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Beginning Principals and Their Educational Training Programs

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BEGINNING PRINCIPALS AND THEIR
EDUCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

by

Jeffrey Dale Francis
August 1, 2003

A project submitted to the Education Division of the Lindenwood
University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

Education Specialist

Education Division

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 the Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Jeffrey Dale Francis

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Date: August 1, 2003

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

iii.

The following people and organizations helped me greatly in writing and formatting this paper. They are in no particular order: Kelly Francis, Audrey Connor, MASSP, Ono Monachino, Vonciel Beiswinger, Nancy Schneider, and all the administrators who participated in my survey.

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This project has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Education Specialist at Lindenwood University by the Education Division

<u>Nancy Schneider, Ed.D.</u> Dr. Schneider, Major Advisor	<u>January 2, 2004</u> Date
<u>Richard A. Boyle,</u> Dr. Richard Boyle, Committee Member	<u>1/2/04</u> Date

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Variable	mean	mode
1. Graduating institute where the participant received his administrative training	2.73	3
2. Principal's association	2.93	3
3. Mentors	4.00	5
4. Colleagues within the district	3.46	3 and 5
5. Colleagues from another district	3.66	5
6. Professional experience	4.14	5

Note. Mean scores were based on a Likert type scale from (most helpful) 5 to (least helpful) 1.

Table 2

Mean and mode scores of how induction activities have helped the participants in preparation for administration.

Variable	mean	mode
1. Principal induction activities provided by the school district	2.88	NA
2. Principal induction activities provided by the state	3.42	3
3. Principal induction activities provided by the institution from where the participant received administrative training	2.29	3

Note. Mean scores were based on a Likert type scale from (most helpful) 5 to (least helpful) 1.

Table 3

Factors participants have listed that were detrimental in their success while entering their first year as a principal.

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1. Support of building principals/superintendent.	8
2. Support from teachers.	6
3. Professional experience as a teacher within the district.	5
4. Leadership Academy	3
4. Family support	3
5. Years within the community	2

Note. The responses were ranked based on the number of times they were listed from an open-ended question. The first response was listed the most followed by the second, third, etc.

List of Abbreviations

IEL-Institute for Educational Leadership.

ISSLC-Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium.

LEAD-Leadership in Education Apprentice Design.

NASEP-National Association of Elementary Principals.

NASSP-National Association of Secondary School Principals.

MASSP-Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals.

STAR-Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits

INTRODUCTION

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the subject. It begins with a brief account of the early attempts to explain the phenomena of life, and then proceeds to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced from time to time. The second part of the book is devoted to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced from time to time. The third part of the book is devoted to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced from time to time.

ABSTRACT

Summary. The Bureau of Statistics estimates there will be a 10% increase in job employment for all types of school administrators by the year 2006. Also, by the year 2003 it is estimated that 50% of all current principals will retire. In the absence of seasoned administrators, school districts will be searching a field that is primarily composed of skilled teachers that lack the experience of administration.

Most college and university programs in Missouri present knowledge about school administration and require an internship regarding school administration. However, this framework does not fully help students develop skills that translate that knowledge into practice.

There are numerous induction programs offered by educational state departments and school districts that are trying to meet the need of administrative vacancies. This paper will reveal some of these programs and offer recommendations on what colleges and universities may do to keep up with the demand for school principals.

CHAPTER I

Beginning Principals and Their Educational Training Programs

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates there are approximately 80,000 public school principals in the United States and that there will be a 10% increase in job employment for all types of educational administrators by the year 2006 (Olson, 1999). It is estimated within five years one half of the current principals in the United States will retire (Klauke, 1998). Additionally, according to Davis (1997), for various reasons one in three principals will be terminated. Most states do provide due process for principals who are in danger of losing their positions but with limitations. In the absence of administrative tenure, administrators become “teachers on special assignment.” Considering these factors, Davis asserts a need for understanding the kinds of leadership behaviors that develop problems for principals (Bulach & Pickett, 1998).

In the absence of seasoned administrators, school districts will be searching a field that is composed primarily of skilled teachers that lack the experience typically required to fulfill the role of an administrator. One solution school districts may consider is to look for an innovating model whereas in-district teachers receive some administrative grooming (e.g., an instrumental role in the process of some administrative decisions) to provide potential candidates with some experience so that they may essentially replace current principals in the possibility the position becomes available.

