There are three other elementary principals in our district and I am assigned specifically to one of them. We met formally maybe once a month, but I feel my mentoring really takes place everyday of every week. That happened because I can at any time pick up the phone and call any of our other principals, email any of them, call any of our assistant principals. I don't feel like I'm new and I don't know what I'm talking about. I don't feel like any question I ask is a silly question. I truly feel the process has been enriched because of the group of mentors that I have in the district. (P4-1-33)

Large districts had more support available than small districts, from central office personnel who focused on training new principals to superintendents who supported the mentoring process by providing release time and funding as needed for principals to meet with their mentors and/or attend various training sessions. Some districts also had curriculum personnel available to help with data analysis and special education directors to assist with the special needs students. One principal expressed her pleasure in working with central office administrators in the following way:

> I can call her [assistant superintendent] with a list at anytime and she'll run by and talk to me and she'll go through things. The district office

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support, I couldn't ask for better support, not just from her, but from special ed, from our finance person, from buildings and grounds. I feel I can call any of them. They will get right back to me for any question I have. (P4-4-155)

Another principal indicated strong support from the district office and communicated his feelings about the program in saying,

I've been in a mentoring program in three different school districts. [School district] is much advanced over the other two for several reasons. It's large enough that there are people that that's their job to train us. . . .We have four all day meetings we have to be at which we cover different items. The last one, we covered professional development; we covered PBTE; and followed up on classroom walkthroughs. So there's always several topics presented and the people presenting are always top-notch. (P3-1-31)

A third principal confirmed district support through the following comments: "They have been very supportive. They realize the state program is probably well worth the money and helping them as well" (P5-4-176), and "Anything I requested help on, they're there to help" (P5-5-195).

One principal entered the district as an elementary principal the same year in which the high school principal and superintendent were also new to the district. With all new administrators in the district, the lack of experience within the district caused some difficulties for all involved. That principal commented,

I felt that I got all the support I really asked for. Our biggest issues were not knowing where to look or go for certain things. . . . He [superintendent] didn't know any better than I did. The two of us spent an awful lot of time doing the same things, figuring the ins and outs of Title programs and we're still learning. Had we had an experienced superintendent, that effort could have been spared. (P6-4-170)

Another principal indicated they might have provided more assistance by talking "about some of the leadership things instead of the management side, which it was highly focused on" (P2-6-244).

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One principal was from a small school with no central office personnel, the only other administrator being the superintendent, who served as the mentor. This principal indicated little support was provided from the superintendent and suggested mentoring between an immediate supervisor and their employee was ineffective.

Research Question 9

In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

Five of the six interview participants indicated professional development was one of the most effective methods of improving instructional leadership skills. Being able to choose opportunities that addressed specific weaknesses identified by the participants added to each individual's professional growth. "It makes the world of difference when you can pick the training you need to build on what you are doing" (P1-6-229) was a comment from one principal interviewed. Another principal substantiated the effectiveness of these opportunities by saying the most effective training for him was the following:

> Some of the professional development opportunities I've taken part in . . .
> that focused on curriculum development and instructional strategies.
> Primarily because at that point, I had identified a weakness and a need of
> mine and was more receptive to things I was going to see and more
> particular about what I went to see. I focused on a need. . . . I'm still
> learning—I'm nowhere near where I need to be in the instructional line.
> (P6-6-240)

A third principal described the most effective method of strengthening the instructional leadership skills as "professional development . . . as an administrator. The conferences I go to that I can walk away with, the professional development at the district level—those are the ones that have strengthened the instructional skills for me" (P4-6-226).

Preparatory programs were described from both effective and ineffective aspects.

One survey comment addressed this issue with his comment as follows:

> Most of what you address in your questions were not formally addressed in my mentoring process, but rather during my graduate work (M.S. & Ed.S.) and time as an AP. I would not feel fit to serve as a building principal if I did not already possess many of the skills and knowledge sets you cover in your survey. (S-34)

One principal reflected on his preparatory work as having just a few classes that focused on instructional leadership skills, but in regard to the entire program, he commented, "I wouldn't say the program was extremely valuable. I learned some through it, but it was very similar to teaching—until you've done it for awhile, you just don't know what all it entails" (P2-6-265). Another principal described his experience with preparatory programs as follows:

> It's a joke—I think it's ridiculous. I want to be a superintendent so I'm going to go get a doctorate. So, I'll jump through these hoops. Every minute I'm doing it, it's a hoop or at least I believe it is. I know I need to know about finance, I need to know about school law; I need to know about personnel; and, of course, proper board procedures. So, what is that—about four classes? I'll jump my hoops, I'll pay my money, and I'll get my 36 hours, and I'll be no better because of it. (P3-4-181)

> Principals interviewed who had completed or were in the process of completing doctoral programs had the opposite feelings as those described above. One principal said,

> I think that my doctoral work has been more influential with my overall leadership. Looking back now and versus where I would have been three years ago with just my master's, I don't think that I would have been as effective as a leader. (P4-4-175)

The same feelings were expressed by another principal in saying,

> I feel like my [preparatory] coursework did a good job of helping me develop instructional leadership skills. Like being introduced with the current literature about the changing role of leadership, and the effective schools movement. Then I was able to participate in the ELPA doctoral program. That has been an awesome experience as far as understanding

the nature of leadership in general, especially leadership of organizations
and leadership during times of change and restructuring. That has added
an important dimension to my preparation as an instructional leader. (P1-
5-192)

A third principal, currently finishing his doctoral program, agreed that participation in the

doctoral program was at the top of his list of effective preparation as an instructional

leader.

Several principals felt the internships that were part of their preparatory programs

were helpful in building instructional leadership skills, depending on who lead the

experiences. One principal completed his internship with a principal who was more of a

coach than an administrator and said this about his experience, "If I were to look at my

job now and look at the things I thought I was doing down there, there was nothing I did

those number of weeks that came close to preparing me for administrative work" (P6-5-

215). The other principals interviewed felt their experiences were more helpful. One

experience was described as follows:

I worked with my principal at the time. She was in charge of curriculum,
so in helping with a lot of paperwork with curriculum, entering curriculum
on the EATOnline program. Realizing that as a principal, you do drive
instruction whether you think you do or not. Just because of the programs
you put in place that you feel are valuable. I did address a lot of that
because she was working with curriculum. (P5-5-212)

Another principal was able to participate in a more in-depth internship that lasted for a

month. She illustrated her experience with the following description:

I participated in monthly, district-wide aspiring leadership training. So
each month, we met and talked about the district and where leadership
might fit into the district. The next year I did teacher leadership things in
my district. . . . The third year, I participated in a month-long leadership
training at the middle school as an assistant principal. I spent all month as
assistant principal at the middle school. The fourth year I just continued
with leadership opportunities. The activities varied throughout the
district—interviewing to teaching at professional development days to

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helping at central office and many other things. . . . It was nice to see what it was like during a school year, for a full month. (P4-5-192)

While most of the principals felt they gained from their internships, this experience was the most extensive.

Mentoring was only listed by half of the principals interviewed as being one of the methods effective in helping develop instructional leadership skills. One principal indicated, "I think it really is a good program and I'm glad that they realize it's a need. We require first year teachers to have mentors" (P5-6-243).

Professional development, preparatory programs, doctoral programs, internships, and mentoring were each mentioned as a method of cultivating instructional leadership skills by at least one of the participants. Participants had varied degrees of success and support from experiences in which they participated prior to becoming a principal or within their first few years of the principalship.

Statement of Research Hypotheses

Research hypothesis 1. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Table 5, this hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance. No statistical differences were found in any of the mean statistics for this instructional leadership standard.

Research hypothesis 2. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-

created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping

beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and

standards.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Table 5, this hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance. No statistical differences were found in any of the mean statistics for this instructional leadership standard.

Research hypothesis 3. There is no statistically significant difference between

mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-

created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping

beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and

instruction that ensures student achievement.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Table 5, this hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance. No statistical differences were found in any of the mean statistics for this instructional leadership standard.

Research hypothesis 4. There is no statistically significant difference between

mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-

created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping

beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult

learning.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Table 5, this hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance. No statistical differences were found in any of the mean statistics for this instructional leadership standard.

Research hypothesis 5. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Table 5, this hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance. No statistical differences were found in any of the mean statistics for this instructional leadership standard.

Research hypothesis 6. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community.

Based on the analysis and data presented in Table 5, this hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance. No statistical differences were found in any of the mean statistics for this instructional leadership standard.

