2002

Ethical practice in the work lives of Iowa public high school principals

Deborah Hellman Hunter
Iowa State University

www.manaraa.com

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Ethical practice in the work lives of Iowa public high school principals

by

Deborah Hellman Hunter

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education (Educational Administration)

Program of Study Committee:
Donald G. Hackmann, Major Professor
Jan R. Bartlett
Kathleen K. Hickok
Joseph H. Kupfer
Janice D. Walker

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2002

UMI®

Graduate College
Iowa State University

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation of

Deborah Hellman Hunter

has met the dissertation requirements of Iowa State University

Signature was redacted for privacy.

Major Professor

Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Major Program

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Single words that would have meant little in the general population 20 years ago have become verbal shorthand for the ethical and moral challenges that are now a part of our everyday world. Stakeholders in public education participate in matters that literally make the difference between life and death for individuals, schools, communities, humankind, and the biosphere.

What are some of these meaning-laden words? Hear one: "Chernobyl." The word has come to signal technological and biological vulnerability. Accounts of the nuclear plant meltdown as told by Soviet engineers and authorities detail the decision by two electrical engineers to override safety systems and alarms in an unauthorized test maneuver (Medvedev, 1991). Kidder (1995) refers to the April 26, 1986 explosion, destruction, subsequent fallout, and loss of life as a "moral meltdown" (p. 33). Where were the values of responsible authority and integrity, concern for community, the environment, and the future?

Hear another: "Challenger." The nation's grief was palpable as millions watched television coverage of the space shuttle disaster in disbelief long into the night of January 28, 1986. Needless death tarnished the bright star of the space program. This tragedy happened not only by failure of the temperature-sensitive "O" rings, but by failure of some to have adequately expressed professional misgivings (*Report of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident*, 1986). There is a need to judge when to push one's beliefs and opinions beyond the invisible social and professional boundaries that complicate the workplace. Every day the specific knowledge and skills of the individual must be harmonized and synchronized with the beliefs and values in organizations, society at large,

and beyond. At what moment does the intensity of shrill discord or imminent danger require the individual to sound the discordant note of disagreement, concern, even alarm or insubordination?

Hear one more: "Columbine." On April 20, 1999, two disgruntled students took the lives of 12 fellow students, one teacher, and wounded 24 others (Erickson, 2001). Since that tragic day, the word "Columbine" is a bitter pill of dumbfounding societal complexity that threatens to poison our hopes of a better future through education. Questions related to school culture, as well as cultural and societal factors in every community, are impossible to separate from more traditional questions of leadership, curriculum, accountability, and finance that must be answered in order to bring schools forward with excellence in the 21st century.

No matter how fearsome the challenges and complex the issues which are recognized instantly in the linguistic shorthand of key words such as "Chernobyl," "Challenger," and "Columbine," one thing is certain: Giving up is not an option. These three event-related words are samples of the language that signals the beginning of new ways to conceptualize our world. The common ground in each of these events is the interplay of morality and ethical decision making in the success or failure of humankind's ability to work and learn in relative safety and peace.

The events of September 11, 2001 changed the collective consciousness of the nation (Kahle, 2002). The physical destruction of the World Trade Center, the attack on the Pentagon, multiple terrorist highjackings of aircraft, and loss of life have exacted an incalculable toll. The boundaries of the lives of families and loved ones expanded, our notions of kinship broadened irrevocably. The writing is on the wall in a scrawling graffiti

that no longer requires full words. It takes only the cryptic shorthand of "WTC" and "9/11"

to communicate the moral urgency to better think, learn, teach, lead, and live ethically.

Education as an Evolving Moral Endeavor

Individuals in isolation and in groups search for knowledge, understanding, and

guidance in many ways and in many places. In organized groups this search may take the

form of religion, education, or a combination of both. This inquiry begins with human search

for purpose and understanding, minds thirsty and seeking, like roots to be followed and

investigated:

> There can, however, be no such thing as reflective morality except where men [and
> women] seriously ask by what purposes they should direct their conduct and why they
> should do so; what it is which makes their purposes good. This intellectual search for
> ends is bound to arise when customs fail to give required guidance, and this failure
> happens when old institutions break down; when invasions from without and inventions
> and innovations from within radically alter the course of life. (Dewey & Tufts, 1909,
> p. 198)

The clarity of these words belies the complexity of the double bind in which

educational stakeholders find themselves today. Reflective people striving for good purposes

attempt to integrate ethical practice into their work lives. However, simultaneously schools

are undergoing reform; quite literally, they are learning institutions under construction.

Stakeholders are the planners, architects, and system designers responsible for a structure that

will support education as a moral enterprise theoretically as well as in every specific

circumstance on a daily basis. The interpersonal tools and the knowledge and skills brought

to this endeavor came out of yesterday's crumbling institutions (Habermas, 1990). Today,

wearing hard hats and working fast, stakeholders must build collectively, and collaboration is

rarely quick or easy (Senge et al., 1999). At a time when it seems that our world trembles, the wisdom and intelligence of reflective practitioners provide a beacon of light to be followed.

In the seminal work, *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching*, Goodlad, Soder, and Sirotnik (1990) brought a new perspective to bear on the discussion of school reform:

> Schools and the people in them are caught up in a host of contradictions and the inevitable conflicts between individual and group interests and well-being. One would hope that teachers and administrators are well prepared to deal with these contradictions and conflicts in steadfastly fulfilling their educational mission. Unfortunately, they are not. (p. xii)

Not only did they find that educators working in schools were ill-equipped to address the ethical challenges to be faced in the school setting, but the problem was even more disturbing because of the critical climate of the times. In the 1983 document, *A Nation at Risk*, the National Commission on Excellence in Education delivered multiple broadsides to the educational ship of state in the United States. The call to arms for moral leadership by Goodlad et al. amounted to yet another volley directed at American education: shot at again—and hit.

The concept of education as a moral endeavor has been emerging in the literature for some time (Purpel, 1989; Schön, 1983; Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 1988). Feinberg (1990) expressed the challenge in broad scope stating, "Education does have a moral mission, and that mission has to do with the creation of a public in a democratic society" (p. 180). The moral leadership of school administrators has emerged as a critical piece in articulating a vision of excellence and advancing school reform (Beck & Murphy, 1997; Rebore, 2001; Sola, 1984). Recognizing the school as a moral institution and the school principal as a moral agent, Greenfield (1991) called for a more systematic introduction of ethics into the training of school administrators.

Heslep (1997) explains that moral agency is marked by interaction, knowledge, freedom, and purposefulness. Because these attributes apply to all stakeholders in the educational process, it follows that moral agents in educational leadership include administrators, teachers, counselors, staff, students, school board members, parents, politicians, judges, and others. As a leading moral agent, the principal is the orchestrator of the voices of multiple moral agents.

The emerging awareness of the ethical dimensions of our everyday world is certainly not limited to life inside the schoolhouse walls. Beck and Murphy (1993) describe demographic, political, organizational, and academic changes occurring in a relatively short span of time that have placed ethics prominently in discussions of educational leadership. The leadership of schools requires a vision, an agenda for activities and outcomes, which draws strength from basic beliefs. Beck and Murphy state, "Ethical behavior is crucial in operationalizing that agenda or vision successfully" (1993, p. 13).

The consequence of changing demographics include the ethnic makeup of neighborhoods, students living in poverty, racial tensions, religious diversity, power struggles within and between schools and school boards, and board members with political agendas (Beck, 1996). Fundamentally inequitable conditions raise the stakes in challenging moral decisions. Responding appropriately to issues such as information regarding HIV, sex education, student privacy rights, and school safety are examples of some of the specific ethical dilemmas faced in public schools today.

Standards and Expectations for Ethical Leadership

An individual administrator may begin by examining laws, rules, and policies,

searching for creative solutions and compromises. Clarifying and standardizing expectations

often takes the form of dialogue leading to a professional code of ethics (Plant, 1998).

Just such a process was undertaken originally in 1966 when The American Association

of School Administrators (AASA) assumed a leadership role for the guidance of ethical

behavior for school administrators, publishing a Code of Ethics that has been embraced by

numerous leading professional educational organizations (AASA, 1996). The code was

revised to its current form in 1981, and in 1985 an accompanying course of study was

developed (Kimbrough, 1985) as a tool to increase awareness and understanding as part of

the dissemination process. The code is not binding in that the penalty for being in violation is

denial of membership, and an administrator can practice without being a member of AASA.

The crux of the difficulty associated with codes of ethics is that the code serves as a guide,

not a litmus test for judging whether a professional is acting in an ethical manner.

Within more recent school reform efforts, the Council of Chief State School Officers

(CCSSO) (1996) has established ethics as one of six major components of the framework for

school leadership today. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)

standards were authored and approved by a consortium consisting of 32 education agencies

and 13 educational administrator associations that have worked through a cooperative

process to establish this framework. Six standards have been identified that specify the

knowledge, dispositions, and performances essential for consideration in the professional

development and licensing procedures for school leaders. ISLLC Standard Five states, "A

school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by

acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner" (CCSSO, 1996, p. 18).

The consortium recommends principles of practice, beliefs and values to which

educational administrators should commit. The dispositions of ISLLC Standard Five evoke a

clear picture of the ethical challenge school administrators face. These state:

> The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:
> 1. the ideal of the common good
> 2. the principles in the Bill of Rights
> 3. the right of every student to a free, quality education
> 4. bringing ethical principles to the decision-making process
> 5. subordinating one's own interest to the good of the school community
> 6. accepting the consequences for upholding one's principles and actions
> 7. using the influence of one's office constructively and productively in the service of all students and their families
> 8. development of a caring school community. (CSSO, 1996, p. 18)

The importance of the ethical component of school leadership brings to mind Fullan's

(1997) question, "What's worth fighting for?" Forging tools for advancing moral leadership

in education is worth fighting for and is the purpose of this study.

Developing Agents of Ethical Educational Leadership

The research literature in the overlapping areas of ethics and educational leadership has

developed a ring of urgency, especially concerning administrator preparation (Beck, 1996;

Bull & McCarthy, 1995; Noddings, 1992, 1999; Strike, 1999). Beck and Murphy (1997) see

the following four objectives as critical competencies for the administrator:

> 1. Be able to see the ethical issues embedded in problematic situations;
> 2. Understand moral principles that have relevance for the problem;
> 3. Be able to make decisions about courses of action using these principles; and
> 4. Be able to justify their decisions to themselves, to colleagues, and to the larger public. (p. 61)

Progress toward improved administrator preparation and support is complicated by the multitude of approaches to issues of morality and ethical stance (Hare, 1997). Classical philosophical theory has given rise to a rich tradition of thought, study, and dialogue. The dialogue continues, evolving both at abstract levels and in the expanding tradition of professional and applied ethics (Winkler & Coombs, 1993).

Threads merge in ways that are remarkably complex. What is true or real, how it is known, and how it can be learned are facets that affect how people think, make decisions, and ultimately act. What people believe to be true in these areas has a multiple effect because it determines *how* they think about their personal and professional lives, as well as *what* they think, believe, value, and decide. How and what they think, in turn, affects how they learn, another concern of this inquiry.

The Interplay of Philosophy, Moral Theory, and Ethics

Philosophy and moral theory are foundational to ethics (Geirsson & Holmgren, 2000). Scholars vary widely in what they consider to be essential in a summary of the most important ideas in philosophy and moral theory (White, 2000). In this inquiry the challenge is to listen for both that which concerns and that which guides school principals as they encounter ethical issues in their work. For this reason the literature review casts a broad net in an attempt to prepare both the researcher and the reader for the myriad of possibilities to be found among individuals with their particular histories, beliefs, and in their particular situations (Crawford & Nicklaus, 2000).

Moral theory and theories of moral development are like slippery fish with the philosophical net their background. Neither their next individual move nor their collective

turn is predictable, because moral theory is emerging and in many ways speculative

(Thomas. 1997). Whether the specific topic is personal moral development (Kohlberg. 1981).

moral development in the professions (Rest & Narvaez, 1994), a developing ethic of care

(Gilligan. 1982; Noddings, 1984). justice (Rawls, 1971), or a combination in search of

common ground (Katz. Noddings, & Strike, 1999), be assured that these fish are evolving.

Both the reader and the researcher are challenged via the review of literature to tolerate, even

appreciate. the multiple species to be discovered in this ethical sea.

The Need for School Administrators

Given the esoteric nature of philosophy. moral theory. and ethics. it is no wonder that

more immediate demands take precedence in the competition for the time and focus of school

administrators. The job is so demanding. in fact. that there is concern that there may not be

the number and the caliber of educators ready and willing to assume the challenge of an

administrative position (McAdams. 1998; Winter. Rinehart. & Muñoz. 2001). Costs related

to technology. aging facilties. and construction collide with increasing budgetary restraints,

creating a financial juggernaut of scarce resources that become the immediate problem of the

administration. According to the School Administrators of Iowa (2000). Iowa school districts

are facing an urgent shortage of qualified school administrators. Between the years 2000 and

2003. an estimated 100 superintendents and 350 principals are expected to retire. This

shortage is not unique to Iowa but also is developing nationwide. The difficulty of attracting,

recruiting, and retaining school administrators is addressed by McAdams (1998), who

suggests that significant changes need to be made in job restructuring, supporting, nurturing,

and developing school administrators.

Factors that have been identified as problematic by those considering entering the principalship include paperwork. bureaucracy, time commitments, emphasis on standardized tests, litigation, and discipline problems (Harris, Arnold, Carr, Lowery, & Worsham. 2001). Additional factors identified by White, Rinehart, and Muñoz (2001) included long hours, less vacation time, less job security, and time away from family. All of these factors combine to sap the enthusiasm and courage of educators considering the challenge of the principalship as well as those who have already shouldered the responsibility.

Statement of the Problem

The problem to be examined is that administrators do not always know what is right, or which of many competing rights holds primacy. Confusion and uncertainty work together, undermining their capacity to manage and endure (Marshall & Kasten. 1994). Public school administrators frequently are faced with difficult ethical issues without having the background. tools. or support that would assist in exploring possibilities and making the best decision. It is the task of the school administrator to navigate and integrate standards of good conduct that seem to be multi-layered, as they pertain to the individual, the profession, the school, the community, and society. Administrators are faced with a multitude of recurring dilemmas when they must choose one moral value over another (Greenfield, 1991).

It can be challenging for any individual to make sound moral decisions on private matters. However, it becomes even more problematic when moral issues are weighed in the bright light of public scrutiny by institutions and individuals coming from a plethora of competing interests (Cooper, 2001). Simplistic phrases such as "enforce the policy," "be consistent," "be fair," and "tell the truth," sound clear and straightforward, but gloss over

underlying complexities. When balancing awareness of the personal and professional moral compass, the administrator must communicate succinctly, yet adequately share the pertinent facts of a case with enough specificity to capture the nuances required to give fair consideration to the true situation.

With the need to attract, prepare, and retain excellent educational leaders, more needs to be done to include opportunities for collaboration and communication between and among practicing and aspiring administrators. There is a critical need for ongoing support throughout principals' professional careers (McCay, 2001). Some models are beginning to emerge in the literature and are being introduced through administrative preparation programs. However, most experienced administrators "have been untouched by these new approaches and are left to find their own ways in the midst of value conflicts and ethical dilemmas" (Marshall & Kasten, 1994, p. 11). There is much to be learned about how school administrators face ethical issues as well as how to better prepare and support them in this endeavor.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to understand how selected public high school principals in the state of Iowa make meaning of the ethical issues they face. An additional purpose is to determine what theoretical frameworks and practices they find to be helpful when considered in the light of their own stories and specific experiences. Their reflections also included exploration of how to adapt and apply these theoretical frameworks and practices for the improvement and support of the professional development of practicing and aspiring administrators.

Research Questions

This study focuses on the following five research questions:

1. What circumstantial/situational detail do Iowa public high school principals perceive as important in understanding the context of. and in the resolution of. an ethical problem or dilemma?

2. Do gender and/or size of the school district play a role in how public high school principals face ethical issues in schools?

3. What theoretical frameworks (such as ethical fitness, dilemma paradigms, and resolution principles) play a role in how public high school principals make meaning of ethical issues?

4. How does the satisfaction of a public high school principal. when reflecting about the outcome of an ethical problem or dilemma. contribute to change in his/her stated attitude toward the job/profession?

5. How can the experiences of public high school principals positively affect professional development for other school administrators as they learn to more effectively address ethical issues?

Rationale for the Study

Investigating moral theory and ethical practice in the daily life of school administrators requires that the inquiry be grounded in the real and particular situations or stories that are part of the experiences of building-level school administrators (Strike & Ternasky, 1993). This study focused on school administrators consciously reflecting on ethical issues encountered at the building level of public high schools. Persons working as administrators in

the school setting face an onslaught of situations which require the ability to think, verbalize, and clarify issues when gathering information and proceeding down the road of decision making. A culture in turmoil places ethical decision making at the forefront of the leadership challenge with increasing frequency and with high stakes consequences.

Determining how to assign relative weight to various insititutional guidelines, rules, and expectations in the light of personal and professional moral duties is no easy task. This process is complex because of competing values and beliefs, specific multiple points of view represented by those involved in the situation, and social/cultural pluralism in the public school setting. There is a growing movement among scholars and in preparation programs "to assist administrators in the effort to set forth an articulated set of professional values or a platform on which they stand for their professional careers" (Marshall & Kasten, 1994, p. 11).

Using a combined quantitative and qualitative approach, Klinker (2000) surveyed and interviewed numerous MetLife/NASSP State Principals of the Year. They expressed dismay that educators are increasingly failing to choose the principalship, and "[T]he common refrain was 'no one wants to do this job anymore'" (Klinker, 2000, p. 97). To say, "no one" is a bit of an an overstatement, but the concern it represents is borne out by current analysis of anticipated shortages of school admininstrators. It is clear, however, that more must be done to learn about and support school administrators in this aspect of their work.

A healthy conception of both organizations and individuals includes the use of systems thinking with reflection and support in a learning community (Senge, 1990). Keeping in mind the wisdom of these broad concepts while using a dialogic approach among school administrators provides an opportunity to bring voice to both the questions and answers

public high school principals bring to bear when discussing the ethical issues they encounter in their work. Using shared ground to bring together the sense-making of individuals adds to the body of knowledge of and for school administrators in the aggregate, enriching and supporting the profession.

Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions of this study include the following:

1. Administrators responding to the letter of invitation to be interviewed read and understood the information provided and made a willing and free choice to participate in the study.

2. Administrators, when participating in the interviews and other subsequent communication, were honest in the stories, experiences, and opinions they shared related to ethical issues they have faced and in their perceptions about related issues.

3. Administrators, when participating in the interviews and during subsequent communication, were honest and thoughtful in representing their ideas and opinions relating to concepts, theories, and strategies which they have found to be helpful (or not helpful) in making meaning of the ethical challenges they have faced.

4. Administrators who elected to participate in member checking via phone or e-mail following the interview were honest and thoughtful as they provided feedback to the researcher regarding the balance between the accuracy and trustworthiness of the confidentiality aspect of the transcription, the sense of the analysis, and fit of the synthesis suggested by the researcher.

Delimitations

The following delimitations apply to this study:

1. Participants included only high school principals who had served at least one year in their administrative position in a 9–12 or 10–12 comprehensive public high school in the state of Iowa.

2. Because of the qualitative phenomenological nature of the inquiry, there was no expectation that findings would be statistically generalizable to any given population. However, trustworthiness and transferability of what was learned is desirable and ultimately judged by the reader of the study based on the quality of the data and analysis.

3. This study did not seek to identify levels of moral reasoning nor specific decision-making techniques of school administrators.

4. This study did not address values clarification, character education, or service learning which often are associated with ethical issues.

Definition of Relevant Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined:

High School: Comprehensive public school in the state of Iowa comprised of grades 9–12 or 10–12 with a full complement of programs, activities, and services, as distinguished from vocational/technical, alternative, or other special settings.

Large School District: Public school district in the state of Iowa with enrollment of 3,000 students or more.

Medium School District: Public school district in the state of Iowa with enrollment of 1.000 to 2,999 students.

Small School District: Public school district in the state of Iowa with enrollment of fewer than 1,000 students.

Meaning-making: "An interactive process of seeking order, pattern, and significance, which is dependent upon and stimulated by the conditions in the environment" (Piper, Gentile, & Parks, 1993, p. 20).

Values: "Those things we care about, that matter to us; those goals or ideals to which we aspire and by which we measure ourselves or others or our society" (Weston, 2001, p. 12).

Moral Values: Those values that give voice to the needs and legitimate expectations of others as well as ourselves (Weston, 2001, p. 12).

Ethics: The deliberate process of re-thinking, prioritizing, and integrating moral values (Weston, 2001, p. 12).

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: Chapter 2 reviews selected literature relating to philosophy, moral theory, and practice; education as a moral endeavor and the ethical dimensions of school leadership; and making meaning in our personally and professionally situated lives. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology used for the study and describes the participant selection process, interviews, and communication strategies used in data collection. Chapter 4 presents, analyzes, and interprets the data collected during the study. Chapter 5 details and summarizes the meanings that emerged

from the data, describes inferences that may be drawn from the study, and provides

recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This overview brings together philosophical theory leading to moral reasoning and ethics, and the moral dimensions of education and leadership. These concepts provide a conceptual framework for how principals make meaning of ethical issues encountered in the school setting.

Historically, ethics gained a foothold in the research and literature of higher education and public administration prior to its more recent visibility in the literature of K–12 education (Callahan & Bok, 1980: May, 1980; Robinson, 1985). The purpose of this literature review is to set the stage for uncovering, reconsidering, and perhaps reconstructing conceptualizations and progressive practices in the professional development of school leaders.

Philosophy as Foundation for Moral Theory and Practice

All people attempt to make meaning of their world. This individualized meaning, which evolves over a lifetime, is considered a personal philosophy. At its most elemental, it is a personal answer to the life question: "Why?" (Frost, 1962). People have developed a shared language over time in order to communicate ideas, concepts, and theories with greater clarity and sophistication. The amorphous question "Why?" and the slippery quest for "The Meaning of Life" are parsed with greater specificity by philosophers. Frost (1962) identifies major issues that always have been a challenge to our thinking: a) the nature of the universe, b) man's place in the universe, c) good and evil, d) the nature of God, e) fate versus free will, f) soul and immortality, g) man and the state, h) man and education, i) mind and matter, and j) ideas and thinking. Several of these issues are boldly integral to the world of education. It

follows that, although educators may vary in their fervor for philosophy, there is at least a

minimum professional interest held in common among educational professionals and

stakeholders.

A comprehensive treatise on the history and evolution of philosophical theory is

beyond the scope of this literature review. Nevertheless, it is important to begin with

philosophy because the roots of moral theory and practice spring from the aquifer of a great

philosophic tradition. Categorizing and labeling branches of moral theory and practice varies

among authors and editors (Frost, 1962; Geirsson & Holmgren, 2000; Johnson, 1994; White,

2000). For the purposes of this study, a simple breakdown is most preferred in bringing a

common language to the lay philosopher.

Philosophical theory is based on knowing

As Stevenson (1998) puts it, "The fact is, philosophy is unavoidable" (p. 4). Philosophy

in ancient times had an extremely wide scope, including subjects that have since come to be

studied separately such as science, math, theology, psychology, sociology, and economics.

For this reason, it is difficult to rule out much about life that is not rolled into the ancient

Greek meaning of the word philosophy: "love of wisdom" (Stevenson, 1998). The good news

for the challenged educational practitioner is that deep, lengthy, and what to some would

seem formidable study of philosophy is not necessary to become better equipped to face

ethical issues.

It is important to understand that several foundational issues related to reality and

knowing have a profound impact upon the quest for understanding. The three main

subdivisions of philosophy have to do with being, knowing, and acting. The first is Ontology:

the study of being, or existence (Stevenson, 1998). Ontologists ask, "What do we mean when we say something exists?" This would not seem to be a burning issue for the school administrator on a daily basis. However, when considering questions of the existence of the good, the right, the moral, or the best, the question no longer seems so easy.