The role of a principal is diverse and involves the supervision of certified staff, support staff, evaluation and the ability to help improve the skills of teachers, work to develop and maintain high curriculum standards, interaction with other colleagues and

community members, preparation of budgets, ensuring students meet national academic standards, and attention towards with students' emotional welfare (Education Administration, 2000). This general job description of a principal places him in the center of a communication network where he must prioritize his workload if he is to succeed. While these roles empower him to exercise authority, he must foster the interests of the institution as well as the concerns of the staff both of these being interdependent. Consequently, as he succeeds in saddling his multifaceted roles, he nurtures the support of his certified staff, whose acceptance of his competency, in turn, upholds the interests of the institution. As revealed here, the role of administrators, primarily principals, is not simple. Rather, this position, important in the functioning of a school system, requires not only training but also, more significantly, experience in using that training.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study was to report the findings from survey data collected to determine if career-beginning principals would be better prepared to lead schools if they were inducted through a principal apprentice program.

Rationale for Study

The next few years will offer some rewarding career opportunities for teachers who are aspiring to become administrators. According to Daresh, there are 3 major reasons for these opportunities: incentives for early retirement for veteran administrators decrease in the labor force, and student enrollment increasing. Most likely these vacancies will be filled with many teachers inexperienced in administration (Daresh, 1986). The purpose of this study was to explore and provide insight on what programs,

events or actions have proven beneficial. In addition, steps and recommendations were addressed for all stakeholders to invest for tomorrow's educational leaders.

Hypothesis

Career-beginning principals will be better prepared to lead schools if they participate in principal induction programs.

Limitations of the Study

The prior experience of a principal as a teacher (or any other profession) was not a controllable factor in the selection of principals. Furthermore, neither their years of experience in one district versus another nor their previous course of study in an administrative training in an institution of higher learning were controllable. For the purpose of this study, the factors of race, gender, demographics, and age were not addressed. Additionally, factors such as district size and number of administrators per district were not evaluated.

The participants were principals or vice-principals who had acquired at least one year of administrative experience. These participants were employed as an administrator during the 2002-2003 academic year. This study was conducted using 15 administrators that responded from a sample of 25 (60%). The 15 administrators that responded were from school districts in central Missouri. There was not a follow up conducted for candidates who did not respond to the survey.

Definitions

Administrator and *Principal* were interchangeable terms used to identify the subjects as well as the positions studied.

Induction program was a program offered to novice principals to prepare them for their career as an administrator. E.g. STAR, LEAD, and "Grow Your Own".

Inexperienced principal was a principal who had completed his first year in his administrative career.

ISLLC referred to Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium

LEAD referred to an induction program for Leadership in Education Apprentice Design to prepare people for the principalship, with a strong focus on instruction.

Management Profile Program referred to an integrated administrator professional development model developed at the Texas A & M University Principals' Center (Erlandson, & Wilmore, 1990).

STAR referred to the Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits programs, an apprentice program that identifies and trains prospective principals within the district.

Summary

The induction of a new principal affects all those who are involved in any aspect of the school. With this brings uncertainty and high expectations among teachers, parents, and district supervisors. Considering the "estimated 60 percent of principals who will reach retirement age by the year 2000," and the challenges of school leadership, "it is reasonable to assume that many inexperienced principals will fail unless they receive support during the critical first year" (Parkay and Currie, 1992, p. 71).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many contend the central problem in principal training programs is that most university programs present knowledge about school administration, but do not help students develop skills that translate that knowledge into practice. For a novice principal the effectiveness of the academic preparation program relies on the university faculty's awareness of the adult learners' need to be actively involved in the learning process. The design of an administration program must provide reality-based and active participation (Ginity, 1995).

According to Ginity, courses in such fields as school-community relations, schools finance, administering school services, curriculum development, school law, and personnel management are generally associated with increasing effective performance. The learning activities, as well as the organization for the academic preparation of school administrators, must be responsive to the needs of the adult learners (Ginity, 1995).

Becoming an administrator in the public school system requires training that many educators have journeyed into but never completed the qualifications. In most states, becoming a principal requires a minimum of a master's degree and additional certification. More than a dozen states test aspiring principals before licensing them, and at least forty states require formal evaluations. To be certified in the state of Missouri one must obtain a Master's Degree in Educational Administration then pass the state assessment, commonly known as the ISSLC assessment. However, even the candidates who pass their state assessment may be unaware of other real life conditions or situations an administrator may encounter (Keller, 1998).

Theory

There are some things that may not be taught in schools of educational administration. For instance, the steps that need to be taken on how to handle a furious parent over a bus situation when you are not in charge of transportation or the guidelines of explaining to a teacher or parent that a student does not qualify for special education services because he/she does not meet eligibility requirements (Wilmore, 1995). A common occurrence is for an inexperienced principal to succumb to the parents' demands on bending the rules for their child or encountering the request from a parent on how to raise a child that does not follow the rules at home.

School districts are aware of many circumstances that arise within the school and realize that many veteran administrators know how to handle these problems. The seasoned principal has the experience and usually the reputation that helps eliminate the negative attention that could be focused on the school (Leadership for Student Learning, 2000).