Summary

Analyses of the data collected from the *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey* and follow-up interviews of selected respondents provided findings for the research questions. From the data, it was concluded that there was no significant differences between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the support provided to beginning principals in helping develop instructional leadership skills. Mean scores from individual survey questions and survey standards

indicated low support for beginning principals in all standards relating to instructional leadership skills. Data gathered through the interviews provided triangulation to support these findings and supplied descriptive information to answer the qualitative research questions. In Chapter Five, an overview of the design and procedures employed for this study are described. A discussion of the findings of the study with limitations and design control are included. In addition, implications for practice and recommendations for further research are presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The researcher investigated the type of support provided by mentors in assisting

beginning principals as they developed instructional leadership skills. Differences

between the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program (AMP) and district-created

mentoring programs in the support provided by mentors to help new principals were

examined. Effective mentoring strategies were identified, along with support from central

office staff and other district personnel. In addition, principals were asked to identify the

type of training that most effectively helped them develop instructional leadership skills

during their first few years of the principalship. Provided in this chapter are the purpose

of the study and the design and procedures employed throughout the study. Findings and

limitations are also discussed, along with implications for practice and recommendations

for future research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of beginning principals

throughout a Midwestern state regarding the effectiveness of the statewide AMP and

district-created mentoring programs in assisting principals as they developed instructional

leadership skills. Research questions were formulated to gather data relating to six

standards of instructional leadership skills as identified in the literature (Fry et al., 2005;

King, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005; NAESP, 2001).

The study's rationale emerged from an examination of the research literature on

the changing roles of administrators, administrator training, and mentoring. A review of

relevant literature revealed the lack of appropriate preparatory training needed to develop skills necessary for leading schools toward meeting today's accountability standards. Principals face challenges of improving student achievement for all students and have completed university training programs without the skills needed to lead their teachers and students in these efforts (Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Mazzeo, 2003; Reyes, 2003). Few programs required aspiring principals to complete internship opportunities where actual experience in the administrative role for any length of time existed (Fry et al., 2005; USDE, 2004). Mentoring programs thus emerged as one method of filling the gap between preparatory programs and the reality of school leadership. Experienced principals serve as guides and role models to novice principals to assist them develop skills during their first few years as school leaders (Daresh; Educational Alliance at Brown University & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; USDE). Although research supports the use of mentoring programs to guide beginning principals, little research has been conducted to connect participation in mentoring programs with the development of instructional leadership skills.

The major question for this study was: What is the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of instructional leadership skills? The research questions guiding this study were as follows:

1. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning?

2. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

3. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement?

4. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

5. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

6. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

7. What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading

schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high

expectations and standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures

student achievement; creating a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources

of data as diagnostic tools; and actively engaging the community)?

8. What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of

   the mentoring program?

9. In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided

   opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

   The following null hypotheses were evaluated in an effort to answer the

aforementioned research questions:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the

   statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring

   programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning

   principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing

   priority on student and adult learning.

2. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the

   statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring

   programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning

   principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and

   standards.

3. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the

   statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring

   programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning

principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement.

4. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning.

5. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools.

6. There is no statistically significant difference between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community.

Design and Procedures

A mixed-methods research design was chosen for this study to utilize "qualitative data to enrich and explain the quantitative results in the words of the participants" (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 34). Two data collection methods were employed. Phase one involved a quantitative questionnaire distributed to beginning principals who were within their first five years of principalship. The survey questionnaire was developed by the

researcher and pilot tested and retested by a group of administrators familiar with the

mentoring process. Results were used to analyze the test as a whole as well as individual

survey questions for reliability. Two questions were removed after pilot testing and

retesting, resulting in a 28-question survey where beginning principals rated the support

received from their mentors on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (6)

to Strongly Disagree (1). One optional open-ended question was included at the end of

the survey to allow respondents to add comments regarding their experiences as they

participated in a mentoring program. Each survey took less than ten minutes to complete.

Data were analyzed using SPSS 11.0. To determine if there were significant differences

between the support provided through the two types of mentoring programs, *t*-tests for

independent means were conducted on each of the six standards of instructional

leadership (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Mean scores for each of the six standards and for

each question were examined to determine the strength of support from each type of

mentoring program and the whole mentoring process.

Phase two of the investigation involved six follow-up interviews with principals

representing both types of mentoring programs being studied, along with the various

demographic characteristics of the total group. Interviews lasted approximately thirty

minutes and were scheduled at the convenience of the participant. Interviews were tape-

recorded and transcribed, with transcripts sent to the participants for member checking

(Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1998). Data were gathered to identify effective mentoring

strategies, support for the mentoring process from school district personnel, and to

examine other methods of training that assisted principals in developing instructional

leadership skills. Principals were also asked to identify the type of training and/or support

that was most effective in helping them develop the skills focused on throughout this study. Themes were reviewed through the framework of the research questions and narrative descriptions were utilized to portray the findings and interpretations of the effectiveness of mentoring programs.

Findings of the Study

Forty-five principals participated in the study by completing and returning usable *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Surveys*. The data from the surveys identified no significant differences between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the support provided by mentors in assisting new principals develop instructional leadership skills. Six standards of instructional leadership were examined according to perceptions identified on the survey instrument. While there were no significant differences between the two mentoring programs, data indicated support from both programs was weak. Mean scores averaged within the Slightly Agree (4) range on all standards and on eighty-six percent of the individual questions. Three questions averaged scores in the Slightly Disagree (3) range and only one question averaged in the Agree (5) range. Data gathered through the interviews provided triangulation to support these findings, along with the strengths and weaknesses within each standard.

Research questions one through six each addressed one standard within the realm of instructional leadership skills. Research question one focused on emphasizing student and adult learning by developing a community of learners. Communication between mentor and protégé was a strategy employed here to assist principals in centering attention on learning, however, half of the principals indicated this was not a strength of

their particular program. Although all principals felt they could go to their mentors for questions about anything they were struggling with or curious about, there was little focus on creating opportunities for learning.

Research question two centered on setting high standards and expectations, a concept necessary in developing those appropriate learning communities discussed in question one. Data from the interviews supported the fact that there was little discussion neither on overcoming barriers to success for all students nor on actually discussing what the high standards should be. Survey data indicated articulating a clear vision with an action plan was critical, but standards needed to be set prior to sharing the vision and developing an action plan because standards guide the journey and the vision.

Research question three was directed toward demanding content and instruction driven by high expectations. This area had strong support from mentors in developing skills for classroom observation and feedback. Mentors from both types of mentoring programs shared effective techniques for observation, both in the walkthrough format and the formal observation process. One mentor was able to spend time conducting walkthroughs with the protégé, allowing time for conversations to process strategies observed and discuss how to give feedback in specific instances. This skill was an important one for beginning principals to develop early in the year as observations and walkthroughs are conducted all throughout the year to gather information regarding student learning and what was actually taking place in the classrooms. Interestingly, only two principals made the verbal connection between curriculum work and student work in connection with the observations and walkthroughs, with survey data backing this up as a weakness within the standard. Although principals are learning the basics of observation

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methods, they are not using the information appropriately in the feedback conversations to drive changes in instruction and bring about improved student achievement.

Research question four concentrated on creating a culture of adult learning, focusing on professional development for the principals as well as the teachers. This standard had the highest mean scores overall with one question receiving scores in the Agree range. However, only two of the six principals interviewed indicated they were encouraged to improve their own professional practice by their mentor. Between offerings from the state department, regional professional development centers, principals' associations, and local school districts, beginning principals had many opportunities to gain additional knowledge for their professional growth. The key was being selective in identifying the opportunities that addressed specific weaknesses to maximize the time out of the school building. One principal felt his place was in the building, not out attending workshops all the time. Principals needed to learn the balance between being in the building to help teachers and students and promoting their own professional growth. In discussing professional development for teachers, only two principals made the connection between these opportunities and improved student learning. Appropriate coaching from the mentor was needed to improve focus on these standards.

Research question five had the lowest support overall from both survey data and information from the interviews. Using data as a diagnostic tool was not a strong focus of either mentoring program with only two of the principals indicating their mentor had discussed different types of data sources, even in an era of high-stakes accountability with importance placed on looking at data to make instructional decisions. Although

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utilizing a variety of data sources to measure performance was the strongest of the statements from this standard, the support was still weak with an overall rating of 4.02 (Slightly Agree). One principal indicated he would be looking at data from last spring's test at the next meeting with his mentor, but March was too late to look at data and be able to make an impact with this year's students. Several principals did have support from other school district personnel to assist in this area, but little support was in place from the mentors. In addition, only one principal mentioned training the staff in looking at data, which was not supported by her mentor. This standard was the weakest of the six regarding mentor support.

