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Running Head: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Instructional Leadership and the Missouri Annual

Performance Report

Donald D. Forrest

May, 2008

A capstone dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty

of Lindenwood University in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Donald Duane Forrest

Signature: *Donald D. Forrest* Date: 7/21/09

A Capstone Dissertation

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ANNUAL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE
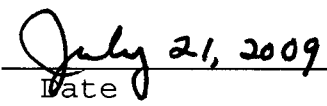
by

Donald D. Forrest

This Capstone Project/Dissertation has been approved as
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education
at Lindenwood University by the School of Education
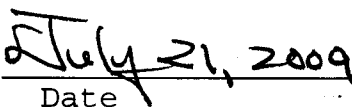
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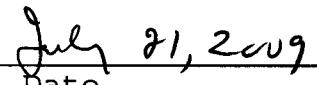Dr. Terry Reid, Capstone Chair   Date

_____   July 21, 2009
Dr. Dennis Cooper, Committee Member   Date

_____   July 21, 2009
Dr. Howard Neeley, Committee Member   Date

Abstract

This study was to determine if there was a positive
correlation between the years of experience of the high
school principal and the annual performance of the
district. Data was obtained from sixty randomly selected
school districts in Missouri. The years of experience of
the high school principal was compared to the Missouri
Assessment Program scores in tenth grade Math, eleventh
grade Communication Arts, 9-12 attendance rate, and the
graduation rate. The reporting period data for this study
was selected from the 2007-08 school year from the Missouri
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website.
The findings of this study did not show a significant
relationship between the years of experience of high school
principals and the performance of the districts.

January 21, 2009

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For a number of years the accountability placed upon schools in the United States has been increasing. Bonaiuto and Johnson (2008) stated that accountability is the catalyst that drives educational progress. Accountability is rooted deeply within our culture and places the burden of accountability upon the shoulders of the building level principal (Bonaiuto & Johnson, 2008).

During this time of increasingly accountability, the role of the principal has dramatically changed. Accountability in school has changed the perception of the public toward schools. Changes in accountability have prompted changes in the expectations for principals. The primary responsibility of the principal has shifted from the manager of the building to the instructional leader of the building. A principal must be able to balance his/her schedule between daily work and improvement of instruction (Agel, Reitzug, & West, 2008).

As accountability upon schools continues to change, the principal is empowering teachers to help improve instruction. Sawchuk (2008) says that school principals and leaders are not in control of instructional changes. This change is shifting the role of the principal to a facilitator of the building to help teachers improve teaching and learning. The increased accountability on schools has evolved the principal's role into one of leadership and shifted the focus from teaching to learning. This change in accountability has empowered the teachers to be in control of instructional changes (Sawchuk, 2008).

The role of the principal in American schools has been changing and taking on new roles as American society has evolved. Principals must help their schools meet standards and increasingly difficult expectations from parents, society and various forms of government. New research, ideas and theories related to schools and instructional leaders change every day and impact the role of the instructional leader in the school. The research and written materials surrounding instructional leadership over the past several years has been debated and discussed in a variety of educational arenas. One widely accepted view that has remained constant today in our schools is the role

of the principal as the instructional leader of the

building (Duvall, 2004).

     As the role of the high school principal has

transformed from a manager to the instructional leader, the

responsibility upon the principal has also increased

(Duvall, 2004). School districts in Missouri receive their

accreditation based on performance indicators, which

include student achievement levels, ACT scores, advanced

and career education courses, college and career education

placement, graduation and attendance rates. The high school

is responsible for eight of the indicators placing growing

pressure on the high school principal as the building

leader to ensure that all areas are met. The process of

classifying and accrediting school districts is approved

and supported by the State Board of Education. The board

adopted classification standards are implemented through

the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP). The goal of

the MSIP process is to promote school improvement within

each district and on a statewide basis. The MSIP standards

are created to guide school districts, while measuring

different areas in order to evaluate the student

performance in each district. Missouri schools are

evaluated every five years in order to determine district

accreditation (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

School districts are given an annual performance report (APR) based on the MSIP performance standards. There are 14 indicators that go into the APR: MAP index/percentage improvement grades 3-5, MAP index/percentage improvement grades 6-8, MAP index/percentage grades 9-11, ACT score, advanced courses, vocational placement, college placement, graduation rate, and attendance. The school is then given accreditation status by meeting the required number in each area (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Schools are trying many techniques to try to improve the performance of the district. Payment to students through reward and cash incentives is being used as incentive for academic performance. Urban schools in Brooklyn, New York, are paying students between $250 and $500 for performance on exams in reading and math. High Schools in Baltimore, Maryland, are paying high schools students $110 for improvement on tests and $8 per hour to attend after school tutoring. The payment for performance it attributed to the increase in student placement tests in Texas. Money is generated from private donors to be used

for incentives in the high poverty school districts. Students use the opportunity to earn money along with improving their learning. School district can capitalize on the improved student performance to help them with the accreditation (Toppo, 2008).

The high school principal has the added responsibility of instruction leader in addition to the duties of manager and facilitator. High schools are now looking for leaders in their buildings with a strong background in curriculum and instruction. It is important to find high school principals who have experience in teaching before becoming a principal. The experience a principal brings to the job has an impact on his/her success as an instructional leader (Campos, Gomez, & Shen, J., 2005).

In dealing with the increasing accountability standards in schools, many principals have turned to professional development in order to train their teachers. In addition to increasing teaching skills, principals are also looking for ways to encourage teachers to stay long term in the field of education. Nearly half of all new teachers leave the field of education during the first three years. It is vital to use professional development to

help slow this trend and prepare teachers for student learning (Pittinsky, 2005).

In order for Missouri schools to improve and increase their annual performance report, they have to be able to understand what factors play a role in student achievement. Ron Edmonds first defined effective schools in 1982 when he defined the following correlates found in effective schools (Lezotte, 1992).

1. Instructional Leadership

2. Clear and Focused Mission

3. Safe and Orderly Environment

4. Climate of High Expectations

5. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

6. Positive Home-School Relations

7. Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task

The correlates have continued to be used by schools and state departments in the development of evaluating of school districts.

Statement of the Problem

Today's principals are expected to lead schools in an attempt to meet ever-evolving and increasingly complex expectations from many elements of American society. Although school districts receive the accreditation as a

whole, the majority of the pressure is on the high school
to perform well, since eight of the fourteen indictors come
from the high school. As a result, principals are feeling
more pressure to succeed from many sources. High schools
are trying to find ways to incorporate instructional
leadership practices and experiences to improve their
scores on the Annual Performance Report.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the
relationship between the MAP scores, graduation rate, and
attendance and years of administrative experience. This
study will examine the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between the years of
   administrative experience of high school
   principals and the eleventh grade Communication
   Arts scores from the Missouri Assessment
   Program (MAP)?

2. What is the relationship between the years of
   administrative experience of high school
   principals and the tenth grade Mathematics
   scores from the MAP?

3.   What is the relationship between the years of
     administrative experience of high school
     principals and graduation rate?

4.   What is the relationship between the years of
     administrative experience of high school
     principals and grades 9-12 student attendance?

Research Hypothesis

To determine the relationship between MAP scores,
graduation rate and attendance and years of administrative
experience the following hypothesis were tested:

1.   There is no significant relationship between
     the years of administrative experience of high
     school principals and the eleventh grade
     Communication Arts scores from the MAP.

2.   There is no significant relationship between
     the years of administrative experience of high
     school principals and the tenth grade
     Mathematics scores from the MAP.

3.   There is no significant relationship between
     the years of administrative experience of high
     school principals and graduation rate.

4.   There is no significant relationship between
     the years of administrative experience of high

school principals and grades 9-12 student

attendance.

Design of the Study

Participants for this study will include a sample of

sixty school districts randomly selected from Southwest

Missouri. The study will look at the High School MAP scores

in Communication Arts and Mathematics for the sixty schools

included in this study. The study will also examine the

attendance and graduation rates in the same sixty school

districts in Southwest Missouri. The performance scores are

placed on the Missouri Department of Elementary and

Secondary website and the study will examine if there is a

relationship between the experience of the building level

principal and the performance of the district.