Whereas, a novice principal has greater chances to make a mistake due to incorrect decisions, timing on issues, inexperience, or laying the new foundation that stems from having a reputation. Consequently, many school districts are reviewing hiring practices that emphasized image over skill, and are beginning to focus on a more comprehensive and well-thought-out principal recruitment and selection process (Klauke, 1998).

Research

According to Ferrandino, most Americans are aware that schoolteachers are becoming scarce and furthermore the public is starting to take notice that there is also a shortage of administrators. In March 1998, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) confirmed a study that found when it became available, very few qualified people were interested in accepting a principal position. Furthermore, these vacancies are not isolated but are inclusive of country-urban, suburban, and rural K-12 schools (Ferrandino, 2000).

School districts have started to resort to in-district training programs, career ladders, and internships, as well outside recruitment to groom prospective administrators. For example, in 1987 Oregon's David Douglas School District began its Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits (STAR) program. According to Anderson, this program identifies and trains prospective principals from within the school district (Klauke, 1988).

According to the NAESP-NASSP survey, about one-fourth of the districts polled had a program of recruiting and preparing candidates from among current staff members (Olson, 1999). In 1998, Philadelphia launched a program for Leadership in Education Apprentice Design (LEAD) to prepare for the principalship—the theme being “grow your own.” Interest in the relationship of establishing an adequate system of formulating a process to assist in the transition of teacher into the role of a principal has generated a number of programs. These programs have been developed as a reaction to problems in finding qualified individuals. Keller states in reviews from Sergiovanni that the “training

principals receive often does not prepare them to be the type of leader that the research says is needed" (Keller, 1998 www.edweek.org/ew/vol-18/11prin.h18). Various task forces, committees, and individuals have viewed different types of actual apprentice programs geared towards developing the aspiring principal. Recommendations for promoting the success of a new administrator's first year have been documented by administrators who have had many years of administrative experience and those who have just put a few years of practice under their belt (Potter, 1996).

In the 1992 September issue of the NASSP Bulletin, a journal of 6 keys to success for new administrators were emphasized: (1) develop a personal image of effective leadership, (2) find a mentor with the skills of effective leadership skills, experience in the administrative role, good listening and communication skills, the ability to ask the right questions (as much as the ability to provide answers), willingness to see the protégé excel, and knowledge of the political and social realities of a school system "knowing how to get things done around here", and (3) seek help from colleagues, (4) be patient, (5) set priorities, and, finally (6) remember why one is there (Daresh & Playko, 1990 p. 43-54). Above all, the key to a good start for all prospective administrators is to believe that you belong there and you are the best possible person for the job (Daresh, 1992).

Similar advice to beginning principals from Selke and Laube in a later issue from the NASSP Bulletin suggests: (1) know exactly what is expected, (2) know what one believes in, (3) be committed to the job, (4) be prepared to handle stress, (5) communication is essential, (6) treat all people with dignity and respect, (7) reflect before one reacts, (8) avoid win-lose situations, (9) strive for ongoing, continuous improvement, and (10) remember that one cannot do it alone (Selke, Laube, 1995 p. 111-114).

“For many years, school administrators have voiced dissatisfaction with the way university training prepared them for the realities of life in school administration”. Sometimes new principals are intimidated to ask for help, afraid that it may be seen as a sign of weakness or a sign that they cannot handle the job. Fortunately this could be lightened if university programs could help students develop skills that translate knowledge into practice (Ginity, 1995 p. 34-41).

Many pitfalls can be avoided through various types of apprentice programs. With the increasing demands that immediately descend upon beginning principals, they need to be prepared better with a working knowledge of educational leadership more than mere textbooks can provide (Selke, 1995).

The process of preparing aspiring principals should occur earlier than the final semester that usually includes a semester-long internship that briefly paves the road. Educational students need to make a transition by means of experience, application and reflection (Murray, 1995).

A program designed to implement these strategies is currently underway at the University of Northern Iowa. The goal is to experience first hand the perceptions, roles, values, and best advice from seasoned administrators. Students are required to interview in detail a principal or a vice-principal on daily performance and tasks. This one on one relationship opens up a meaningful dialogue between the two professionals. Instead of the protégé being lectured, he can engage in the actual thought processes and appreciate the dexterity of mentor (Selke & Laube, 1995).

In 1998, Philadelphia implemented the aforementioned LEAD program. The program included two six-week internships under exemplary principals, an applied-

research requirement, and a performance-based assessment of the candidate's leadership skills. According to Karen Kolsky, the acting principal at Taylor Elementary School and one of the program's first 16 graduates, "it really prepared us to be principals. No college course really prepares you for the job" (Olson, 1999 www.edweek.org/ewkvol-18/sprinh18).