Research question six referred to strategies to actively engage the community in school programs. Several mentors encouraged the use of open communications to build relationships with parents and community members; however, little focus was placed on developing actual partnerships with community groups and businesses for the purpose of strengthening programs supporting school goals. This standard connected to the one from research question two, setting high expectations and standards. If the expectations and standards are not in place, how can a principal utilize community and business groups to support standards not in existence? Several of these standards are connected; when support is in place for one standard, the bridge is built to support other standards as well.

Descriptive information was also gathered through the interviews to address research questions seven, eight, and nine. Research question seven examined effective mentoring strategies and their impact on instructional leadership skills. Effective strategies included communication between mentor and protégé and making a proper match to develop a supportive relationship. Most of the principals also identified gaining

techniques for observation and feedback as one of the most effective strategies. One ineffective strategy was identified as too much time required for face-to-face meetings, when communication would be just as effective through a phone call or email. Another concern was the need for guidelines for content within the program. Specific but flexible guidelines would help develop consistency among mentoring experiences to address statewide issues in student performance. Reflections regarding the overall value of the program were also discussed in relation to this question. The biggest impact on the effectiveness of mentoring programs was found to be dependent on the relationship and the appropriate match between the mentor and protégé.

Support from school personnel was examined in research question eight. The findings indicated all principals interviewed had the support from their central office administrators if that level of administration was in place. Support included financial support and release time for mentoring activities and professional development opportunities, along with specific assistance with curriculum issues and data analysis. Larger districts seemed to have more advantages with more personnel available specializing in various areas.

Research question nine was the final question and investigated various types of administrator training programs for their effectiveness in assisting the principals as they improved their instructional leadership skills. Professional development was found to be one of the most effective methods of training that impacts the development of the identified skills, especially when they were able to match training to their own identified weaknesses. Other types of training with varying degrees of impact were administrator preparatory programs, internships, doctoral programs, and mentoring. Administrator

preparatory programs received support from some principals while others felt it was a waste of their time and money. Support for internships varied as well, based on the design of the experience and the person supervising. One principal was lucky to be able to serve as an intern for a month during the school year, gaining real life experiences as an assistant principal. Another worked with her existing principal, who allowed her to take part in a lot of work with curriculum. Other experiences were not as positive. However, the three principals interviewed who working on or had completed their doctoral programs agreed they had gained in knowledge and skills throughout participation in these programs. The final type of training addressed was mentoring. Only half of the six principals listed mentoring as one of the effective strategies in helping them develop as instructional leaders.

Discussion of the Findings

One purpose of research employing mixed-method design was to "measure trends, prevalences, and outcomes and at the same time examine meaning, content, and process" (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 175). This type of research helped the readers make sense of the data and understand the findings, making research accessible for practitioners and enhancing the ability to utilize the findings to impact actual practices already in place (Creswell & Clark). The data described in this research provided insight into the ways in which mentoring programs impact the development of instructional leadership skills in beginning principals. In this section, links between the study's findings and pertinent research were made to explicitly help the reader understand the importance of effective mentoring programs. Presented in Table 14 was a summary of this information.

Table 14

Selected Literature Related to Study

Researcher(s)	Changing Roles of Administrators	Administrator Preparatory Programs	Mentoring
Allen & Poteet, 1999			X
Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001	X	X	
Daresh, 2004	X		X
Educational Alliance & NAESP, 2003	X	X	X
Fink & Resnick, 2001	X	X	X
Fry, Bottoms, O'Neill, 2005	X	X	
Grogan & Andrews, 2002	X	X	
Hopkins-Thompson, 2000	X		X
Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000	X	X	
Mazzeo, 2003		X	
NAESP, 2001	X	X	X
Reyes, 2003			X
USDE, Office of Innovation & Improvement, 2004		X	X
Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003	X		
Gettys, 2007	X	X	X

Finding 1

Mentoring programs within the Midwestern state included in this study are
providing weak support, at best, for beginning principals as they develop instructional
leadership skills during their first five years of the principalship, according to data
collected throughout this investigation. Research questions one through six examined
each of the six instructional leadership standards with mean scores for each standard from
the survey data falling within the range of Slightly Agree (4) answers on a 6-point scale,
with six being the highest score. Data from the interview transcripts corroborate this
finding. Therefore, this finding supports the need for restructured programs, such as that
described by the Educational Alliance & NAESP (2003),

> Effective mentoring must be understood as a process that is much more
> sophisticated than simply sharing craft knowledge when called upon by
> organizational newcomers. It must be seen as a proactive instructional
> process in which a learning contract is established between the mentor and
> the protégé. (p. 11)

Data from this investigation indicated participation in mentoring programs is struggling
in its efforts to assist new principals make the connection between what they see in the
classrooms on walkthroughs and formal observations and what needs to be happening to
improve student achievement. Principals are not developing the skills to use data to work
with the teachers in making instructional decisions to help all students. These are skills
principals leading today's schools must develop quickly in order to impact student
achievement (Fink & Resnick, 2001; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; IEL, 2000; Waters,
Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Mentoring programs hold promise to bring about these
changes if we listen to those currently participating in the programs as they express their
needs and concerns to make program improvements.

Finding 2

One of the keys to effective mentoring programs was ensuring that an appropriate match was made between mentor and protégé (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Educational Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Reyes, 2003). Daresh (2004) indicated professional goals, interpersonal styles, learning needs, and other variables must be accounted for in matching mentors and protégés, rather than making matches based on convenience or location. The qualitative data from research question seven indicated the importance of appropriate matches through statements from the principals interviewed and through comments written on the surveys. Protégés who indicated their mentoring program lacked in effectiveness were typically principals whose mentor was not from a similar-sized school, but may have been located in close proximity to the protégé or selected for another unknown reason.

Finding 3

Communication between mentor and protégé was another theme identified as a key aspect of developing appropriate mentoring relationships through information examined in research question seven. Communication skills were developed through sharing, discussions, and reflections. Protégés were more apt to translate theory into practice when mentors communicated with them to assist them in interpreting problems and applying appropriate solutions (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Daresh, 2004, Educational Alliance & NAESP, 2003; Reyes, 2003). In one case, the principal indicated there was not a proper fit between mentor and protégé as they came from very different sized schools. While there were not many experiences that were common between these two, the communication and support assisted in making the best out of a poorly matched

process and the mentor was able to suggest other resources that were more fitting to the experiences of the protégé.

Finding 4

The lack of appropriate training in administrator preparatory programs was evident through analyzing the data gleaned from research question nine. Although some interviewees had positive experiences in their preparatory programs, more statements were made reflecting the negative aspect of their training. Research indicated that university programs have done little to change from focusing on the managerial role of the principal to the instructional leadership aspects of the job (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; Daresh, 2004; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Mazzeo, 2003). The training of new principals was often left up to schools to finalize, even though these principals had to complete coursework to apply for and receive their certification. Preparatory programs need to be held accountable for training principals to develop the skills necessary to impact student learning (Bottoms & O'Neill; Fry et al., 2005; Mazzeo).

Finding 5

The lack of appropriate internship opportunities during the preparatory process was also documented through discussions of various types of training addressed in research question nine that did impact the development of instructional leadership skills throughout the first few years of the principalship. Although some principals described positive aspects of their internship and specific skills they may have developed during this process, only one principal interviewed had actually participated in an internship where she was acting as an actual administrator. This principal was able to have her class taught by a substitute teacher for one month while she interned as a middle school

assistant principal. Experiences such as this proved to be invaluable in actually learning

what the role of principal specifically entailed. Serving in that role in the middle of the

school year for a four-week period allowed that principal to experience the day-to-day

responsibilities of an administrator. In the Midwestern state involved in this study, these

experiences are infrequent. Research did indicate valuable internship opportunities such

as the one described are provided in some parts of the country. Chicago, Boston, New

York, Washington, D.C., Memphis, and San Francisco had developed partnerships

between universities and public schools or principals associations to develop such

internship opportunities (Duffrin, 2001; Fry et al., 2005; USDE, 2004).

Finding 6

Data from research question nine indicated professional development

opportunities were one of the most effective methods of assisting principals in improving

instructional leadership skills. Data from the surveys backed up this finding by indicating

mentors had a high impact on helping protégés recognize the need to continually improve

professional practice. Data from the interviews thus provided triangulation for this

finding as professional development was identified by five out of six principals

interviewed as one of the methods most effective in enhancing their skills in instructional

leadership. Research from the literature review supported the importance of professional

development as a means of improving one's practice (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; Grogan

& Andrews, 2002; Waters et al., 2003). Two specific professional development

opportunities offered in this Midwestern state for new and practicing school building and

district leaders, the Satellite Academy Program and offerings from the Leadership

Academy (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006b) were

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identified in the research. Interestingly, none of the principals participating in this study

identified these opportunities as specific programs they attended. A conference on

Professional Learning Communities was identified by two principals as one of the most

helpful conferences they had attended since becoming principals. Many professional

development opportunities are available to allow principals to tailor their learning to fit

their needs.