Definition of Terms

Annual Performance Report (APR). A yearly report card

that every school district receives (Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

(DESE). The organization in charge of overseeing Missouri

school districts (Department of Elementary and Secondary

Education, 2007).

Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). A state required instrument in which certain grades are to take a subject area test to measure individual differences in performance based skills (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP). The process used in Missouri to evaluate school districts every five years for accreditation (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). A federal regulation that requires school district to reach one hundred percent proficient in communication arts and math by 2014 (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Assumptions and Limitations

1. Instructional Leadership impacts student performance.

2. The Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests are self-administered by each district.

3. Participants are sixty school districts selected from Southwest Missouri.

4. The principal is the instructional leader of the building.

Summary

America's schools continue to be at the center of the debate concerning the excellence required to compete in a global market. Instructional leadership accountability rests heavily on the shoulders of the principal. Principals have moved away from managers of the district to instructional leaders and facilitators of learning. Administrative job experience usually results in higher compensation in salary and benefits. It is important to see if the experience of the instructional leader has an effect on the Annual Performance Report (APR) of the school district (Hallinger, 1992).

In order for Missouri schools to improve and increase their APR, they have to be able to understand what factors play a role in student achievement. California Center for Effective Schools (2001) quotes Ron Edmonds, "while schools may be primarily responsible for whether or not students function adequately in school, the family is probably critical in determining whether or not students flourish in school." Schools across our country are involved in school accountability and looking for strategies to improve student learning. Many states such as Missouri are

incorporating the effective schools correlates into the accreditation process in order to improve schools.

One of the main areas of the effective schools movement was the individual school as the main change agent. The principal as the instructional leader is vital in order to gain the strong district support needed to bring about effective change in student achievement. Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) takes the effective school correlates and measures them through the Annual Performance Report (APR) to determine the district's level of accreditation (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Kelly and Lezotte (2005) emphasized that schools are either improving or declining and therefore school improvement is no longer an option. It is up to each school to take advantage of the opportunities available in the school improvement process and use them to improve schools. Experience of the principal to develop and implement strategies to improve student performance is crucial. As schools struggle to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, it is vital that schools follow the focus of the effective schools movement in that "all children can learn."

With ever increasing accountability, the role of the high school principal is constantly changing. Today many schools are transforming their educational environment into a Professional Learning Community (PLC). The principal's role is also changing once again. High school principals are progressing from instructional leaders to instructional facilitators (DuFour, 2004).

Missouri schools today are held accountable from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the federal requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Through the years the high school principal has developed a stronger background in instructional leadership. The role of the principal will continue to be central to the ongoing success of schools (Campos, 2005).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Education Influence

Olivia (2001) suggests the 1960s Coleman report depressed educators on the quality of education in the United States. The report determined that the achievement level of the student was influenced first by his/her social environment (families and peers); second, by their teachers, and third, by non personal expenditures such as per pupil expenditures on education. The report at the time played a major role in the public perceptions of education in the United States. The report was shocking to many educators by reporting that "schools bring very little to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his/her background" (Lezotte, 1997, p. 1). This report influenced many educators to question the way education was being administered and perceived by the public. In 1966, "The Equal Educational Opportunity Survey" by J.S. Coleman

was published. It became famous as the Coleman Report and emphasized the role of the family on the education of the child. It presented information relating the social economic status of the parents to the education of the child. The report concluded that the parent's lack of education had more impact on their child's education than the method of instruction. Educators were shocked to learn that the environment and surroundings played such an important role in education versus the actual instruction of the child (Lezotte, 1992).

Ledoux & Overmaat (2001) state that students coming to schools from lower social economic homes need much more structure and positive reinforcement from their teachers. Their counterparts from higher social economic homes do not require the same reinforcement from their teachers. According to Ledoux & Overmaat the students from the lower social economic homes will need more time and instruction to be successful.

The best way to improve the education of students in poverty areas is through instruction. One way to do this is through improving the number of quality teachers available to hire. In Chicago, the number of teachers applying for jobs increased from 2.5 to 10 per job opening from 2002 to

2006. This occurred largely due to the alternate teacher education program in place to recruit teachers from other areas (Honawar, 2008).

In New York City, partnerships with teachers focus on hiring teachers in poverty schools who will commit to two years in the district. This "New Teacher Project" targeted teacher candidates who had ties to New York City and ownership in the success of the schools. These teachers are recruited from other careers to teach in high poverty schools in New York City. This program is given credit for lowering the achievement gap between high poverty and low poverty schools (Honawar, 2008).

According to Marzano (2003, p. 3), a study performed in 1972 by Christopher Jenks supported the Coleman report which added support to the findings from 1966. Some of the findings from the Jenks study were

- Schools do little to lessen the gap between rich and poor students.
- Schools do little to lessen the gap between more and less able students.
- Student achievement is primarily a function of one factor- the background of the student.

- Little evidence exists that education reform can improve a school's influence on student achievement.

The findings from the Coleman and Jenks reports resulted in Americans questioning the need and quality of public education. Some wondered should be school reform if there is little chance of overcoming a child's social background. Perception and faith in the public education system remained skeptical throughout the remainder of the decade.

Nation at Risk

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education released its landmark report, "Nation at Risk." The report described the public schools across the country as "rising tide of mediocrity" in the nation's school system. The report also emphasized a correlation between the country's educational system and its economy. According to the Commission on Excellence, the quality of education and quality of life shared common ground in the country, and both were in a decline. The effect of the commission's report was shocking and impacted the world of education (Ginsberg & Plank, 1995, p. 19). The report suggested that American test scores had declined over time and students

were falling behind, and it called for instructional

leadership accountability and recommended higher standards

for teachers. It also recommended that schools need to

focus on the basics and spend more time on student

learning.

The results of the National Commissions Report spawned

the Effective Schools Movement in education. According to

the California Center for Effective Schools (Effective

School, 2001), Ron Edmonds refused to accept the Coleman's

Report. He came to the conclusion that the family's role in

the education of the child was critical. He maintained that

schools play an important role in the educating of a child,

and through time and effort could perhaps overcome the

effects of the family environment on the child.

Effective Schools Movement

The effective schools movement developed from the

questioning of the Coleman Report. Researchers of the

movement stated that effective schooling did little to

influence the socioeconomic status along with student

attitudes and achievement. Researchers supported the

opinion that teacher management practices could impact

student learning regardless of the socioeconomic status or

other demographic characteristics (Lawrence, 1992).

According to Lezotte (1992, p. 3) the basic beliefs of the Effective Schools Movement are that

- all children can learn and come to school and be motivated to do so

- schools control enough of the variables to assure that virtually all students do learn

- schools should be held accountable for measured student achievement in order to be certain that all students learn

- the internal and external stakeholders of the individual school are the most qualified and capable people to plan and implement change necessary to fulfill the learning for all mission.

Lezotte (1992, p. 4) states that the effective schools movement identified correlates that could be used to monitor school improvement. The principal was identified as the one in charge to help with the monitoring as the instructional leader. The following seven correlates are most frequently found in an effective school:

1. Instructional Leadership

2. Clear and Focused Mission

3. Safe and Orderly Climate

4. Climate of High Expectations

5. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

6. Positive Home School Relations

7. Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task

Nichols (2007) stated that when Missouri began its school improvement program in the 1990's, it incorporated many of the effective school correlates. He believes that the Missouri School Improvement Program was patterned after the effective schools research. The correlates provide evidence on whether or not a school is becoming an effective school. Instructional leadership is one of the key components of the Missouri School Improvement Process and at the center of the effective schools movement.