The second subdivision is Epistemology: the study of knowing (Stevenson, 1998). Epistemologists ask, "What do we mean when we say we know something?" Educators considering the merits of teaching and learning via observation, experience, and inductive and deductive reasoning are familiar with the concept of knowing in the context of education. Epistemology, how we know, is not an area the school administrator is likely to find troubling. To know the status of a budget or demographic information, "hard data" provide credible evidence. To determine what really happened during an incident, multiple interviews of persons involved and observers, and even videotape can be combined to create a helpful and reliable account. However, when considering questions of the good, the right, the moral, or the best, the question, "How do we know?" cannot be taken for granted.

The third subdivision is Ethics: the study of moral and social behavior (Stevenson, 1998). Ethical philosophers ask, "What does it mean to be a person and how should people act?" This third area is clearly an important part of the educator's philosophical vision, as it goes to the heart of "what's best" for students, schools, and communities.

Philosophy is a bridge for the human mind between wisdom past and wisdom present. Consideration of the philosophic tradition situates the best of what is known as humankind faces each moment of choice and action. It is necessary to understand at least the basics of the main and evolving philosophic traditions that inform the study of ethics today.

Philosophic traditions

Johnson (1994) characterizes ethics as "the systematic inquiry into human conduct with the purpose of discovering both the rules that ought to govern our action and the goods we should seek in life" (p. 6). Stated in the more classic form, ethics seeks to answer the question: What is the good and the right?

The philosophical theory of the right attempts to identify what is morally right and what is morally wrong (White, 2000). The theory of the right comes from two main traditions: one concerned primarily with action and intention. the other with ends or goals of those actions. The first tradition. deontology (concerning duty), has historical connections with Christianity and most often is associated with Kant (1785/1959).

One popular related view is the divine command theory, which holds that an act is right if it is commanded by God. and wrong if God forbids it. Although accepted by millions of religious people, it assumes a personal God and leaves open for debate ways of discovering, verifying, and clarifying His/Her/God's nature and commands. Weston (1997) sums up the difficulty this way:

> Appeals to God, in practice, are never actually to God. Instead, they are appeals to some religious leader who claims to speak for God or to some religious text that claims to be the true work of God. And this inevitably means the reentry of human claims to authority into the picture. (p. 16)

The second tradition, called teleological (concerning ends), is associated with the ancient Greek thought of Socrates, and subsequently Jeremy Bentham and John Stewart Mill. Versions of teleological theory (also called consequentialist) hold that the good is more fundamental than the right. Put simply by Geirsson and Holmgren (2000), "Whether or not an act is right is determined by whether the consequences of that act are good" (p. 81).

Utilitarian logic requires that net good be calculated relative to the greatest number.

According to Pops (2001) calculation of the net good must include "all members of a given

society or community from the family through the entire planet" (p. 197). What are the

boundaries of that calculation? Does the idea of society include only the United States? Is

"community" to mean citizens only? Does this include future generations? Is the

interdependence of nations, animal populations, and natural elements within ecological

systems a legitimate part of what must be considered?

Both traditions, when stretched to the breaking point by carefully constructed test

scenarios and hard questions, have flaws that render neither to be perfect templates for

ethical decision making or moral behavior. Consequentialist theories are argued to be simpler

and more intuitively plausible than deontological theories. In the realm of public

administration, the teleological stance is far more prevalent. However, from a philosopher's

viewpoint "deontological theories perform significantly better in capturing our firmly held

moral convictions and are therefore preferable" (Geirsson & Holmgren, 2000, p. 111).

Must the lay philosopher choose sides in this dichotomy? Boylan (2000) claims that

individuals should study the philosophic traditions, which he identifies in five categories, and

choose one to use consistently as their compass for moral thought and decision making. Such

an approach is in direct contrast with Rebore (2001) who, in a very comprehensive treatment

of ethics in educational leadership, presents both the deontological and teleological

approaches and recommends to school administrators an intermingling of the two.

Fox (2001) describes an emergence of philosophical views that attempt to bring

together a composite of teleological and deontological theories. Multiple versions of this

blending have emerged, including feminine ethics, communitarianism, neo-Aristotelian

ethics, character ethics, and virtue ethics. Probably the most widely held of these versions is communitarianism, which seeks solutions to social problems, enhancing community well-being (Bellah, 1996; Etzioni, 1996; Knight, 1998; MacIntyre, 1984). On the teleological side, the emphasis on consequences to be pursued is a healthy citizenry, environmental protection, and lower crime. On the deontological side, process values such as linking multiple public dialogues and greater civility in discourse are stressed.

Communitarianism is sometimes considered naïve, however. Gortner (2001) cautions: "Recognition that the answers to important questions seldom come from one theory or philosophy is critical to avoiding oversimplification in dealing with human and social problems" (p. 525). In order to strengthen the theory of communitarianism as it is included in the developing norms of ethical practice in public administration, Pops (2001) recommends increased inclusion of deontological principles related to fairness and democracy, such as public access and due process, both highly applicable in educational administration.

This brief summary is an oversimplification of what branches of philosophical theory share as well as how they differ. However, it is analogous to the situations in which educators often find themselves, synthesizing a working understanding of philosophy on the run, simultaneously keeping an eye on the morals and values that are an essential part of their world view.

Personal moral theory and practice

Personal morality can be defined as the knowledge of right and wrong that resides in the heart and is known via conscience or through what principal respondents referred to as "gut feelings" (Klinker, 2000, p. 105). Ethical decision making and the actions that result

become the hands and feet, or implementation of the morality within. "Walking the talk"

becomes the ethical version of putting the spirit of what is right into practice. It is not always

a clear or easy path.

Stein (1982) told the following story to explicate the need for an increased focus on

ethics:

> During the height of Watergate, Jeb Magruder announced that the reason he found
> himself in such sorry circumstances was that somewhere along the line he had
> misplaced his "ethical compass." This inspired much mirth at the time—one columnist,
> I remember, called upon his readers to be on the lookout for Jeb's ethical compass—but
> there was something to what Magruder was saying, and it was applicable to a great
> many of us. (p. 3)

It is apparent that the individual who searches for the good and the right may have

considerable difficulty in isolation. How, then, can knowing more about the traditions of

moral theory and practice help to inform the lay philosopher's struggle with ethical

questions?

Philosophy lays the groundwork for clearer thinking and communication about

principles of action and the analysis of ethical problems. Nolan (1982) recognized the

foundational role of philosophy to ethics when he asserted, "Individuals are, in a sense,

philosophers when they reflect about living issues and practical concerns and make choices

required by daily involvements" (p. 18). Abelson and Friquegnon (1987) identify the crux of

the challenge whether the dilemma is in the personal or professional arena when they state,

"When plausible reasons are cited on both sides of a practical controversy, we begin to

wonder, not just which course of action is best, but which of the competing reasons is most

compelling and why" (p. 3).

Building a Broader Base for Meaning: Ethics, Morals, and Values

What is meant by "ethics" is not easily reduced to one simple definition. In a contemporary source, Stevenson (1998) chooses one definition: "The study of moral and social behavior. Ethical philosophers want to know what it means to be a person and how people can and should act" (p. 245). Williams (1985) explains the meaning of ethics using the classic line from Socrates: "It is not a trivial question. What we are talking about is how one should live" (p. 1).

Weston (2001) finds it helpful to couch a definition of ethics within a framework of values and morals. Values are "those things we care about, that matter to us; those goals or ideals to which we aspire and by which we measure ourselves or others or our society" (p. 12). Moral values are a specific subset of values in general that identify the needs and legitimate expectations of ourselves, and others. With this foundation he concludes that ethics means "the study of moral values; reflection on how best to think about moral values and clarify, prioritize and/or integrate them" (Weston, 2001, p. 12). The definition of ethics which best captures the emphasis and nuance most appropriate for the purpose of this study is Weston's summation: "The deliberate process of rethinking, prioritizing and integrating moral values" (2001, p. 12).

Whether it be attributed to philosophy, psychology, or education, there is a long tradition of the "composing human mind" (Piper, Gentile, & Parks, 1993, p. 20). This tradition recognizes that all human beings continually reorder their sense of self, world, and personal reality. Greater degrees of complexity in moral reasoning emerge from prior experiences. Piper et al. (1993) elaborate: "This meaning-making activity is an interactive

process and thus is dependent upon and stimulated by the conditions in the environment. Meaning-making is a process of seeking order, pattern and significance" (p. 20).

These multiple definitions stitch together the overlapping meanings of philosophy, ethics, morality, and values. Thoughtful educational practitioners bring these concepts and meanings to bear on the challenges in their professional lives.

Beyond definitions: Knots of circumstance, rationality, and emotion

There is an emotional element, a sense of high stakes associated with morals, values, and ethics. In the words of Dewey and Tufts (1909): "...in their root and essence moral judgments are emotional rather than intellectual. A moral judgment, however intellectual it may be, must at least be colored with feeling if it is to influence behavior" (p. 296).

There is a flawed thesis that "human beings are torn between reason and passion" (Letwin, 1987, p. 85). Sometimes seen as irreconcilable forces tearing an individual apart, Letwin posits, "Passion is not radically disjoined from reason" (p. 119). There is no battle between incompatible elements of the psyche. Rather the passions are open to change like all cognitive judgments, refined by "persuasion, learning and the development of new habits of thought" (Letwin, 1987, p. 120). Because of the intense interpersonal aspect of ethical thought and behavior, it is easy to understand why situating emotion as a part of the unified self is important in any setting, including the school setting.

In a cross-case qualitative study comparing the teaching of ethics at three different post-secondary institutions in the disciplines of medicine, business, and education, Mead (1993) was struck by the differences found between the groups. Students and professors in business and medicine viewed ethics as a discrete and occasional issue about which it would be

practical to be educated. Students and professors of education, on the other hand, were passionate in their belief that ethical issues permeate every aspect of education. Mead noted, "This 'ethics is everywhere' perspective meant there was no tradition presenting a separate education ethics literature" (1993, p. 17). It is assumed in the profession that ethics permeates education at all levels.

Writing from the business perspective, Andrews (1989) captured the sense of importance associated with ethical decision making in all walks of life. Ethical decisions require three qualities that can be developed:

> These are, first, the ability to recognize ethical issues and to think through the consequences of alternative resolutions. Second is the self-confidence to seek out different points of view and then decide what is right at a given time and place in a particular set of relationships and combination of circumstances. Third is what William James called tough-mindedness, which in this case is the willingness to make decisions when all that needs to be known cannot be known and the questions that press for answers have no established and incontrovertible solutions. (Andrews, 1989, p. 139)

Although not written with the school setting in mind, Andrews' statement reflects the ambiguity faced by school administrators.

Codes of ethics

The lone efforts of the individual who seeks to clarify an ethical problem may begin by examining laws, rules, and policies, looking for just application, creative solutions, or compromises. But as in most endeavors, the process of working collaboratively with stakeholders in the profession serves as an important dialogical stimulus for more deep and thorough consideration. Attempts to bring clear language and expectations to the practical application of ethical principles in the work world frequently take the form of codes of ethics specific to various professions (Plant, 1998).

Codes of ethics are not intended or expected to resolve moral dilemmas. Beyerstein (1993) describes a code of ethics as a systematic statement of rules which govern, or ought to govern a profession. Codes of ethics are formulated for a particular subset of the population and are aimed at the heart of what is to be done or not done by this group. By stating the moral principles that the group or profession endorses, it provides guidance to the individual group member or professional, clients, and the public about what ethical principles guide behavior in the group and therefore clarifies what can and should be expected from members. The code also provides guidance in considering any misconduct of a member of the group or profession. The process of writing a code of ethics within a profession or an organization can help to explore the spaces and the overlaps between the personal morality of the individual, issues specific to the profession, and the challenges of specific applications sure to surface in a pluralistic social and cultural milieu.

Frankena (1973) introduced greater specificity regarding two common uses of the terms "ethical" and "moral." The difference can be helpful when thinking about and discussing a professional code of ethics. Sometimes the terms are used synonymously when speaking of people's decisions and behavior, equating that which is ethical or moral. Ethical may also refer to a "class of judgments pertaining to morality" (Frankena, 1973, p. 4). When considering ethics in terms of such codes and policies, "ethics" or "ethical" refers more narrowly to the policies and judgments themselves, not a description of their moral quality.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) assumed a leadership role for the guidance of ethical behavior for school administrators, publishing a Code of Ethics which has been embraced by numerous leading professional educational organizations (AASA, 1996). The code was revised to its current form in 1981, and in 1985 an

accompanying course of study was developed as a tool to increase awareness and

understanding as part of the dissemination process (Kimbrough, 1985). The code is not

binding in that the penalty for being in violation is denial of membership, and an

administrator can practice without being a member of AASA. The crux of the difficulty

associated with codes of ethics is that the code serves as a guide, not a litmus test, for judging

whether a professional is acting in an ethical manner.

In a social and cultural context that has been critical of public schooling, one response

has been to further professionalize educational practice, developing and enforcing ethical

codes (Egan. 1990; Kalish & Perry, 1992; Rich, 1984; Sichel, 1993). In the broader

application of public administration, ethical policies typically cover such things as racial and

sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, physical brutality, violations of confidentiality,

nepotism. and inhumane research (Rudder. 1991). Rudder further argues that efforts to

establish and enforce codes and professional policies regarding the "protection of persons

and professional competence are often misidentified and misdirected because they are not

functionally ethical but political and may actually inhibit the exercise of sound professional

judgment" (1999. p. 42). It is this criticism or limitation that has resulted in less emphasis on

ethical codes in current professional literature.

Gortner (2001) emphasizes the centrality of values and the need for public

administrators to be able to articulate them. The articulation of values is the important

transition to be made between the concrete and perhaps overly legalistic code of ethics and

the desired outcome of a genuine moral stance it is meant to foster. The school administrator

must present an image as well as take a true stance as fair-minded, which includes such

specifics as maintaining norms of openness, full disclosure when appropriate, seeing

problems in their complexity, and collecting and weighing evidence carefully and objectively.

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards

Within more recent school reform efforts, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (1996) has established ethics as one of six major components of the framework for school leadership today. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards were authored and approved by a consortium consisting of 32 education agencies and 13 educational administrator associations that have worked through a cooperative process to establish this framework. Six standards have been identified that specify the knowledge, dispositions, and performances essential for consideration in the professional development and licensing procedures for school leaders. ISLLC Standard Five states, "A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner" (CCSSO, 1996, p. 18).

Dispositions are principles of practice the consortium recommends in which educational administrators should believe, value, and commit to. The dispositions of Standard Five evoke a clear picture of the ethical challenge school administrators face. These state:

> The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:
> 1. the ideal of the common good
> 2. the principles in the Bill of Rights
> 3. the right of every student to a free, quality education
> 4. bringing ethical principles to the decision-making process
> 5. subordinating one's own interest to the good of the school community
> 6. accepting the consequences for upholding one's principles and actions
> 7. using the influence of one's office constructively and productively in the service of all students and their families

8. development of a caring school community. (CSSO, 1996, p. 18)

When difficult issues resist resolution, the practitioner may need more in his or her

ethical toolbox than just a copy of a professional code of ethics and what was learned in

kindergarten. When ethical dilemmas require a level of reflection that cuts deeper than

circumstance, emotion, and rationality, the search for answers may take the inquirer all the

way to bedrock, to a theory of moral development that will support an ethical stance.

Evolving Theories of Moral Reasoning

Moral reasoning has been an important individual characteristic studied in the

theoretical and empirical research related to moral psychology. As described by Bandura

(1991), "Moral reasoning involves interpreting available information in moral predicaments

against personal standards and situational circumstances for evaluating the rightness or

wrongness of conduct" (p. 59).

The empirical study of moral development as a part of cognitive development began

with Piaget (1965), whose interest in the logic of children's thinking led him to make

observations of the moral judgments they made. Interestingly, he also held that there are no

such things as purely cognitive or purely affective behaviors. Evaluation, highest on the list

of Bloom's Cognitive Domain of the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Krathwohl,

Bloom, & Masia, 1969), was said by Piaget to be a function of the affective system. In partial

summary of Piaget's various assertions, Brown (1996) states: "Awareness of evaluative

activities comes in the form of feelings" (p. 150). Later scholars, further pursuing this

relationship, have taken a direction which is creating a newer body of work investigating and

synthesizing cognitive and affective aspects of thinking and learning, importing the blend to

a more holistic ethic of justice, care, and responsibility discussed in more detail in a later section.

Following Piaget, Kohlberg's approach to moral development was based on a cognitive theory of six stages of reasoning used by individuals to resolve moral dilemmas (Kohlberg, 1981; Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1983). These levels reflect an expansion in moral perspective from an individual, to a societal, to a universal point of view. Wittmer (2001) recently characterized the theory as overly tight, as it maintains that individuals "pass sequentially, invariantly, and irreversibly from lower to higher stages, although not all persons ever reach the highest stages of moral reasoning" (p. 488).

Gilligan (1982) countered Kohlberg's theory, claiming that women tend to define themselves in terms of relationships in which they are involved, making decisions that will maintain those relationships. Decisions are likely to be based more on caring and fostering cooperative relationships and responsibility rather than the application of rules and principles of justice. In her own words, Kohlberg's six stages equate justice "with the preservation of existing social systems through the maintenance of respect for their norms and values" (Gilligan, 1981, p. 142).

According to Perry (1981) the only exception to linear progression through Kohlberg's moral stages occurred during the college years, when subjects addressed the problem of moral relativism. Kohlberg viewed this non-linearity as an anomaly. In developing subsequent ethical cognitive theory, Perry took a different view. He described a scheme of increasing complexity rising from a simplistic duality in which the world is viewed in terms of "we-right-good" and "other-wrong-bad" to complexity. This more complex world view requires "genuine moral and intellectual maturity" (Bondeson, 1981, p. 367). Commenting

on the profound difference between the two positions of Kohlberg and Perry, Gilligan (1981)

stated, "While, for Kohlberg, principled moral judgment *solved* the problem of moral

relativism, for Perry, relativism *found* the problem in principled moral judgment" (p. 153).

Faced with scenarios of ethical dilemmas, many college students questioned the questions

and the social assumptions in which the questions were couched in their attempt to reconcile

the logic of moral choice and their interest in the causes and consequences of such choices.

Noddings (1984) built on Gilligan's concept of morality, basing further development

on the recognition of needs, relation, and response. In the introduction to *Caring: A Feminine*

Approach to Ethics and Moral Education, Noddings (1984) clearly states her intellectual

mission:

> ...I shall strike many contrasts between masculine and feminine approaches to ethics
> and education and, indeed, to living. These are not intended to divide men and women
> into opposing camps. They are meant, rather, to show how great the chasm is that
> already divides the masculine and feminine in each of us and to suggest that we enter a
> dialogue of genuine dialectical nature in order to achieve an ultimate transcendence of
> the masculine and feminine in moral matters. (p. 6)

Fenner (1999) credits Noddings as having had a key influence in the 20th century philosophy

of education.

Writing less with an eye toward education and more from a psychological/sociological

perspective, Bandura (1991) described a social cognitive theory of morality in which three

main sources influence moral agents: behavior, cognition and other personal factors, and

environmental influences. This interactionist perspective conceives of moral conduct as

regulated by the interaction of thought, conduct, and social influences. He identified self-

evaluative reactions and social effects as two sets of consequences that serve to modify or

change behavior.

For the purpose of this study, it is not necessary to select a single belief about or approach to moral theory and development, or to champion any particular view. Dialectic questioning that continues to investigate issues such as these has led to a change in the landscape of practical and applied ethics today.

Expanding the Philosophical Paradigm

Philosophy and moral theory, like every discipline, continue to evolve (Gaarder, 1991/1994). In the crucible of discussion and practice, it continues to be developed not only by experts but also by people facing ethical issues in all walks of life. To whatever extent the philosophical map fails to illuminate the territory of ethics in practice is the extent to which it is challenged and adapted. The winds of change that have resulted in the development of a communitarian philosophy, a feminine ethic, and renewed interest in virtue ethics are evidence of humankind's continued search for meaning. Each of these areas constitutes a growing body of literature and this summary is not purported to be exhaustive.

Writing with the development of adaptive schools in mind, Garmston and Wellman (1997) noted: "It is increasingly clear that we live not in a world of *either/or* but in the dawning of a world of *both/and*" (p. 102). This process of intellectual evolution and collaborative discovery is foundational in qualitative inquiry into the nature, meaning, methods, results, and continued learning in the areas of personal and professional ethics.

Female ethicists are going beyond Gilligan's and Noddings' early version of care ethics, extending their insights to ethics of care, justice, and equity (Enomoto, 1997; Schrader, 1999). Characterizing a male ethic as "principled" and a female ethic as "consultative" is overly simplistic and unnecessarily dichotomous. Koehn (1998) states that

in order to be more defensible, "female ethics must become more dialogical" (p. 4). There must be space for the person on the receiving end of care, trust, or empathy to be heard.

Walker (1998) recommends getting at morality's content by tracking responsibilities. This view prescribes an investigation of morality as a "socially embodied medium of mutual understanding and negotiation between people over their responsibility for things open to human care and response" (p. 9).

Thomas (1997) offers another theory of moral development that builds upon past scholars. yet demonstrates flexibility. Following the foundational ideas of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Bandura. he concludes that moral development consists of advancing toward belief in various kinds of values. not using just one lens. one tool, approach, or paradigm. These values might include conceptions of justice, compassion, bravery, honesty, and others rather than advancing on a singular ultimate value such as duty, justice, or care. While people do develop in their maturity or thinking toward a more mature version of a particular value, a person does not replace the less mature with the more mature version. Instead. the individual adds the more mature version to a growing repertoire of options. The choice of a version of a value to emphasize or choose in a given moral event or decision-making sequence is determined by such considerations as the consequences likely to result and the feasibility of a given option.

A person may tend toward predominant use of one hierarchy, such as compassion, obedience to authority, justice, or rule governed behavior (Thomas, 1997). A general understanding of these multiple points of view, or paradigms, provides a rich and provocative background from which to consider and evaluate the ethical views of others.

Ethical and Moral Dimensions of Leadership

The following overview attempts to explicate the connection of the conceptually related areas of leadership in general and educational leadership specifically. This summary focuses upon the more recent literature of leadership in the public sector, which shares a tradition with the literature of school leadership and administrators facing ethical issues in the advent of the 21st century.

The moral dimensions of leadership are the subject of research conducted by Kouzes and Posner (1993). They identify honesty as the most critical characteristic of a credible leader. They state, "Being seen as someone who can be trusted, who has high integrity, and who is honest and truthful is essential" (p. 24).

There are occasions when "right values" personally, or within an organization need to be sorted out, clarified, and compared. When confronting controversial dilemmas, it is important that constituents refrain from resolving disputes by acquiescing or imposing the will of authority. Kouzes and Posner (1993) recommend an interactive approach:

> If ethics, high purpose, and high performance are important goals, then asking why is a better strategy than giving answers. And if personally confronted with an ethical dilemma yourself, the best strategy is to seek counsel. When the issues are ethically challenging, even the most moral people reason better in consultation with others. (p. 68)

Encouraging and supporting such open interaction requires a safe forum for dialogue and a vision which includes open, yet respectful communication as a part of the cultural norm of the organization.

Carter (1996) identifies a key quality in the individual practitioner as discernment, which he considers to be "taking the time for genuine moral reflection in order to be sure that one is doing the right" (p. 31). Is discernment a practice, quality, value, or virtue?

The connotation of the word "virtue" varies widely. Kanungo and Mendonca (1996)

clarify the difference between "human moral virtues" and the "theological virtues" (faith,

hope, and charity). The human moral virtues (also called the cardinal virtues) include

prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. Each cardinal virtue plays a role in the context

of moral behavior. Prudence means the objective assessment of a situation and exercising

sound judgment. Justice requires that the individual strive to give others what is their due,

what they need to fulfill their duties and exercise their rights as persons (e.g., right to life,

cultural and moral goods, and material goods). Fortitude is the courage to take risks for and

persevere toward ideals that are worthwhile. Temperance involves distinguishing between

what is reasonable and necessary and what is self-indulgent.

More than technical competence, organizational loyalty, and decision-making

techniques are needed:

> In a profession where decisions have social justice, resource allocation, and other
> equity implications, public administrators must be armed with the ability to determine
> decision contingencies and social ramifications, as well as the strength to make difficult
> decisions and follow through with implementation. (Yoder & Denhardt, 2001, p. 67)

Described in this way, it is easy to see the parallel between the ethical issues faced by leaders

in public administration and in education.