The School Administrators Association of New York State has a half-day program called "Look Before You Leap" for teachers whom principals have tapped as potential school leaders. The program allows teachers to perform administrative tasks that are closely monitored by a seasoned principal. The tasks are linked to supervision, attendance verifications, data entry, and discipline. The program is designed to get the aspiring principal's feet wet. This program does contain a cost in which the School Administrators Association has proposed to the state of New York to provide financial assistance and incentives for districts that hire administrative interns (Olson, 1999).

Mentoring relationships have proven effective if followed by a regimented guideline and both parties are able and willing to work cohesively together. Mentoring tends to be more successful when the novice principal has input into who their coach will be (Wilmore, 1995).

One program that has been successful is the Management Profile, an integrated administrator professional development model developed at the Texas A & M University Principals' Center (Erlandson, Lacy, and Wilmore, 1990; Wilmore, 1992; Erlandson, Atkinson and Wilmore, 1994). This profile is built around a videotaped interview of open-ended questions with a principal. Trained assessors then assess the video. The responses are compared to standards built around a three-tiered matrix of leadership

functions, roles, and task areas. Once the data is compiled to the uniqueness of the principal, the school district is encouraged to choose a mentor that is most likely compatible for the needs. This mentor should be able to help and guide the new principal for the next three years (Wilmore, 1995).

Typically, colleges and universities train their students to be effective in administrative challenges and management of all school functions. The crux of the problem is that these institutions present only the knowledge based concepts of school administration. These institutions are obligated to provide the essential skills needed to translate that knowledge into practice (Leadership for Student Learning, 2000).

University of Northern Colorado has designed a creative program for the academic preparation of its school leaders. This change has introduced new concepts that focus its course work from knowledge concepts to frameworks of practical applications in school administration (Daresh and Barnett, 1993).

These frameworks reflect a shift from individual courses in traditional areas as school law, supervision, finance, school-community relations, and personnel to a core set of five integrated learning experiences: Understanding Self, Shaping Organizations, Understanding People, Understanding Environments, and Using Inquiry (Ginity, 1995).

Refining the frameworks will help aspiring principals appreciate their own strengths and weaknesses. This will allow those to find ways to compensate their skills. The program applies the importance of building relationships between the school and the community, understand and implement strategies to effectively motivate staff, and to keep up with technology the program instills the utilization and processing of data that is user friendly for all stakeholders (Ginity, 1995).

Summary

Ginity recommends the "learning by doing" activities in a real-world environment that enables students to apply theoretical learning to leadership skills by instituting yearlong internships. The conclusion in a study by three full year internships produced a clear and distinct picture of what life as a school principal entails. This internship, similar to a doctor's residency, gave administrative interns the chance to learn and practice technical skills under the supervision of an experienced practitioner. The full-time internship provided and strengthened the link between the university preparation and the expectations that come with the job (Ginity, 1995). Intern programs have proven beneficial because, too often, school districts have gone through an elaborate process of selecting new principals who, when hired, were given the keys to the building, disappeared into the sunset and only reappeared if or when they get themselves into trouble (Wilmore, 1995).

On a different level, school districts can play a vital role in grooming a principal. The initial step is to identify possible candidates for the position and adequately finance the induction program. Careful planning must take place among policymakers and followed through by a team of evaluators. The team must be able to make adjustments and improvise when situations occur. In essence, the district and universities can mold educational leaders that fit the needs of all school districts (Leadership for Student Learning, 2000).

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Most school administrators come from the ranks of teaching and obtain masters degrees on their way to achieving a principal's certification from the state. Efforts to clarify what first time administrators should know and do were completed by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). Growing pressure on school systems from the federal and state agencies to improve student achievement has placed a greater responsibility for instructional leadership. Influenced by ISLLC, instructional leadership is now a priority as administrator preparation programs are restructured.

The principalship is now a focus of monumental concern for scholars. Many practitioners conclude that the principal is the key for learning institutions to be effective. Theorists and researchers have valued the view that the principalship is crucial and it has been widely accepted (Leadership for student learning, 2000). Numerous research studies have been conducted on, "what a principal needs to know;" however, this study tries to identify what preparations have helped the aspiring administrator prepare for the real world experience.

Subjects

A sample of 15 administrators in secondary and elementary education were surveyed. These administrators had 10 years or less of experience as a principal or vice-principal in public education. It was assumed that all principals surveyed had met the qualifications required in all universities including ISSLC certifications required throughout the state of Missouri. Additionally, these principals were employed as administrators during the academic year 2002-2003.