Instructional Leadership

Being a good manager in the school building used to be enough to be considered an effective principal. In today's competitive world and with schools more accountable, the principal is expected to do much more. As studies link principals to improving teaching and student learning, it is obvious that principals today must also serve as instructional leaders. In an effective school, the principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively and persistently communicates that mission to the staff,

parents and students. The principal understands instructional leadership and demonstrates the characteristics of effective leadership (O'Donnell, 2005).

"Instructional leadership" refers to the skills principals must model and demonstrate to the staff to effectively support the educational program. This includes skills in listening, modeling and observation as well as making recommendations to improve teaching and learning. Principals who are effective instructional leaders are comfortable with learning theories and instructional teaching techniques. They are able to help teachers develop curriculum and write assessments. They serve as a valuable resource for the classroom teacher if he/she need help planning or teaching lessons (Duvall, 2004).

Instructional leaders must be prepared to lead school districts in a manner that promotes learning opportunities for all children. In doing so, they must develop educational programs that emphasize and promote improving instruction. Developing the principal as an instructional leader requires commitment and motivation that is promoted through incentives that encourage learning. Therefore, not all principals are effective since they are not always prepared to be both a manager and instructional leader. If

principals are struggling to become instructional leaders, then the driving focus of the school will be more on managing the school rather than on instruction (Stein, 2006).

Research shows that effective instructional leadership can improve student achievement. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLCC) has developed standards by bringing together several states including Missouri. These standards are used to evaluate the knowledge of each principal in an attempt to measure his/her success as an instructional leader. The six ISLLC standards developed for school leaders include each of the following (Interstate School, 2007): A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by

- Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship vision of learning that is shared and supported by school community.
- Advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development.

- Ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment.

- Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interest and needs and mobilizing community resources.

- Acting with integrity and fairness and in an ethical manner.

- Understanding, responding to and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context.

The standards were designed and developed to describe what is vital to be an effective instructional leader.

Principal leadership is the driving force behind student achievement. Research indicates that effective leaders know how to impact student learning through instructional strategies. Effective leaders understand which changes will have a positive impact on the student achievement. Positive relationships between the building level principal and the classroom teacher have a positive impact on student learning. The instructional leader is the

one responsible for setting the tone, direction and mission of the building (Marks & Printy, 2003).

The principal's role as the instructional leader of the building covers a variety of different areas. A strong instructional leader must be able promote a vision of learning and facilitate an environment that promotes the success and learning of all students. Effective principals ensure that there is a continuous focus on the academic success of each student. Leaders must believe that all students can succeed and display that belief through a vision of learning. Strong instructional leaders implement and cultivate the vision of learning to all stakeholders (Johnson Jr. & Uline, 2005).

A strong instructional leader develops a culture of teaching and learning. Principals who are effective instructional leaders develop an environment where students believe and feel that they are important and respected. Teachers must be involved in ongoing meaningful professional development in order to progress in teaching and learning. Teacher collaboration time must be set aside and developed in order to develop a positive culture of learning. The principal plays a major role in the development of a positive learning culture. Leaders must

find time in their busy schedules to visit classrooms daily and foster an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning (Johnson Jr. & Uline, 2005).

According to Marzano (2003), leaders establish a learning environment that empowers students to become active learners. He believes that effective leaders know what to do, how to do it and why to do it. Instructional leaders ensure that instruction is the driving force behind everything that goes on in school, including what the principal does. This type of research has helped school leaders develop leadership ideas that center on doing what is best for student learning.

Instructional leaders must be able to promote the success of students by creating management of the organization. Successful schools develop programs developed through the principal to help teachers manage and organize student learning. Focused teaching and learning requires extensive planning and management by the teacher. Instructional leaders monitor their buildings to ensure that each teacher's organization drives his/her daily instruction. Strong instructional leaders are able to hire staff members who share the vision and management skills of the group. Bringing effective teachers on board helps to

cultivate the culture of the building to ensure that all students have an opportunity to learn (Murphy, 2002).

Successful schools have principals who are comfortable with their role as the instructional leader. They focus on the teaching and learning so teachers have the opportunity to grow through professional development. Along with the growth and development, an instructional leader must have the courage and support to remove those teachers who are ineffective. Removal of ineffective teachers is not a pleasant thing to do. Strong instructional leaders accept the challenge and do what is needed to ensure high quality teaching and learning (Johnson & Asera R, 1999).

Instructional leadership extends beyond the teachers and students to the community. Leaders must create an environment where parents and community members feel welcome. In successful schools, parents are involved with their students at home to reinforce the learning that is occurring at school. This partnership is created and nurtured through the building level principal in the instructional leadership position. The school must look for ways to make parents feel comfortable at school. Parents will take an active role in their child's education if they feel they are needed. School leaders can establish an

environment in which parents feel wanted and respected. The principal as the instructional leader plays a big role in establishing this environment. Many students and parents in successful schools see their school as a family. Schools that operate as families are ready to do whatever it takes for students to be successful (Scribner & Reyes, 1999).

Ferguson (2003) believes that successful instructional leaders should always demonstrate integrity and ethics in working with students. Acting fairly and treating parents, teachers and students in an ethical manner cannot be taken for granted. Students look to teachers and parents to model the type of behavior that is expected.

Leaders must be able to balance the amount of time that teachers spend on interpersonal issues. Personal issues can take valuable time from student learning. Issues surrounding the student's home life can also decrease instructional time in the classroom. Instructional leaders must establish a learning environment that teachers focus on student learning and avoid being too involved with the student's personal lives (Johnson & Asera R, 1999).

Strong instructional leaders must be able to balance political, social, economic, legal and cultural issues that arise in schools. Instructional leaders must be able to

serve dual roles in schools today. Many times principals may feel like they are a lawyer, social worker and instructional leader all in the same day. Leaders must find ways to overcome issues that arise with students while keeping the focus on learning in the classroom. Principals that can balance all areas at the same time still need to have the time to devote to instructional leadership (Ragland, Asera, & Johnson, 1999).

According to Muijs (2004), it is challenging work to improve schools that are in disadvantaged areas. He believes that improvement will occur if the focus of the instructional leader centers on creating a positive school culture. Extensions from a positive school culture will include parent involvement and teacher development and focus on teaching and learning. Muijs points out that students and parents in disadvantaged schools must first see that the teachers and administrators are concerned about their lives. If students realize that teachers and administrators care about them, they will be ready to improve in their learning.

Clear and Focused Mission

Jim Collins says, "We don't have great schools, principally because we have good schools" (Collins, 2001).

The entire school community of parents, students, administration, teachers and community members must all be involved in the planning the mission of the school. Mission statements become the framework of the school and should be the driving force behind all decisions that are made.

In the effective school there is a clear and focused mission that is shared by all stakeholders in the district. An instructional leader helps provide a clear and focused mission for the building. Staff members accept responsibility for students learning and are ready to do their part to help students be successful. A mission helps students, teachers, administrators and parents have ownership in what is important in their school. Understanding what is important helps the administrator set priorities, the teacher direct a lesson and the student prepare for the class. The mission should consistently emphasize commitment to children demonstrated both in talk and actions (Robbins & Alvey, 1995).

A clear and focused mission helps the school to emphasize what it important and avoid spending time on things that are not. The core mission of the school is centered around student learning. The school mission must be repeated and used as often as possible in the school so

that all stakeholders understand the mission. Once the

mission is understood it should drive the daily

instruction. If the mission is the focus of the school,

then things that happen off task can and will be avoided

(Neuman & Pelchat, 2001). Although the mission statement

drives learning, it cannot be followed if there is not a

safe and orderly environment.

Safe and Orderly Environment

Robert Marzano says, "If students and teachers do not

feel safe, they will not have the necessary psychological

energy for teaching and learning" (Marzano, 2003, p. 5). A

safe and orderly environment is established by promoting

learning while reducing misconduct and ensuring students'

safety. A safe and orderly environment helps ensure that

distractions are reduced.