The concept of servant leadership was pioneered by Greenleaf (1977) bringing personal

beliefs and values together. The individual lives and leads in ways that are congruent with

one's own discovered truth. Expanding on the topic, Gardiner (1998) describes restructuring

consciousness, emphasizing interconnectedness, and increasing the level of what he describes

as "authentic relationship" among human beings. Suggesting a depth of consciousness and

interdependence, he states, "Connection with one's core and with that of others is the key. Our self is not separate, in fact, but rather a field within larger fields" (p. 121).

According to Palmer (1998) there is a shadow self among leaders. The shadow self fears chaos in the form of dissent, innovation, challenge, and change. Rigidity of rules and procedures is one manifestation of an ineffective strategy to minimize this shadow of fear. He states, "The spiritual gift on this inner journey is the knowledge that people and organizations not only survive but thrive in chaos, that there is vitality in the play of chaotic energy" (p. 206).

To the professional with a more traditional conception of leadership as management, this kind of thinking and writing is bewildering. It is relevant in providing background to the moral dimensions of leadership and education, because the conceptualization of leadership, administration, and education are evolving to include a greater variety and complexity of ethical issues causing people to stand at the edge of what may seem like a threatening precipice or an awe-inspiring vista. Successfully meeting the challenge of answering the questions of what to do, what to think, and what to be, creates a sense of accomplishment and wonder. To fail to negotiate the challenge results in a sense of failure and alienation (Judge, 1999).

Ethical Dimensions of School Leadership

Some may claim that this sort of thinking about leadership and education is new wave or extreme. However, D. C. Smith (1996), writing on the topic of the importance of the relationship between teacher and student, uses Plato's words to emphasize the moral dimension of education and ground the concept in antiquity. Smith describes Hippocrates'

plan to pay Protagoras a fee for teaching, but Plato admonished him for not perceiving what

is at stake in the choice of a teacher:

> Well then…do you realize the sort of danger to which you are going to expose your
> soul? If it were a case of putting your body into the hands of someone and risking the
> treatment turning out beneficial or the reverse, you would ponder deeply whether to
> entrust it to him or not, and would spend many days over the question, calling on the
> counsel of your friends and relations; but when it comes to something which you value
> more highly than your body, namely your soul—something on whose beneficial or
> harmful treatment your whole welfare depends—you have not consulted either your
> father or your brother or any of us who are your friends on the question of whether or
> not to entrust your soul to this stranger who has arrived among us. (Smith, 1996, p. 5)

In the seminal work, *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching*, Goodlad, Soder, and Sirotnik

(1990) questioned whether teachers and administrators were prepared to deal with

contradiction and conflict in their work, particularly between the individual and group

interests. They concluded that educators were ill-equipped to address the ethical challenges

faced in the school setting.

A dawning of moral and ethical awareness was unmistakable in the literature of

educational leadership in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The theoretical basis for considering

education as a moral endeavor became a firmly established part of emerging thought (Beck,

1992; Fenstermacher, 1990; Hodgkinson, 1991; Noddings, 1992; Purpel, 1989; Starratt,

1991).

Decision maker, leader, and organizer are the three administrative roles described by

Strike and Soltis (1988). These general descriptors include facilitating the work of faculty,

making up budgets, hiring and evaluating teachers, allocating resources, and dealing with

students, parents, and school board members. Describing the ethical component of these

tasks they state, "Ethics *is* part of the job. Indeed it is an essential part of the job.

Administrators deal with fairness, equality, justice, and democracy as much as they deal with test scores, teachers' salaries, parents, and budgets" (Strike & Soltis, 1988, p. 14).

Credited as an early standard bearer for the moral dimension of leadership in schools, Sergiovanni (1992) described the principle of justice as the equal treatment of and respect for the integrity of individuals. He claimed for every parent, teacher, student, administrator, and other members of the school community treatment with equality, dignity, and fair play. He articulated a vision of concern for the welfare of the school as a community, with all stakeholders interdependent, and seeking to advance the welfare of the community.

Serviovanni (1992) suggested three measures or indicators of moral leadership in schools. One was Kant's (1785/1959) categorical imperative, to act so that you treat others always as an end and never as a means. Another test would be Rawls' (1971) justice theory, in which a "veil of ignorance" is assumed in a theoretical process for framing a fair and equitable system for persons in all socioeconomic levels and walks of life. A third measure would be Habermas' (1990) "moment of empathy," which would have stakeholders take the place or point of view of others in order to discuss whether a norm is fair for all.

Honesty, promise-keeping, respect for persons, and fairness are the four key norms governing the moral or ethical conduct of students and teachers (Fisch, 1996). Given a strengthening consensus on the importance of ethics for students, teachers, and administrators, by what mental framework do individuals navigate between theory and practice?

Ethics Viewed Through a Lens of Theory and Practice

The place of theory in relation to practice is an important one in considering how

school administrators face ethical issues. In Schön's (1983) words:

> In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing "messes" incapable of technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical interest, are often relatively unimportant to clients or to the larger society, while in the swamp are the problems of greatest human concern. (p. 3)

School leaders have no difficulty relating to Schön's swampy lowland when, on a daily basis,

they find themselves up to their necks in the alligators of socioeconomic and cultural

challenges to education.

There is an intellectual chasm between theory and practice which Miller (1997)

explores. He reminds the reader that the rational model long has been recognized as a

normative, and not a descriptive or explanatory model. The standard cycle of defining goals,

imagining alternative means for attaining them, evaluating the consequences of taking each

course of action, and choosing the alternative most likely to attain the goal, is not a

description of what actually takes place. Contextual factors foil the model with such

regularity that its explanatory power is nil. Reservations that practitioners have about

theoretical formulation are well grounded. However, he is not willing to leave theory

"dismantled and hung out to dry" (Miller, 1997, p. 367). A world without theory is an endless

stream of images popping into and out of consciousness from sensory sources, devolving into

"*one dang sensory image after another*" (Miller, 1997, p. 367).

Comparing theory and practice to two sides of a coin, Broadnax (1997) sees one side

devoted to reflection and the other to action. One runs on adrenaline and the other on

analysis, incisiveness, and asking the right set of questions. Theory is a vehicle to move from chaotic abstraction to understanding and explaining reality.

The use of case studies is effective in the development of teachers' professional knowledge (Russell & Munby, 1991). When a theory in action (as opposed to an espoused theory) stimulates questions or surprise, reframing can suggest new actions that may be applied to a revised theory in action. They emphasize the difference between reflection on action (after the fact) and reflection in action which is integral within the activity itself.

Dialogue can maintain a spirit of the cooperative effectiveness of the win-win method. People are able to rethink their ethical beliefs and engage in mutual ethical learning. This reflection is particularly helpful in situations where the ethical problems are located primarily at the level of individuals. Argyris and Schön (1996) label this strategy "double-loop learning." It has the advantage of eliminating the unintended paradoxical effect of escalating an adversarial situation or tone. The double-loop method frames organizational ethics and integrity issues as a phenomenon occurring between and among individuals. Nielson (1996) expands on the concept, drawing attention to the need for explicit awareness and consideration of embedded social traditions and organizational expectations, which are often important, though unacknowledged factors in a given circumstance.

In a comparison of public and private sector ethics, Smith (1998) observes that both fields struggle with the notion of individual responsibility in a framework of organizational culture. The norms and values constitute what he calls the "organizational ethical climate" (p. 188), although he does not elaborate on how the interplay between the norms and values of the individual aggregate to affect or reflect the norms and values of the organization.

That these ideas continue to evolve is evidenced in the literature by a new journal to be spun off from the *Business Ethics Quarterly* that will be devoted to the emerging area of organizational ethics. Professional ethics that traditionally have focused on the individual as moral agent and the area of organizational ethics will focus on the collective ethics implicit or explicit in social and institutional organizations (Iltis, 2002). The influence will be felt in the literature of ethics relative to educational leadership, as it also has strong cultural, social, and institutional traditions and expectations.

Teaching and Learning about Ethics Through Theory and Practice

The place of ethics in the higher education curricula of business, law, medicine, and public administration has been entrenched more solidly for a longer period of time than it has been in the course of study for the preparation of school administrators (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Farmer, 1998). Confirming the inclusion of ethics as a curricular building block in public administration, Bowman (1998) writes, "There has been an increase in the number of ethics courses over the years from almost zero in 1970 to some 25% of programs in 1988 to possibly one-half today" (p. 34). By contrast, as recently as 1996, Rodriquez argued in a philosophical doctoral dissertation that the study of ethics should be reinstated as a requirement in the preparation of educational leaders.

Catron and Denhardt (1994) see the post–Watergate 1970s as a turning point for renewed interest in ethics in the field of public administration. They report that in a 1987 survey conducted by the accrediting body, National Association of Schools of Public Administration and Affairs (NASPAA), 91% of member institutions favored coursework in ethics, with 52% favoring a required course.

In a survey of four schools requiring Masters of Public Administration students to complete an ethics course, Menzel (1997) reported that student responses on written surveys indicated that ethics education does make a difference. Analysis of respondent comments included a white female in her 40s who was employed by an academic institution. She stated:

> As an administrator of financial assistance, ethical issues are a regular occurrence. The values that I hold dear were acquired prior to completing an ethics course. However, the course helped me better identify ethical issues and make more objective decisions, which is often difficult to do. (Menzel, 1997, p. 227)

A white male in his 50s, employed by a nonprofit organization, saw some confidential information about a parent of a patient that had implications regarding the moral suitability of the parent. He stated,

> My ethics class made me aware of the legal implications and the necessity of doing something. Although I can't be sure I did any good, I feel that at least I did do something rather than feeling unequipped to deal with the problem at all. (Menzel, 1997, p. 227)

Some said that when they faced an ethical dilemma, they found their ethics education to be less than influential and criticized the approach taken in their course as focusing too much on theory, which did not seem to be applicable.

The proliferation of practical and professional ethics courses in the professions is an important development in what Bok (1990) calls teaching the "new" ethics. The emphasis on application does not seek to convey a set of moral truths, but instead encourages students to think carefully about complex moral issues. He states:

> The principal aim is not to impart right answers, but to make students more perceptive in detecting ethical problems when they arise, better acquainted with the best moral thought that has accumulated through the ages, and more equipped to reason about the ethical issues they will face in their own personal and professional lives. (Bok, 1990, p. 73)

In a study of the most common process means for teaching ethics in higher education,

Payne and Charnov (1987) identified three: developing the student, communicating

theoretical knowledge, and controlling the process. More specifically these areas included

structuring the learning situation, supporting skill development, presenting information,

managing the learning process, providing guidance, and performance evaluation.

Conspicuously absent at that time was any focus on the need for transformative learning

through authentic experience, interactive strategies, or reflection.

When Menzel (1997) asked alumni of graduate level public administration programs to

identify the factors that influenced their ethical outlook and behavior, they listed family,

friends, church, and interaction with coworkers as the top four in importance. Results showed

that "discussion of ethics and values in ethics course" ranked fourth in overall importance,

followed by "discussion of ethics and values in MPA [Masters in Public Administration]

coursework as a whole" (Menzel, 1997, p. 228). Interpreting these findings, Menzel

concluded that a formal course of instruction in ethics was valuable, although respondents

regarded noneducational influences as more important.

Generally, students clamor for decision-making strategies and tools for immediate use

while instructors at the post-secondary level prefer to include more depth in theory (Beck &

Murphy, 1994; Marshall, 1997; Menzel, 1997). A preponderance of educational programs

rely heavily on analysis and discussion of case studies, most often supplied by the teacher,

but occasionally written by students (Beckett, 1997; Broadnax, 1997; Hostetler, 1997).

In contrast, Letcher (1998) recommends "doing ethics" by using "practice-oriented

pedagogy" (p. 42). He emphasizes reflective questioning in which the learner applies ethical

guidelines and standards. Hummel (1997) also supports expanding the use of practitioner

experience, claiming the new motto for theorists should be "Out of the classroom and into practice!" (p. 381).

Expressing skepticism regarding the efficacy of teaching theory is Marshall (1997), who describes Generation Xers (people between the ages of about 22 and 32 in 1997, or about 27 and 37 in 2002) as viewing organizational theory as manipulative. Compared to Baby Boomers, who tend to embrace theory as a way of organizing and making sense of the experiential world, GenXers are cool to theory and doubt its potential in making meaning. They are more likely to see theory as a part of social control. If Marshall is correct, teachers of ethics should be aware that a lack of idealism and faith in grand narratives in certain age groups would reduce their usefulness to some students who might be seeking master's degrees or certification in school administration.

Another consideration in principal preparation programs is a shift reported by Beck and Murphy (1997), in which one-third of survey respondents indicated "a shift in thinking about leadership and about legitimate scholarship and teaching that can inform and develop leaders" (p. 37). Factors that accounted for the renewed interest in moral issues affecting school leaders included changing demographics, political context, and shifts in thinking about organizational structure and educational leadership. Also identified as important was the increased attention to issues of practice within preparation programs. Scenarios specific to education such as those compiled by Green (2001) and multiple case studies by Sharp, Walter, and Sharp (1998), provide a vehicle for exploring the complex interaction of these areas.

Processing a case through class discussion incorporates student experience, writing, and imagination as means to integrate learning. Rizzo (1998) describes the use of a case project

written by students, which includes a dilemma and characters, discussion questions regarding

pertinent ethical quandaries, themes, and lines of argument, and the author's analysis and

resolution of the ethical dilemma. The more the events are represented in real-life terms, the

better the reader perceives the multiple conflicting layers of moral dilemmas. This narrative

approach is similar to the vicarious experience of a reader, or person viewing a film, a

process which evokes emotion and draws people to learn through literature and film (English

& Steffy, 1997).

Weschler (1997) sees practical theory showing a path for action. He makes a case for

its usefulness in the following way: "Teaching theory is less about explicating a given theory

and more about helping students to understand the function of theory and theory building in

changing everyday life" (p. 384). Avoidance of theory can be taken too far. Absence of *a*

priori categories and *schemata* robs the learner of tools for basic retrieval of information,

sense-making, discerning patterns, and building meaning.

An Emerging Research Agenda

The research to date pertaining to ethical issues faced by school administrators is

questioned, criticized, and debated regarding aspects of both methodology and findings. The

following sections include specific ethical issues that reccur in the literature as well as

concomitant issues related to methodology, particularly experiments, surveys, scenarios,

interviews, and combinations of each. The aggregate of this research, when paired with

theory that also has been reviewed, sculpts the rationale and method specific to this study.

Specific ethical issues identified in the literature

Issues reported in the literature as posing ethical challenges to school administrators

differ over time and by author. However, a review of these issues provides specific examples

of the variety of ethical issues that must be addressed by school administrators.

Writing in a special issue of *NASSP Bulletin* on ethical leadership for principals,

multiple authors identified a wide range of areas as "most difficult." General areas identified

included supporting teachers, teacher evaluation, and confidentiality (Seldin, 1988), as well

as holding and communicating deep and genuine respect for teachers and achieving fairness

in teaching assignments (Doggett, 1988). Dempsey (1988) cited student athletic eligibility as

a recurring difficult issue, in addition to special education placement decisions in which

demand for additional services compete for the financial resources of the district.

Several authors focused on the area of special education as being persistently fraught

with ethical issues for school administrators. Brennan and Brennan (1988) noted friction and

misunderstanding between regular and special education teachers. In fact, it was their

perception that special education issues topped the list of situations most frequently cited by

principals as presenting ethical challenges, specifically, placement decisions, discipline of

special education students, and assigning special education-related support services. Parental

rights to information was identified as an ethical area that must be addressed conscientiously

particularly relating to special education, student discipline, and counseling situations

(Harden, 1988).

Multiple authors have highlighted ethical issues related to drug and alcohol use by

students and staff, gifts or favors from vendors, nepotism in hiring, relatives serving on

school boards, and a reluctance to divulge information that would put one's school or district

in a bad light (Boothe, Bradley, Flick, Keough, & Kirk, 1992; Freitas, 1991). It also has been

noted that the increase in site-based decision making resulted in numerous occasions when

principals were in positions to make sensitive decisions regarding hiring and building funds.

Demographics such as age, experience, and educational level appear in the literature, and to

varying degrees and with varying levels of confidence have been found to be relevant to

levels of moral reasoning and perceptions about ethical decision making (Gonzales, 1999;

Kaigler. 1997; Rest & Narvaez, 1994; Walker, 1999).

A special constellation of difficulties is associated with small rural school districts.

Schmuck and Schmuck (1990) visited 25 rural and small-town districts in 21 states, spending

a week in each school district. They reported that a depressed economy, declining

enrollment, consolidation fears, and closing school buildings were the immediate and

concrete concerns. Additionally they found that fewer than 12% of rural school board

members hold jobs that traditionally would be labeled as "professional." Teachers,

administrators. and school board members often were involved in friendship, kinship, and co-

worker ties that complicated usual communication patterns.

In an ethnographic study, Peshkin (1982) tells the tale of five politically distinct Illinois

towns fighting for survival between 1945 and 1980. The struggle over school consolidation is

a study in community and cultural values that are situationally specific and held at a personal

level that may be both rational and emotional. In a multiple case study, Schmuck and

Schmuck (1993) describe the themes that emerged from discussions with educators in small

towns: "A dominant minority population, high unemployment, a downward-spiraling

economy, poor student achievement, low parental support for education, limited resources,

and a prevailing sense of despair" (p. 205). In response to questions regarding gender equity

for students, 37% of administrators reported "no problem," yet blatant gender inequities in curricular and extracurricular activities were apparent to the researchers. This variability in perception and awareness suggests that further investigation is necessary.

Empirical studies: Methodology and findings

Frederickson (1994) reviews the types of research methodologies most often used in administrative ethics, summarizing strengths and weaknesses of each. Historically, experimentation has yielded powerful results but with a second-level ethical backlash. For example, the Stanford Prison experiment (Zimbardo, 2000) used inadequately informed students to observe aspects of social group identity and organizational power. The participants in the Milgram (1974) experiments (also inadequately informed) believed they were delivering electrical shocks of increasing voltage to a person in another room, but proceeded to do so at the urging of an authority figure. Higher standards for ethical treatment of participants have resulted in a near cessation of experimentation with human subjects in the area of ethics and morality.

Use of hypothetical scenarios to collect meaningful data presents another set of difficulties. In his review of philosophy in administrative ethics, Fox (2001) dismisses the work of Kohlberg as overly simplistic, in that the scenarios used in Kohlberg's research are void of realistic psychological and sociological context. Upon reviewing Kohlberg's dilemma scenarios used to assign levels of moral reasoning to participants, Weston (1997) expressed outrage:

> Astonishingly enough, subjects in Kohlberg's studies were graded as morally "immature" if they started exploring other possible options for Heinz. The researchers concluded that these subjects just didn't understand the dilemma. In fact, I think, they

understood it better than the researchers. They understood it as a false dilemma, which is exactly what it is. (p. 47)

Frederickson (1994) judges face-to-face interviews to be the "cornerstone of research in the field of ethics in general and in administrative ethics" (p. 36). He suggests that the strongest results in the research of ethics today come from the post-positivist approach, including naturalistic inquiry, ethnography, case studies, and sense-making from stories in which values, norms, and context are intact.

In a dissertation study, Klinker (2000) conducted a mixed methodological study that included written scenarios of ethical problems tailored to school administration. Comments written in the margins by high school principals responding to the dilemmas evidenced considerable frustration. On the part of the survey designated for Likert-type responses to justification choices, participants wrote:

- I don't understand this part. None of these support the decision I made. Seven is the closest—How can I rate the other reasons?
- The choices for rating are ambiguous. The meaning is not clear. For instance, I might agree that the feelings of colleagues are important, but they may not change my decision. (Klinker. 2000. p. 136)

These comments clearly indicate that a standardized response survey form may not be able to accommodate the complexity and depth of feeling elicited by ethical dilemmas.

In the territory of ethical decision making, "Feeling is part of the story" (Weston, 2001, p. 9). Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch and Enz (2000) describe an increase in enthusiasm of a teacher for the profession as "renewal," and a decrease in confidence or engagement as "withdrawal." This phenomena may also be applicable to school administrators confronting ethical issues. What is the inner cost of dealing with conflict? How does one emerge from having faced an ethical issue with more energy and optimism rather than less?

In a qualitative case study, Larsen (2000) described an extreme case in which negative stress on an Iowa school superintendent was directly related to an internal conflict between his religious beliefs and educational beliefs. Subsequent to the superintendent's death by suicide. "Court findings affirmed that his widow was entitled to workers' compensation benefits because her husband suffered a mental/mental [legal category] injury in the workplace due to stress caused mainly by the OBE [Outcomes Based Education] controversy" (Larsen. 2000. p. 1). Although most conflicts experienced by administrators facing ethical issues do not rise to this level, this case is an illustration of the need to further investigate the interrelationship of values, emotion, and communication difficulties affecting administrators' attitudes toward their work.

Researchers are not even close to bridging the gap between moral theory, ethical decision making, and prediction of behavior. Self-reports of intended ethical behavior in response to scenarios are fraught with social desirability bias. Asking respondents to report what they believe they should do is not even commensurate with speculation about what they might do (Randall & Gibson, 1990). The extent to which subjects accurately know and report what decisions they would make and what their behavior would be in a given situation is impossible to determine. In studies using scenarios, the dependence on respondent speculation is usually stated as a given weakness in the design.

In an effort to compare the self-prediction and report of behavior with actual observed behavior. Bay (1997) conducted a laboratory experiment in which actual behavior was observed without the subjects' (in this case student accountants) knowledge. Additionally, a questionnaire was used to elicit self-reports on theoretical scenarios of similar situations. The relationships of incentives such as financial reward, social gain, and peer pressure then were

compared between the two data sets. Although real incentives and financial compensation were provided in the experiment using direct observation of behavior, it was not commensurate with what would be at stake in reality. The students were not in a position in which discovery of their behavior would affect their future in any substantive way. There was no threat of punishment other than momentary embarrassment for those caught in participating in unethical behavior. Concluding that the results of the study should be interpreted with caution, Bay (1997) noted, "It is quite possible that the impact of financial incentives and third-party control [observers simulating auditors] and their interactions with personal ethics are quite different in practice than they were in the laboratory experiment" (p. 208). The importance of this difference is apparent in the following study.

In a qualitative study investigating the knowledge and experience of women administrators in public school, central office positions in the areas of leadership, power, and ethics, S. J. Smith (1996) discovered more about what people might do, by looking back at what they had done in actual situations:

> It seemed amazing that 20% of the subjects left their positions because they had reported a wrong doing. When the problem was not resolved or they were blamed for reporting it, they left their jobs. None of them were fired, they just found another school system where they could work in a school that was consistent with their values. They were willing to draw the line and did it even under fire. (S. J. Smith, 1996, p. 152)

These same women administrators emphasized that caring and humane treatment of people were at the center of their ethical decisions. The most frequent moral dilemma reported was that of a difficult personnel issue. They described circumstances in which they were required to terminate an employee for legitimate reasons. Similarly, the decision to close a school, with all the attendant repercussions on stakeholders, also was seen as a moral dilemma. The

detail in which they described these decisions indicated that these were particularly

troublesome burdens that they carried among their work responsibilities:

> Several subjects discussed instances where records were falsified, false figures were asked to be shared with board members, and employees were stealing from the system. Some of them described the pressure of the system to ignore the wrong doing if the employee was popular. All of them refused to change their view when asked or pressured to ignore the problem. (S. J. Smith, 1996, p. 145)

Kirby (1990) also used principal generated accounts of past events to consider the

ethical reasoning of 23 school principals in a large suburban public school district. Follow-up

questions requested details of alternatives that were considered, input solicited from others,

the course of action taken, and a retrospective evaluation of the choice made. More than half

of all the dilemmas shared involved questions of teacher competence. The remaining

involved student behavior, teacher/student conflicts, and teacher/parent conflicts. In

responding to scenarios constructed by the researcher, administrators reported that other

administrators act at lower ethical levels than they would like because of the expectations of

the institution. Further research was recommended to determine whether expectations of

district-level administrators affect the ethical behavior of school principals, and if so, whether

all principals in a district react similarly to district expectations.

In a qualitative study conducted by Buckman (1998), elementary principals in a

Chicago suburb were interviewed and asked to respond to written dilemma scenarios.