The selection process was composed of practicing secondary and elementary principals or vice-principals. Each candidate was pre-screened in order to eliminate any appointees with significant experience as acting principal. The candidates were divided into two groups: (1) Principals or vice-principals who had participated in any induction program other than an internship required by a university and (2) principals or vice-principals who had only participated in an internship required by a university.

Sampling Procedure

The administrators who had an administrative position when the study was conducted received a three-part survey (see Appendix). The volunteer principals were asked to complete the survey and questionnaire within one week. The subjects were obtained from a list given to the researcher by the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals. These administrators were then selected randomly and mailed a copy of the survey. Surveys were sent out to 25 candidates and 15 (60%) were returned. The volunteers who returned the responses back on time were classified as candidates for this informative study.

Research Setting

This study puts forward the establishment of a voluntary survey given during the summer of 2003. The participants were allowed to complete the survey wherever they chose. They had approximately one week to complete and return. The participants were informed in the cover letter that the results would be kept confidential.

Research Design

The survey along with a cover letter stating the guidelines of the study was mailed to each participant. . The participants were issued a prepaid self-addressed envelope for convenience and assurance of retrieving the survey. There were three parts to the survey, (a) personalized information, (b) scale items, and (c) open-ended questions. One part of the survey contained a standard questionnaire based on personal and professional characteristics of the subject and their school district. This information was sought to differentiate any other variables that may become viable to investigate in future in-depth research.

The final part of the survey consisted of two open-ended questions designed to cover key parts dealing with preparatory programs for principals and tasks of major concerns for novice principals. These questions were designed to gather insight that may not have been depicted by the core data.

Instrumentation

The core data collected included scale items (Baker, 1991) that pertained to pre-existing conditions, internal and external issues, personal issues, professional support, and induction activities. This data helped to lead and identify concerns many groups of organized institutions deem critical for the future of the educational leaders of tomorrow.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data was collected and assessed: (1) the written records of the survey were compared and evaluated; (2) the summaries of data were compared and contrasted using mean scores; (3) the analysis of data was conducted using a qualitative approach; and (4) the open-ended answers were ranked accordingly to the frequency of their responses.

Summary

This paper provides a preliminary examination of practicing principals in regards to their preparation and experiences they have received in their professional training from perspective colleges or universities. The content of preparing teachers to become principals has typically fallen on the shoulders of higher learning institutes. These institutes may need to refine or simply reinforce their curriculum based on the needs of their patrons, for it is the aspiring principal who must meet the challenges of transition from teacher to administrator.

The transition for a principal is a complex one and the demand placed on the novice principal can be cumbersome. The beginning principal must be prepared to implement a diverse range of skills and in the process of developing these attributes they need as much practical experience as possible in a real setting.

Looking back at the concerns, frustration problems, and challenges a beginning principal must overcome can help lift the burden or anxiety of a new and aspiring principal. The data collected should help school districts and institutions of educational administration to collaborate and devise meaningful strategies to help prepare the educational leaders of tomorrow in Missouri.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The research was guided by three questions: (1) To what extent did the participant find help from professional support elements during his first year as a principal? (b) What type of induction activities did the participant experience that helped him in preparing for his role as a principal? (c) What steps or events made a difference in the success the participant had while beginning his principalship?

The first question was calculated by determining the mean scores based on a Likert type scale. The mean scores suggest that mentors were the primary indicators of professional support for the beginning principal while the graduating institute from which the principal received his training scored the lowest. The type of mentor varied from administrative survey. However, ten respondents implied that their superintendents were primarily the ones they sought for help and advice. These respondents replied vaguely as they asked any and every type of question. (see Table 1)

The second question was calculated by determining the mean scores based on a Likert type scale. The mean scores suggest that induction activities offered by state programs was the primary indicator that was most helpful in preparing the participant for his role as a principal while the graduating institute from which the principal received his training scored the lowest. The sample population contained seven administrators that were involved in the Leadership Academy sponsored by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in Missouri. These respondents regarded this experience as a very helpful program. Other participants mentioned local workshops or

seminars as helpful. The names of these workshops or seminars were not given but provided by DESE or NASSP. (see Table 2)

The third question was calculated by listing the most frequent response from an open-ended question. The main steps or events that were listed the most by the participants were the support of other building principals or superintendent within the same district followed closely by the support of teachers and experience as a teacher. Nine respondents mentioned that moral support from their family was essential for their success as an administrator. The moral support came from the superintendent, teachers within the building, and family. Other types of support surrounded issues as finance and discipline. (see Table 3)

Analysis of Data

Table 1

Mean and mode scores of how the participants perceived professional support in relation to their success as a principal.