In an effective school, there is an orderly

environment that is free from physical harm. Many parents

are more concerned about the safety of their child than the

curriculum. All adults must accept that they are on duty at

all times in the school to help ensure a safe and orderly

environment; rules must be enforced throughout the school

with consistency. Inconsistency will destroy the safe and

orderly environment as students will become more focused on what is "unfair" than their learning (Lezotte, 1997).

Climate of High Expectations

In the effective school, the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can learn. There is a climate that fosters that all students can obtain mastery of the school's curriculum. In an effective school, the staff member also believe they can help students to achieve a level of mastery. A teacher's behavior communicates to students that they can achieve, with attention given to both low and high achieving students. Teachers identify what is important and students understand what they need to do in order to be successful. In a climate of high expectations the teacher will also establish an environment that provides opportunities for student leadership (O'Donnell, 2005).

Most people believe that great teachers have high expectations for their students. The important issue is whether or not the teacher has high expectations for himself/herself. Poor teachers can have high expectations for the students while having low expectations for themselves. Schools must establish a school environment that promotes high expectations for students, teachers,

administrators and parents. Mutual respect between the teacher and the student is taught and learned in a climate of high expectations (Whitaker, 2004).

In a climate of high expectations, professional development for the teachers takes center stage. Pittinsky (2005) believes that schools must ensure that all teachers are accounted for in receiving professional development. Schools are facing ever changing challenges with the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers. Teachers face the challenges of time, space and resources in keeping up with professional development.

With time being a major challenge with professional development, changes are occurring in the professional development of teachers. Many states are beginning to use online blackboards so that teachers can interact with others on their own time. Teachers log in the system and progress with programs that meet their desired outcomes. This is a change from the traditional professional development that is becoming very popular. This type of professional development goes along with virtual classrooms (Pittinsky, 2005).

According to Pittinsky (2005), virtual classroom offer advantages compared to traditional classrooms. Teachers who

come together in a traditional classroom for professional

development have the advantage of interaction with peers

along with professional dialogue. After the workshop the

teachers go back to their schools without the support of

the group. In a virtual classroom the professional

development is ongoing and teachers can discuss and conduct

dialogue anytime they wish. This allows for ongoing high

quality professional development for teachers and

administrators.

One time professional development sessions do not

usually have long term positive effects. Ongoing community

practices online allow the professional development to

continue to grow and build with time. It also solves the

issue with time and distance. It is nearly impossible for a

teacher to fly across the country during the school year to

grow professionally. In the virtual classroom, they can

meet with teachers all over the world from their computer.

This is also very positive for budgets that face the

challenges of travel expenses (Pittinsky, 2005).

Professional development of teachers must center on

modeling desired outcomes by the teacher. Students look to

their teachers for discipline and leadership. Teachers who

model real life behaviors in a positive way and tie them to

their taught curriculum improve student learning.
Successful cultural responsive teachers are giving up some
of the quizzes in class for student portfolios that allow
creativity for the students. Professional development for
the teacher must focus on teaching lessons that allow for
learning freedom for the students. Once teachers model the
desired teaching style, students will adapt to reshape
their learning style (Farmer & Hauk, 2005).

Professional development has shifted its focus to
quality mentoring through collaboration with experienced
colleagues. High quality principals have the ability to
create a culture in their building through which teachers
learn from other teachers. Mentoring allows an experienced
teacher to coach a young teacher and help his/her with
their development in the teaching field. In order for
mentoring to be successful, it must go beyond theory and
focus on best practices. The focus for the mentor must be
centered on helping the new teacher improve his/her
teaching and learning skills.

Effective mentors have the ability to demonstrate
leadership strategies while providing day to day best
practice training. A successful mentor becomes a coach for
a young teacher to help his/her grow professionally while

on the job. Mentoring programs do not just focus on teachers; they also are used to help new principals and superintendents in their professional growth (Gray & Walker, 2007).

Frequent Monitoring of Progress

In an effective school, pupil progress is monitored and measured frequently. This is done to ensure that student success is a priority in the classroom. Student academic progress is measured frequently through a variety of assessment procedures. The results of these assessments are used to improve individual student performance and also to improve the instructional program. Frequent monitoring is no longer just monitoring student learning and where necessary adjusting behavior. Teachers pay much more attention to the alignment that must exist between the intended, taught and tested curriculum (Bergeson, 2007).

Achievement data must drive changes in the instructional programs and school procedures. Test data, grade distribution and enrollment patterns are analyzed by race, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status to detect any inequity and to ensure that all students are learning. Summaries of student progress should be shared will all staff members and reported to the students' parents. All

staff members can use the student data to analyze and
evaluate teaching strategies. Leadership from the building
level principal that ensures that the staff uses student
data is vital to foster an effective school (Robbins &
Alvey, 1995).

Standardized tests measure only part of what schools
should be doing. Effective schools don't let standardized
tests take over the entire class, but they use them to help
the school grow and improve. In schools that exceeded
expectations on tests, the perspective of the educators was
refreshing. The teachers and principals in those schools
did not believe in the value of testing more than the other
schools. They used the data and understand that it is
another tool to improve teaching and learning (Whitaker,
2004).

Frequent monitoring of student progress also includes
working on an individual basis with students to determine
how each student improves his/her learning. Schools must
monitor student progress and then adjust teaching in order
to increase the amount of knowledge gained by the students.
This helps to ensure that each student is becoming
competent instead of just getting a good grade. Grades do
not always tell educators everything they need to know

about student learning. Many students may have good grades and not score at high levels on standardized tests (Glasser, 2004).

Even in situations where the students perform well, teachers still must use the data to examine the teaching process. This will help the teacher to understand what worked well to improve student learning. High performance does not always mean effective teaching and learning. The instructional goals and objectives may have been too easy, or the test given may not have been valid. The results of the evaluation provide evidence if needed to make adjustments in the instructional process (Olivia, 2001).

Home School Relations

Initially when the effective schools movement started, the partnership between parents and the school signified that parents understood and accepted the school's basic mission for the students. Today partnerships between the parent and the school are much more extensive. The school relies on parent input and the parent counts on the school to provide them with needed information. It has developed into a working partnership between parents and the school. In an effective school the principal and staff work with the parents to develop a partnership so that they can work

together to ensure positive educational outcomes for the
student (Lezotte, 1992).

According to Marzano (2003), there are three features
of home school relations: communication, participation and
governance. One of the key components of an effective
school is good communication from the school to the parent
and from the parent to the school. Both the building level
principal and classroom teacher share in this process.
Parents are not obligated to communicate with the school.
It is the responsibility of the school to open the
communication channels and provide an atmosphere in which
the parents want contact from the school. Based on studies
conducted by Marzano (2003), the most widely used forms of
communication were newsletters, bulletins and flyers. These
do not provide the parent an opportunity to respond. He
suggests that effective schools will find ways for the
parent to respond with the school so a partnership can be
developed.

It is important that the school and parents form a
partnership to foster the education of the child. Initially
the effective schools movement meant that parents
understood and supported the mission of the school. It has
now turned into a partnership between the school and the

home. If there is a breakdown in the communication and the partnership is absent, the child is at-risk. One of the defining features of an effective partnership between the school and the student's home is communication. A strong partnership between the school and the parents will improve the education of the student (Marzano, 2003).

A good partnership between the parents, teachers and principal helps provide an opportunity for student success. Letters and phone calls with positive information can really help build a relationship with the parents. This can be very helpful if and when negative student information must be passed along to the home. Research indicates that students have higher grade point averages when a positive relationship exists between the parents and the principal. In simple terms, the best ways to improve a student's education is to involve the parents with the education of their child (Wherry, 1992).

Many times parents that are negative about their child's school are just frustrated with their child's education. Effective principals build a relationship with the parents so they can work through issues that arise in the educational process. Many times after parents have expressed their frustrations, they are then ready to work

through the problems their child is facing. Effective

principals have the ability to work through problems that

students and parents face without making the issues

personal. If parents and school leaders work together it

will produce positive outcomes for the student (Whitaker,

2003).