Kidder's four dilemma paradigms (truth versus loyalty, individual versus group, present

versus future, and justice versus mercy) were used as an analytical framework. Buckman

concluded that principals seek to balance their own core ethical values with those of the

school system when faced with dilemmas. All principals interviewed reported following

policy, yet a majority also ascribed to the belief that "there are no hard and fast rules"

(Buckman, 1998, p. 161). This apparent contradiction was not resolved by the researcher but does at least attempt to probe the heart of the difficulty posed by the presence of personal and organizational values juxtaposed in the workplace. Buckman suggests further research to clarify these issues, as well as multiple ambiguous responses by principals faced with dilemmas.

Clark (1998) used a mixed methodology to compare administrators', teachers', and school board members' perceptions of ethical behavior in their particular school district. No statistical differences were found using a closed-response Likert scale. The researcher commented on not effectively achieving insider status as a probable factor in the lack of depth of response and disappointing lack of self-disclosure on the part of administrator participants. The researcher was not a school administrator and stated, "...teachers were more open with their responses than administrators. Teachers were far more willing to provide more examples and detailed information concerning the conflict they faced" (Clark, 1998, p. 63). Administrators were guarded in their responses, and gave only general statements about conflicts they faced. Unfortunately, this difference was reported by the researcher as if it were a characteristic of teachers and administrators rather than a possible effect of the personal and specific dynamics in the district, as well as between the researcher and participants. This alternate interpretation is supported by the fact that no school board member was willing to participate in the interview portion of the study. Reporting that the district had been under recent scrutiny for incidents that had strained the public trust, it is not too surprising that the researcher had some difficulty gaining entry and the trust of participants. In what may have been a related issue, Clark (1998) reported, "86% of teachers interviewed stated that they knew of an individual who had been hired because they were

related to an administrator or board member…showing a lot of hostility concerning this issue" (p. 51). This study contributes much to understanding the important interplay between methodology, findings, and interpretation of findings in the quest for understanding ethics in the school setting.

In a qualitative study, Dustman (1998) conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with 12 superintendents regarding strategies used to buffer themselves, their boards, and their organizations in risk-laden situations. One of the 10 categories that emerged from the data was ethics as a perceived area of risk. Respondents chose similar phrases to describe the risk, such as "Is this the hill I want to die on?" and "You can only fall on your sword once!" The category of ethics was identified as an area of concern by one out of seven male superintendents and by three out of five female superintendents, but none were able to identify an issue that would qualify as the bottom line beyond which he/she would take a stand. Great concern about media coverage was considered a separate topic from ethics, as was personnel issues. It is quite possible that probing into these areas would reveal imbedded ethical issues, such as confidentiality and loyalty to the organization, resulting in reluctance for problems to come to light.

Uline (1995) examined barriers school administrators face when attempting to apply reflective methods to their work. Competing obligations, frenetic pace, fragmented nature of the work, and entrenched internal decision structures were some of the identified challenges. One specific suggestion to help breach the gap between past patterns and improved practices was "the routine designation of a devil's advocate [so that] no important decisions are finalized before antithetical points of view are fully aired" (Uline, 1995, p. 265). By regularly

changing the designated dissenter, all moral agents have the opportunity to stimulate the

process of shared reflective deliberation.

Using a mixed methodology, Bishard (1993) probed the perceived level of unethical

and/or illegal communication about sensitive personnel matters by the school board,

individual school board members, the superintendent, and/or the management team in Kansas

school districts. Survey results showed that problems were more prevalent in districts with

smaller high schools. Interviews of 12 educational executives revealed the perception that

improper communication was a serious problem, with the trend having increased over the

five years prior to the study. As a part of the project, a model policy was formulated to help

guide ethical and legal conduct and was made available throughout the state. The specific

focus of Bishard's project was on a perceived area of concern that was specific to a time,

place, and situation. It is important to focus on ethical issues that are couched in a specific

situation, involving particular people (Benhabib, 1987).

There is a tendency to rethink personal and organizational ethical moorings only when

they demand attention due to a failure in the system, a change in specific circumstances, or a

formerly status quo situation deteriorates when cultural changes impinge from outside (Scott,

1998). Until there is a breakdown of former policies or strategies, or conflict that derails

tradition or the status quo, individuals and organizations generally "feel little need to think

about ethical issues at all" (Scott, 1998, p. 10).

Dilemma Paradigms and Resolution Principles

An approach that brings practical application and theory into closer proximity is the use

of several concepts described by Kidder (1995). He applies moral reasoning in specific

circumstances through the use of what he calls "dilemma paradigms" and "resolution principles." He describes the zone of ethical decision making as the domain in which there is no absolute law, nor absolute freedom. The challenge to the individual is to exercise the opportunity/need to obey one's individualized internal moral code in ways that are congruent with professional codes and expectations of the organization, while also prioritizing one's own beliefs and values.

An ethical problem deals with a moral issue that has answers that may seem slippery when one attempts to situate them firmly on the continuum of right and wrong, morally better or worse. It may have difficult aspects, but there does seem to be a right and a wrong from which to choose. With care and deliberation, the rationale for a decision could be explained. The ethical dilemma is more complex because the choice to be made is from two competing rights. The dilemma is the forced choice not between right and wrong, but between what is right and what is *more* right, or primary. Kidder (1995) identifies the following categories as dilemma paradigms which can be helpful in classifying the conflict of relevant issues in given situations: truth versus loyalty, individual versus community, short-term versus long-term. and justice versus mercy.

Kidder also suggests that by thinking through possible ethical choices in the light of three resolution principles, the complexity of the context of the story can begin to make way for weighing the larger moral issues to be considered. These principles are: ends-based thinking, rule-based thinking, and care-based thinking.

The theoretical concept Kidder calls "ethical fitness" relates to frequency and ease of use of ethical decision making strategies. It is a capacity that can be developed to "recognize the nature of moral challenges and respond with a well-tuned conscience, a lively perception

of the difference between right and wrong, and an ability to choose the right and live by it"
(Kidder, 1995, p. 57).

Questions to Consider

Human beings continually redefine their sense of self and their understanding of the
world. To make meaning "is an interactive process and thus is dependent upon and
stimulated by the conditions in the environment. Meaning-making is a process of seeking
order, pattern, and significance" (Piper et al., 1993, p. 20). Questions stimulate the process
and affect the direction of inquiry. Questions may be posed within the consciousness of the
individual, via dialogue between and among people, or couched in a myriad of creative
mediums such as story, song, film, or art.

What practices are helpful to the individual or the collective educational profession to
encourage processing with others, and reflection? Empirical quantitative studies in the
literature support a view that experience is an important factor in facing ethical issues. The
question arises: Is it the experience in and of itself which makes a difference, or the
concomitant benefits associated with communicating, processing with others during the
situation, reflecting upon outcomes, and revisiting personal, professional, and organizational
values and beliefs? Can it be discerned whether successful resolution of difficult ethical
issues is related only to the accumulation of what has been experienced firsthand over the
years, or is there also an important element relating to *how* that experience is gained and
processed? What factors are important in the kinds of ethical issues school administrators
face and how they resolve them? These questions arise from the review of literature and fuel
the curiosity of the researcher.

A Focused Qualitative Inquiry to Add to the Body of Knowledge

The research on teaching and learning that informs educational leadership calls for the inclusion of more specific situational applications to accompany theory. Dialogue and reflection play an important role in both leadership and learning. Both philosophy and ethics are social in nature as is the world of education and the practicing school administrator. Qualitative research methodology, which is both dialogical and hermeneutic, provides a vehicle for answering questions pertaining to why, and how, and communication regarding the nuances of understanding, application, synthesis, analysis, and evaluation in a sociological setting. A holistic approach aimed at building shared meaning between researcher and participants would provide the necessary vehicle for answering some of the unanswered questions evident through the review of literature.

Summary

This review of literature and related research examined the foundational role of philosophy in the understanding of moral theory and practice. Philosophic traditions are still evident in the ways in which people make choices related to personal and professional values. Codes of ethics provide a venue for furthering professional discourse about ethics; however, they do not assist individuals in sorting out priorities when dealing with ethical dilemmas. Leadership theory and professional development merge to create an opportunity for educators to consider matters of professional ethics through a lens of both theory and practice. The intersection of cultural and social change in the educational setting and the emergence of the use of qualitative methodology in recent research sets the stage to seek descriptions of how ethical practice plays a role in the work lives of school administrators.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology used in this study, including the underpinnings in the literature that support the rationale for the methodology chosen. Methodology refers to more than just how a study is conducted, but the way in which problems are approached, including asssumptions, purposes, the place of theory, and perspective (Taylor & Bogdan, 1997). These concepts relate directly to other aspects of research design, including the purpose of the study and the questions it seeks to answer. More specific methodological description in this chapter includes participant selection, data collection and analysis.

Research Design: A Constructivist Qualitative Approach

The essential components of a research study are described by Maxwell (1996) to include the purpose of a study, the conceptual context (explicated through the literature review), research questions, the methods used, and ongoing attention to validity. In his Interactive Model of Research Design, he depicts the need for coherence between and among these components.

This inquiry was conducted within a constructivist qualitative framework. Schwandt (1998) describes the goal of a constructivist research design as "understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (p. 221). To judge the appropriateness of this approach, it is necessary to consider the purpose and questions of the study in light of three aspects associated with the constructivist paradigm: ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

The first aspect is ontolology, which considers what is the form and nature of reality, what exists, or what is true. The ontology of this study is relativist, in that it allows for the individual nature of participants' views of reality. The underlying assumption is that the experience of participants is situated and individual. Their stories and experiences are as Guba and Lincoln (1998) describe, "apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature" (p. 206). The perceptions or meanings shared by participants are not necessarily right or wrong, but to varying degrees are informed, insightful, or sophisticated. Soliciting, listening to, and examining the experiences and learnings of each participant constitutes a relativist ontology consistent with a constructivist research design.

The second aspect of the research design, epistemology, or how things are known, is transactional and subjectivist. Guba and Lincoln (1998) explain this to mean, "The investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the 'findings' are *literally created* as the investigation proceeds" (p. 207). In this study the object of investigation is not only the participant but also her/his prior experiences, relevant moral theory and ethical considerations, and the influence of the school setting which inform and affect his/her practice.

The third aspect of the research design is the appropriateness of the choice of methodology relative to the purpose and questions of the study. In this case a hermeneutical and dialectical methodology was used. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) describe hermeneutics as explaining, interpreting, and accurately recounting the meanings research participants give to the reality around them. They emphasize that interpretive, dialectical studies "are framed by descriptions of, explanations for, or meanings given to phenomena by *both* the researcher

and the study participants, rather than by the definitions and interpretations of the researcher alone" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 31). This approach accomodates the variability and personal nature of the social constructions in which high school principals are engaged. Guba and Lincoln (1998) suggest that in such a setting individual meaning can be elicited and refined "only through interaction *between and among* investigator and respondents (p. 207, italics in original).

These three aspects are the essential elements of a constructivist qualitative research design. They are congruent with the questions and purpose of this study, making for a coherent research design.

Research Questions

This study focused on the following five research questions:

1. What circumstantial/situational detail do Iowa public high school principals perceive as important in understanding the context of, and in the resolution of, an ethical problem or dilemma?

2. Do gender and/or size of the school district play a role in how public high school principals face ethical issues in schools?

3. What theoretical frameworks (such as ethical fitness, dilemma paradigms, and resolution principles) play a role in how public high school principals make meaning of ethical issues?

4. How does the satisfaction of a public high school principal, when reflecting about the outcome of an ethical problem or dilemma, contribute to change in his/her stated attitude toward the job/profession?

5. How can the experiences of public high school principals positively affect professional development for other school administrators as they learn to more effectively address ethical issues?

Participant Selection

Most sampling in qualitative research is what Patton (1990) describes as purposeful sampling or what LeCompte and Preissle (1993) call criterion-based selection. In this study, 16 public high school principals across the state of Iowa were identified to participate in one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher.

Potential participants were identified using the *Iowa Educational Directory: 2000–2001* obtained from the Iowa Department of Education. Criteria for invitation to participate in the study included:

1. The individual was listed in the 2000–2001 Directory as being a principal in a 9–12 or a 10–12 comprehensive public high school in the state of Iowa.

2. The individual was identified via a random selection process in one of six enrollment size/gender categories.

3. The individual had been employed in his/her position for at least one full year.

Rationale for these criteria was fairly straightforward. Ample evidence in the literature has pointed to gender as a factor in the work lives of school administrators (Bell, 1995; Chase, 1995; Dunlap & Schmuck, 1994; Schmuck & Schubert, 1994; Shakeshaft, 1987). Likewise, it also is known that the size of school district influences the day to day workings of a school and its stakeholders (Peshkin, 1982; Schmuck & Schmuck, 1990, 1993). The effect of these constructs on the ethical practice of high school principals, however, is not

known. Therefore, selection of participants was purposely designed in order to ensure adequate voice of the experiences and perspectives that might be unique by gender or district size.

It also was important to create a minimum frame of reference common to all participants reflecting from a current perspective in the principalship. Therefore, the criterion of at least one year in their current position was required of each participant. The criterion regarding 9–12 or 10–12 grade configuration in a comprehensive high school was imposed to eliminate unusual circumstances that might be related to the work life of principals in alternate settings, or in grade level configurations that extend below the secondary level.

Selection included consideration of the gender of the participants. Strategic inclusion of female participants was planned in order to include consideration of the experiences and perspectives that might be unique by gender. During the interview process itself the issue of gender was not specifically raised by the researcher, although participants did know that their participation was selected via the categories of gender and district enrollment size. Through analysis of interview data, these particular constructs were considered as possible factors in how participants made meaning of ethical issues that arose in the context of their work in school administration.

A purposive strategic selection process was used to identify administrators fitting the selection criterion of the following six categories:

1. Male high school principal in a school district with enrollment of 3,000 students or larger (Large School District).

2. Male high school principal in a school district with enrollment of 1,000 to 2,999 students (Medium School district).

3. Male high school principal in a school district with enrollment of fewer than 1,000 students (Small School District).

4. Female high school principal in a school district with enrollment of 3,000 students or larger (Large School District).

5. Female high school principal in a school district with enrollment of 1,000 to 2,999 students (Medium School District).

6. Female high school principal in a school district with enrollment of fewer than 1,000 students (Small School District).

Using information from the *Iowa Educational Directory: 2000–2001*, a Microsoft Excel database was created indicating the names of districts and high schools that were eliminated from the study for reasons such as 7–12 grade configuration, alternative or vocational (non-comprehensive) high school setting, or students attending high school in another district.

A second database was created, rank ordering the remaining districts by size of student enrollment. Phone calls were made to any district in which the gender of the high school principal(s) was ambiguous based on the first name(s) listed. After sorting the list by gender, the lists were studied and sorted in order to determine a district student population, which would create meaningful categories of Large, Medium and Small School Districts, while simultaneously providing enough female principals in each category so that it would be likely that sufficient female respondents would be identified in each category.

Using the lists and a table of random numbers under the supervision of an Iowa State University faculty member, potential participants were identified in rank order in each of the six categories. The researcher contacted each district by phone to verify that no major district

changes (such as grade configuration) or personnel changes (such as reassignment) had taken place. In any case in which changes had taken place, the high school and potential participant principal were excluded from the study, and the next randomly selected school and potential participant principal were identified.

Each of the randomly selected potential participants in each category was mailed an initial invitation packet consisting of a letter of invitation, a consent form (see Appendix A), and a stamped envelope addressed for return to the researcher. Potential participants who either did not return the consent form or declined to participate within 18 days, were replaced by the next randomly selected person from the same criterion category. Subsequent potential replacement participants were sent the initial invitation packet and had equal time for response. This process was to be repeated until a total of nine male and nine female high school principals (three in each district size category) were identified for participation in the study.

This plan was modified approximately two months into the selection process, when the potential female candidates in the large district category had been exhausted with two rather than three participants identified. At that point two male candidates in the large district category also had been identified; however, that pool was large enough that it was likely that a third would be identified. In weighing the benefit of identifying a third female in the large district category against the possible confounding influence of having varied the selection process used to solicit the participation of females in large districts, it was determined that two instead of three participants in both the male and female large district categories would be included in the study, bringing the total number of participants to 16. Once potential participants self-identified by returning the signed consent form, the researcher initiated

contact with participants via phone and/or e-mail, continuing contact via whichever mode the participant preferred.

A participant profile form (see Appendix C) was used by the researcher to systematically record demographic participant data confirming that the participant was indeed representative of the criterion category by district size and gender, and that the principal had been in his/her current position at least one year prior to his/her continued assignment during the 2001–2002 school year. The form also was used to record additional information on each participant during ensuing phone and e-mail contact regarding initial information, time, place, and driving directions. Subsequent information concerning each participant was maintained by the researcher, which included field notes, initial impressions following interviews, initial thoughts during tape transcription, and a record of adjustments made in the transcripts in order to maintain the privacy of each participant.

Interview of Participants

The main purpose of the interviews was for participants to share their world view, experiences, and explanations of those events and experiences relating to the ethical issues they faced as building-level administrators. When scheduling the interview, participants were given the option to obtain in advance the representative sample of interview questions (see Appendix B). For those who chose to peruse it in advance, it provided an "anticipatory set" stimulating the participant to remember, sort, and reflect on his/her own archive of experiences at the building level. Rather than standardizing this aspect of the study, a judgment panel of Iowa State University graduate students and Ph.D. candidates recommended that participants decide individually whether or not they preferred to receive

the sample questions in advance. It was noted that some participants, rather than feeling more

at ease with more specific prior knowledge, might have felt constrained to give undue

advance focus to "what the researcher wants."

The main question was purposely general in order to allow information to emerge from

participants rather than via advance prompting by the researcher. The researcher emphasized

to participants that they should choose to peruse the representative sample of interview

questions or not, based on what would make them most comfortable prior to and during the

interview.

The introductory question was, "In your current position as a building-level school

administrator, what situation or situations stand out as dealing with difficult ethical issues?

(Consider a situation or situations from the past or present.)" Information sought included

general observations by the participants relating to ethical situations, as well as more specific

information that might be shared regarding more complex "stories."

Additional information identified among the sample interview questions included more

specifics such as circumstances, collecting information, seeking advice, making a decision,

and satisfaction. Additional questions listed included, "What do you think would be helpful

to school administrators facing ethical issues? (Theories? Strategies? Actions?

Communications?)" and "Do you think facing ethical issues affects how you feel about your

job?"

During the interview the researcher probed for clarifications of meaning previously

expressed by the participant, and inquired about theoretical frames, which relate to the stories

shared by the participant during the interview. These included aspects of Kidder's (1995)

dilemma paradigms, resolution principles, and concept of ethical fitness, depending on the nature of the stories shared.

The practical test of a theory-in-use is the degree to which it helps resolve a situation and solve a problem (Schön, 1983). Participants were asked what they considered to have been helpful to them in dealing with ethical issues, and to speculate about what they believed would be helpful in the professional development of other administrators. In order to strengthen reliability (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993), all interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher.

The Role of the Researcher in a Qualitative Study

An important part of gaining access and building rapport is examining the roles and relationships of the researcher to participants (Burgess, 1991). At the point of invitation, the participants were aware that the researcher was collecting data toward the completion of requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Administration. Knowing that there were commonalities of experience between the researcher and participant provided some confidence that understandings on complex issues and sensitive topics could emerge.

Rubin and Rubin (1995) emphasize that qualitative research is personal, not detached. The researcher is the tool of the inquiry. In the words of Glesne and Peshkin (1992):

> My subjectivity is *the* basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build. It makes me who I am as a person *and* as a researcher, equipping me with the perspectives and insights that shape all that I do as a researcher, from the selection of topics clear through to the emphases I make in my writing. Seen as virtuous, subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise. (p. 104)

The synergy between researcher and participant that comes from professional background in education and administration, professional challenges, shared language, and specific stories can lead to grounded theory blending with previously considered conceptual theory.

One major threat to validity or trustworthiness occurs when the researcher provides incomplete description, or "sketchy data" (Maxwell, 1996). Another is imposing his/her own interpretive framework on the data, failing to attend to discrepant data, and therefore ignoring alternative explanations. An additional threat to trustworthiness is failing to acknowledge and deal productively with the researcher's influence on the setting and participants. The knowledge and experience of the researcher is a legitimate and positive part of a qualitative study. By including the reflexivity of the researcher as a part of the data collection process, it was less likely that the data collection process or analysis would be skewed for self-confirming results.

Analysis of the Data

Initial analysis, in addition to the intimate familiarity that develops during the tape transcription process, consisted of scanning and listening for categories and patterns specific to the research questions enumerated. After initial analysis by the researcher, member checking (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) was used to collaborate with those participants who self-selected to continue in the interactive process.

Follow-up contact with particpants consisted of revising the transcripts and checking perceptions regarding the application of theory. This process was used to confirm that what the researcher synthesized during the writing process continued to resonate with participants.

According to Maxwell (1996) grounded theory is "inductively developed during a study

(or series of studies) and in constant interaction with the data from that study.... In

qualitative research, both existing theory and grounded theory are legitimate and valuable"

(p. 33). Using this methodology participants were included in the building of grounded

theory. Their part in the process was documented via researcher notes during phone calls and

printed copies of e-mail. The researcher used a constant comparison method to relate

information in the narratives to the research questions. Britt's (1997) Concept Modeling and

van den Hoonaard's (1996) model of Sensitizing Concepts provided the basis for identifying

and linking concepts in the process of theory building.

Validity, Trustworthiness, Authenticity

Qualitative researchers seek opportunities to build credibility or truth value into their

methodology. A constructivist inquiry aims to produce reconstructed understandings in

which traditional criteria of validity are replaced by the terms trustworthiness and

authenticity (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In traditional research internal validity refers to the

extent to which a researcher's observations and measurements are true descriptions of a

particular reality. External validity traditionally refers to the degree to which descriptions can

be accurately compared with other groups. Trustworthiness is a more appropriate word to use

in the case of a qualitative constructivist inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is important

because it signifies a different set of assumptions about research purposes than does validity.

Constructions are considered credible and trustworthy when those who constructed them find

them plausible and explanatory. The researcher's goal is to add to knowledge, or as Bogdan

and Biklen (1998) state so clearly, "The worth of a study is the degree to which it generates theory, description, or understanding" (p. 34).

The researcher addressed trustworthiness and authenticity using multiple strategies and methods. Researcher notes taken during interviews and initial impressions written by the researcher following each interview provided an audit trail of emerging constructs, categories, and theories. This makes it possible to "explore the process, judge the decisions that were made, and understand the salient factors in the context that led to the decisions and interpretations made" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 242). Ultimately the reader judges the study by the degree to which it communicates a coherent description or argument supported through narrative analysis and theory building which has included participants.

Summary of Data Collection Process

The following steps summarize the data collection process used in this study:

1. Identify participants in each criterion category using previously described methodology.

2. Researcher contacts each participant via phone or e-mail, collecting and recording initial information on the participant profile form and scheduling interview.

3. Conduct one-on-one semistructured interview with each participant.

4. Interview transcribed by researcher. Reflexive notes recorded regarding each interview including adjustments made to protect the identity of participants, initial thoughts, general impressions, and questions.

5. Follow up contact with participants electing to review transcript of their interview, providing further feedback and input.

6. Repeat process until all 16 participants have been interviewed.

Ethical Considerations

This study had multiple safeguards related to ethical considerations. Traditional ethical concerns include informed consent, right to privacy, and protection from harm (Fontana, 1994). The researcher obtained Iowa State University Institutional Review Board approval prior to contact with participants (see Appendix E).

High school principals participating in the interview had the option of sharing multiple stories, one particular story with more detail, a story from the past, or from the present. Each participant made the determination of what and how much to share for him/herself. Therefore, each participant had a great deal of control during the interview. It also was important that the timing and location of the interview satisfied the need for the comfort and confidentiality of the participant.

It was the intention of the invitation strategy and use of preliminary contacts during which the interview was scheduled, to address any concerns the participants may have. Addressing the safety issue relating to confidentiality and the concern that others, either within or outside the school building or district, could be impacted by revelation of details was of primary importance to the researcher and in the design of the study. Each participant was consulted regarding how identifying features such as names, locations, and details regarding circumstances and issues shared were modified to protect the identity and location of the participant and others who might be implicated. Some researchers would not purge

identifying information from transcripts at all, but would wait until writing up findings to take care that identifying information was omitted. This researcher considered it prudent to make these changes within the transcripts prior to printing, manipulating, and coding in order to internalize pseudonyms and the written modification of situations which were generalized in order to omit identifying specificity.