Limitations and Design Control

Like any other study, there were several limitations that need to be acknowledged to

identify potential weaknesses. Steps were taken to minimize the effects of these

limitations through supervision and guidance from experienced researchers throughout

this study. The following limitations related to this study were identified by the

researcher:

1. All participants in this study were beginning principals from a Midwestern state.
   The researcher assumed the sample chosen for this study was representative of
   beginning principals throughout a Midwest state.

2. Participation in the study was limited to the beginning principals who consented
   to voluntary participation and whose superintendents gave permission for their
   participation.

3. The researcher assumed principal responses were accurate and honestly
   represented their perceptions regarding various aspects of mentoring programs
   and the impact on developing instructional leadership skills.

4. The statewide Administrator Mentoring Program, one of the mentoring programs principals participated in, has only been in place for one year at the time of this study.

5. Survey instruments utilized in this study were created by the researcher.

To minimize the limitation of participants being from only one state, principals from all geographic locations within the state were invited to participate in the study. Schools were randomly selected from the Missouri School Directory 2006-2007 (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2006c) to identify principals within the early years of their principalship. Emails were sent to principals to verify their years of experience and identify the type of mentoring program in which they participated. A database of principals meeting the criteria for this study was developed and letters of consent mailed to their superintendents soliciting permission for participation in the study.

The researcher distributed multiple mailings through email and regular mail to collect consent forms for as many participants as possible. A database of over one hundred principals was identified through the selection process described above. Emails and letters were then sent to superintendents asking for permission for their principals to participate in the investigation. Two large school districts requested additional information before permission could be given. All requests were complied with to develop a pool with the largest number of participants possible. Permission was granted from both large school districts with one providing seven principals who were allowed to participate in the study. Permission was received for sixty-nine principals to participate in the study. Surveys were then mailed to these participants with several email reminders to

those who had not completed and returned the surveys as different intervals of time

passed. By the time of data analysis, forty-nine surveys were returned. Four of these

indicated they did not have a mentor and returned the surveys unmarked as was stated in

the instructions. Forty-five surveys were thus available for use in the data analysis phase

of the study.

Assurances of confidentiality were included in the consent forms and participants

were allowed to stop their participation at any phase of the study. The purpose of this

practice was to encourage honest and accurate answers from the participants. By assuring

confidentiality, principals would be more likely to report ineffective practices in addition

to those practices that were effective. By allowing participants to drop out of the study at

any time, comfort levels were more easily established. In addition to these measures,

interviews were transcribed and transcripts sent to the principals to verify accuracy of the

information reported during the interview.

The researcher was aware that the statewide AMP had only been in place for one

year at the time of this study. District-created mentoring programs that may have been in

place for longer time periods were also included in this study in order to provide an

investigation that encompassed the variety of programs in place throughout the state. One

of the recommendations for future research was to replicate this study after the statewide

AMP has been in place for a longer period and improvements have been made to the

program based on feedback received from participants and participating school districts.

To improve the reliability and validity of the researcher-created survey, the

questionnaire was pilot tested and retested by a small population of administrators

familiar with the mentoring process. Modifications were made to the questionnaire based on feedback from the pilot participants and statistical analysis of the results.

Implications for Practice

The study's findings have direct implications for university programs, state departments of education, school districts, and beginning principals. Six implications for practice were identified and described in the paragraphs below.

One of the most critical aspects of building an effective mentoring program is ensuring an appropriate match between mentor and protégé. Suggestions from participants in existing programs indicated mentors should be from a school of similar size to that of the protégé in order to share like experience that would be most beneficial to the protégé. Location was also an important factor when scheduling meetings and observations between the mentor and protégé. Although this was identified as an important factor, it was secondary to finding a mentor from a similar-sized school. Participants also indicated the importance of avoiding placing a protégé with a mentor that served in a supervisory role to the protégé. The protégé must have confidence that the mentor is there to help, not to evaluate. Opinions differed when considering whether the mentor and protégé should be from the same district or from different districts. There were some benefits identified from both situations and the final decision should be contingent upon the comfort level of the protégé.

Mentors need training and networking opportunities of their own to be able to share what is working within their mentoring relationship and what is not working. These training sessions could be facilitated through the principals' associations, the Regional Professional Development Centers, or the Department of Elementary and Secondary

Education. Mentors working in the statewide AMP received some training prior to being placed with a protégé. This training should be examined for content to determine whether mentors are receiving the support they need to be effective in their roles.

Money from school districts is being paid to support the statewide AMP. This research indicated this new program is no more effective than district-created programs currently in place. Those in charge of the statewide program should listen to the feedback they are receiving from the participants of the program and from any outside sources to make improvements while the program is still in its infancy. Input from these sources should serve as a guide to create the changes needed to develop an effective program for all new school leaders.

According to the data analyzed for this research, large districts with enough administrators to have a pool of in-district mentors in like fields as new administrators seemed to have positive results from their existing mentoring programs. These programs should be examined to determine how similar experiences could be created for small rural district to allow for similar results. Small districts might work cooperatively to pool resources and develop a program where administrators from schools of like size could mentor new principals more effectively than what is happening at the current time.

Universities need to make changes in their programs to reflect the needs of today's accountability standards. The managerial-style leadership of the past is often ineffective in bringing about improved student learning. Principals must have the instructional background to be able to lead teachers through school improvement efforts. Many university programs have not adapted to the changing needs of today's future administrators.

Finally, the internship process typically offered in university programs also needs to be restructured. Typical programs require aspiring principals to choose administrative activities to observe and/or be a participant. Internships with more extensive opportunities to actually serve in the administrative role would be more effective in training new principals. Teachers must participate in student teaching experiences for eight weeks or more. Our school leaders are the key ingredients to bringing about change in a school, but few are required to actually train and work as an apprentice in situations similar to student teaching. Opportunities could be created during summer school for emerging principals to actually practice their skills under the leadership of existing leaders without creating chaos for their current job responsibilities.

Recommendations for Future Research

Training new school leaders is key to effectively leading schools of tomorrow through the reform efforts necessary to meet state and federal accountability standards. Effective mentoring programs must be developed or enhanced to provide the appropriate preparation for new leaders. The statewide AMP is only halfway through its second year in existence. This research should be replicated after the program has been in place for several years and improvements have been made based on feedback from the participants, their respective school districts, and any outside sources with information to impact program effectiveness.

Effective mentoring programs are currently in place within school districts across the state. Research should be conducted to analyze mentoring programs with positive results. Questions should be raised to determine the characteristics of effective programs.

Identification of effective characteristics should then lead to study regarding how these programs could be replicated on a larger scale across the state.

This research was restricted to one Midwestern state. Would research conducted involving multiple states have the same results? Are there some states across the country with existing programs in place that are effective? Research should be conducted to determine where effective programs are located in other states. Identification of effective programs should also lead to replications as stated in the previous paragraph.

Further research should also be conducted to compare actual student achievement data from schools where principals have completed various types of mentoring programs. Would comparisons of actual student achievement data lead us to determine the effectiveness of programs from a different standpoint? How many years should a new principal lead a school prior to data being impacted by this principal? Our schools exist in a data-driven world—how do we examine this data to determine effectiveness?

Summary

The purpose of this study was to research the type of support provided by mentors in assisting beginning principals as they developed instructional leadership skills. No significant differences were found between the statewide AMP and district-created mentoring programs in the support provided by mentors to help new principals. Although no significant differences were found, the data indicated that neither program provided strong support to new principals in developing instructional leadership skills. Six standards of instructional leadership were examined with strengths and weaknesses of each standard identified. Data from the interviews provided rich narrative descriptions to substantiate the findings from the survey.

Mentoring strategies were examined to determine effectiveness and included communication and making a proper match between mentor and protégé to develop a supportive relationship. Most of the principals also identified gaining techniques for observation and feedback as one of the most effective strategies. One ineffective strategy was identified as too much time required for face-to-face meetings, when communication would be just as effective through a phone call or email. Another concern was the need for guidelines for content within the program. The overall value of the program was also analyzed, along with support from central office staff and other district personnel. In addition, principals identified professional development as the one of the most effective types of training to help them develop instructional leadership skills during their first few years of the principalship. Other types of training that were identified by one or more participants in the study included administrator preparatory training, internships, doctoral programs, and mentoring.