Opportunity to Learn and Time on Task

Teachers in effective schools must allocate a

significant amount of classroom time to instruction. In

effective schools students will be engaged in their

learning. This creates a focus on mastery of competencies

that allows students to learn at varying rates in the

classroom. Some students simply need more time to master

the learner outcomes. Time on task is defined as, "the

percentage of classroom time that students are actively

engaged in learning" (Lezotte, 1992, p. 8).

According to Payne (2002, p. 118) "Teaching is what

occurs outside the head, while learning is what occurs

inside the head." Some students lack the needed cognitive

skills for effective learning to take place. In order for

schools to improve student learning, the necessary

cognitive skills must be present in the student. Mediation

may be necessary to help the student improve their

cognitive ability. Students must be given the time on task in order for the student learning to increase (Payne, 2002).

Professional Learning Community

Richard DuFour (2004) says we must create a professional learning community that focuses on learning rather than teaching. Through collaboration the staff can hold each other accountable for results.

Educators have seen many changes occur in the schools with the role of the principal. A movement is taking shape across the country to reshape the role of the principal from instructional leader to instructional facilitator. Professional learning communities empower teachers through a variety of ways to ensure that learning outcomes are reached (Nelson & Sassi, 2006).

In a successful learning community, all members must ensure that all students learn. In a professional learning community, the core mission shifts from ensuring that all students are taught to ensuring that all student are learning. This shifts the focus from teaching to learning. The role of the principal is to facilitate the shift to learning and help teachers understand that teaching without learning is not successful. Most schools have listed in

their mission statements that all students can and will learn. In a professional learning community school, teachers, administrators and stakeholders pledge to ensure that all students learn (DuFour, 2004).

In order for schools to grow into professional learning communities, they must be able to answer the following three questions:

1. What do we want each student to learn?

2. How will we know when each student has learned?

3. How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

Schools that function as a professional learning community will ensure that the above questions are dealt with in every room. The first two are answered in a similar manner in many traditional schools. The third question separates learning communities from traditional schools. The response to a student who is experiencing learning difficulty is systematic in a learning community school (DuFour, 2004).

First the school must identify students who need additional time and support in a timely manner. Once identified, the focus must shift from remediation to

intervention. In the past our schools have used summer school or course recovery programs to remediate students who failed to achieve. In a professional learning community school, intervention takes place at the onset of learning difficulty rather than waiting on remediation programs. This plan does not ask students if they need help; it directs them to the help until they have mastered the difficult concepts. Professional learning community schools identify those students having difficulty early through programs and interventions developed by their own staffs (DuFour, 2004).

For each student to be successful, data must drive instruction to ensure that learning is taking place. Feedback and data allow the teacher to identify students who are successful and ones who need intervention. Teachers must be allowed time to meet and collaborate to develop a systematic plan for learning developed through sharing best practices. Teachers are the experts in a professional learning community. Ownership and collaboration from the teachers shift the focus from teaching to learning. In this shift the students are active participants who benefit in learning (Bourgoin, Bouthillier, Dicks, & Kristmanson, 2008).

Educators in a professional learning community recognize that they must work together in a collaborative manner to ensure that all students are successful. In order to do this, structures are developed by the staff members who promote a collaborative environment. Movement from shared teaching practices to collaborative learning are present in a professional learning community school. Collaboration improves the teaching to ensure that learning also improves in the classroom. In a learning community teachers hold each other accountable (Hutchings, Quinney, & Scammell, 2008).

The collaboration shifts the focus away from just teaching to learning. Teachers develop relationships that foster communication to develop ideas to help students. Collaboration can be the base for school improvement. Teacher learning teams can meet and use the data from state or national tests to align the curriculum for the classes. Teachers' lessons are developed based on the curriculum that is written from the student outcomes. Through collaboration, teachers can also develop common assessments that are used from room to room so students are prepared for standardized tests (DuFour, 2004).

In order for teachers to meet and have the collaborative time to develop common assessments and plan for student learning, time must be set aside during the work day. It is essential for the collaboration time to be planned and protected on a weekly basis. Teams must develop meeting norms and devote their focus to improving student learning. These norms will help each member stay focused during the meetings to improve student learning (DuFour, 2004).

If a school is going to become a professional learning community, some barriers must be removed. Learning teams must ensure that the written curriculum and the taught curriculum are the same (Marzano, 2003). Teacher conversations must change from concern only on the taught curriculum to student learning.

The time barrier excuse must be removed in order to develop a professional learning community. As Roland Barth (1991) asks, "Are teachers and administrators willing to accept the fact they are part of the problem? God didn't create self-contained classrooms, 50-minute periods, and subjects taught in isolation. We did because we find working alone safer than and preferable to working together" (Barth, 1991, pp. 126-127).

Student growth relies on the teacher and teacher growth must rely on the expertise of the staff. In a collaborative building, the responsibility of professional development shifts from the principal to the teacher. Ownership is much higher if developed by the teacher. Transferring the responsibility to the teacher allows the principal to work with the teacher in dealing with all building issues from budget to curriculum. Once teachers take on the responsibility of their own professional development, they find that they learn more from doing. Once the teacher takes ownership, professional development occurs at all times. Teachers grow professionally in the halls, lunch and after school in a college's room. Students and teachers improve their learning when they work together (Rooney, 2007).

Building a collaborative culture is a mindset and requires a staff that is committed to work together and find a way to be successful. Professional learning communities base their success on results. Focus on results becomes the focus and center of the school. In a result oriented school, data is welcomed and used to provide needed information to the staff. Teachers develop common formative assessments in a professional learning community.

This allows each teacher to use data to improve teaching and learning within their classrooms. Teachers learn to judge their success as a teacher from the results of the data. The shift from the focus on teaching to learning changes the outcomes for all learners (DuFour, 2004).

Professional learning communities require committed effort and hard work in order to be successful. School staff must focus on learning and work together in a collaborative manner to ensure the learning takes place. Each member in a professional learning community holds himself/herself accountable for learning outcomes. A high level of accountability both on a personal level and building level is the driving force behind a successful learning community (DuFour, 2004).

Professional learning communities are occurring around the globe. Teachers in Queensland, Australia, created an environment in their classrooms that focused on their teaching rather than changes in the organizational structure. Teachers who share their best practice ideas in teaching develop a culture that increases learning in the classroom. The sharing and collaboration process is not always an easy process. There is stress and anxiety that goes along with the restructuring process that occurs in a

professional learning community classroom (Andrews & Lewis, 2002).

Changes that were noted in Queensland, Australia, include teachers focused on student learning and moving away from teaching practices. They created and cultivated learning environments that students felt comfortable performing as young adults in the classroom. All teachers interviewed expressed feelings that the professional learning community movement had improved the relationships throughout the community. The process focused on classroom outcomes created a professional learning community that extends beyond the classroom from teachers, students, parents and patrons (Andrews & Lewis, 2002).

Once the teachers involved in the professional learning community training are finished, they face the challenge of spreading the learning across the staff. Many teachers find this to be a challenge since the other staff members have not received the same training. It is not easy to pass along a learning culture that has been developed. Trained teachers find this to be a challenge and long process. Teachers refer to their training as developing a culture of the way things are done instead of a new program (Andrews & Lewis, 2002).

The contribution of the facilitators creates a ripple effect within the staff. Other teachers notice the changes in the halls with conversations along with practices in the classrooms. The professional learning community begins to grow and take shape as all stakeholders become involved (Andrews & Lewis, 2002).

Administration plays an important role in the growth of the professional learning community. It is important for the administrators to be involved in the learning teams while allowing others to lead the groups. Teachers must take the ownership themselves since they are the experts in their fields. Administrators must be supportive and act as a team member instead of the building leader. This is a big change from the role of the principal as the instructional leader. In a professional learning community, the principal empowers the teachers to lead themselves and learn from each other through collaborative meetings (Andrews & Lewis, 2002).

According to Wahlstrom & Louis (2008), the impact of the principal on student learning has been accepted for several decades. Shared leadership from teacher to teacher allows student learning to increase much faster. The principal can only be in one area of the school at a time.