Summary

The basis for a constructivist inquiry has been outlined as appropriate in this study. Key features of participant selection, the interview process, and analysis were described followed by a discussion of ethical considerations and trustworthiness.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand how selected public high school principals in the state of Iowa make meaning of the ethical issues they face. An additional purpose was to determine what theoretical frameworks and practices they find to be helpful when considered in relation to their own experiences. Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data collected during the study are included in this chapter.

The first section describes how the planned analysis of interviews progressed and was modified in order to balance the needs of participants and the needs of the researcher. The second section explores the professional terrain of each participant, tracing a path of analysis between the individuals, their issues, and their stories. The final section synthesizes the data in order to answer the research questions of the inquiry.

Conducting Interviews with Ongoing Analysis of Data

Because of the unfolding nature of qualitative inquiry it is not surprising that the researcher was moved to make appropriate adjustments in order to accommodate the needs and concerns of participants and at the same time persevere in the quest for useable narrative data through which to build meaning and progress toward answering research questions. This section addresses this aspect of the study.

A continuing priority: Anonymity and comfort of participants

The primary goal of the interviews was to obtain information from each participant regarding experiences, perceptions, and thought processes about how she/he addressed

ethical considerations in his/her administrative work life. This goal was continually balanced with a concomitant ethical requirement that every participant be as comfortable as possible with the process including returning the signed consent to participate form, scheduling and anticipating the interview, participating in the interview, and subsequently engaging in any further communication with the researcher. This concern for the comfort of participants continued throughout the written analysis of data and its further use in conversations, presentations, journal articles, and the body of this dissertation. Because of this priority, some general explanation of the researcher's ongoing attempt to provide this comfort and confidentiality is necessary.

When scheduling the interview, participants were asked if they preferred to receive a sheet of sample interview questions in advance either by mail or by e-mail. Three out of eight male participants and seven out of eight female participants preferred receiving the sample interview questions in advance, with the other participants either declining or indicating no preference. For participants who expressed ambivalence, the questions were sent in advance of the interview.

In order to conduct ongoing analysis and build upon what had emerged in early interviews, the researcher attempted to complete an initial transcription of each interview prior to interviewing another participant. In nine of the 16 interviews, it was possible to "stay ahead of the next interview" with the transcriptions. This form of initial analysis provided further opportunity for the researcher to reflect on the interview process and content and to make minor adjustments to the focus of subsequent questioning strategy, thereby improving the outcome of each successive interview.

Because the informal interaction leading into each interview varied, interview format varied slightly among participants. Informal conversation regarding previous phone contacts with the participant, characteristics or location of the school building, or activities in progress in the building provided different conversational openers. In every case, the tape recorder was turned on as soon as possible and all subsequent conversation was transcribed.

Most interviews began with the researcher sharing a synopsis of professional background and purpose of the study. Details regarding the researcher's interest in the topic were not described or explained initially. In some cases, experiences of the researcher very similar to those of participants would be shared, but without significant detail.

After completing the initial transcriptions of all 16 interviews, the researcher re-listened to all tapes at least twice and revised transcripts using a uniform strategy for omitting identifying information. The researcher looked for patterns regarding the professional experiences of participants, the types of issues they chose to discuss, and the way they characterized their educational values and moral decision making. Including specific data regarding teaching and administrative background would easily narrow down the identity of the participant. Therefore, an early decision regarding the narrative data was required to determine if specific data regarding professional work history was necessary in order to answer the research questions. After the second review and adjustment of transcripts, the researcher was satisfied that generalized characterizations regarding former teaching and administrative assignments and experience were as helpful as more specific information. Consequently, all transcripts were adjusted to reflect general time-frames and characterize past teaching and administrative experience in general ways.

Each participant was invited to review the transcript of his/her interview after it had been adjusted for content of identifying information. Four males in medium to small districts and one female in a large district declined to receive and review a transcript. The only request for adjustment in the transcripts was to increase the frequency in which persons were referred to as "*he/she*" in order to neutralize gender as an identifying characteristic. Because this gender ambiguity was provided, some information relating to gender issues was lost. However, it was more important to protect the identities of participants and maintain their confidence and confidentiality than it was to have access to gender as an issue for analysis in every situation.

The research questions of this study focus primarily on *how* administrators make meaning of the ethical issues they face, not on which issues tend to be identified, which may vary by gender or district size. It was not a stated goal to include a critical analysis of gender issues in other aspects of administrative life. If this were the case it would have been necessary to make this clear "up front" with participants. Ethical issues related to gender which emerged were part of the ethical terrain described by participants, but the effects of gender in other aspects of administrative work life were beyond the scope of this study.

Both male and female principals in the first two to three years of administrative experience were no more or less aware or challenged dealing with ethical issues than were administrators with more years of experience. Neither was there evidence that years of teaching experience were related to the way male and female administrators perceived or reported their experiences. Therefore, general information regarding years of experience is provided in the characterization of each participant, but it is not a continuing focus in analysis of how administrators in this study made meaning of the ethical issues they faced.

Administrators still in the process of, or recently taking advanced coursework, were more likely to report deliberate reflection and recently seeking advice from coworkers or educational cohort members. Although no explicit attempt was made to identify the age of participants, it was easily apparent, given work history and other comments, which participants were nearing retirement age, often with the subject of retirement brought up voluntarily by the participant. Of the participants nearing retirement, there was no evidence that proximity to retirement had any effect on participant awareness, interest in, or perceptions regarding ethical issues.

The age and experience of administrators who did not choose to return the consent form and participate is unknown, so the researcher can draw no conclusions regarding characteristics of those who declined to participate. A total of 36 letters of invitation to participants were sent out. Eight of 17 males contacted and eight of 19 females contacted returned signed consent forms.

Analysis strategy

Two conceptual models were used as a basis to blend and adapt a framework for organizing, categorizing, and analyzing the content of the interviews. Fouad and Bingham (1995) identify Spheres of Influence of cultural variables that affect career issues and professional work life. These variables include a dominant group, which in this study was adapted to be the dominant/school setting of the participant, racial or ethnic groups, family, gender, and the core, which for the purposes of this study was adapted to mean core beliefs and values. Through the process of relating specific statements made by all 16 participants to this model, it became evident that the adapted model was useful for mapping

participants' areas of concern relating to issues of equity. Late in the mapping process the topic of special education was added to the adapted model, as it became apparent that aspects of equity overlapping with concerns about resources was also a recurring theme (see Appendix D).

The second graphic organizer adapted was the Zones of Ethical Choices model (Scott, 1998). With a focus more toward people rather than issues, it includes society as a whole, local community/public, work/business/professional associates, friends/dates/distant relatives, family/intimate others, and self. The major modification made in using the model was to expand the category of work/business/professional associates to specifically list board, district, building: administration, teachers/staff, students, and students' family. Scott includes "self" as the central zone in the model; however, it was eliminated as a zone for recording information because it was redundant to the core area in the adaptation of Fouad and Bingham's spheres of influence (1995). By using these two adapted models for recording and organizing the data of participant narratives, it was possible to more easily compare areas of interest and concern expressed by participants.

Adjusted transcripts were reread repeatedly with topics, issues, and other notes categorized by Zones of Ethical Choices (Scott, 1998), Spheres of Influence (Fouad & Bingham, 1995), Dilemma Paradigms (Kidder, 1995), and Resolution Principles and Ethical Fitness (Kidder, 1995). These notations were accompanied by the numbered transcript lines relating to the topic for each participant. The researcher looked for patterns related to gender, district size, and professional experience, interconnecting with the identified issues of concern, and categories of people most often referred to or involved in situations relating to personal, professional, and educational values and beliefs.

Upon review of information shared by all participants, three major areas were discerned. Topics discussed by participants could be described as professional and educational values, ethical issues, and ethical dilemmas. Each of these areas will be explained in further detail as part of the analysis strategy and identified as they occurred in the context of participant interviews.

Exploration of the Ethical Terrain of School Administrators

The experiences and multiple points of view of high school principals provide a window on the educational values and beliefs that make up their moral landscapes. By comparing and contrasting the ethical issues they face, how they do so, and how it affects how they feel about their profession, it is possible to take a closer look at what they share as well as how they differ. This section emphasizes topics that were of prominent concern or interest that administrators shared through the interview process.

The voices of school administrators

In most interviews, initial rapport was established through the process of sharing educational background. In most cases an initial ethical issue was identified by the participant and discussed at length. During this process participants generally made many statements regarding their educational beliefs and values. Sometimes these beliefs and values intersected with personal beliefs and values in such a way that it was evident the administrator was striving to balance conflicting priorities and personal and professional values and beliefs.

Participants talked about topics of educational values and priorities like careening pinballs which randomly covered a lot of ground. When the pinball of any identified value or priority collided with a situational post, bumper, or another pinball, this amounted to a "ding," lighting up an awareness of an ethical issue. When personal, professional, and educational values collide with each other, with policies, or within circumstances, an ethical dilemma is at hand. The more force, frequency, or situational complexity involved, the more difficult the dilemma was likely to be perceived.

The following data in the form of participant narrative and accompanying analysis provide example and detail for further interpretation. The order of this presentation is like a web or trail by which participants are connected through comparison and contrast of various educational issues, experiences, and points of view. As the reader is not likely to recall the pseudonyms of each participant, it may be helpful to note that the names selected in both the male and female categories descend through the alphabet by district size. Anita, Carole, Art, and Bob are pseudonyms of principals in large districts (beginning of alphabet); Marta, Nadine, Olivia, Larry, Matt, and Nick are pseudonyms of principals in medium districts (middle of alphabet); and Theresa, Valerie, Wanda, Vince, Warren, and Zach are pseudonyms of principals in small districts (end of alphabet). In some cases information is shared without the pseudonym of the participant to decrease the likelihood that a recognizable portrait of any participant will emerge. Words from transcripts printed in italics indicate that an adjustment has been made to help protect the identity of the participant.

Beginning the web with educational values and beliefs

In most cases participants shared much information regarding educational beliefs and values. It was upon this base that their daily work lives are situated. Most administrative behavior and energy for leadership springs from these beliefs and values. Therefore, it was necessary and important for participants to be able to include them as a way to ground their comments and explanations. It was common for participants to wonder out loud, "Well, I'm not sure this is an ethical issue, but ..." Often they were verbalizing the foundational values and beliefs which are the ground upon which ethical issues emerge. Like rocks previously hidden in the soil, after an overnight rain, what was not even visible yesterday can become an obstacle needing attention today.

Olivia has been the high school principal in a medium size rural school district for enough years that she has gained confidence and credibility. She has a strong educational belief in site-based decision making, explaining, "I think the people who are in the trenches doing the work should have something to say about the rules and policies that they have to follow and the directions the school is going." This had been a strong long-term commitment in the district where she serves, but with changes in the board and superintendency in recent years, the support and emphasis on collaborative decision making has waned. The researcher prompted: "Sometimes people have to choose, when they are pushed enough, or uncomfortable enough with an organizational change, that they just can't tolerate anymore." Olivia responded:

> I've had some of those thoughts. I know exactly what you're talking about.... There would be a point at which I would say, "I can't work here anymore"...and that would be if we started having the philosophy that we wouldn't do everything we possibly can do to keep kids in school.... We have got to make things better for the kids. That's why we're here. The second non-negotiable would be the use of collaborative decision

making. I don't have enough experience bossing people around to do it effectively.... I want to be the kind of principal where I become a part of a culture, and be part of a family, I guess. Maybe that sounds corny. But I want to be part of something that weathers the bumps in the good and the bad times.

This is an ethical issue for Olivia because she continually weighs the value of her current situation and a point beyond which she would determine that the situation was unacceptable. Were the situation to intensify in the district so that she was pressured to compromise these beliefs, she would be faced with making a decision regarding the ethical dilemma of compromising her educational beliefs versus giving up the community of which she has become a part. She has stated that, from her current point of view in which the choice is not yet necessary, there would be a clearly right course of action for her: to leave.

Nick briefly describes his experience in a medium size district in which he faced a similar dilemma, which did escalate to the point of making a choice in an ethical dilemma:

> I don't know how I should say this. I battled with, I was the [position] and kind of battled with the administration, superintendent for quite a while. I think *his/her* ethics needed examining. I wasn't in a position to do anything about that.

The issue was a district level concern that put into question at least the clarity, if not the honesty with which information was being communicated within the district. The situation escalated to the point that Nick felt he no longer belonged in the district. He went on to describe the overlap between his personal values regarding family issues and a difficult decision to relocate. With the following comment, Nick was subtle in describing what he believed to play out as justice in the long term:

> But what was ironic was that within [a short period of time] [one of the administrators who had opposed him] retired and [another key administrator] was fired.... All I know is that I'm very happy right now...[in his current administrative position].... Funny how things work out.

Nick's low key statement about things working out attests to his conviction that in his situation he had done the right thing. With his family's blessing he made a major professional "course correction" that was in alignment with deeply held personal and professional beliefs and values. This intersection of personal and professional ethics is not always so evident, but jumps to the foreground when personal and professional values are in conflict in the arena of one's private or professional life. The more the intersection of values is entangled with the policies and values of the educational organization, the more complicated is the task of the individual to resolve the problem.

In communicating about the ethical dilemma in which he found himself, Nick included a great deal of detail that has been omitted in order to protect his anonymity. Later in the interview Nick described a district-wide decision being made, with good open communication between and among the administrators. When asked if his previous experience of mistrust among coworkers had affected him he responded:

> I don't believe anything I'm told until I check it out myself. And I think that's a good way to be.... Every time anybody tells me something I believe something's there.... But I check it out myself and make my own decisions.

In this case, analysis of Nick's ethical dilemma touches on more than one of the research questions of this study, including detail and context of a situation grounded in the circumstance of a male administrator in a medium size district, a small window on how it has affected his stated outlook toward the profession. He does not believe that the experience changed his life view, only his job circumstances.

Gender issues

In the early stages of designing this study, a gender balance of participants was sought

in order to be sure that the voice of female administrators be heard. Gender was identified as

an ethical issue among some participants.

Olivia thinks of herself not just as a school administrator, but as a female school

administrator. In response to the interview starter question she responded:

> **Olivia:** Probably the first thing I would say is that when I first started in this position it
> seemed an ethical issue to me was being accepted as a female in a high school
> principalship position.... And the first few meetings I attended of principal groups, you
> know it's kind of looking around at all the men in suits and trying to figure out what I
> could bring to the group.... And I would say for the most part that the men were very
> welcoming. But I have noticed over the years that the meetings have taken on much
> more of a student achievement and how can we help each other look, as opposed to
> discussing how the athletics are going...what I would call the "good-ole-boy-network"
> of conversations. And I don't think that's because of me so much, I just think the times
> are changing to be more accepting and to maybe be a little bit more professional about
> the kinds of things that are talked about when you get together.
> **Deb:** ...Are you more comfortable now with more "compadres" [female
> administrators] so to speak?
> **Olivia:** Definitely. I mean I feel like I could call any high school principal in the state
> of Iowa and get help or have a good conversation. And I have some examples I won't
> use very specifically, of where I called another school with a male principal to ask for
> information and I felt very brushed off. And that just doesn't happen any more. Now
> maybe I have more skills, you know, so I'm not necessarily blaming them.

In no case did a male administrator express that his own gender or the gender of a

female administrator amounted to an ethical issue in the workplace. However, in five out of

eight interviews, female administrators communicated at length and pointedly, regarding

their gender as an ethical issue in their work lives. Only the two female principals in large

districts and one female principal in a medium size district did not mention gender as an

ethical issue in their work lives.

Valerie's concern about gender comes not from her relationships with teachers or other administrators, but from the community. She is a relative newcomer to administration and spoke with great enthusiasm about her work in a small rural district where she enjoys an open and comfortable relationship with the superintendent. As she states:

> Number one, this district has never had a female principal...at the high school. You know, lots of kids saying, "Well I'm not going to listen to some woman coming in." Number two, a lot of people said I was relatively young to be doing it.

Valerie's teaching experience prior to administration included recognized instructional excellence and strength in managing difficult student behavior. Her energy and excellence caused her to stand out and fueled her interest in further leadership opportunities.

Marta also took pleasure in demonstrating educational excellence and leadership as a teacher prior to pursuing the principalship. She commented at length on her gendered experience as a school administrator in a rural/suburban district of medium size:

> **Marta:** ...I learned a lot in the last three years and I've studied education a lot, so sometimes it's scary to superiors if they feel that maybe you know more than they do about a topic so they don't bring it up. But if they feel like they might know more about *sports*, and they might know just as much about the way the grounds should look, then those things are safe to bring up, because they know they can't be challenged, that you can't dispute what they say. And I find that the board is likely to worry about things that they feel that they're experts on. And same with the superintendents.... And so if you have a superintendent who is really athletic and really into sports, doesn't know that much about instruction and curriculum and not really that interested in it, then those are the things that are going to come up in the evaluation because they feel comfortable saying to you, "Well, you missed that *ball* game." Whereas they don't feel comfortable saying, "Well now, what about your English curriculum?... You know they don't feel comfortable discussing that.... And what it does to me is, it makes me want to move up into a higher position. Because then I wouldn't treat my administrators that way.... That's one of the reasons that I wanted to be a principal.... And I would just look at the principal saying to me, and they were great guys, but I just was looking at them thinking, you know you guys are missing the boat.... I just knew I needed to move up.

Marta is not timid in her expression of judgment. However, she also demonstrates compassion for the superintendent she perceives to be experiencing *his/her* own difficulty with the board:

> **Marta:** But it's hard to work for people that you feel are incompetent and then to have them to be your evaluator. And it's hard to work for a board that doesn't necessarily like a superintendent, and so everybody is miserable.
> **Deb:** You've been in that situation?
> **Marta:** Yeah. Where they just, no matter what, if *he/she* says, "Black" they say, "White." I mean *he/she* might say, "The sun's up." And everybody goes outside and it's light and they say, "Nope, it's dark." You know it's just absolutely intolerable for everyone. And you can't get anything accomplished because anything *the superintendent* supports they [the board members] reject.

For Marta these are ethical issues in her work setting. They do not rise to the level of ethical dilemmas, because by her own perception she is not having to make a difficult choice between two right values or courses of action. She explains:

> As far as ethical, you know that's such a big word for me. That would be like the superintendent that sleeps with his secretary. Well, that's unethical. Or the board member's kid who doesn't get punished. That's unethical. But those aren't decisions that I get to make. Those aren't things that I do. So I don't really feel like my position really lends itself to being unethical. Just because I don't have anything to gain or lose. And maybe that's naive, but, that's just kind of how I feel. I don't feel like I have anything to gain in acting a certain way.

When answering the initial interview question about ethical issues in her work, Marta is quick to point out that her decisions are under constant scrutiny and any wrongdoing would not be overlooked. She elaborates:

> It would be splattered all over, because principals live in a fishbowl, high school principals in particular.... Everybody is gonna know. And it's gonna be the topic at the [name of local eating establishment] because it's a small district.... You just have so many enemies, I mean just from your job.... I just think that any intelligent administrator knows that every decision, every move is under scrutiny of everyone and when the time is right, it's gonna be brought up.

She expresses frustration with the community expectation that a principal new to a district live within the district regardless of availability of suitable housing. She notes that this is not an expectation for teachers, nor for the elementary principal in her district. She rages at being considered a commodity: "And so you have to show them all that they've bought, because that's how they feel." She mimics a low male voice saying, "We've paid a lot of money for you, we're entrusting you with our kids, our school."

This less than flattering view of school board and community extends even to teachers and fellow administrators, causing Marta to seek advice outside rather than within the district. When asked about seeking advice about a difficult issue she responded:

> I think that a principal knows never to talk within the district about district matters because, no matter what, somehow it's going to come back around. It just does. We have a really great group of administrators that are females in this district that [gives examples of things they do together]. But I don't, we don't ever say things that I might say to a friend that has no tie to my district whatsoever.

Trust and communication

This advice from Marta demonstrates overlapping issues of gender, trust and communication that affect the ways in which principals seek advice. It is a particularly important issue for principals because it is both a kind of personal support and over time, an informal form of professional support.

The time honored administrative advice of "be careful what you say" is closely tied to the necessary practice of guarding confidentiality, but also increases an administrator's sense of isolation. In medium and small districts, principals were in agreement that trusted and reliable sources for information included Area Education Agency (AEA) staff, current and former university professors, and personnel at School Administrators of Iowa (SAI). One

male and one female principal, both in small districts, specifically named Kathy Collins, Director of Legal Services with SAI, as a trusted source of professional advice. Two male and two female principals in small districts reported close working relationships with the school counselor as providing support and as a frequent sounding board for the principal, as well as for collaboration on discipline issues.

Conversely, male and female principals in large districts all expressed openness and confidence in seeking information within district from coworkers, fellow administrators both within and outside the district, central office staff, and district legal counsel. One such principal in a large district is Art, who would not mind being considered a "Grand Ole' Man" of the principalship. Nearing retirement from a large district, he shared a retrospective on his experience that was stirring and impressive. He is the kind of administrator that the profession is challenged and struggling to replace. Couched in the story of his professional career are numerous occasions during which he reports comfortably and confidently conferring with coworkers and administrative superiors within the district. He related two interactions in which he "crossed swords" with an administrative peer. In both cases he was defending a deeply held educational value. Because the administrators involved continued to confront the issue, his perception was that, although the personal interaction was uncomfortable, the issues were resolved and positive change was the outcome.

Also a principal in a large district, Anita says of herself, "I've not ever been a very good person for just keeping quiet about things. I've not ever been one that has anguished over what I should say, because I always say it." She describes school administration as "just such a busy, busy business that I don't have time to handle things much of any other way."

Art and Anita describe challenging communication encounters in a far different light than principals with less experience. Is it communicative skill and experience, status and power, or a combination of both which is acquired over time that makes such a considerable difference in the outcome of substantive professional interchange of ideas and opinions?

Experience, power, and communication

Vince provides an example of the issues of power and communication without complicating the scenario with gender issues. He is relatively new to administration in a small rural district. In many ways during the interview he has been candid about the difficulties he is experiencing:

> ...[T]here's not a lot of trust between the building principals and the school board.... Working with the superintendent, that's also where there's a trust issue because a lot of times we get some pretty goofy e-mails. Both the other principal and I now kind of cringe just to open up our e-mail in the morning depending on what message might be there.

He has grown to hate e-mail saying, "...to me e-mail is one of the worst things that has ever happened for schools." When asked what is worse about e-mail than a phone call he replies, "It's just so impersonal. And depending on how they write that one sentence, I mean, 'Whoa! Is he/she that mad at me?' or 'What exactly is going on?'" There is stress associated with the ambiguity of partially understood communications, lingering doubts, and questions, particularly for the administrator with less power and experience. Vince also cues us to the importance of the relationship between and among administrative team members. An administrator's success or failure in the district is closely tied to communication and success or failure in maintaining these important relationships.

Wanda was relatively young and had minimal administrative experience in a small district when she left her first administrative position due to a disagreement with the superintendent regarding deeply held educational beliefs and values. There is no way to know if the philosophical chasm was the real problem, communication style, or innumerable other possibilities. She expressed her belief that the importance of the issues at stake was non-negotiable, saying, "And that's where my own philosophical issues [were]: What do I stand for? What do I believe in? What am I willing to do for kids? Am I willing to buck the system if it's going to help kids?" She reported the words of her superintendent, "If our philosophical beliefs don't come closer together, one of us won't be here next year." She was given three measurable goals that she considered to be acceptable, as she explains:

> That's fine. Then on the bottom of my sheet it basically said, these are not the only things you'll be judged on. You will also be evaluated on your leadership abilities, your, I mean, abilities that are vague, that basically what it came down to for me was
> **Deb:** "Gotcha."
> **Wanda:** I can't win. And what I said to *him/her* was, "So what you're telling me is, I can keep my job for a year, however, no guarantee after the year even if I jump through all these hoops, I can keep it.
> **Deb:** Why do you think *he/she* really wanted you to leave?
> **Wanda:** I think *he/she* (whispers)
> **Deb:** (Laughs)
> **Wanda:** (Loudly to the tape recorder) I think [the superintendent] doesn't like women!... I was so beside myself.... In my husband's perspective you don't quit without a job. You've got *a family*.... And he knew how miserable I was. And I have a lot of respect for [husband's first name]. He's a good solid grounded person. And he knew what I was going through from a rational and logical standpoint. He was concerned about some very legitimate things. My perspective was, "You know something, maybe this is God's way of saying to me you need to be home with your *family*." I don't know what He's telling me, but all I do know is I'm not going to do that [compromise specific educational values]. I'm not going to, I'm a better person than that. I deserve better than that. And I'm not going to put myself through that. Because by putting myself through that, I'm going to be putting my *family* through that, you [Wanda's husband] through that, my friends. I'm not going to be able to do that. I don't want to do that. Even if I could, you know, I don't want to do that.... So I quit.