The study's findings raise concern that many of our new principals are entering the field without the proper preparation. Support for these new school leaders is critical in light of the accountability standards enacted by our state and federal policy-makers. Effective mentoring programs should be in place to assist new principals as they begin to create and sustain learning communities, but our current practices need improvement. Current school leaders and policy-makers must not ignore this issue. Our new leaders must be supported and encouraged as they grow into the instructional leaders of the future.

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Appendix A

Permission Forms/Informed Consent

    1. Superintendent Permission for Administrator Participation Form

    2. Informed Consent Form – Survey

    3. Informed Consent Form – Interview

Superintendent Permission for Administrator Participation Form

Dear Superintendent,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia, I am conducting a research study titled, *The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills*. The focus of this study is on support needed by beginning principals to develop appropriate instructional leadership skills. The research gathered should be helpful in providing insight into improving mentoring programs for beginning principals and may be published.

For the study, a database of beginning principals across the state was developed from information in the Missouri School Directory 2006-2007, as well as from those participating in the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program. I am seeking your permission as the superintendent of the *<Name Here>* School District to contact *<Name Here>* for the purpose of inviting him/her to participate in this study.

<Name Here> will be invited to participate by completing 24 items on the *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey*. The survey will be pilot tested and retested with a group of administrators familiar with mentoring programs prior to use in the study. The enclosed survey contains 30 items correlated to six standards identified as characterizing instructional leadership skills developed by principals from the National Association of Elementary School Principals. The pilot testing will establish reliability of scores and will result in the weakest statement for each standard being eliminated prior to administering the survey with the research participants. The final survey will consist of 24 items.

Several principals will also be randomly selected to participate in an interview session comprised of 17 open-ended questions. A copy of the survey, interview protocol, and informed consent letters are attached for your review.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. The participants may withdraw from participation at any time they wish without penalty, including in the middle of or after completion of the survey and/or interview. Participants' answers and identity will remain confidential, anonymous, and separate from any identifying information. I will not list any names of participants, or their corresponding institutions, in my dissertation or any future publications of this study.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about participation either by phone at (417) 256-8511, or by fax at (417) 256-8907, or by email at sgggd4@mizzou.edu. In addition, you are also welcome to contact the dissertation advisor for this research study, Dr. Barbara Martin, who can be reached at 660-543-8823 or by email at bmartin@cmsu.edu .

If you choose to allow me to contact *<Name Here>* regarding participation in this study, please complete the attached permission form. A copy of this letter and your written consent should be retained by you for future reference.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

Superintendent Permission for Administrator Participation

I, _____grant permission for *<Name Here>* to be contacted regarding participation in the study support needed by beginning principals to develop appropriate instructional leadership skills being conducted by Susan G. Gettys.

By signing this permission form, I understand that the following safeguards are in place to protect teaching staff choosing to participate:

- All responses will be used for dissertation research and potential future publications.
- All participation is voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any point in the study prior to submission of the survey.
- All identities will be protected in all reports of the research.
- Any consent or refusal to participate in this study will not affect the employment of participants in any way.

Please keep the letter and a copy of the signed permission form for your records. If you choose to grant permission for *<Name Here>* to participate in this study, please complete this *Superintendent Permission for Administrator Participation Form*, seal it in the enclosed envelope and return to Susan G. Gettys as soon as possible.

I have read the material above, and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction. I grant permission for *<Name Here>* to be contacted and invited to participate in this study.

_____ _____
Superintendent's Signature   Date

(Return only this page. Keep the others for your records.)

Informed Consent Form
Survey

Dear Participant,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia, I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to participate in a research study entitled, *The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills*. The focus of this study is on perceived effectiveness of administrator mentoring programs in developing appropriate instructional leadership skills and may be published. You must be 18 years of age to participate.

Researcher: Susan G. Gettys, University of Missouri-Columbia Doctoral Candidate, sgggd4@mizzou.edu, (417) 256-8511.

Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Barbara Martin, 4105 Lovinger Hall, University of Central Missouri, (660) 543- 8823.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to examine the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of skills necessary to become instructional leaders. The study will address the following questions:

1. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning?

2. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

3. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement?

4. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

5. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

6. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

7. What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high expectations and standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; creating a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and actively engaging the community)?

8. What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

9. In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

Procedures: Your superintendent has already been contacted, provided with a copy of the survey, and given consent for you to participate in the study. If you agree to participate, I will ask you to complete a fifteen minute, 28 item survey and return it, along with the informed consent form, in the self-addressed stamped envelope. You may withdraw participation at any time should you wish without risk or penalty whether during or at the conclusion of the survey.

Confidentiality: Your confidentiality will be maintained in that a participant's name will not appear on the survey or in the published study itself. A code number may be assigned so that responses may be grouped for statistical analysis. The data will only be reported in aggregate form. The surveys will be retained for a period of three years in a locked cabinet following the completion of the dissertation process and will then be shredded.

Risks and Benefits: The risk of your participation in the study is minimal. The research gathered should be helpful in providing insight into how to improve administrator mentoring programs. The findings could serve to assist new principals in gaining appropriate skills to enhance their instructional leadership skills and impact student achievement.

Injuries: It is not the policy of the University of Missouri to compensate human subjects in the event the research results in injury. The University of Missouri does have medical, professional, and general liability self-insurance coverage for any injury caused by the negligence of its faculty and staff. Within the limitations of the laws of the State of

Missouri, the University of Missouri will also provide facilities and medical attention to subjects who suffer injuries while participating in the research projects of the University of Missouri. In the event you suffered injury as the result of participating in this research project, your are to immediately contact the Campus Institutional Review Board Compliance Officer at (573) 882-9585 and the Risk Management Office at (573) 882-3735 to review the matter and provide you further information. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

If your decision is to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form. A copy of this letter and your written consent should be retained by you for future reference.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

Informed Consent

I, _____, agree to participate in the study entitled *The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills* conducted by Susan G. Gettys. I understand that:

- All responses will be used for dissertation research and potential future publications.
- All participation is voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any point in the study prior to submission of the survey.
- All identities will be protected in all reports of the research.
- Any consent or refusal to participate in this study will not affect the employment of participants in any way.

I have read the material above, and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

_____

Signature   Date

Informed Consent Form
Interview

Dear Participant,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia, I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to participate in the interview process for a research study entitled, *The Role of Mentoring in Developing New Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills*. I am examining the perceptions of beginning principals regarding the effectiveness of administrative mentoring programs. The focus of this study is on support needed by beginning principals to develop appropriate instructional leadership skills and may be published. You must be 18 years of age to participate.

Researcher: Susan G. Gettys, University of Missouri-Columbia Doctoral Candidate, sgggd4@mizzou.edu, (417) 256-8511.

Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Barbara Martin, 4105 Lovinger Hall, University of Central Missouri, (660) 543- 8823.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to examine the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of skills necessary to become instructional leaders capable of leading teachers and students toward developing high student achievement. The study will address the following questions:

1. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to lead schools by placing priority on student and adult learning?

2. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to set high expectations and standards?

3. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to demand content and instruction that ensures student achievement?

4. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the

kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to create a culture of adult learning?

5. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools?

6. Are there perceived differences between mentoring programs (the statewide Administrator Mentoring Program and district-created mentoring programs) in the kind of support provided by mentors in helping beginning principals develop instructional leadership skills to actively engage the community?

7. What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills related to the six standards (leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning; setting high expectations and standards; demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement; creating a culture of adult learning; using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools; and actively engaging the community)?

8. What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

9. In addition to mentoring, what administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

Procedures: Your superintendent has already been contacted, provided with a copy of the interview questions, and given consent for you to participate in the study. If you agree to participate, I will ask you to partake in a one to one and one-half hour semi-structured interview comprised of open-ended questions. The interview will be informal and may seem more like a discussion. Feel free to answer the questions that you choose, and pass on those that you do not wish to answer. You may withdraw participation at any time should you wish without risk or penalty whether during or at the conclusion of the survey.

Confidentiality: The tapes and transcripts of this study will be retained in a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Tapes, transcripts, and documents will be retained in a locked cabinet for a period of three years following the completion of the dissertation process and will then be shredded and destroyed. Your identity will be protected as no names will be used at any point in time including the published study itself. Data and results from this study may be presented at national educational conferences or in educational periodicals, but the confidentiality of the participants in the study is assured.

Risks and Benefits: The risk of your participation in this study is minimal. In discussing your perceptions and opinions regarding your experiences, it is extremely imperative that

I assure you of the care given to anonymity and confidentiality of your identity within the study. All names will be issued a pseudonym. Your interview responses will be taped and transcribed verbatim. You will be given the opportunity to verify the transcribed interview or accuracy of what was stated and what you intended. All edits, deletions, and clarifications will be made immediately in order to comply with your right to voluntarily release data and your comfort as a participant in my study. The research gathered should be helpful in providing insight into how to improve administrative mentoring programs.