The teachers are in each classroom impacting student
learning every minute of the day. Professional learning
communities allow the building principal to share the
leadership with the staff. Once the leadership is shared,
the principal's role become less important and more
students can increase their learning.

Shared leadership builds a level of trust among the
teachers. Once teachers trust each other, they can engage
in peer observations. Improving student learning comes
directly from improved instruction. In a professional
learning community it is important for teachers to share in
the evaluation of teaching and learning. Peer observations
allow a teacher to go next door and learn a new teaching
strategy or reinforce one of his/her own. Once teachers
build trust in each other, they can feel comfortable to
share their knowledge and teaching skills with each other
(Koops & Winsor, 2005).

Principal Compensation

With the role of the principal continuing to change,
it may be necessary to look at the way principals are
compensated. According to Olson (2007), principals are
rewarded for having more experience. Their salaries are
based primarily on the number of years they have in

education. Olson notes that usually principals receive more compensation for secondary principal positions and larger school districts.

It may be necessary to include principals in pay-for-performance before teachers are included. Teachers may view the inclusion of principals as being fair as changes in compensation are explored. As accountability for schools continues to increase the best way to compensate teachers and principals may be tied to student performance. Maryland is currently developing performance-based pay to implement into its public schools. Maryland's performance-based pay schedule provides annual bonuses up to twelve thousand per year to reward increases in student performance. Performance based compensation appears to be here to stay as states look for ways to meet accountability requirements (Olson, 2007).

History of Missouri School Improvement

The implementation of the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) played a major role in shaping the role of the principal as the instructional leader. Before MSIP, schools were judged primarily by the local patrons on whether or not they were successful. According to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (1990) as

the new system for measuring school quality unfolded, three

significant changes set the new program apart from the

prior approaches to school classification. First, the new

program was to be comprehensive and integrated. For the

first time, the evaluation required evaluating such things

as courses offered, teacher certification, school

governance, administration, curriculum, instruction and

student performance. It also looked at programs in

vocational education, special education and federal

programs. As the student performance data began to unfold

pressure was placed upon the shoulders of the building

level principal to improve the instruction. Principals had

been primarily managers, but after the Missouri School

Improvement Program changes in 1990, it was apparent that

building level principals had to take the role of the

instructional leaders.

The assessment of Missouri public schools through the

Missouri School Improvement Program is overseen by the

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary under

policies of the State Board of Education. Missouri

requirements include high quality professional development

as well at measuring student performance. Student

performance is measured by improvement on the Missouri

Assessment Program (MAP). Performance standards are defined in the Standards and Indicators Manual and base acceptable performance on student performance. Acceptable standards are based on student's mastery or improvement from lower to higher levels. Overall accreditation is assigned considering Resource, Process and Performance of the district (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Annual Performance Report

The Annual Performance Report is issued each year and measures fourteen performance measures in Missouri K-12 districts. Each area on the Annual Performance Report (APR) is listed as "met" or "not met" as it relates to the scoring guide. During the Missouri School Improvement year, a school district must meet at least twelve of the performance measures on the APR to achieve full accreditation. If a school district earns fewer than eight performance measures, it will be placed in provisional accreditation status. If a school district earns fewer than five performance measures, it will become unaccredited and face correction from the State Board of Education (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

Missouri Assessment Program

Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) was developed in accordance with Senate Bill 380 (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007). MAP was developed as a performance-based method of assessing student learning. The idea was to involve students in the performance of an activity, instead of having them answer question with pre-determined answers. This test is still being utilized today in grades 4-8 to measure student performance, and test scores hold schools accountable for reaching the desired outcomes.

Senate Bill 380 increased the amount of money Missouri spent on education by more than $350 million in one year. In his 1992 campaign for Governor, Mel Carnahan pledged to make school reform in Missouri his top priority. After Governor Carnahan took office, a court mandate ruled that Missouri's educational funding was unfair and unequal. At that time, the Outstanding Schools Act was implemented and shaped the accountability in schools that is present today (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1994).

No Child Left Behind

In 2001, President George Bush signed a federal law that increased public school accountability to all time

high levels. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) ensured that all schools would be making adequate yearly progress (AYP) and placed even more pressure on the building level principal as the instructional leader. The No Child Left Behind Law ensures that all children, despite their environment, background or family's financial status, receive an appropriate and equal education. To achieve this goal, all students must be "proficient" (as defined by each state) by 2014. Based on the criteria included in No Child Left Behind, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has established specific annual targets for AYP in communication arts and math. Schools that fail to meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind face school improvement and possible loss of district control (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2007).

As easy as the No Child Left Behind Act sounds on the surface, educators understand the dynamics of the law along with the challenging factors that go into trying to meet the guidelines. As a result of the No Child Left Behind Act, the connection between the school district and Federal government involvement has increased. This has placed increasing pressure on the school districts, teachers, administrators and school boards. Title one funds from the

Federal government to school districts arrive along with the No Child Left Behind mandates. These mandates include increased student performance expectations, teacher certification guidelines, state requirements and school district requirements (McGuinn, 2009).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 rapidly changed the role of the federal government in elementary and secondary education. The No Child Left Behind Act reinforces the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, which at the time was the main federal law concerning public education. Through the 1965 law, the federal governments' role was primarily to provide additional educational funding for the states to aid in the education of disadvantaged students, along with educational research. The No Child Left Behind emphasizes accountability by making funding conditional upon schools meeting academic standards as well as following the policies established by the federal government (McGuinn, 2009).

The No Child Left Behind Act endorsed stricter requirements and expanded the testing of students in public schools. This change in accountability shifted the focus from local control in the school districts to federal accountability and guarantees for every student in every

classroom. The standards created in this act that are considered "successful" one year may be "failing" the next due to the increasing of standards each year through 2014. The percentage of students scoring proficient in math and communication arts must continue to grow year to year regardless of whether or not the student is financially disadvantaged. The No Child Left Behind Act pushes state governments and school districts to help low-achieving students meet the federal guidelines. Students in high-poverty schools must meet the same academic performance standards that apply to all students (McGuinn, 2009).

The No Child Left Behind Act focuses the accountability on results. School districts must ensure that all students are successful. Financially disadvantaged students take the same test each year in math and communication arts. Students are identified disadvantaged based on poverty, race, ethnicity, disability and limited English proficiency. Schools that fail to show the required progress toward statewide proficiency benchmarks are subject to improvement, corrective action and, in some cases, restructuring to ensure that no child is left behind. Schools must ensure that one hundred percent of their students are proficient by 2014 (McGuinn, 2009).

The No Child Left Behind Act places emphasis on educational programs and practices that have proven successful through scientific research. The Reading First program makes federal funds available to school districts that utilize the reading program. The Reading First program requires all reading teachers to adopt the reading first model in their classrooms. Schools that do so may receive federal dollars for training and supplies. School districts that do not qualify for the Reading First grants are free to adopt the reading model they choose. Some districts are merging a combination of several models in an attempt to reach every child (Pruisner, 2009).

No Child Left Behind offers more options for students' education to parents for their child's education. Students attend Title One schools that fail to meet the standards are given the opportunity to attend a higher performing school within their district. Students attend low performing schools are also permitted to use federal funds to acquire additional services from the private sector (McGuinn, 2009).

According to Hill (1996), universal school choice would benefit all children, including disadvantaged, by promoting candid and demanding relationships among

teachers, students and parents. Hill supports the idea that was later put into law with the No Child Left Behind Act that disadvantaged students that are in poor performing schools should be allowed to choose another school of their choice.

The No Child Left Behind is intended to give the state governments and school districts more flexibility with the federal funds in exchange for meeting the federal requirements. As a result, there is less paperwork and more attention devoted to students' needs. Schools have more freedom to spend the resources in the way they choose as long as the students meet the testing requirements and accountability standards. School districts are provided flexibility in teacher training in both instruction and technology (McGuinn, 2009).