Variable	mean	mode
1. Graduating institute where the participant received his administrative training	2.73	3
2. Principal's association	2.93	3
3. Mentors	4.00	5
4. Colleagues within the district	3.46	3 and 5
5. Colleagues from another district	3.66	5
6. Professional experience	4.14	5

Note. Mean scores were based on a Likert type scale from (most helpful) 5 to (least helpful) 1.

Table 2

Mean and mode scores of how induction activities have helped the participants in preparation for administration.

Variable	mean	mode
1. Principal induction activities provided by the school district	2.88	NA
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3. Principal induction activities provided by the institution from where the participant received administrative training	2.29	3

Note. Mean scores were based on a Likert type scale from (most helpful) 5 to (least helpful) 1.

Table 3

Factors participants have listed that were detrimental in their success while entering their first year as a principal.

Variable	Number
1. Support of building principals/superintendent.	8
2. Support from teachers.	6
3. Professional experience as a teacher within the district.	5
4. Leadership Academy	3
4. Family support	3
5. Years within the community	2

Note. The responses were ranked based on the number of times they were listed from an open-ended question. The first response was listed the most followed by the second, third, etc.

Deductive Conclusions

There were 15 administrators from the mid-Missouri area that participated in the survey. The size of the school districts was mainly small rural districts. Eight participants came from a school district of 300 to 1,000 students. One participant came from a very small school district of 48 students. Five participants came from medium size school districts of 1,200 to 2,400 students and one participant came from a very large school district of 18,000 students. There was no distinction made between the size of school districts. Consequently, there was no variation between the participants' responses based on size.

After analyzing the data it was relevant to note that the participants relied heavily on colleagues from within their districts. The analogy of "learn on the job" was very prevalent from the survey. Other resources the participants depended on were professional development programs offered by the state. Some participants were graduates of the Leadership Academy while others took advantage of workshops or various seminars provided by professional organizations. The participants of the survey did not name the workshops or seminars but mentioned that DESE or NASSP sponsored them.

There was strong evidence to support that traditional principal programs offered by colleges and universities were disconnected from the real life drama that unfolds on the job while serving as a principal. Principal training from these institutions was seldom embraced with hands-on experience, which is so critical to the profession.

After analyzing the surveys it was clearly apparent that no members of the sample population had any involvement with induction programs through their school district or

graduating institution. Murray has pointed out that many colleges and universities prepare aspiring principals by offering only one semester of practical application to the administrative career (Murray, 1995). In addition, Selke stresses the importance that colleges and universities must change their curriculum to accommodate the skills needed for the beginning principal (Selke, 1995).

Preparing to become a successful leader obviously begins well before one is appointed to the job and includes experiences as a student and a classroom teacher. The fault did not exclusively lie on the colleges and universities because they have been limited in what expectations they could fulfill. For example, the time aspiring principals had was limited due to their demands in supporting a financial career at the same time as completing course requirements.

In addition to the time required for acquiring certification and licensing, the finances available to cooperating schools have been limited due to shortfalls of revenue. A cooperating school would have to spend time searching for desired candidates, expend money for salary and insurance for a substitute teacher. Finally, the assessment of a program would have to be evaluated and overseen by a competent director.

Summary

Making changes will not be easy. As school districts, colleges, and universities seek solutions, they will encounter the same obstacles that other scholars and researchers have faced regarding these issues. Many of these obstacles were stated in a report given by a task force given to the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL).

The IEL task force recommended filling the pipeline with effective school leaders. The plan called for increasing the numbers in the field of school administration

and retaining effective school leaders. Further recommendations included support for the profession through improved preparation, and raising entry and exit standards of college preparation programs, and exploring alternative pathways to the principalship for capable leaders. Task force members sought to guarantee quality and results through evaluating principals more effectively and more frequently especially in the areas of accountability and data driven results (Leadership for Student Learning, 2000). These vigorous challenges were identified but continue to confront colleges and universities while these institutions try to improve the preparation training for aspiring principals.

Higher education institutions must be stimulated to change the mediocre preparations to enhance and ensure the quality of aspiring principals. The partnerships between school districts and universities need to shift from producing a middle management boss to an educational leader who is proficient in all realms of education. The prospective principal needs to be refined in the areas of culture, business, and technology and competent in the dynamics placed on the education system. If higher education does not stimulate change in its preparation for aspiring principals then school districts will get what they have always had.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This preliminary study was based on 15 participants who were currently serving as principals or vice-principals in the Missouri Public School System. The participants had received their administrative training from various institutions throughout the state. One participant received his training from the state of Illinois and another from the state of Kansas. The participants' responses to induction experiences varied, which made it difficult in grouping them according to the extent of their administrative induction activities. Furthermore, some responses were thrown out of the study due to many participants marking (NA) not applicable. Some of the information obtained from the survey was not used due to the fact that it will be used to focus on a more in depth study of beginning principals in the future and did not pertain to the focus of this study.