Injuries: It is not the policy of the University of Missouri to compensate human subjects in the event the research results in injury. The University of Missouri does have medical, professional, and general liability self-insurance coverage for any injury caused by the negligence of its faculty and staff. Within the limitations of the laws of the State of Missouri, the University of Missouri will also provide facilities and medical attention to subjects who suffer injuries while participating in the research projects of the University of Missouri. In the event you suffered injury as the result of participating in this research project, your are to immediately contact the Campus Institutional Review Board Compliance Officer at (573) 882-9585 and the Risk Management Office at (573) 882-3735 to review the matter and provide you further information. This statement is not to be construed as an admission of liability.

If your decision is to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form. A copy of this letter and your written consent should be retained by you for future reference.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

Informed Consent

I, _____, agree to participate in the interview process for the study entitled *The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills* conducted by Susan G. Gettys. I understand that:

- All responses will be used for dissertation research and potential future publications.
- All participation is voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any point in the study prior to submission of the survey.
- All identities will be protected in all reports of the research.
- Any consent or refusal to participate in this study will not affect the employment of participants in any way.

I have read the material above, and any questions that I have posed have been answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

_____

Signature   Date

Appendix B

Survey Instrument

1. Test-Retest Instructions

2. *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey –*
   Initial Survey

3. *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey –*
   Revised Survey

Test-Retest Instructions

Dear Fellow Administrator,

I am conducting a research study titled, *The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills*. The focus of this study is on support provided by mentors to assist beginning principals in developing appropriate instructional leadership skills. This study is part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia and may be published. The research gathered should be helpful in providing insight into improving mentoring programs for beginning principals.

Part of this study involves creating a survey instrument to gather information from principals during their first five years of experience as a building principal regarding the effectiveness of their mentoring program. Survey instruments need to be pilot tested to establish reliability of individual items and the instrument as a whole. I am requesting your support and help with this pilot phase by asking you to complete the survey, *Support of Mentors in Developing Instructional Leadership Skills Survey,* putting yourself in the role of a beginning principal. There is a second survey included in this packet to complete within one week of completing the first survey. You do not need to complete the first page with the demographic information. Results of the two surveys will be compared to establish reliability of the instrument. When both surveys are complete, you may return them in the envelope provided. By returning the completed surveys, you are giving consent to participate in the pilot test phase of this study.

Any feedback regarding general appearance of the instrument, clarity of instructions, and ease of comprehension of the survey and the individual items is welcomed and will be utilized to refine the survey prior to its administration with beginning principals. There is also a place at the end of the survey to indicate the length of time required to complete the survey. A code on the front page of each survey will be utilized to match the two surveys completed by each participant in the pilot test. The intent is not to identify any pilot participants.

Thank you for agreeing to help in the pilot test of the survey instrument. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me at 256-6150, ext. 298, during the day or 256-8511 in the evening. You may also contact me through email at sgggd4@mizzou.edu. My dissertation advisor is Dr. Barbara Martin, who may be contacted at 660-543-8823 or bmartin@cmsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia

SUPPORT OF MENTORS IN DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP SKILLS INITIAL SURVEY

Thank you for considering participation in this study on administrator mentoring programs. This survey is conducted as part of research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. The information gathered should be useful in the field of school leadership. Your participation has been approved by your Superintendent. Your identity will remain confidential and anonymous and will not be reported or used in the dissertation or any future publications of this study. Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participation at any time you wish without penalty, including in the middle of completing the survey or after completing the survey. You may also decline to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.

Identification of Mentoring Program

Please indicate which of the following best describes the mentoring program you participated in within your first five years as a school principal:

_____ Statewide Administrator Mentoring Program

_____ Formal Mentoring Program within your district (Formal guidelines were in place regarding responsibilities of mentor, frequency of meetings, and expected outcomes.)

_____ Informal Mentoring Program within your district (No specific guidelines were in place.)

_____ I did not have a mentor. (Please return the survey without answering the questions.)

Demographic Information

Please circle one choice for each item:

Gender: Male / Female

Age: 20-30 / 30-40 / 40-50 / 50 and over

Years of Experience as Principal (Do not include years as Assistant Principal):
1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / more than 5

Highest Level of Education: M.Ed. / Ed.S. / Ed.D. / Ph.D.

Level of School: Elementary / Middle School / Junior High / High School

School Size: Less than 350 students / Between 351-650 students / More than 651 students

School Location: Urban / Suburban / Rural

This survey is designed to assess your perceptions regarding the impact of mentoring programs in helping you develop instructional leadership skills. Instructional leadership skills are defined as skills employed by principals to lead members of the school community through professional growth opportunities toward providing quality teaching impacting student achievement.

You are to circle the number that best describes the support your mentor provided to help you develop instructional leadership skills.

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Slightly Disagree, 4 - Slightly Agree, 5 - Agree, 6 - Strongly Agree

1. My mentor helped me create and nurture a community of learners where adults as well as students are continually learning. 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. My mentor encouraged me to provide time for reflection as an important part of improving practice. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. My mentor guided me in hiring and retaining high-quality teachers and holding them responsible for student learning. 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Through the mentoring process, I gained skills to review and analyze student work to determine whether students are being taught to standards. 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. My mentor helped me ensure that students and families are connected to the health, human, and social services they need to stay focused on learning. 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. My mentor helped me develop skills to analyze data with staff using a variety of strategies.
. 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. Through the mentoring process, I learned to share leadership and decision-making. 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. Through collaboration with my mentor, I learned to connect professional development to school learning goals. 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. My mentor assisted me in developing a school culture that is flexible, collaborative, innovative, and supportive of efforts to improve achievement of all students. 1 2 3 4 5 6

10. My mentor supported me in utilizing a variety of data sources to measure performance. 1 2 3 4 5 6

11. My mentor encouraged me to embody learner-centered   1 2 3 4 5 6
    leadership by providing examples of my own learning
    as a model.

12. My mentor helped me learn the importance of observing   1 2 3 4 5 6
    classroom practices to assure that all students are
    meaningfully engaged in active learning.

13. Through the mentoring process, I learned to tie daily   1 2 3 4 5 6
    operations of the schoolhouse to school and student
    learning goals.

14. Working with my mentor strengthened my skills in using   1 2 3 4 5 6
    data as tools to identify barriers to success, design
    strategies for improvement, and plan daily instruction.

15. My mentor supported me as I encouraged parents to   1 2 3 4 5 6
    become meaningfully involved in the school and in their
    own children's learning.

16. My mentor helped me recognize the need to continually   1 2 3 4 5 6
    improve my own professional practice.

17. My mentor guided me in locating resources to provide   1 2 3 4 5 6
    up-to-date technology, training, and instructional materials.

18. Through the mentoring process, I learned to engage the   1 2 3 4 5 6
    community to build greater ownership for the work of the
    school and to keep them informed of school progress.

19. My mentor guided me in articulating a clear vision that   1 2 3 4 5 6
    reflects the beliefs, values, and goals of the school
    community with a clear agenda for action.

20. My mentor assisted me in locating resources (time,   1 2 3 4 5 6
    opportunity, and funding) for professional
    development aligned to improving student achievement.

21. My mentor encouraged me to examine successful schools   1 2 3 4 5 6
    with similar demographics to identify strategies for
    improving student achievement.

22. My mentor assisted me in developing skills to ensure that   1 2 3 4 5 6
    all students have adequate and appropriate opportunities
    to meet high standards.

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Slightly Disagree, 4 - Slightly Agree, 5 - Agree, 6 - Strongly Agree

23. My mentor assisted me in creating a school environment   1 2 3 4 5 6
    that is comfortable using data.

24. Through working with my mentor, I learned to seek   1 2 3 4 5 6
    leadership opportunities from multiple sources.

25. Working with my mentor helped me develop skills to   1 2 3 4 5 6
    monitor alignment of curriculum with standards, school
    goals, and assessments.

26. My mentor helped me ensure that barriers to student   1 2 3 4 5 6
    learning were identified, clarified, and addressed.

27. My mentor encouraged me to develop opportunities   1 2 3 4 5 6
    for teachers to learn from each other through
    observations, demonstrations, and collaboration.

28. Through working with my mentor, I learned to establish   1 2 3 4 5 6
    partnerships with area businesses, institutions of higher
    education, and community groups to strengthen programs
    that support school goals.