The future of No Child Left Behind is highly debated in educational arenas. Davidson (2008) states that the bill currently has very few friends even though it has done some good for schools. The bill allowed each state to set its criteria level of proficiency. This allows some states to set lower standards than others. In doing so, they may appear to have more students achieving at higher levels than are actually doing so.

Alabama lowered their standard of proficiency and are meeting the requirements of NCLB. They categorize all of their districts as passing while only 40% of Birmingham's students graduate from high school on time. The federal law requires students to be tested seven times during their school years. It is not possible to fairly compare states accountability without knowing their level of proficiency. Funding for the law has dropped 12% since signed into law in 2002. Presidential change will most likely bring some changes to a bill that has mixed popularity (Davidson, 2008).

Accountability in schools is being felt from the federal government to state government. Schools have to find ways to deal with all areas of accountability while focusing on teaching and learning. Many states are taking accountability one step further with the implementation of exit exams. Perkins (2005) points out that exit exams can harm students and schools. Exit exams can cause lower graduation rates, narrow curriculum and neglect to higher level learning. If schools focus on preparing students to pass the exit exams they may sacrifice other needed areas of the student's education.

Schools in Austin, Texas, and Jackson, Mississippi, were studied to see how exit exams were influencing the curriculum. In both schools, it is noted that time was increased in tested subjects while decreasing flexibility in course offerings. Teachers in both districts were provided with pacing guides to make sure the tested curriculum was taught. This also ensured that their teaching was aligned to the tests. Success on end-of-course exams, states tests and exit exams demands that all teachers teach the tested curriculum. In many states, this dictates the schedules of the students (Geweritz, 2007).

In California the courts had to decide the destiny of 50,000 students failed to pass exit exams. Graduation was scheduled for June while the lawsuit was pending in the court system. Judge Robert B. Freedman lifted the test hurdle in the court so the students could graduate and receive their diplomas. High stakes testing does not change the fact that the students in California had earned their diploma. Judge Freedman ruled that the students had met the requirements to earn their diploma and the board policy of passing exit exams was overturned (Jacobson, 2006).

Florida, New York, Indiana, North Carolina and South Carolina have all implemented exit exams. Each state has

experienced a decline in their graduation rates. This in

turn forces more students out of school to a global job

market without a high school diploma. Placing so much

emphasis on one test causes extreme pressure on students to

perform and can diminish the educational experience for all

students. Some students demonstrate the mastery to pass the

objectives of a course and fail to demonstrate mastery on

the exit exam (Perkins, 2005).

Many professional testing experts warn against using

any one test to measure accountability. Testing experts

claim it is impossible to find any test that will offer the

validity to ensure that a graduating senior's academic

knowledge is correctly assessed. Trying to do so can lead

to students being denied a diploma who may actually have

the necessary knowledge. It is possible to have the

knowledge and not perform well on a test. Preparing

students to pass one big test can place pressure on the

teachers to narrow their curriculum. If this happens,

students may pass the exit exam and be less prepared for

college than prior generations (Perkins, 2005).

The No Child Left Behind Act has left many states

looking for ways to increase student assessments. Difficult

standards have led to exit exams for courses and

graduation. The stakes remain high and do not appear to diminish anytime soon. States must continue to look for options that look at a variety of areas and not focus on one test (Perkins, 2005).

According to Baskin (2007), exit exams do not always measure how prepared the student is for college. He believes that they best measure the mastery of the state curriculum. This narrow view can diminish how prepared the student actually is for college. States such as Maryland are allowing students who do not pass the exit exam to still earn their diploma through earning credits. Of the twenty three states that responded to the survey conducted by Baskin, only six said their exit exam was designed to measure students' readiness for college.

Schools in Missouri are working to improve not only their annual performance reports but also to meet the challenges of No Child Left Behind. For years, educators have debated how to improve student learning. School districts today are being held to higher levels of accountability than ever before. The building level principal, who in the past was viewed as the manager of the building, is now looked to for help with instruction. Instructional leadership now takes center stage over

discipline in considering principal candidates. Research

has shown that many factors can influence student

achievement including leadership shifting from managerial

to instructional, and accountability playing a bigger role.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

For a number of years, the quality of education in the United States has been questioned and debated. During this debate, the role of the principal has changed as increased accountability has been placed upon schools. During this time, the principal's role has evolved from manager of the building, to the instructional leader, to currently the facilitator. As the facilitator, the principal works closely with the teachers to improve teaching and learning in the building. This change has shifted the focus away from teaching and centered in on learning (Agel, 2008).

The focus of this study was to determine the relationship between instructional leadership and school district annual performance. Sixty school districts in Missouri were examined to determine if there was a relationship of MAP scores, graduation rate and attendance

with years of administrative experience. Data examined included tenth grade Math MAP scores, eleventh grade Communication Arts MAP scores, grades 9-12 attendance and graduation rate. In this chapter, the researcher will review methodology chosen for the study. The statement of the problem, research questions, description of the population, research setting, sampling procedure, research design and treatment of data will be presented.

Questions to be Analyzed

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of the MAP scores, graduation rate and attendance with years of administrative experience. This study examined the following research questions:

1.   What is the relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP?

2.   What is the relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the tenth grade Mathematics scores from the MAP?

3.   What is the relationship between the years of

experience of high school principals and

graduation rate?

4.   What is the relationship between the years of

experience of highs school principals and

grades 9-12 attendance?

Description of the Population

Missouri's high schools are listed by region

throughout the state. The Missouri Association of Secondary

Principals (MASSP) divides those schools into regions to

provide more support for principals. In this study,

research was conducted to look at those high schools that

are located in southwest Missouri as identified by MASSP.

This research was conducted to see if there was a

relationship between instructional leadership and the

school district's annual performance report. School

districts in southwest Missouri with 9-12 high school

principals were selected for this study. The population

totaled 60 schools located in Southwest Missouri. The data

for the study was selected from the Missouri Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education website.

Research Setting

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of the Communication Arts MAP scores, Mathematics MAP scores, graduation rate and attendance with the years of experience of high school principals. The researcher looked at standardized state level tests in Mathematics and Communication Arts. Graduation rates and attendance rates were also examined in the study to determine the relationship to administrative experience of the high school principals. There were four hypothesis tested in this study.

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP.

2. There is no significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the tenth grade Mathematics scores from the MAP.

3. There is no significant relationship between the
    years of administrative experience of high school
    principals and graduation rate.

4. There is no significant relationship between the
    years of administrative experience of high school
    principals and grades 9-12 attendance.

Sampling Procedure

Data from the 2007-2008 school year was used for this
study. All schools took the same standardized test in
Communication Arts and Mathematics during the study period.
Graduation and attendance rates were reported during the
year and published on the Missouri Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education website along with the
Communication Arts and Mathematics scores.

Research Design Procedure

Sixty high schools in southwest Missouri were randomly
selected for the study from the membership list provided by
the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals.
The years of experience of the high school principals in
the selected districts were compared to the tenth grade
level MAP Math test, eleventh grade level MAP Communication
Arts test, 9-12 grade level attendance rate and 9-12 grade
level graduation rate. The data were retrieved from the

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary School
Website.

Treatment of Data

Data generated from the Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education sources were compared using a Pearson
Correlation with the SPSS 11.0 statistical program.
According to Devore (2008) Pearson correlation scores range
from -1 to +1. Correlation values greater than 0.8
demonstrate a strong correlation between the variables.
Correlation values that fall between 0.5 and 0.8
demonstrate a moderate correlation between the variables.
Correlation values less than 0.5 demonstrate a weak
correlation between the variables.

According to the SPSS 11.0 Manual (2001), a Pearson
Correlation Bivariate can be used to measure how variables
are related to one another. Pearson correlations can be
used to see if there is a linear relationship among the
variables examined. The correlation coefficients range in
value from -1 (a perfect negative relationship) and + 1 (a
perfect positive relationship. A value of 0 indicates no
relationship among the tested variables. If a relationship
is found, it does not mean that one variable caused the

other. It simply means that a relationship exists between the two variables.