Future studies need to concentrate on a group of principals who have experienced quasi-principal roles as noted from STAR and LEAD programs compared to administrators who have experience only through institutional training. In the state of Missouri there are no known programs where teachers are selected and trained to become administrators inside their districts. This could cause the study to be construed as vague and ambiguous due to the various types of training each principal has received and the number of participants included in this sample population.

The study does stimulate interest to search deeper into different training programs for selecting and training candidates for administrative duties. There has been substantial evidence that supports the shortage of principals and this shortage will only increase in the future (Ferrandino, 2000).

The study coincides with Ginity's assessment that beginning principals do not receive their most valuable training through colleges and universities (Ginity, 1995). Instead the novice principals rely on their past experiences as teachers and the support of other administrators. The need for training quality administrators through apprentice programs is clearly stated in the review of literature.

Effective apprentice programs would include genuine experiences in instruction, teacher evaluations, discipline, finance, and scheduling in real schools. Colleges and universities should revise standards that make clear the purpose of these programs. Closer partnerships between principal training programs and local school systems are critical to develop hands on experience for the aspiring principal.

Implication for Effective Schools

College personnel have been trying to stay on the cutting edge of producing qualified principals. For instance, several states have introduced new licensing procedures in conjunction with state universities (Keller, 1998). These strategies have helped certify quality principals but have done little to help train individuals. In addition, universities have required aspiring administrators to complete principal internships with seasoned administrators. However, these internships turn out to be more of an observation of a practitioner at work rather than letting the protégé take part in decisions that make an actual impact.

Recommendations

The practice of an internship may help to a certain degree, but from this study, findings show that this practice has limited application. These shortcomings do not fall on any entity. Instead the school districts, universities and the cooperating state need to

collaborate more in regard to developing programs to help select and train aspiring principals.

The IEL task force recommends developing an effective principal induction program. The IEL task force suggests tackling three critical challenges: (1) increasing the job market for aspiring principals, (2) supporting the profession, and (3) guaranteeing quality and results (Leadership for Student Learning, 2000).

The IEL would increase the job market by targeting recruitment and retention efforts to better reflect the demographics of student populations. They recommend revamping principal preparation programs to focus on real life situations and skills a principal needs to be successful, developing higher standards for principals and more rigorous means of credentialing principals, and retooling retirement and retention to increase principals' freedom to move across the state without sacrificing important benefits (Leadership for Student Learning, 2000).

The IEL would support the profession by providing professional development. They believe principal salaries and benefits should be sufficient to attract and retain the best candidates for the job. They encourage school districts to alleviate unnecessary and unproductive stresses by providing the principals with the resources and flexibility to delegate responsibilities and distribute leadership roles. Further, they support enhancing autonomy and accountability for building level decisions.

The IEL recommends ensuring quality and results by providing frequent and meaningful assessments that are designed to generate information for professional growth and school improvement. They encourage establishing rigorous and fair systems of accountability. The system should offer incentives for success and consequences for

performance that is in the control of the principal. Finally, the IEL supports increasing data and information systems that determine whether strategies work, how they work, and how well they may work for other schools.

There lies a common thread when addressing all three questions. According to the IEL, to insure a quality principal requires colleges and universities to revamp their principal preparation programs from antiquated models to real life occurrences. They should provide meaningful professional development within the school district. Finally, it is important to institute accountability that is fair and does not focus on factors that principals have little influence.

Colleges and universities could begin to make changes that are beneficial for all. The first step is for these institutions to openly communicate with each other and find what data is needed to begin a effective study of what is the best practice for addressing the needs of school to obtain quality personnel for school administration. The institutions would have to make changes in the curriculum department and begin to establish better relationships with local school districts.

School districts would have to accept the new and more applicable relationships that higher education's institutes are trying to establish. There would have to be a sharing of needs between the two entities that is conducive for all stakeholders.

Finally, DESE and other professional organizations would need to be included to help establish guidelines and provide support for institutions and school districts that are not performing to expectations.

Presently, the financial status for schools is at an all time low and to be fair schools have always been limited in funds. Establishing the processes would take

incredible amounts of time, resources and funding at a time that is not currently doable. This does not mean that small steps can be initiated and built upon at a later time.

Summary

Funding to support universities and school districts to implement an apprentice type program should come from all involved government agencies. If appropriately funded, the aspiring principal could be paid a salary comparable to a teacher or a beginning principal. The job description should entail all the duties of his predecessor with the notion he is on a probationary status. If the quasi-principal completes his probationary period successfully and the school district wants to employ him as an administrator, then the new principal should be obliged to render his services to that school district for a contractual time as this is where he received his training. Likewise, once the probationary period is successfully completed and the school district does not need a new administrator, then he should be let go as in today's practice.