Like Olivia and Nick, Wanda was clear that she was dealing with what for her were non-negotiable educational values. Like Nick, she chose to move on. In describing the circumstances of his ethical dilemma, Nick also included personal and specific information regarding the effects such a decision had on his family. The overlap of personal and professional ethics in such cases is painfully clear.

Personal, emotional and professional consequences

In considering the question of how administrators feel about their jobs or profession after confronting a difficult ethical dilemma, both Nick and Wanda were certain they had done the right thing and their careers moved forward in ways which, in the long term, were very positive. When asked, "Do you think you've finished paying the price for the choice?... [Y]ou're happy with who you are and where you are?" Nick responded, "Oh, absolutely."

Seven of eight male and seven of eight female administrators across all three district sizes spoke about the interconnection between their professional circumstances and the effects their jobs had on their family. In nine out of 16 interviews, administrators spoke at length about including family members when considering career moves. This overlap between the personal life of the public school administrator and professional educational values is an ethical issue that only rises to the level of an ethical dilemma when the two competing values both cannot be honored under the given circumstances.

When asked what it would take for him to want to leave his position, Vince replied that it was important for things to continually improve for himself and for those around him. By Vince's professional values, what he is doing is good and important, but not without some conflict in personal values:

Deb: So in general your progression from teacher to administrator has been a good thing?
Vince: Yes, it has....well, I, for me personally. Uh, for my family, no.
Deb: Would they even say, would they say that? Or you're just being...
Vince: No, they would probably say that. (Pause) Um,
Deb: So they're paying, the family pays a price.
Vince: Yes, it does.

As long as Vince's situation is improving and he believes that he is contributing to the improvement of the school, he is willing to continue to make a short-term sacrifice in the quality of his family life in order to reap a professional benefit that ultimately will benefit his ability to provide for his family in the long term. The short-term/long-term dilemma paradigm characterizes important aspects of the two conflicting values. By continuing on his present course, Vince is using the ends-based resolution principle in that, although the current situation is difficult for him and for his family, in the end more good will come from his perseverance in the principalship for the school, his family, and himself.

For Zach, the stress of adjusting to the principalship is a distant memory. As principal in a small rural district. he spends a great deal of time interacting informally with students regarding discipline issues and other daily matters. He recounts his professional history and concludes with a chuckle that "IPERS [retirement] is close." During the course of the interview. he does not mention the pursuit of professional development or current educational issues. He responds to the interview starter question:

> Well this school district, um one of the things that we don't have is we don't have a lot of minorities here. So we don't have you know, sometimes with minorities you have some conflicts, squabbles going back and forth. So we don't have those things happening. The school, the student body we have here is pretty good as far as listening to stuff so we don't have fights. We don't have teachers that feel that they're being abused by the students or anything like that. The most difficult situations that I've had have had to do with sexual harassment. A kid will start popping off to another kid about this or that and it's usually a boy/girl situation. We haven't had too many times where it's been same sex going after each other or anything like that. But those have been,

probably, that's the ones that stand out in my mind as far as the most difficult. And a lot of times they're difficult because of the fact that they've started outside of the school and then they come into the school. And you know once they affect us here, for whatever the reason, then it becomes my job to try and sort it out and make sure it doesn't happen again and things like that.

Zach's comments suggest minimal concern or awareness of ethical issues in his work life. However, he was aware that for some principals, there are pressures and concerns that are not obvious to others. At the conclusion of the interview, when the tape recorder was turned off, he spoke of an administrator who had committed suicide, and his regret that he and his colleagues had not been more aware and helpful to the deceased administrator. Zach was regretful for the tragedy and feels a sense of shared responsibility among administrators. He said, "We really need to support each other better." In telling the background of his own career, he previously had described a time when he experienced the need to be understood and supported better. For Zach the importance of support was more than a theoretical responsibility, but a personal memory of having needed support, lacked it, and knowing how devastating it can be.

The conundrum of special needs

An area that cuts across gender and district size for collaboration and teamwork was special education. This topic deserves a place of its own within this analysis because of its frequent appearance as an educational issue and the frequency with which it was identified as an ethical issue. Although collaboration is a mandated part of the special education decision-making process, there was definitely a sense that seeking solutions as a team in every way possible was the practice not merely for legal compliance but out of anxious concern to attempt to discover and implement solutions for situations that are difficult for students, staff,

and parents alike. Ironically, special education was frequently described as an ethical issue of equity, but from two distinctly different points of view. For some participants the question of equity related to access to services for the educational success of students with special challenges. For other participants, due to funding challenges and frustration, the ethical issue was equitable distribution of funds and resources, reasonable use of limited space and services for the success of all students. An in-depth look at these issues is beyond the scope of this inquiry. However, a few comments from a female principal in a large district and a male principal in a district of medium size give an indication of the difficulty.

Anita is a seasoned administrator in a large district. Speaking about special education, she sounds tired:

> ...It's my largest department.... If there are cases that we think are going to get pretty um, (pause) in depth, or maybe complicated or intense or whatever then I want to know. I want to be involved. We have our finger in a lot of the Special Ed cases simply because Special Ed makes up the vast majority of the referrals we see in the office.... [W]e [the building level administrative team] keep trying to do something to address that so our day is not totally taken up with Special Ed.

In response to a question about the types of discipline options and consequences students encounter in the school, Anita lists such options as Saturday school, detentions, in-school and out-of-school suspension. There is an alternative school in the district, but there are far more students seeking an alternative setting than can be accommodated. Students who have experienced difficulty in one setting in the district can be moved to another building by what is known as an in-district transfer or principals' agreement. It provides another chance but requires that good grades, attendance, and behavior be maintained.

Anita continues to describe options, which from her weary tone obviously do not hold out much hope for many of the students who are not meeting with success in traditional schools:

> **Anita:** Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.... I take 'em from other schools. We try it. It's, it's.... It's something. If it's a Special Ed student, that's a possibility, but it's less likely to occur because our Special Ed programs are spilling over.... Now, sometimes if it's a kid that's 17, 18, 19 years old and we have just tried everything, we might say, why don't you read through this brochure about getting your GED?... So, some options. Oh, I forgot about [name]. It is our alternative high school and they will take students that are not being successful here sometimes. It's a referral basis, they only have so much room.... I try to maintain that we are a traditional high school.... And in rare occasions will we shorten a kid's schedule.... Of course if there's a doctor's recommendation or, then of course we would, psychologists or whatever. But, I try, you know if a kid's gonna make it in a traditional school then we gotta be traditional.
> **Deb:** Can you think of an exception of one [a situation] when it was like, "Oh, this one's harder?"
> **Anita:** Oh, (pause). You know it's always hard when you end up having to, well... I can't really think of times when they're harder. And I guess maybe there's a reason for that. Because by the time that decision has to be made I feel pretty confident that we've done everything we can in a regular high school.
> **Deb:** Um hmm.
> **Anita:** So, and because I have respect for my colleagues and the other programs that are out there.... But it's not like I'm throwing them to the wolves. You know, if they're smart they're going to finally realize this is my last chance to make this work. Um, so no, I don't think I agonize over those.

For Anita this is an ethical issue but not an ethical dilemma because, from her point of view, there is clearly a right course of action. If she believes she is doing the only right thing, which happens to be very difficult, it is an ethical issue. If, however, she sees it as having to choose how to apportion inadequate resources, pitting multiple values and right actions against each other, she is experiencing an ethical dilemma. In the end, only Anita needs to know, and respond.

The intersection of special needs and discipline

School administrators spend a great deal of time managing student discipline and participating in team decision making regarding the special needs of individual students. In the voices of several administrators, the two topics are described as overlapping. Some administrators express a higher level of frustration than did Anita.

Larry has served in his current position as principal of a rural school district of medium size for between six and 12 years. When asked about what his teachers find frustrating he responds:

> It just seems like every year we get more and more kids that are on medication that you've never even heard of, "bi-polar," I mean, you know, it seems like 25% now of your kids are ADHD or they have some reason why they can't pay attention.... You finally just want to say, "You know if I slap you in the face you'll pay attention." But you know that's not gonna work. That's what frustrates the teachers because they say, "He'll listen to me. Just let me take him in the back of the room and paddle his ass." ...But they know they can't do that. But it's frustrating.... I do believe that the, that it's increasing every year.

Later in the interview Larry explained discipline options, including an alternative school setting. When asked if the person staffing the alternative school had special education certification, Larry said *he/she* did not. When asked how they cover special education students who might end up at the alternative school, he replied:

> Well, we have a special education consultant that is outstanding and just always seems to say, "Larry, don't worry about it, I'll take care of it."...we try to modify the best we can, but eventually we tell the parents they have to pretty much sign those kids out of special education. Because our alternative school is not a special education facility. But I say that and, I look at the kids on the list and probably 30% of them were Special Ed when they were up here [at the high school] ...But many times kids are special education because they, for whatever reason, they're distracted, they can't concentrate, they've got too many things going on. They get down there [to the alternative setting]...the ratios are small. So, you know, while we have had kids that have been very low in special education *here go there*, they usually can't make it. Kids that are in resource program up here so they, you know, a couple of grades below in comprehension and vocab and that type of thing, they do fine. And if they don't want to

go they don't have to be there. And so when they're there, they're usually pretty committed, you know, much more than here. You know [first name of the alternative teacher,] she doesn't have discipline problems because if they don't want to be there they don't have to be there. And she doesn't have attendance problems very often because if they don't get their hours in two weeks in a row they're dropped.

What Larry has described is not in compliance with the rules of special education. There might be educators who would consider this arrangement to be neither legal nor ethical and would disapprove of Larry's comments and practices. There also might be educators who would wince at how he has baldly expressed his opinions, but they might also identify with his frustration and agree with his point of view.

District size and personal privacy

Because Larry was willing to speak out on special needs and consequences for student discipline, the researcher invited Larry to comment on personal privacy in his medium size district. He responded:

> I have to leave.... If my family wants to take vacation we leave town. Every police officer knows you, you got a door wedged open [at the school] at midnight, one o'clock in the morning, they call you. And while I like knowing those guys on a first-name basis I don't always like to see them at one o'clock in the morning. So there's drawbacks. In the long run, there's probably many more positives because you know everybody, but there's really no "my time." I can't go to bars downtown, not that I do, but, I gotta be careful. I gotta be careful, (pauses) well I used to be a lot more careful, you know having a couple of beers when I go out to the [name of place,] nice beautiful restaurant here and have a steak. But anymore I'm just like, you know, I'm old enough. Obviously I'm not gonna start dancing on the table and that type of stuff so. But if I want to, if I want to, you know, you gotta leave if you're gonna do, if you're gonna be (laughs) you know anything that's going to embarrass yourself or your position, and I don't do that anyway. But, you know you really don't have "your time" so to speak.

Larry has been in his position for more than a few years, and perhaps the constraints of the visibility of his administrative position have begun to wear on him.

Valerie is newer to her position in a small rural district. She reports the same phenomenon of social constraints but delivers a more positive tone. She describes in great detail the complicated social and family relations involved in the small community. One student's athletic ineligibility, a disciplinary consequence to another student, and an employee on a remediation plan all have social repercussions in the community. In one case the awkward aftermath results in a community member who no longer patronizes a local shop. In another case, there is a connection between an issue at school which affects the school employee's spouse and his/her boss. And in still another case, who speaks to whom and what is said or not said at a relative's birthday party outside of school is affected by issues within the school. Nevertheless, Valerie describes her administrative experience as exciting, challenging, and enjoyable. Her most relentlessly occurring ethical dilemma is confidentiality, which is exacerbated by living in the community. She explains:

> I go into the grocery store. People that I've had to discipline their children will turn around and go the other way.... It's really hard for me, but I accept it. This year I'm getting a thicker skin. You just learn to accept it.

Following Valerie's description of these interpersonal challenges, the researcher described some of what is difficult in the principalship as having an "internal cost." Valerie agreed. The following exchange demonstrates how much more is shared between professionals when there is a sense of common understanding and experience:

> **Deb:** Or it feels like you're paying in a different kind of way. It's not just your time and energy.
> **Valerie:** Right.
> **Deb:** It's "Ouch."
> **Valerie:** Yeah. Yeah, that's true.
> **Deb:** ...How do you feel about your job when you think about those?
> **Valerie:** Last year it was really hard on me. I had a hard time sleeping, and I knew I wasn't getting good quality sleep. Because if I went to sleep thinking about something, I would wake up thinking about it instantaneously. The minute my eyes opened it was

right on my mind. So I thought, "Great, I didn't get a good night's rest again." I had that a lot last year. Things really bothered me. I made the tough decisions, you know I handled things, but it hurt.

Valerie admits to recently allowing herself to be absent for part of a school day in order to see a doctor. She explains that the previous year, "I had a lot of stress. I didn't think I could, it didn't matter how sick I was…I just would never take a day off. I just had to be here." Valerie reports she is adjusting to the stress and doggedly meeting the challenges of the position.

"It's that mental outlook"

What makes the difference between frustration bordering on anger for Larry and Valerie's outlook that largely consists of friendly self-talk encouraging herself to learn and adapt? Perhaps Nadine has the answer.

Nadine has been in her position in a medium size rural district for several years and has a strong relationship with her superintendent. She admits that she is not sure how long she wants to continue as a principal: "I don't know how to deal with the stress associated with the job. And sometimes I do such a pathetic job of doing that….That's what I need to master more, it's that mental outlook."

In Nadine's opening response to the interview starter question regarding ethical issues, she expresses concern about knowing where to draw the line between supporting non-cooperative students with special accommodations or placement, and determining when this amounts to enabling them to continue the inappropriate behavior. She was particularly disgusted by recent student behavior that, in her opinion, demonstrated that the character lessons regarding safety and respect, coming on the heels of the September 11 terrorist

attacks, had not been understood or taken to heart by students, who were behaving in threatening and irresponsible ways. She says, "I was surprised. I guess I really thought that more people would take to heart the idea of, 'Your actions everyday make a difference in the world.'" It is as if the very idealism that causes Nadine to care about her students and her school is also a weakness in her armor for tolerating student aggression and her own disappointment. She states, "I've got a [young relative] I want this world to be a better place for *him/her*."

Nadine and Matt have much in common including the desire to make a difference. Both are principals in medium size districts with a number of years to their administrative credit. An ethic of care regarding student concerns can be heard in Matt's voice as well. He handles a lot of discipline, but he sees that as a form of teaching and it does not wear him down. He does worry that in his low socioeconomic community, with a high minority population compared to the rest of the state, that a long-term suspension or expulsion is an educational "death penalty." He admits that in the more extreme cases, "I lose sleep over them because I want to make the right call." This rises to the level of an ethical dilemma for Matt. He states, "I have to think of the good of the individual student. I also have to think of the good of the other [200–350 students] I have, plus maintaining control."

Discipline, dilemma paradigms, and resolution principles

Matt is unaware of dilemma paradigms but clearly is aware of the competing values he is encountering when dealing with school discipline. In a pattern that is repeated in subsequent participant examples, various degrees of three dilemma paradigms come into play. When managing questions of discipline, the individual/community dilemma paradigm

is often most obviously at issue because the actions of an individual student have a negative impact on the learning opportunities of the many. Additionally, the health of the educational organization and school safety are connected to the concerns of the learning community. The short-term/long-term dilemma paradigm also is related to maintaining healthy respect for authority, and ongoing opportunities for learning in a positive school culture. Matt is aware of the justice/mercy dilemma paradigm as well when special circumstances of the individual need to be taken into consideration. Like many administrators he uses the phrase "what's best for kids." However, he does not use the phrase to gloss over the fact that there is still a difficult choice to be made. What's best for the one student who might need a break? What's best for the greatest number of kids? What's best in the short term? What will have the best outcome in the long term? How will you know? These are the questions he considers when he says, "I look at, I guess I try to figure out, keep in mind what's best for kids, for the student, and what's best for the student body." When asked for clarification, whether he tends to choose what's best for most, Matt replied, "Yeah. I think I have to.... What's best for most, but you keep the individual in mind.... I have to keep that broad view in mind. I have to keep the safety of the general population in mind.... Because it's what I'm, I'm paid to do that." He compares the cost of education to the higher cost of incarceration saying, "I feel a responsibility for that too."

An ethic of responsibility

Kidder's (1995) resolution principles include ends-based, rule-based, and care-based approaches. What can be heard in Matt's voice is the weight of responsibility. It can be heard more clearly when he talks about collaborating with others in decision making. "And so I

bounce things off people, but it still is gonna end up being my call on a lot of things." He uses this same phrase when asked who takes administrative responsibility for special education in the district: "That's mine." It is clear from his voice he is not talking about power—he is acknowledging responsibility.

Position and professional point of view

Most principal participants were already firmly or becoming firmly ensconced in their identities as high school principals. Is the point of view different for principals preparing for the superintendency? If so, how?

Both Matt and Nadine express care about their students, their schools, and the community, and they exhibit sensitivity regarding social responsibility. Both are involved in professional development, interacting with others in cohorts to prepare for the superintendency. Each has had some firsthand experience with school boards as well as having watched both board members and superintendents come and go from their districts. The specter of submitting their own professional futures to the vagaries of this system is a sobering consideration.

Matt begins describing his experience with school boards lightheartedly: "When I was a teacher I hardly knew one existed. [In a past administrative position] I tried to schedule *something else* on board meeting nights. That way I didn't have to go." There is a possibility he could ascend to the superintendency in his current district. He has seen the results of professional vulnerability on the lives of other administrators. He becomes more serious:

> So really the most directly I've worked with boards is here in [name of district] over the last [number of] years. We've changed. I really felt that the first *several* years here we were a real close team, really worked together. Sometimes, maybe too closely together,

because that difference between administration and board, kind of became real gray maybe. I don't know, but it seemed good at the time. Yeah, they [the board] were involved, but...we worked together during that time though, so I didn't have negative thoughts about it, because things went pretty well.

Matt is very perceptive as he recounts the subtle changes he has witnessed between the board and the administration. He is also very honest as he struggles out loud to put his finger on what seemed okay at first, that is, until it did not seem okay any more. He can be heard feeling around for the answer to the questions: What changed? What line was crossed and when?

But over the last *several* years, well, as I said, the superintendent developed a problem with the board.... It's just become a, there's been a wedge, a separation for *several* years now. I think it's just developing trust between us again. And I think there's been *several* years of when that trust has been kind of broken or at least frayed, and developing that again takes some time.

Matt does not finish processing this out loud, but the quality of his personal and professional life as a superintendent will be determined by his ability to discern the answers in time to avoid the typical fate of the superintendent who "develops a problem with the board." Matt stated earlier in the interview that he would not be interested in taking a superintendency that would require him to move from the area. Is he willing to gamble that he will be a superintendent who will not be required to move on? Clearly his current combination of personal values and professional values together make him a strong administrator and community member. Paradoxically, both sets of values make him vulnerable: He would like to take the next professional step that could benefit both his own personal and professional growth and the strength of the local school system. But at the same time, because of the frequency in which the relationship between school board and

administration becomes strained, a move to the superintendency jeopardizes his personal and professional life.

The need for personal connection

Overcoming isolation in the principalship is an ongoing challenge for school administrators. Matt described many relationships between himself and other administrators new to the district when he has been in a mentoring role to a new person entering the district. Late in the interview Matt launches into a description of his participation in a cohort for superintendency preparation:

> **Deb:** Are the people in the cohort important to you?
> **Matt:** Yeah, yeah, that's just, that team, be a part of a team, be part of a group you're going through this together with.
> **Deb:** They're doing something right with that. Because I've known places where they want to have a cohort...but I don't think it always takes.
> **Matt:** Um hmm.
> **Deb:** And so, there's something, I don't want to say "magic," but it can be done in a way that it gels and it doesn't always.
> **Matt:** Yeah.
> **Deb:** So I think it's great that you have this opportunity. I'm curious. (Pause) I would think that that sort of feeds you intellectually and in your enthusiasm for your work.
> **Matt:** It does. It does. You know it's funny, it becomes a support group too...because you know, you get there, and even though you can do that here, but still you get there, these are guys, or gals who are in the same job that you're in and you just get there and say, "You won't believe what happened."

When describing his mentoring responsibilities in the district, he sounded serious, helpful, and intent. In talking about his own learning amidst the camaraderie of other administrators, it was apparent that this combination of purpose and joy is likely to fuel his choice in making a decision on the personal/professional dilemma as he weighs his desire to stay in the community and his desire to become superintendent with the risk that it could cost

him membership in his community. Nearing the end of the interview, Matt says, "I'd like to be a superintendent.... And I think I'm ready to try."

The truth/loyalty dilemma paradigm

The truth/loyalty dilemma paradigm pits a person's need to disclose important information (tell the truth) with that same person's desire to support the group or organization that would be hurt by the disclosure.

Warren, a principal in a small district, also is preparing for a particular superintendency position that is expected to come open soon. Although fairly new to administration, he has been in the area for a long time and is very loyal to the community and the school. The positive tone of the interview was so persistent that this tone itself became the subject of conversation between the researcher and participant. Later in the interview he shared information specific to his upbringing that shed light upon his persistent expression of a positive view. He admitted that there is only one very limited and private circumstance in which he will tell any school-related "negative stuff." This was nearly amusing because, much to the chagrin of the researcher, nothing challenging, controversial, or difficult crossed his lips. Out of loyalty to his school and district the principal shared little beyond the level of educational values during the interview. By verbalizing his awareness of the practice it became evident that he was a strong believer in the time-honored administrative practice of "Speak No Evil."

This practice ties directly into the truth/loyalty dilemma paradigm. In Warren's case, he may have actually had no awareness of any competing values or ethical dilemmas. What difficulties he mentioned were always couched as challenges he and his staff were meeting.

If it had been a job interview, he would have been hired. If he had been a realtor, the listener would have bought a house in the district. But to a researcher and educator, the all-too-rosy picture was harder to accept.

He did identify one instance from the past that had occurred within his district in which it was his perception that a now-departed superintendent had treated a former principal unfairly. More than an opportunity to look at the dynamics of the difficulty, for Warren, it was another opportunity to make the point that "things are better now." Because this inquiry was to be descriptive and collaborative rather than critical or interpretive, this author attempts only to make the point that at the very least Warren is validating the strength of the practice of administrators protecting their districts, communities, and schools from criticism. The paradigm of truth versus loyalty is a hard one to uncover, but not impossible.

The story Theresa wasn't going to tell

The practice of self-silencing is appropriate when dealing with issues of confidentiality. However, there are times when untoward isolation is the result. What happened to Theresa provides an example.

When Theresa responded to the request to be interviewed for this study on the topic of "School Administrators Facing Ethical Issues" she did not have a copy of the sample interview questions. When she received them in advance, she planned to go forward with the interview but not include the ethical dilemma that so obviously related to the thrust of the questions. Nearing the end of the interview, she shared her story.

A few years previously Theresa had experienced a personal/professional ethical dilemma in her small rural district, and it was obvious that even years later it continued to

cause her emotional pain. The situation first and foremost disrupted the flow of communication between and among the administrative team members. The situation would have been difficult in any district, but in the setting of a small community, the close proximity of participants in neighborhoods, grocery stores, and church rendered the boundaries between professional and private lives virtually nonexistent. Administrators, teachers, students, and parents were in close proximity and privy to varying amounts of accurate information.

Luckily, although Theresa had a difficult administrative task to perform, she was certain about what was the right the thing to do.