29. My mentor helped me to align financial, human, and   1 2 3 4 5 6
    material resources to the school goals.

30. My mentor encouraged me to communicate the vision   1 2 3 4 5 6
    and mission of the school to staff, parents, students, and
    community members.

Is there anything you would like to share regarding your experiences participating in the mentoring process? (Continue on the back if you need additional space.)

Would you be willing to participate in an interview to share additional information regarding administrator mentoring programs? _____ Yes _____ No

If you are willing to participate, please provide the following information:
Name: _____   Phone/Email: _____

Thank you for completing this survey.
Your participation in this study is appreciated.
Remember, your identity will remain confidential
in the reporting of the results of this survey.

SUPPORT OF MENTORS IN DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS REVISED SURVEY

Thank you for considering participation in this study on administrator mentoring programs. This survey is conducted as part of research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia. The information gathered should be useful in the field of school leadership. Your participation has been approved by your Superintendent. Your identity will remain confidential and will not be reported or used in the dissertation or any future publications of this study. Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from participation at any time you wish without penalty, including in the middle of completing the survey or after completing the survey. You may also decline to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.

Identification of Mentoring Program

Please indicate which of the following best describes the mentoring program you participated in within your first five years as a school principal:

_____ Statewide Administrator Mentoring Program

_____ Formal Mentoring Program within your district (Formal guidelines were in place regarding responsibilities of mentor, frequency of meetings, and expected outcomes.)

_____ Informal Mentoring Program within your district (No specific guidelines were in place.)

_____ I did not have a mentor. (Please return the survey without answering the questions.)

Demographic Information

Please circle one choice for each item:

Gender: Male / Female

Age: 20-30 / 30-40 / 40-50 / 50 and over

Years of Experience as Principal (Do not include years as Assistant Principal):
        1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / more than 5

Highest Level of Education: M.Ed. / Ed.S. / Ed.D. / Ph.D.

Level of School: Elementary / Middle School / Junior High / High School

School Size: Less than 350 students / Between 351-650 students / More than 651 students

School Location: Urban / Suburban / Rural

This survey is designed to assess your perceptions regarding the impact of mentoring programs in helping you develop instructional leadership skills. Instructional leadership skills are defined as skills employed by principals to lead members of the school community through professional growth opportunities toward providing quality teaching impacting student achievement.

You are to circle the number that best describes the support your mentor provided to help you develop instructional leadership skills.

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Slightly Disagree, 4 - Slightly Agree, 5 - Agree, 6 - Strongly Agree

1. My mentor helped me create and nurture a community of learners where adults as well as students are continually learning.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

2. My mentor encouraged me to provide time for reflection as an important part of improving practice.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

3. My mentor guided me in hiring and retaining high-quality teachers and holding them responsible for student learning.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

4. Through the mentoring process, I gained skills to review and analyze student work to determine whether students are being taught to standards.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

5. My mentor helped me develop skills to analyze data with staff using a variety of strategies.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

6. Through the mentoring process, I learned to share leadership and decision-making.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

7. Through collaboration with my mentor, I learned to connect professional development to school learning goals.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

8. My mentor supported me in utilizing a variety of data sources to measure performance.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

9. My mentor encouraged me to embody learner-centered leadership by providing examples of my own learning as a model.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

10. My mentor helped me learn the importance of observing classroom practices to assure that all students are meaningfully engaged in active learning.　　　1　2　3　4　5　6

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Slightly Disagree, 4 - Slightly Agree, 5 - Agree, 6 - Strongly Agree

11. Through the mentoring process, I learned to tie daily   1   2   3   4   5   6
    operations of the schoolhouse to school and student
    learning goals.

12. Working with my mentor strengthened my skills in using   1   2   3   4   5   6
    data as tools to identify barriers to success, design
    strategies for improvement, and plan daily instruction.

13. My mentor supported me as I encouraged parents to   1   2   3   4   5   6
    become meaningfully involved in the school and in their
    own children's learning.

14. My mentor helped me recognize the need to continually   1   2   3   4   5   6
    improve my own professional practice.

15. My mentor guided me in locating resources to provide   1   2   3   4   5   6
    up-to-date technology, training, and instructional materials.

16. Through the mentoring process, I learned to engage the   1   2   3   4   5   6
    community to build greater ownership for the work of the
    school and to keep them informed of school progress.

17. My mentor guided me in articulating a clear vision that   1   2   3   4   5   6
    reflects the beliefs, values, and goals of the school
    community with a clear agenda for action.

18. My mentor assisted me in locating resources (time,   1   2   3   4   5   6
    opportunity, and funding) for professional
    development aligned to improving student achievement.

19. My mentor encouraged me to examine successful schools   1   2   3   4   5   6
    with similar demographics to identify strategies for
    improving student achievement.

20. My mentor assisted me in developing skills to ensure that   1   2   3   4   5   6
    all students have adequate and appropriate opportunities
    to meet high standards.

21. My mentor assisted me in creating a school environment   1   2   3   4   5   6
    that is comfortable using data.

22. Through working with my mentor, I learned to seek   1   2   3   4   5   6
    leadership opportunities from multiple sources.

1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Slightly Disagree, 4 - Slightly Agree, 5 - Agree, 6 - Strongly Agree

23. Working with my mentor helped me develop skills to   1 2 3 4 5 6
monitor alignment of curriculum with standards, school
goals, and assessments.

24. My mentor helped me ensure that barriers to student   1 2 3 4 5 6
learning were identified, clarified, and addressed.

25. My mentor encouraged me to develop opportunities   1 2 3 4 5 6
for teachers to learn from each other through
observations, demonstrations, and collaboration.

26. Through working with my mentor, I learned to establish   1 2 3 4 5 6
partnerships with area businesses, institutions of higher
education, and community groups to strengthen programs
that support school goals.

27. My mentor helped me to align financial, human, and   1 2 3 4 5 6
material resources to the school goals.

28. My mentor encouraged me to communicate the vision   1 2 3 4 5 6
and mission of the school to staff, parents, students, and
community members.

Is there anything you would like to share regarding your experiences participating in the mentoring process? (Continue on the back if you need additional space.)

Would you be willing to participate in an interview to share additional information regarding administrator mentoring programs? _____ Yes _____ No

If you are willing to participate, please provide the following information:
Name: _____ Phone/Email: _____

Thank you for completing this survey.
Your participation in this study is appreciated.
Remember, your identity will remain confidential
in the reporting of the results of this survey.

Appendix C

Participant Communications

1. Advance Notice Email of Introduction and Explanation - Survey

2. Follow-up Letter - Survey

3. Participant Letter of Thanks – Survey

4. Participant Letter of Confirmation for Interview

5. Participant Letter of Thanks – Interview

Date

Dear Beginning Principal,

As part of my dissertation research for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia, I would like to extend a personal invitation to you to participate in a research study entitled, *The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills*. The focus of this study is on perceived effectiveness of administrator mentoring programs in developing appropriate instructional leadership skills and may be published.

The purpose of the study is to gain insight into the perceptions of beginning administrators regarding support provided through mentoring programs. Development of instructional leadership skills has become essential with accountability measures required through federal and state mandates. I am hoping the results of this study can provide guidance for improving mentoring programs, both at the state level and within individual school districts.

In about a week, you will receive an envelope with more information. If you agree to participate, I will ask you to complete a 28-item closed-ended survey. A stamped, self-addressed envelope will be provided. You may withdraw participation at any time without risk or penalty whether during or at the conclusion of the survey.

I want to thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
(417) 256-8511
sgggd4@mizzou.edu

Date

<Title><First Name><Last Name>
<Position>
<School District>
<Address>

Dear <Title><Last Name>,

About a week ago you received the survey I distributed in order to complete my research study entitled *The Role of Mentoring in Developing New Principals' Instructional Leadership Skills*. The study investigates the perceived effectiveness of mentoring programs in providing support for beginning principals in the development of skills necessary to become instructional leaders.

I hope you found the packet to be self-explanatory and the survey easy to complete and return.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any problems. I genuinely appreciate your help with this project.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
(417) 256-8511
sgggd4@mizzou.edu

Date

<Title><First Name><Last Name>
<Position>
<School District>
<Address>

Dear <Title><Last Name>,

I would like to express sincere gratitude that you took time from your busy schedule to help me with my research study. The information from your completed surveys will be very helpful in generating a better understanding of how to improve administrator mentoring programs to assist beginning administrators as they develop appropriate instructional leadership skills.

I want to reassure you that I will maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of your participation and responses, both in my dissertation project and in all future published research on this topic.