This is a win-win situation for the aspiring administrator and the school districts. Novice principals can gain valuable experience beyond the instruction provided by their graduating institutes. The school district wins by seasoning their novice principal at the financial reimbursement of the state and the university. However, if school districts, colleges, and government agencies continue their antiquated programs then they will continue to get what they have always had.

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June 30, 2003

Dear Administrator:

I am currently an assistant principal at Laura Speed Elliott in Boonville Missouri. I am working toward completion of an Education Specialist degree in Administration. I am conducting a study, which is part of my graduate program.

The attached survey will be given to approximately twenty current administrators who have ten or less years of experience as a principal or assistant principal. Confidentiality of responses will be preserved. The survey contains a questionnaire, several questions with scale items, and two open-ended questions; however, your responses are very important for the data I need to gather. The completion of this survey is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate in this study, please fill out the permission form at the bottom of this page and return it along with survey. Due time constraints, I would appreciate it if you could mail the survey back in the self-addressed envelope provided within one week from receiving this letter. The names of administrators will not be identified in the study. If you would like to see the results of this study, please contact me at Laura Speed Elliott.

I will undoubtedly appreciate your time and professionalism.

Sincerely,

Jeff Dale Francis
Laura Speed Elliott
Boonville R-I School District
660-882-6649

Mr. Francis:

I _____ am willing to participate in this anonymous administrator survey concerning the training programs administrators have experienced.

Administrator Signature

Date

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Name (optional) _____ Gender _____

Age _____ Ethnic Background _____

1. Number of teaching years in the district where you are appointed as a principal or vice-principal. _____
2. Number of total years as a principal. _____
3. Number of total years as a vice-principal. _____
4. Number of years as principal/vice-principal in your current position. _____
5. Number of years as principal/vice-principal outside your district. _____
6. Number of building principals and vice-principals in your district. _____
7. Number of students in your building. _____
8. Number of students in your district. _____
9. Where did you complete your educational administrative training?
 _____ What year? _____
10. List any educational professional organizations you belong to.

11. Have you ever been involved in an apprentice program? Yes or No (please circle)
 If yes, please list. _____
12. Did any school district provide a program to prepare you for an administrative position? Yes or No. If yes, please list the school district and the name of the program.

SURVEY

To what extent did you find the pre-existing conditions at the school being a major problem (5) or not being a problem (1)?

Socio economic status of students.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Financial situation of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Community's view of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Staff discontent resulting from the previous principals' style of leadership.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
School organization.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Other conditions.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

To what extent have the following internal issues presented a problem for you at some stage during your first year as a principal? (5) Is a major problem and (1) is a minor problem.

Establishing priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Coping with a wide range of tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Dealing with a large number of decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Finding out the daily routine of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Curriculum development.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Establishing a discipline policy.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Dealing with student problems.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Establishing/improving consultation procedures within the school district.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Establishing/improving channels of communication within the schools.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Managing staff.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Working with school finance.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Maintaining adequate staffing.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Difficulties caused by the practice and style of the previous principal.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Working with problems related to the school building.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Managing the mail/information flow.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

To what extent have the following external issues presented a problem for you at some stage during your first year as a principal? (5) Is a major problem and (1) is minor.

Developing a good working relationship with:						
School support staff.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Central office.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
School board.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Working with parents and their problems.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Working with patrons of the community.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Issues arising from school politics.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Issues arising from government policies.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Creating a better public image for the school.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

To what extent did you find the following professional support to be helpful during your first year as a principal? (5) Is most helpful and (1) is least.

Graduating institute where you received administrative training.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Principal's association.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Leadership academy.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

Mentors.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Apprentice programs provided by the school district.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Supervisors.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Colleagues within the district.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Colleagues from another district.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Professional experience.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Other. Please list.						

If you attended any of the following induction activities, indicate the extent to which you found them most helpful (5) to least helpful (1) in preparing you for your role as a Principal.

Principal induction activities provided by the school district.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Principal induction activities provided by the state.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Principal induction activities provided by the institution from which you received your administrative training.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Other. Please list.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Professional Organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

To what extent did you find the following personal issues to be a major factor during your first year as a principal? (5) Is a major factor and (1) is a minor factor.

Personal stress.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Time management.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Family domestic difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5	NA
Personal support.	1	2	3	4	5	NA

The open-ended questions.

1. Rank three key steps/events/actions that made a difference in the success you had in entering and beginning this principalship?
2. As you have taken up the position of principal, what do you see as the major tasks that lay ahead for you as a principal in this current year?