> **Theresa:** But that was one time when I knew I had to do what I knew was right regardless of the consequences.
> **Deb:** So your job, your future, your home was on the line....
> **Theresa:** It was a very stressful time, very stressful.
> **Deb:** For support, were the people that you referred to before [colleagues in another district] adequate for that?
> **Theresa:** Uh, no. Not enough, because I didn't feel like I could share everything....

Every participant in this study mentioned confidentiality as a prominent ethical consideration in his/her work. Most of the time it was discussed as a matter of fact, an expected practice, not a problem. What makes Theresa's problem with confidentiality unusual in this case is that she did not need just technical advice, she needed moral support. She was unable to turn to her usual support network. When a problem within an administrative team rises to the level that one or more members of the team feel professionally or personally threatened, or both, it becomes much harder to seek advice.

> **Theresa:** I was able to talk to [name of former school administrator/professor.] And I was able to talk with Kathy Collins, SAI legal counsel. They allowed me most of all just to vent, to see if I'm doing the right thing. And Kathy said, "Just keep the paperwork." And I mean I kept every scrap of paper. [I]t's evident in small schools that your cohort group to work through those things isn't there.... Basically you're alone

and you worry that you are making the right decision. Should you just turn your head and forget about it...?

In this circumstance Theresa did not have an option to ignore the whole problem just by keeping silent, but there may have been options that would have taken some heat out of the situation. However, these may have been less ethically straightforward than her more difficult chosen course of action.

> **Deb:** How, did it change how you feel about your job? Or about your profession?
> **Theresa:** ...I went into administration visualizing being a team coach...and moving us forward....
> **Deb:** ...Do you think that your experience would have been different if you had been a male principal?
> **Theresa:** (Quickly) Yes.
> **Deb:** Tell me why.
> **Theresa:** Absolutely.
> **Deb:** Why?
> **Theresa:** [T]he way [the person involved] treated me would have been different.
> **Deb:** Why?
> **Theresa:** I really don't want to get into all of that too much, but um, I just think that [the person involved] deals with women differently than men. In my mind I'm very confident that that would be different. And I think I had some empathy from the other [number] administrators. But I think that there was also some relief that it wasn't [happening to] them. (Laughs)

Much of the experience and many of the issues Theresa shared in this example relate directly to the research questions of this study. Her experience is part of the web of issues that spring unbidden from the unexpected events of life in schools. In the next section her dilemma will be more completely analyzed.

The emerging concept of shared reliance

Collaboration and teamwork are increasingly the expectation and the norm as educators work shoulder-to-shoulder to accomplish their work. Theresa's emotion related to her difficulty was not about ethical decision making, rules, policies, or the outcome of her

challenge. It was about the loss of her access to coworkers and the resulting isolation when she needed them the most. The well-being of the administrator under stress is related to his/her access to advice and support that is grounded in the world and experiences of fellow administrators.

Theresa recounted how unsatisfactory it was to vent to her spouse when things were difficult in her district, "because he just says, 'Well, quit.'" Both researcher and participant erupted in gales of laughter. It was so much fun to laugh, she repeated it again, "Well, quit." And it was good for still more laughter. Perhaps it was funny because we shared knowledge of how challenging it was to become an administrator and to consider quitting would be no offhand decision. Perhaps it was cathartic to find humor in difficulty, and to reach each other through laughter.

Learning is about digging deeper, building upon that which is already there, extending the path between known and unknown, understood and foreign. Educators are finding that learning for students is social. So too is it social for school administrators, teachers, and community members for whom the operative norm is to work ever more interdependently. Emerson's 19th century essay called for the "self-reliance" of the thinking man. The ethical practice of educational professionals calls for "shared reliance" in the 21st century.

Individual and organizational learning: As social as communication

Bob provides an example of the social nature of his deliberations. When asked how, when making an ethical decision, he determines what values get priority, Bob responded:

> ...I know that there are some administrators who apply their own personal values above and beyond all other values. It is my style to try to solicit as many different values as I can on an ethical issue. I would talk to the people who are knowledgeable about [the]

issues. I might call some of my friends who are administrators in other buildings or other districts...have conversations with other people, gaining as broad a value system as I could, and then trying to do what I then determine to be the right or ethical thing to do.... So I always sort out my own ethical position on something. It may come back to be that position. But I always allow that that other set of values would be included.

In further conversation Bob indicates that his propensity to access others in dealing with ethical issues also applies to collecting information in personnel matters, as well as in developing policy and initiatives. He continues:

> ...It's easy to jump to conclusions that Joe Smith is certainly in the wrong. I'd certainly want to find out from Joe Smith's perspective what was going through the thought processes, or the actions that occurred.
> **Deb:** So sometimes it's as simple as checking with Joe Smith. Doing a perception check, and hearing more about what was going on there. And other times it's broader, and you're checking with more people.
> **Bob:** You have to be totally informed about what really occurred. Or could be occurring, or is being proposed. If you ever jump to a conclusion, I think that's when your own value system is taking over and not being totally open about all the possibilities.... I mean if you don't know all the facts about something, it's pretty easy to be critical of the person that's making the decision, or not making the decision that you want them to make.... Sometimes people like to have me in on a meeting or when we're talking about some things, and sometimes they don't.
> **Deb:** Why, how do you mean?
> **Bob:** Well, I speak what I think. And I usually don't speak until I've heard around the room. And so sometimes when we have our administrator meetings my colleagues will give me a bad time because, "Oh yeah, you wait until the last minute and then you hit them with a, "right between the eyes." It isn't a devious attempt on my part to do that, it's just the way I operate. I want to hear how you think about something, and how that person thinks about something, and then when I see the course that we're going, I might raise a question about that course. Some people perceive that to be a power play. But that's the way I operate in almost all cases. I glean information. Try to bring people to consensus. Make sure it's well thought out. I don't like to surround myself with people who are "yes" people. Although some people perceive that they have to be that way.... I want to hear divergent opinions about topics. I want to make sure that if you're thinking something negative, put it out on the table.

A great deal of trust is required at multiple levels for the communication Bob is describing to take place. The benefit is that multiple points of view are shared and better outcomes are the result.

When the organization is up to the challenge

It is not just the principal and individual staff members who must be ready and able to collaborate. The organization itself along with other organizations and institutions are integral parts of the success of the whole.

Bob is at the helm of a well-oiled machine as a principal in a large district that would be considered by many to be a premiere educational organization. He spoke wisely, confidently, and with vision for his school, respect for his coworkers, care for his students, and pride in his community. He was energetic and impassioned about initiatives that were breaking new ground in taking his school and his district to the next level of excellence. He acknowledged the interdependence in the system. His well-oiled machine can work because of the competence and care encouraged and exhibited at every level. It is part of the school and community culture. It works only because there is individual and systemic competence, burgeoning to excellence in all directions. His work is exhausting and intoxicating. He thinks he might have aspired to the superintendency if he'd ever been stymied in his current position. He is a productive, contributing leader, and he knows it does not get much better than that. He chooses to stay in his position. His district is an example of the presence and success of positive shared reliance.

The effect on individuals when organizations are not up to the challenge

What happens when one or more of collaborating organizations are in some way dysfunctional? There are plenty of reasons and possibilities including poor leadership, ineptitude at high-, mid-, or low-ranking positions, lack of funding, or lack of information

that cause an organization, agency, or institution to fail to uphold its part of a task or its end of a collaborative bargain that directly affects services to students.

One participant recounted a surprising story in which he/she had circumvented (or perhaps broken) the law in order to do the right thing for a student in need. The administrator was quite conflicted as he/she looked back on the incident. He/she was fairly certain that breaking the law, jeopardizing one's job, and family, not actually lying, but participating in a subterfuge, was not the picture of ethical behavior. Yet every time the administrator attempted to close the book on the incident, attempting to label it a mistake, or unethical, he/she repeatedly arrived at the paradoxical conclusion that he/she would do the exact same thing, "if I had to do it over." How could it be both right and wrong?

The answer to the paradox is that the crooked action, taken for the benefit of the student, was made necessary by the failure of an agency to successfully do its job, hold up its end of society's bargain. The rules, the law assume that one person in authority will do the right thing and all will be well because others, in their right-side-up worlds are also holding up their piece of the sky. But this is not always the case, and a humane school administrator hates to see the sky fall on a student who deserves better. To secure a positive outcome for the individual student in question, it was not possible to overhaul the agency or successfully plead for an exception. So the administrator broke the rules in order to secure a more just and humane outcome for the student. The dilemma paradigms of justice/mercy and short-term/long-term play largely in this ethical dilemma as do the resolution principles of ends-based and care-based thinking. The reason for the disconnect that caused the more typical rule-based administrative approach (such as "work within the system" and "don't tell lies") to fail in this case was that the shared reliance between the educational system and the other

agency broke down. The usual expectation that a fair and just outcome would be possible via rule-bound collaboration between the two organizations could not hold up in the face of serious dysfunction in the other agency.

This case was particularly troubling to the administrator because the responsibility to the student and the responsibility to support public institutions and programs are in direct conflict. The administrator knows that it would not do for people to break rules whenever they find a public agency or institution lacking. In the aftermath of a tornado and a flood in which a driver picks his/her way through the wreckage in the streets, is there anyone who would not briefly cross the yellow line to drive around the downed tree limb while taking a victim to the emergency room? By analogy, in the case of this student, administrator, and agency, the administrator drove briefly on the wrong side of the street, choosing to honor the short-term responsibility to the individual student over the longer-term task that remains of repairing the broken community institution.

There are people who would object, who would say that breaking rules or the law is always wrong. It is likely that an opportunity for lively conversation on the topic would succeed in challenging premature certainty, sharpening reasoning, shaping thinking, and improving responses and outcomes.

Support networks

Our institutions are not all well-oiled machines upon which we can depend. Individuals within the system also have need of ongoing opportunities to learn and to be supported along the way. It is the challenge of every school and every district to work toward increasing competence toward excellence so that shared reliance between and among institutions and

their inhabitants is the norm. Support networks for individuals in need are a part of what is necessary for institutions and individuals, including administrators, to accomplish their mission while leaving no collaborator or participant in unexpected or unwanted isolation.

Sometimes it is an easy solution to call for more or better, but before doing so it is important to examine what is working. It is not a typical view to consider the relationship between administrator and teacher to be supportive. In fact, there is a habit of mind that more likely frames the relationship as adversarial. There were significant moments when participants identified important ways in which the system does work. Some of these are included in the next section, as the research questions are used as the frame upon which to synthesize answers.

Synthesis of the Data by Research Question

In order to answer the research questions posed by this study, it was necessary to use the educational values and issues brought up by participants as the vehicle for discussion. Between, among, and behind these educational issues was the primary focus of the study. The personal, professional, and educational values brought up by participants provided conversational grist for the mill in which ethical issues and dilemmas were grounded. Only when ethical issues and dilemmas emerged from the conversational background of educational values could the research questions be applied.

Research Question One: What circumstantial/situational detail do public high school principals perceive as important in understanding the context of, and in the resolution of, an ethical problem or dilemma?

In most cases, ethical issues and dilemmas were communicated in a very sketchy outline, which amounted to the shorthand of administrators who are familiar with the constellation of specific detail which accompany certain problems or scenarios. In discussing educational values and specific related challenges in their work lives, administrators usually included very little detail. However, when delving into a specific circumstance of interest to the administrator and being shared as an example, much more detail was included.

Principals in large districts were most likely to communicate using more generalities and less detail than principals in medium and small districts regarding discipline issues. In these settings there were always two or more assistant or associate principals who were likely to have primarily conducted the investigations into matters of student discipline. For this reason it is likely that the experience of personally uncovering the detail was not a part of the principal's experience of the dilemma. In cases in which personnel matters were at issue, it was more likely that principals had been primary investigators. However, in these cases, principals took even more care to omit specific information regarding a case, incident, or dilemma. In these cases, principals in large districts recounted about the same amount of detail as principals in medium and small districts.

It is possible that principals in larger districts do see the specific detail as less important, but this could not be determined with any certainty in this study. On several occasions principals in large districts encouraged the researcher to interview a particular assistant or associate principal who they believed would be very interested in the topic of school administrators facing ethical issues. It was their perception that the personal and "up close" quality of their involvement in various ethical issues would generate rich data. As this

was not included as part of the plan for this study, it is taken into consideration as an area for further research.

Principals in medium and smaller districts frequently included peripheral issues in recounting cases of student discipline and ethical dilemmas dealing with personnel such as salient familial and social relationships impinging on the case. It is likely that additional information was shared because these connections are far more likely to complicate the situation in the multiple overlapping circles of church, social circles, business, and school found in the smaller communities of medium to small districts, not because these administrators think that detail is more important.

No gender differences regarding the importance or inclusion of detail were noted. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher had anticipated that ethical dilemmas were more likely to be told as a narrative account with much detail—that is to say, as "stories." Surprisingly, the ethical dilemmas shared by both male and female principals were sometimes told with almost no detail at all, but because of the shared understanding of educational issues among experienced administrators, a grasp of the conflicts in values and beliefs involved in various scenarios was nearly immediate, obviating the need for details. For example, one principal brought up a current issue boiling in the district in which stakeholders were quite "stirred up" about the administrative resolution of a discipline incident involving a special education student with a weapon. Very little detail was necessary to communicate the issues and values being debated. A brief description of the circumstances including location, weapon, intent, and district policy was about all that was necessary.

Research Question Two: Do gender and/or size of school district play a role in how public high school principals face ethical issues in schools?

No gender differences were found in *how* school administrators face ethical issues in schools. It should be noted that *what issues* were identified as ethical issues in schools did vary by gender. Most notably, whether gender in the work life of the school administrator is itself an ethical issue was the only striking difference between male and female participants as they identified what were educational values, ethical issues, or ethical dilemmas in schools. Zero of eight male participants, compared to six of eight female participants, identified gender in the daily work life of school administrators as an ethical issue.

The educational values, ethical issues, and ethical dilemmas that were discussed by school administrators varied by district size, but with one exception, had no effect on *how* administrators described the ethical issues, categorized them, or made decisions and took steps to resolve them. Designations of large, medium, or small district did, however, affect what specific issues were identified in that setting.

Similarly, the educational values, ethical issues, and ethical dilemmas that were discussed by school administrators varied by descriptors of urban, suburban, rural, or any combination thereof, but with one exception, had no effect on *how* school administrators described the ethical issues, categorized them, or made decisions and took steps to resolve them. Designations of urban, suburban, rural, or any combination thereof did, however, affect what specific issues were identified in that setting. Both exceptions pertain to how administrators in small and medium rural districts compared to administrators in large districts describe their communication strategies. All administrators (four of four) in large districts professed to and gave examples of their propensity to speak up and speak out about

controversial issues, "saying what I think." This was always done within the bounds of confidentiality. In five of 12 participant interviews in medium and small districts, the topic did not come up. In the remaining seven of 12 participant interviews in medium and small rural districts, the issue of communication strategies did surface, and in these cases the administrators referred to "shutting up" and "keeping quiet." These comments were not related to issues of confidentiality but were related to controversial issues about which superintendents and/or school board members were involved and held opinions.

Breaking this down further by gender, two of six male administrators in medium to small rural districts did not mention this topic. Three of four male administrators in medium to small districts professed to be very careful what they say about some educational and ethical issues in the district. The one male administrator in a medium to small rural district, who subscribed to a policy of speaking out, reported having left a district as a direct result of the behavior.

Among the six female administrators in medium to small rural districts, the issue came up in every instance. Four of six professed to be very careful concerning what they say about some educational and ethical issues in the district. Two female administrators in medium to small size districts subscribe to a policy of speaking up. One of the female administrators experienced having to leave a district as a direct result of the behavior. The other was not concerned about changing districts and was likely to move into a superintendency. This suggests possible implications beyond the scope of this study related to the tendency for females to be more place-bound than males, in which case speaking out could be related to job security and job mobility.

Research Question Three: What theoretical frameworks (such as ethical fitness, dilemma paradigms, and resolution principles) play a role in how public high school principals make meaning of ethical issues?

Ethical fitness is described by Kidder (1995) as the increasing capacity to meet the challenges of ethical issues and dilemmas. Years of administrative experience are helpful in that over time administrators become more familiar with policies. However, much more important than administrative or teaching years of experience are factors such as a climate for safe and open communication, administrative support network, listening skills, the ability to try on multiple points of view, and reflection. Acquisition of these skills relates to Research Question Five and is discussed in further detail.

Participants used some portion of the language or labels of the dilemma paradigms, but whether the language or awareness of the categories was evident, the ethical issues and dilemmas they discussed clearly fell into the four categories of Kidder's (1995) dilemma paradigms. When dealing with student discipline, the three paradigms of individual/ community, short-term/long-term, and justice/mercy were consistently aspects of competing issues in every scenario. Kidder's resolution principles of ends-based thinking, rule-based thinking, and care-based thinking were evident as participants weighed options and described decisions made. Which principles were used most often and in what situations varied, with no patterns emerging by gender or district size. Ends-based and rule-based thinking could be identified as most principals' predominant mode in dealing with student discipline. Not all principals clearly stated a pattern or preference. However, the fact that principals were so varied in their philosophies about discipline bears further analysis below.

Participants also use language similar to the resolution principles in describing the approaches for ethical decision making without prompting from the researcher. The concept of ethical fitness was used as a category by the researcher to collect and describe examples and components of ways of thinking and behaving which seemed to contribute to improved ethical awareness and developing facility for dealing with ethical issues and dilemmas. Each of these areas will be described now in more detail.

All principals used combinations of the three resolution principles. Their explanations for why and underlying beliefs were significantly varied.

One female principal in a small district had come from a middle level background and preferred individualizing discipline consequences for students. High school staff in her current principalship were critical of her "inconsistent" approach. A discipline matrix was developed and adopted and the principal now finds the "cookbook" approach to be an easy solution, a compromise she is willing to make. In this case she uses a rule-based approach with her own belief in a care-based approach included within her delivery and interaction with students and families. By adjusting discipline consequences within the confines of the matrix, the high school staff is satisfied that she is being "consistent" and she satisfies her need to individualize and include care via her personal interactions. This resolution, a blending of approaches, is the product of what had been an ethical dilemma that was both personal and professional to the participant. It also provides a good example of how the professional life of a school administrator is richly intertwined with personal beliefs. In response to the opening question, this same participant identified the most prominent ethical dilemma in her work life to be consternation that she was not able to better include her religious and spiritual beliefs in the school setting. The multiple layers of her personal,

spiritual, and professional identity require that she continually work toward integrating the various aspects of her personal, spiritual, and educational values that in a feminist paradigm would be referred to as multiple and intersecting identities (Merchant & Willis, 2001).

The rule-based discipline approach of "going by the book" was the opposite of a male principal in a small district who works closely with the school counselor, individualizing and seeking out the causes of problematic student behavior. He reported that office referrals were significantly reduced and credits this not just to his discipline approach but to quality teaching in classrooms. His preferred approach is definitely a care-based focus on the individual student.

Principals in large districts were more likely to be involved in discipline at the expulsion stage. From their point of view, their primary responsibility was to preserve school safety and the educational environment of the community, choosing primacy of the good of the many in an ends-based approach. With little agony or regret, rule-based, ends-based, and care-based thinking converge. In these cases the focus of the principals' care-based thinking is not the individual student, as would usually be the case, but the preservation of the institution, the safety of adults and students therein. Placement at an alternative setting when possible, or expulsion, when the safety of the many is at issue is, in the words of one female principal, "a no-brainer."

Three male principals in large to medium districts described their approach as primarily ends-based thinking, with enough wiggle room to accommodate care-based thinking serving up a dollop of mercy to go with the main course, justice. Bob described looking at the big picture of a student's circumstances, saying, "...your compassion comes into play." In Matt's words, "You do what's best for most, but keep the individual in mind."

A female principal in a district of medium size is besieged by conflict between and among superintendent and board members. Because she can never be sure of a base for support, she is firmly locked into a rule-based thinking approach. She mentally rehearses, "What would I say to the board?" if I had to explain the problem and defend my actions. The politically charged circumstance in the district where she serves leaves little room for individual interpretation.

In contrast, a female principal in a small district enjoys a comfortable and open relationship with the superintendent in which frequent informal conversation is the norm. This principal enjoys the benefits of daily mentoring via reality checks, and low stress due to frequent collaboration. Her remarkably supportive situation was unique among all participants.

One male principal nearing retirement in a small district described an ends-based and care-based approach that included deferring consequences in one incident to use as leverage against possible future transgressions, and the time honored line, "I won't call your parents this time, but if it happens again...." This has the unintended consequence of putting the administrator clearly in the wrong for failing to keep parents informed. Even in this case, the dilemma paradigms and resolution principles are still useful in characterizing, categorizing, and analyzing the discipline approach being applied to ethical issues and the frequent dilemmas of student discipline.

The dilemma paradigm of truth/loyalty is so much more complex than the other three, that it will undoubtedly become a focus of further study. Administrators dealing with issues other than student discipline frequently find themselves lost in the funhouse of competing issues of truth and loyalty.

When asked to describe one of the hard issues that perhaps interferes with her sleep, a female principal in a large district was quick to respond:

> Stupid things teachers do.... Teachers who use poor judgment in things they say, in their demeanor and thank God they're few and far between.... One of the most difficult things for me to do is to sit in a parent conference with a teacher and a parent and a student and support the teacher when the teacher has caused the problem. [It] doesn't happen all the time, obviously, but it happens sometimes. Teachers who think that almost every kid belongs in an alternative setting. You know, that they should be able to stand at the door and say, "I'll take you, but not you, and I'll take you, but not you."

This principal has wandered into the difficult terrain in which the truth includes a reality that is not flattering to, in this case, a teacher, and in many other instances, the school in general. In order to effect positive change, she must identify and work to change that which needs improving. But even acknowledging the problem creates waves and can give a "black eye" to an individual, to the school, or to the district. She attempts to do the right thing, while minimizing collateral damage. As if speaking to the teacher in question she vents, "Maybe things are not working in your classroom because you keep doing things the same way, and it never worked, and it still isn't."

Improving classroom instruction to effect higher student achievement goes to the heart of school improvement. What this principal is talking about is important. Why is it a dilemma? Because as the principal, she is responsible for leading and managing the success and improvement of the building. She must balance nurturing the improvement of staff, which sometimes comes about by learning from mistakes, with the need to be honest and acknowledge the shortcomings of the school, and sometimes the individuals who constitute its working parts. She is describing a "glitch" in what she would like to be a well-oiled educational machine. She continues:

Becoming physically aggressive sometimes. That's one of the most difficult things for me. I will say to a teacher, after a difficult conference like that, when it's just the teacher and I, "Don't ever put me in that situation again. Because I won't be...covering your backside the next time." It's a difficult thing.

Deb: ...Do you think that that teacher generally leaves and is quite happy not to talk about it outside your office? Or have you had it turn into a....

Anita: (spoken to indicate a teacher saying) "She doesn't support me."

Deb: Right. So sometimes that happens.

Anita: Sometimes it does. Sometimes it does.

Deb: You have such longevity in your administrative experience, I'm thinking that you've learned ways to be okay with those things.... You don't strike me as a wounded person. So I want you to tell me how you manage to not be wounded by those hard things.

Anita: Because I don't let 'em go by.

Deb: What do you do?

Anita: I have the conversation with the teacher. I have them put in narrative a summary of our conversation. I have made recommendations to human resources. I have recommended termination. I have not solved all the problems on the staff. And this staff is so scholarly and so fine that those people stick out like a sore thumb.

Deb: So it doesn't become a festering problem.

Anita: Well....

Deb: Among the rest of the staff.

Anita: Sometimes it does.

This administrator has touched on what is so difficult about the truth/loyalty dilemma paradigm. There is a complex interrelation of the work of the teacher and the work of the administrator. Both are motivated for "excellence in education" and "doing what's best for kids." The truth is that people make mistakes and have room to grow and improve. Loyalty to the organization makes speaking out difficult. In moving toward a vision of excellence, there are a myriad of ways in which the shared reliance of interdependence can break down.