Data generated from the DESE data source were computed using the person correlation in order to determine a value for r. Values for r were computed by comparing the years of administrative experience of high school principals (dependent variable) to eleventh grade Communication Arts MAP scores, tenth grade Mathematics MAP scores, graduation rate and 9-12 attendance rates (independent variables). A significant correlation was determined using a correlation value greater than 0.5.

The data was examined to determine whether or not the researcher would accept the null hypothesis or reject it. The data collected for each hypothesis needed to indicate a correlation significance greater than 0.5 for the hypothesis to be accepted. If accepted, it was then determined that there was not a significant relationship between the tested variables. If rejected, it was then determined that a significant relationship did exist between the two variables.

Summary

Increased accountability upon schools across the nation has increased the importance of school data.

Missouri like many other states is looking for ways to improve teaching and learning. Accountability is felt by all school employees and centered on the building level principal. Accountability at the federal level with the No Child Left Behind Law continues to force schools to look at strategies and plans to improve student performance each year (Johnson Jr. & Uline, 2005).

This study was conducted in order to determine if the experience of the high school administrator had a significant relationship with the eleventh grade Communication Arts MAP scores, tenth grade Mathematics MAP scores, graduation rate and 9-12 attendance rates. It was hypothesized that a positive relationship could help reinforce why we generally compensate principals for their years of experience. If there is not a relationship between the experience and the performance, this study could help open the debate of merit pay for school accountability.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

Sixty schools in Southwest Missouri were randomly selected for the study. Data from the selected schools was selected from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website and analyzed. Due to the data being retrieved online, there was a 100% collection rate.

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between the experience of the high school principal and the performance of the district. Data collected from sixty randomly selected Missouri school districts were used to compare the years of experience of the high school principal and tenth grade MAP Mathematic scores, eleventh grade MAP Communication Arts scores, 9-12 attendance rates and 9-12 graduation rates.

Data Analysis

This chapter is designed to present the results of the data collected using a Pearson Correlation. The data

compared in this study was analyzed using the SPSS

statistical analysis program version 11.0. The following

hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between the
    years of administrative experience of high school
    principals and the eleventh grade Communication
    Arts scores from the MAP?

2. There is no significant relationship between the
    years of administrative experience of high school
    principals and the tenth grade Mathematics scores
    from the MAP?

3. There is no significant relationship between the
    years of experience of high school principals and
    graduation rate?

4. There is no significant relationship between the
    years of administrative experience of high school
    principals and grades 9-12 attendance?

Null Hypothesis #1

There is no significant relationship between the years

of administrative experience of high school principals and

the eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP.

It was hypothesized in this study that there is not a

significant relationship between the years of

administrative experience of the high school principals and the eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP.

Table one below shows the comparison of the two groups. It can be determined by the results of the data in comparing eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP and years of administrative experience of high school principals that there is not a significant correlation between the two groups. The Pearson Correlation results of -.037 indicates a negative relationship that is statistically weak. As a result of this relationship data, this null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 1:

Correlation of Communication Arts MAP scores with high school principal experience

N	Pearson r
60	-.037

Null Hypothesis #2

There is no significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the tenth grade Mathematics scores from the MAP. It was hypothesized in this study that there is not a significant relationship between the years of experience of the high school principals and the tenth grade Mathematics scores from the MAP.

Table 2 shows the comparison of the two groups. It can be determined by the results of the data in comparing tenth grade Mathematics scores from MAP years of administrative experience of high school principals that there is not a significant correlation between the two groups. The Pearson Correlation results of .171 indicate a positive relationship that is statistically weak. As a result of this relationship data the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 2:

Correlation of Mathematics MAP scores with high school
principal experience

	N	Pearson r
	60	.171

Null Hypothesis #3

There is no significant relationship between the years
of administrative experience of high school principals and
graduation rate. It was hypothesized in this study that
there is not a significant relationship between the years
of experience of high school principals and the graduation
rate.

Table 3 below shows the comparison of the two groups.
It can be determined by the results of the data in
comparing graduation rate and years of administrative
experience of high school principals that there is not a
significant correlation between the two groups. The Pearson
Correlation result of .028 indicates a positive

relationship that is statistically weak. As a result of
this relationship data the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 3:

Correlation of graduation rate with high school principal
experience

N	Pearson r
60	.028

Null Hypothesis #4

There is no significant relationship between the years
of administrative experience of high school principals and
grades 9-12 attendance. It was hypothesized in this study
that there is not a significant relationship between the
years of experience of high school principals and the
attendance in grades 9-12.

Table 4 below shows the comparison of the two groups.
It can be determined by the results of the data in
comparing grades 9-12 attendance and years of
administrative experience of high school principals that

there is not a significant correlation between the two

groups. The Pearson Correlation results of -.047 indicates

a negative relationship that is statistically weak. As a

result of this relationship data the null hypothesis was

accepted.

Table 4:

Correlation of grades 9-12 attendance with high school

principal experience

N	Pearson r
60	-.047

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The goal of every school in the state of Missouri is to maximize student achievement. The state publishes the Annual Performance Report each year to inform the public of the school's performance. The purpose of the study was to determine the significance of the MAP scores, graduation rate and attendance with years of administrative experience. There were four hypothesis questions that were analyzed using the Pearson Correlation, and it was determined to accept the null hypothesis in each area.

The first hypothesis was analyzed to determine if there was a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP. It was determined by the Pearson Correlation score of –.037 to accept the null hypothesis. From the data collected and analyzed, there was not a significant

relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the eleventh grade Communication Arts scores from the MAP.

The second hypothesis was analyzed to determine if there was a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the tenth grade Mathematic scores from the MAP. It was determined by the Pearson Correlation score of .171 to accept the null hypothesis. From the data collected and analyzed, there was not a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the tenth grade Mathematic scores from the MAP.

The third hypothesis was analyzed to determine if there was a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the graduation rate. It was determined by the Pearson Correlation score of .028 to accept the null hypothesis. From the data collected and analyzed, there was not a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the graduation rate.

The fourth hypothesis was analyzed to determine if there was a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the grades 9-12 attendance. It was determined by the Pearson Correlation score of -.047 to accept the null hypothesis. From the data collected and analyzed, there was not a significant relationship between the years of administrative experience of high school principals and the grades 9-12 attendance.

Conclusions

The significance of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between the years of experience of the high school principals and the performance of the district. Eleventh grade Communication Arts MAP scores, tenth grade Mathematics MAP scores, graduation rate, and grades 9-12 attendance rates were compared to determine if a correlation existed.

The researcher anticipated that experience of the building leader, would have a positive relationship with district performance. Within the context of the limitations of this study, the researcher found just the opposite. There was not a significant relationship between the years

of experience of the high school principals and the
performance of the districts.

As a result of these findings, one must consider if
schools should continue to base principals salaries on
years of experience. The researcher anticipates that in the
future, principals salaries will include a performance-
based component. In the future, salaries of all school
personnel may be linked to district and student
performance.

On the basis on the data presented in this paper, the
following conclusions are offered:

1. From evidence gathered in this study, there did not
    appear to be a significant relationship between the
    years of experience of high school principals and the
    eleventh grade Communication Arts MAP scores.

2. From evidence gathered in this study, there did not
    appear to be a significant relationship between the
    years of experience of high school principals and the
    tenth grade Mathematic MAP scores.

3. From evidence gathered in this study, there did not
    appear to be a significant relationship between the
    years of experience of high school principals and the
    graduation rate.

4. From evidence gathered in this study, there did not appear to be a significant relationship between the years of experience of high school principals and the grades 9-12 attendance.

Recommendations

As a result of the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. A study should be conducted to compare experience of high school principals and performance of districts with another sample of schools.

2. A study should be conducted to compare the experience of high school teachers and performance of the districts.

3. The state of Missouri should investigate plans to relate administrators' compensation to annual district performance.

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