I welcome you to call me should you wish to provide any additional insight or documentation that you feel will further enrich my study.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
(417) 256-8511
sgggd4@mizzou.edu

Date

<Title><First Name><Last Name>
<Position>
<School District>
<Address>

Dear <Title><Last Name>,

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me on <date><time> at <site>. I thought it would be helpful to send you the interview questions and a copy of the Informed Consent form which I will ask you to sign prior to the start of our interview. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any point without penalty.

Our interview will last approximately one hour and will be audio-taped. Your interview responses will be transcribed verbatim from the tapes. You will be given an opportunity to verify the transcribed interview for accuracy of what was stated and what you intended. All edits, deletions, and clarifications will be made immediately in order to comply with your right to voluntarily release data and your comfort as a participant in my study. Your individual responses and all data from this project are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. I assure you that your individual identity will be protected and never mentioned in my dissertation or any other future publications.

In providing you with the questions in advance, it is my hope that you will have an opportunity to consider your responses and contact me should you have questions or require clarification. Please feel free to call or e-mail me with any concerns prior to our meeting (417-256-8511 or sgggd4@mizzou.edu).

Thank you again for taking time from your busy schedule to meet with me. Any additional information that you feel might enrich my study would be welcomed and greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
(417) 256-8511
sgggd4@mizzou.edu

Date

<Title><First Name><Last Name>
<Position>
<School District>
<Address>

Dear <Title><Last Name>,

I would like to express sincere gratitude that you took time from your busy schedule to meet with me on <date>. Your insightful responses are genuinely appreciated. I want to reassure you that I will maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of your participation and responses, both in my dissertation project and in all future published research on this topic.

I welcome you to call me should you wish to provide any additional insights or documentation that you feel will further enrich my study.

Sincerely,

Susan Gettys
Doctoral Candidate
University of Missouri-Columbia
(417) 256-8511
sgggd4@mizzou.edu

Appendix D

Interview Documents

1. Interview Questions Protocol

2. Interview Field Notes Form

SUPPORT OF MENTORS IN DEVELOPING
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions:

1. Introduce yourself and tell me what has been the most rewarding experience that happened this past year.

2. What motivated you to enter the principalship?

3. Describe the mentoring program you participated in during your first year as principal.
   Probe: Length of program, mentor from within the district or outside, how often met

Research Question #7: What mentoring strategies did beginning principals perceive to be most effective in developing instructional leadership skills?

A. Leading schools by placing priority on student and adult learning.

4. How did your mentor help you create a community of student and adult learners?

B. Setting high expectations and standards.

5. What support did your mentor provide to assist you in ensuring appropriate opportunities were in place to allow all students to meet high standards?

C. Demanding content and instruction that ensures student achievement.

6. What strategies did your mentor use to help you develop classroom observation and feedback techniques to ensure students are engaged in active learning?
   Probe: Monitoring curriculum & assessment, analyzing student work.

D. Creating a culture of adult learning.

7. How did your mentor guide you in providing appropriate professional development opportunities for staff and for yourself?
   Probe: Time, funding, aligned to student learning

E. Using multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools.

8. How did your mentor help you develop skills in analyzing data with staff and using the results to design strategies for improving student learning?

F. Actively engaging the community.

9. What strategies did your mentor utilize to help you involve the community and parents in various aspects of the educational process?

All sections:

10. How successful was participation in a mentoring program in helping you develop as an instructional leader? What aspects or components of the program made it successful or unsuccessful?

Research Questions #8: What support did school district personnel provide to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring program?

11. What support was provided from school district personnel to assist you through the mentoring process?
    Probe: Release time to meet with mentor, attend professional development, network with other principals

12. How did the support from school district personnel aid in the development of your instructional leadership skills?

13. What could school district personnel have done to provide more assistance to you through the mentoring process?

Research Question #9: What administrator training most effectively provided opportunities to develop instructional leadership skills?

14. Describe the training you received in your administrator preparatory program coursework that helped you develop instructional leadership skills to be a successful principal.

15. Describe the internship opportunities you participated in prior to receiving administrator certification. Probe: Length of time, content, actual participation in school improvement activities.

16. Describe the professional development opportunities you have participated in since becoming a principal.

17. Which of these opportunities—preparatory coursework, internship, professional development, mentoring—was most effective in strengthening your instructional leadership skills? Why?

Is there anything else you would like to share with me regarding how mentoring helped you gain skills as an instructional leader?

Interview Field Notes Form

Date of Interview: _____

Name of Participant: _____

Job Title/Position: _____

Location of Interview: _____

Length of Interview: _____

Notes:

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Appendix E

Data Codes

Data Codes

Data Codes

S   Survey

S-<u>36</u>   Underlined section indicates survey number. Surveys were numbered in

the order in which they were received.

P1   Principal Interview 1

P2   Principal Interview 2

P3   Principal Interview 3

P4   Principal Interview 4

P5   Principal Interview 5

P6   Principal Interview 6

P2-<u>3</u>-26   Underlined section indicates the page number of the data from the

interview transcript.

P2-3-<u>26</u>   Underlined section indicates the line number of the data.

Appendix F

Approval Form

Internal Review Board Approval – University of Missouri, Columbia

	Campus Institutional Review Board	483 McReynolds Hall
		Columbia, MO 65211-1150

University of Missouri-Columbia

PHONE: (573) 882-9585
FAX: (573) 884-0663

Project
Number: **1078837**

Project Title: The Role of Mentoring in Developing Beginning Principals`
                 Instructional Leadership Skills

Approval Date: 01-16-2007

Expiration
Date: 01-16-2008

Investigator(s): Gettys, Susan Gail
                 Martin, Barbara Nell

Level Granted: Expedited

**CAMPUS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-COLUMBIA**

This is to certify that your research proposal involving human subject participants has
been reviewed by the Campus IRB. This approval is based upon the assurance that you
will protect the rights and welfare of the research participants, employ approved methods
of securing informed consent from these individuals, and not involve undue risk to the
human subjects in light of potential benefits that can be derived from participation.

Approval of this research is contingent upon your agreement to:

(1) Adhere to all UMC Policies and Procedures Relating to Human Subjects, as written in
accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 46).

(2) Maintain copies of all pertinent information related to the study, included but not
limited to, video and audio tapes, instruments, copies of written informed consent
agreements, and any other supportive documents for a period of **three (3) years** from the
<u>date of completion</u> of your research.

(3) Report potentially serious events to the Campus IRB (573-882-9585) by the most
expeditious means and complete the eIRB "Campus Adverse Event Report". This may be
accessed through the following website: http://irb.missouri.edu/eirb/.

(4) IRB approval is contingent upon the investigator implementing the research activities
as proposed. Campus IRB policies require an investigator to report any deviations from

an approved project directly to the Campus IRB by the most expeditious means. All human subject research deviations must have prior IRB approval, except to protect the welfare and safety of human subject participants. If an investigator must deviate from the previously approved research activities, the principal investigator or team members must:
a. Immediately contact the Campus IRB at 882-9585.
b. Assure that the research project has provisions in place for the adequate protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects, and are in compliance with federal laws, University of Missouri-Columbia's FWA, and Campus IRB policies/procedures.
c. Complete the "Campus IRB Deviation Report". This may be accessed through the following website: http://irb.missouri.edu/eirb/.

(5) Submit an Amendment form to the Campus IRB for any proposed changes from the previously approved project. Changes may not be initiated without prior IRB review and approval except where necessary to eliminate apparent and immediate dangers to the subjects. The investigator must complete the Amendment form for any changes at http://irb.missouri.edu/eirb/.

(6) Federal regulations and Campus IRB policies require continuing review of research projects involving human subjects. Campus IRB approval will expire one (1) year from the date of approval unless otherwise indicated. Before the one (1) year expiration date, you must submit Campus IRB Continuing Review Report to the Campus IRB. Any unexpected events are to be reported at that time. The Campus IRB reserves the right to inspect your records to ensure compliance with federal regulations at any point during your project period and three (3) years from the date of completion of your research.

VITA

Susan G. Gettys was born on September 11, 1956, in Omaha, Nebraska, the

daughter of Russell Eugene and Barbara Jean Gettys. She attended the public schools of

Memphis, Tennessee, and Bartlesville, Oklahoma, graduating from Sooner High School

in 1974. She received a B.S. in Elementary Education (1979), an M.S. Ed. in Learning

Disabilities (1986), and an Ed.S. in Educational Administration (1994) all from Missouri

State University (then known as Southwest Missouri State University). As part of the

University of Missouri-Columbia statewide cohort program, she completed the Ed.D. in

Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (2007). She has been employed by the West

Plains R-7 School System in West Plains, Missouri, since January 1980, and is currently

Director of Curriculum and A+, a position she has held since 2005. She is also working

as an adjunct professor in the educational administration department at Missouri State

University – West Plains.