A particularly potent area in which this dynamic can be seen at work is in the area of school safety. A male principal in a large district has instituted new measures in the building, which include increased responsibilities for teachers to account for students who come and go from class and supervision of areas within the building. These measures were not greeted with enthusiasm by the teachers. The administrator is firm in instituting the change. It may be

the most controversial, visible, long-lasting, and important change he institutes in an august administrative career. Because his power and status in the community are greater than his title and position, he is "getting away with it." A lower status principal in a district where tragedy has not awoken stakeholders to danger which is not merely theoretical, but actual, might not succeed in such a visible and controversial initiative. This principal has been willing to speak the truth regarding concerns about school safety without having loyalty to district and concern about expenditures related to school safety interfere with his convictions and ultimately with implementation of reasonable and necessary measures. His recognition of a problem and leadership to meet the challenge was not met with resistance within his district as an act of fiscal treason. By contrast, a principal in a medium to small district found him/ herself in hot water with the board and superintendent for admitting to a safety concern that would require minimal cost and effort to rectify.

Research Question Four: How does the satisfaction of a public high school principal, when reflecting about the outcome of an ethical problem or dilemma, contribute to change in his/her stated attitude toward the job/profession?

Administrators expect to confront educational values, ethical issues, and dilemmas on a continual basis. This is just "part of the job." Their level of ongoing satisfaction is not so much subject to fluctuation because of facing or reflecting about ethical problems or dilemmas. Only when these issues interrupt or interfere with their ability to do their job, which includes maintaining professional relationships, do ethical issues and dilemmas affect job satisfaction. Educators have made a lifetime choice to be "in the people business." Maintaining confidentiality is an administrative communication skill and is rarely a problem.

Isolation, on the other hand, is antithetical to the routine and expected practice of school administration. School principals are ill-equipped for the rare occasions when the circumstances of their work cut them off from necessary support and communication.

Even several years after the incident that caused Theresa to experience isolation from her administrative team and reduced communication with other support networks, she expressed very strong emotions about her experience. Most characterized by stress and isolation. the experience was unpleasant and draining, but she believes that the outcome for stakeholders was just and she has no intentions of leaving the profession. In her words, "...I love this job. I really do. I love this school. It's a great school. The staff is tremendous. I wasn't going to let somebody else take that away from me." She remains committed to her profession and positive about education and her work as a school administrator.

Two participants identified non-negotiable issues that would cause them to change districts. but did not indicate that they would change professions. Olivia, a female in a medium size district. would not compromise putting students first, nor her belief in shared decision making. A serious challenge to these values would cause her to change districts. Vince stated that he would require that things continue to get better for him and for his small district. for him to stay in his current position. He is concerned about the effect that the hours and stress of his administrative duties have on his family. He verbalized that his family would not identify his administrative position as a good thing, but does not elaborate on what it would take for this conflict of values to derail his career as an administrator. Although this question is left unanswered, the tension between professional and family responsibility has a detrimental effect on his perception of his job/profession.

The method of selection of participants for this inquiry included only currently practicing administrators in the study. In order to get at the true scope of this question, it would be necessary to include participants who have left the profession, or have changed to other administrative or teaching positions.

Research Question Five: How can the experiences of public high school principals positively affect professional development for other school administrators as they learn to more effectively address ethical issues?

All administrators need ways to expand and refine their skills. Professional preparation and development are an important part of helping school administrators to acquire and develop skills in addressing ethical issues.

A female principal in a small district expressed her opinion that she had received a good background in her preparation program, but that the practicum experience with her building principal had been "...poor. I didn't get anything out of it." She doesn't feel ready to take on the task of mentorship. This was an opinion repeated by both male and female administrators in medium and small districts. Principals in the early years of their administrative experience are overwhelmed and less likely to commit the time and additional responsibility associated with being a mentor. The benefits and pitfalls of administrative mentoring are beyond the scope of this paper, but mentoring was definitely identified as one way in which administrators can help each other to learn about facing ethical issues.

The most frequent burst of enthusiasm encountered during interviews was when participants launched into descriptions of their own continuing professional development through cohort group learning, most often related to pursuing advanced degrees or

certification. It would be hard to overstate the positive energy displayed by principals as they

describe their experiences and the positive impact of their interactions in a cohort group. This

is how one principal described cohort learning:

> Then those professors would just interject something every now and again and just spin
> it in a different direction until we would all kind of come around to go, "Oh yeah. You
> know, that's how it should have been handled." And so it wasn't a, "We're right, you're
> wrong" it was a "work through it, chew it up, spit it out, see what you think when
> you're done" and nobody would ever, nobody's ever told me, "...what you wrote there,
> that's not right, you know, that's unethical, that's not how you should behave." They've
> never said that, but they might write, "Well, what about this? Or what about that?"
> They just ask questions. Constantly making...(louder) that's what it was! Is they would
> constantly encourage you to reflect, and be critical of yourself. And that's why we
> started learning to think about what we were going to say, or what we were going to do
> before, and then, not only think about it, but the impact it was going to have.

Opportunities to share professional experience, common goals, and dialogic interaction were

consistently the most commonly and most passionately reported venue for professional

support and learning. Administrators who had recently completed their coursework

associated with a cohort kept in touch either informally or via scheduled plans to meet as a

group.

Unfortunately, there are many administrators outside this loop. In fact the administrator

who could most benefit from this kind of support is likely to be pressed for time,

overwhelmed, and not likely to be seeking even more challenge via taking courses and

extending his/her certification.

Expanding the circle of administrators with whom one communicates and upon whom

one can rely for advice and support is part of the value of cohort learning. Another

participant completed the picture by describing the ongoing development of shared reliance

between and among professionals in the school.

...[S]o much hinges upon your people...when you're hiring, when you're interacting...having the right people around. And surrounding yourself with people who treat kids the way you think kids deserve to be treated, which is with dignity and respect...surrounding yourself with people who have at least the same philosophy. Everybody has to be different. [Describes diversity of staff.] We are about as diverse as you could get. But yet I think we come, not always from the same page, but at least from the same book.

Part of the process of "getting on the same page, or at least in the same book" can be accomplished through scholarly inquiry and research. In the case of this study, a dialogic reflective approach including a broad spectrum of school principals in the state of Iowa has provided a forum to learn more about how high school principals make meaning of the ethical issues they face.

The research questions of this study have been addressed through exploratory description. analysis of topics from the narratives, and synthesis of information relating specifically to the research questions. School administrators can learn more about using theoretical frameworks to sort out educational values, ethical issues, and dilemmas by utilizing the strength of their coworkers through communication and shared experiences. The concept of shared reliance is a concept that, with further development. can help to flesh out the gaps between those educational values which all stakeholders hold dear and the more problematic questions regarding how to implement changes that bring the vision of educational excellence to reality.

Summary

This chapter has described how participant interviews provided narrative data for exploration, analysis, interpretation, and synthesis by the researcher. Principal participants provided a view of their professional practice that included many opportunities to compare

and contrast their philosophies, educational values, professional practices, and other aspects of their work lives. Their narratives were used to answer the questions of this inquiry. Administrative participants were generous and candid in their descriptions of their educational values and the ethical issues and dilemmas they face, and provided a window through which this researcher was able to share their world views and work lives, and build shared meaning.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The concept of education as a moral endeavor has been emerging in the literature for some time (Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Purpel, 1989; Schön, 1983; Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 1988). The moral leadership of school administrators plays a crucial role in articulating a vision of excellence and advancing school reform (Beck & Murphy, 1997).

In 1966 the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) assumed a leadership role for the guidance of ethical behavior for school administrators, publishing a code of ethics that has been embraced by numerous leading professional educational organizations (AASA, 1996). Within more recent school reform efforts, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (1996) has established ethics as one of six major components of the framework for school leadership today.

The research literature in the overlapping areas of ethics and educational leadership has developed a ring of urgency, especially concerning administrator preparation (Beck, 1996; Bull & McCarthy, 1995; Noddings, 1992, 1999; Strike, 1999). Administrators are faced with a multitude of dilemmas when they must choose one moral value over another (Greenfield, 1991). It is their task to integrate moral standards as they pertain to the individual, the school, the community, the profession, and society.

Summary of Research Study and Methodology

This section provides a summary of the research study including the problem, purpose, and research questions. The synopsis of the methodology focuses on the interviews of participants and ongoing analysis of the narratives.

Public school administrators routinely are faced with difficult ethical issues without having the background, tools, or support that would assist in exploring possibilities and making the best decision. Administrators do not always know what is right, or which of many competing rights holds primacy. Most administrators "are left to find their own ways in the midst of value conflicts and ethical dilemmas" (Marshall & Kasten, 1994, p. 11). Confusion and uncertainty undermine their capacity to endure. There is much to be learned about how school administrators face ethical issues as well as how to better prepare and support them in this endeavor.

The primary purpose of this study was to understand how selected public high school principals in the state of Iowa make meaning of the ethical issues they face. An additional purpose was to determine what theoretical frameworks and practices they find to be helpful when considered in the light of their own stories and specific experiences. Their reflections were also used to explore how to adapt and apply theoretical frameworks, and to consider practices for the improvement and support of the professional development of practicing and aspiring school administrators.

The following five research questions were used to focus and guide this research study:

1. What circumstantial/situational detail do Iowa public high school principals perceive as important in understanding the context of, and in the resolution of, an ethical problem or dilemma?

2. Do gender and/or size of the school district play a role in how public high school principals face ethical issues in schools?

3. What theoretical frameworks (such as ethical fitness, dilemma paradigms, and resolution principles) play a role in how public high school principals make meaning of ethical issues?

4. How does the satisfaction of a public high school principal, when reflecting about the outcome of an ethical problem or dilemma, contribute to change in his/her stated attitude toward the job/profession?

5. How can the experiences of public high school principals positively affect professional development for other school administrators as they learn to more effectively address ethical issues?

This inquiry was conducted within a constructivist qualitative framework. The goal of a constructivist research design is "understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1998, p. 221). The investigator and the participants are assumed to be interactively linked so that the findings are created as the investigation proceeds (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

In this study, 16 public high school principals across the state of Iowa were identified to participate in one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted face to face with the researcher. Participant selection was criterion-based, including male and female participants who had served in their current position at least one full school year in a 9–12 or 10–12 comprehensive public high school in a district of large, medium, or small enrollment.

The main purpose of the interviews was for participants to share events, experiences, and explanations relating to the ethical issues they have faced as building-level

administrators. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher using pseudonyms and italicized modifications in order to help protect the identities of participants.

Follow-up contact with particpants consisted of revising the transcripts and checking perceptions regarding the application of theory. The researcher used a constant comparison method to relate information in the narratives to the research questions. Britt's (1997) Concept Modeling and van den Hoonaard's (1996) model of Sensitizing Concepts provided the basis for identifying and linking concepts in the process of theory building.

In a constructivist qualitative inquiry traditional criteria of validity are replaced by the terms trustworthiness and authenticity (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Constructions are considered credible and trustworthy when those who constructed them find them plausible and explanatory. Because the findings of this study are specific to these participants and the interactions with the researcher, there is no claim that the results are generalizable to a population. It is up to the reader to judge the validity and value of the findings based on their descriptive and explanatory power.

Limitations

The focus of this study was limited to high school principals who had served at least one year in their administrative position in a 9–12 or 10–12 comprehensive public high school in the state of Iowa. No attempt was made to draw conclusions about the population of high school principals based on a sample.

Interviews were conducted between late August and mid November, 2001. The steep economic downturn which was felt across the nation and evidenced in statewide budget cuts was not yet in full flower at the time these interviews were conducted. The researcher often

asked if scarce resources created an ethical issue when determining how to apportion funding

dollars within the district or at the building level. Administrators did not identify scarce

resources as particularly problematic except as an issue of fairness or equity in relation to the

cost of special education. It is likely that administrators' responses to questions about the

educational values which must be prioritized when funding is unusually constrained would

have been quite different if the interviews had been conducted several months later. This is

an illustration of the changing nature of what may or may not be considered a difficult ethical

issue at a given time, in a given circumstance. The perception of issues as problematic is

situation dependent and can vary greatly over time and from person to person.

Discussion of Findings and Implications

Because of the public nature of the job of the high school principal, participants labor

under a fulltime yoke of observation. Much like a politician, "they are their position." How

does one account for the principal's need to maintain the elements of trust, communication,

and a personal life and still support professional growth? Describing personalized instruction,

Keefe and Jenkins (2002) explain, "Renewal is all about how a learner's growth in

knowledge and self-awareness leads to wisdom, personal happiness, and collective

responsibility" (p. 440). Conceiving of a forum through which to support such renewal is one

of the challenges of this inquiry.

Applying theory

Investigating how theoretical frameworks play a role in how public high school

principals make meaning of ethical issues was part of the focus of this study. It was found

that discipline issues are consistently managed by principals, using combinations of individual/community, short-term/long-term, and justice/mercy dilemma paradigms. These issues are typically processed using a combination of rules-based thinking and ends-based thinking, with care-based thinking usually manifest more in manner of communication than in determination of consequences.

These findings are consistent with Noddings' (1999) observation that "caring often springs into action when justice has made a decision..." (p. 12). It is often subsequent to judgment that related issues, such as maintaining relationships, and supporting the individuals and community who will feel the effects of the decision, are given full focus (Enomoto, 1997; Gilligan, 1977; Noddings, 1984).

It is common for a greater level of reflection to be required in the case of ethical issues that are less frequently occurring and less routine. Participants most often cited difficult personnel issues as most troubling, which was consistent with the findings of Kirby (1990) and Smith (1996) discussed in depth in the review of literature. This would also support the interpretation of Dustman's (1998) findings, suggesting that personnel issues and ethical issues are not separate, but are often overlapping constructs.

The truth/loyalty dilemma paradigm manifests itself in the school setting much less frequently than the other three paradigms in circumstances that are vastly more complex, with interpersonal and professional consequences far more serious than those associated with the other three paradigms. For this reason it will be necessary to investigate this aspect of the meaning-making of administrators using a wider geographic area to decrease the likelihood that participants would be identified by their stories. It will also be necessary to use a more focused selection strategy, seeking participants willing to speak out on topics about which

they are at odds with their district or administrative superior(s). A limited number of these dilemmas were shared by participants in this study. Circumstances surrounding issues of school safety described in Chapter 4 provided a sample forum for the difficult dynamics involved.

Welch (1994) outlines three responses from which the professional experiencing the dilemma must choose: exit (leave), voice (speak up within the organization), and whistle blowing (speak up outside organizational channels.) Two participants related career events that led to resigning his/her position and moving to another school district. Several participants discussed what they considered to be non-negotiable educational values or ethical issues that they monitor to determine if they will remain in their current positions. Welch points out another possible interpretation to self-imposed silence that this author originally perceived as simply protecting the organization. He notes, "Effective reform efforts are almost always group efforts" (Welch, 1994, p. 105). Principals may be motivated to use caution regarding difficulties in the school or district because of their interest in maintaining ongoing relationships through which to work communally for change, or because they know they lack the necessary support from superiors, administrative team members, the board, or the community for change to succeed.

Special challenges of equity and educational philosophy

A person who has made the choices that have led to the principalship has chosen to support education for the betterment of individuals and the community. Those who battle daily with issues of fairness and equity are standard bearers for public education, maintaining as much truth as possible working within an imperfect system.

Riley (2002), U.S. Secretary of Education from 1993 to 2001, continues to call for "an unflinching commitment to excellence and equity" as an important guiding principle (p. 700). Schools are finding that in order to improve student achievement, equity issues must be addressed (Fullan, 1999).

Among the participants of this study, equity issues related to access to resources. Facilities and quality personnel were frequently identified as educational values but only occasionally rose to the level of being expressed as an ethical issue or ethical dilemma. These concerns were often specific to special education and its overlap with discipline challenges and to apportioning scarce resources (including money, time, space, materials, and personnel.)

These two difficult areas bear further scrutiny. It was common to hear a principal report that some aspect of resource apportionment was not a problem. However, without also communicating with other administrators in the district, it is impossible to know if this is not a problem because resources are adequate at all levels, or if it is not perceived as a problem by the high school principal because the pinch is being felt more at another grade level. This underlines the importance of dialogue among administrators and the importance of the ability to listen and consider various points of view (Torbert, 1981). For example, attempts are underway to further evaluate this tangle of ethical issues and related concerns about funding equity.

In the past it has been common to report the percentage of students with disabilities but without public accountability regarding academic progress. Christie (2002) cites data which indicate that the average student with disabilities requires approximately 1.9 times the amount of money required to educate students not identified as special education students.

On average this amounts to an additional cost of about $5,918 per special education student. Current funding strategies are widely perceived as inadequate and inequitable, leading to new ways of framing the problem of funding for education.

Learning is a birth to death proposition with broad sociological effects. Prominent educational leaders are speaking out at the national level, calling for greater financial support for federally mandated services. Hufstedler (2002), the first U.S. Secretary of Education, suggests that education be reconceptualized beyond the traditional boundaries of school buildings, grade levels, budget categories, and interest groups. Public school facilities should provide for the multiple shared needs of the community including health, wellness, and technology. Hufstedler (2002) calls for education and related services to be financed from multiple federal and state sources, not solely from education budgets. This is an example of the shared reliance approach at the macro level that goes beyond other non-systemic approaches.

Hatch (2002) identifies "diverse constituencies, frequent changes in policies and personnel, operating with significant constraints on time, resources and funding" (p. 626) as examples of competing demands and responsibilities to be managed by school administrators. In addition to these difficulties there are theories of learning and theories of schooling that people and organizations hold at the level of philosophical beliefs and values. Achieving some manner of programmatic integration, wholeness and coherence is described by Fullan (1999) as the change challenge for today's school administrators.

Eschewing the term "reform," Sirotnik (1999) prefers "renewal" and urges a new accountability that is more akin to "responsibility." How can the recurring concept of

responsibility as a component of school renewal be helpful to school administrators rather than another weight in an already heavy load?

Meaning-making

Human beings continually reorder their sense of self, world, and personal reality. "This meaning-making activity is an interactive process and thus is dependent upon and stimulated by the conditions in the environment. Meaning-making is a process of seeking order, pattern and significance" (Piper, Gentile, & Parks, 1993, p. 20).

School administrators are people who have devoted years to the study and practice of delivering an educational program within communities. The day-to-day work of the principalship is affected by culture, community, politics, power, and gender (Bushnell, 2001; Hart. 1995; Marshall, 2000; Turiel, 1996), factors which color the meaning that is constructed by individual administrators. These themes also emerged in the narratives of participants in this study.

The circumstantial and situational detail high school principals perceive as important in understanding the context of, and in the resolution of, ethical problems or dilemmas varies depending on their purpose in communication. When communicating for information, and in pursuit of making some other point, administrators used little detail, with basic information given summarily in a minimum sketch. This manner was also used when protecting the identity of people or organizations.

By contrast, an interesting phenomenon was demonstrated when participants switched into a mode of story telling. This difference in narrative form has been described by Mattingly (1991), who observed it among occupational therapists. She labeled the

abbreviated clinical sketch "chart talk" and investigated the differences in purpose between it and narrative storytelling that included care, detail, and emotion. This difference in manner was observed among administrators during the interviews conducted for this study, but in-depth analysis could not be conducted, because it was always these stories that were heavily edited during the collaborative transcription process. Ironically, because this inquiry was limited to the state of Iowa, in order to protect the identity of participants, much rich data were declared off limits in shared decisions between the researcher and participants.

Two action research studies were conducted by Mattingly (1991) in which professionals were asked to tell stories about their work and then to analyze the stories, investigating underlying values and assumptions. Both studies relied on what Mattingly calls the "pluralism inherent in storytelling, the fact that different actors will tell different stories about the 'same' situation" (p. 249). Among occupational therapists the storytelling generated reflection and intellectual excitement. This was not the case among managers of a development project who were under pressure to minimize any reference to or aspect of projects which were considered to be less than successful.

It would be interesting to use similar methodology with administrators in already established collegial groups who might be willing to interact as a focus group, yielding yet another dimension to the narrative study of educational values and ethical issues in the work lives of school administrators. Would the social and caring aspect of the nature of the work of education predominate in emotional and animated discussion, or might constraints related to self-silencing modify the communication of some administrators? If so, what would be the factors related to constraint of effective communication?

The healthy integration of the personal and professional aspects of one's life can be a serious challenge. The residual effects of difficult experiences and events can continue to have a negative emotional impact as long as the experience goes unprocessed. When processing difficulties, school administrators may need a venue for investigating the complex layers of their personal and professional lives.

An ethic of responsibility as a framework for meaning-making

The narratives of participants were considered in relation to resolution principles of ends-based thinking, rule-based thinking and care-based thinking. A thread from participant narratives as well as in the literature suggests that an ethic of responsibility should also be considered for goodness of fit.

Moral theories must be useful in actual experience. Held (1995) argues for a method of moral inquiry that makes room for learning through what she calls "moral experience." In most philosophical writing, this term refers to empirical experience. She states, "Moral experience is the experience of approving or disapproving of actions or states of affairs of which we are aware and of evaluating the feelings we have and the relationships we are in" (Held. 1995. p. 154). It is experienced subjectively, not scientifically observed.

Walker (1998) recommends getting at morality's content by tracking responsibilities. Subject positions, power, and social constructions are a part of how people live and judge. People reflect on morality, moral judgment, and moral responsibility as they are familiar with them through their own training, character, and experience.

Pointing at the social and dialogic nature of learning, Walker (1995) states, "One form of intelligence that very often, if not typically, offers crucial resources for the resolution of

moral problems is the ability to communicate among persons involved or affected" (p. 142).

While it is not always an option, she adds, "It often enough is, and its efficacy is so obvious

that it is astonishing how little attention is paid it in most nonfeminist moral philosophy"

(p. 143).

As school administrators sort through educational values, identify ethical issues, and

resolve ethical dilemmas, greater knowledge and experience applying theoretical frameworks

helps to clarify, sort out, and prioritize competing rights and values. Providing and

supporting interactive opportunities for administrators to discuss and explore ethical issues in

their work lives can and should be focused within the groups they already use and trust for

support.

Exploring the usefulness of mentoring to develop ethical fitness

In a study by Boon (1998), 24 selected assistant principals were paired with

experienced principals for eight weeks of intensive mentoring. Participant responses on a

Likert-like scale showed that both mentors and protégés judged the greatest benefit to be the

expansion of a collegial network. Interestingly, both mentors and protégés ranked "attained

higher level of professional knowledge" highly. However, protégés identified "improved

school management" as a specific area of increased knowledge, while mentors ranked

"increased level of motivation" higher. This suggests that for the administrators in training,

the day-to-day (cognitive growth) specifics garner special attention and learning, while the

mentors gain motivation (affective growth) by sharing their administrative world with

another, thereby seeing it themselves with a fresh pair of eyes.

Although both groups benefit, the hierarchical approach would not lend itself to adults whose education and personal and professional values are neither better nor worse than another administrator's, neither more developed nor less, based on job status or experience. Certainly in matters of interpreting and implementing policy an administrator with more years of experience has a wealth of knowledge from which to draw. However, it is more likely that the ability to consider another's point of view and anticipate unintended consequences both short- and long-term, are important factors in addition to experience.

Systematization of the mentoring process is discussed by Crow and Mathews (1998). Issues such as planning, mentor selection, matching, training, and evaluation are described with a focus on socialization strategies, career development, and professional and psychosocial development. Although dialogue regarding ethical issues could take place within the mentoring paradigm, traditional mentoring is too structured and formal for what is needed. Crow and Mathews recommend mentoring components such as "goals, directions, mile markers, methods, and content." These descriptors of a very structured approach make it clear that for the trust and shared nature of investigating one's own, and hearing alternate strategies and beliefs, the mentoring relationship, as described, is lacking.

The best explanation for "What is wrong with this picture?" comes from Hopkins-Thompson (2000), who bases her endorsement of mentoring on the following description: "Mentoring is an intense relationship in which a senior person oversees the career development and psychosocial development of a less-experienced person" (p. 30). There are three reasons this model would be inappropriate for providing a forum through which administrators could interact to develop ethical fitness. The nature of the topic could result in an intense relationship, but this is not necessary, nor is it likely if the relationship is assigned.

Second, the focus on greater experience as an important attribute of the mentor is not necessarily related to a person's ethical awareness or depth of thinking. For meaningful dialogue about beliefs and values, one person cannot be dominant. Third, the stated topic in the mentoring descriptor is career development and psychosocial development.

Peer-coaching, a form of mentoring, focuses on job-related tasks or skills and is accomplished through instruction, demonstration, and feedback (Hopkins-Thompson, 2000). While both mentoring and coaching may be seen as possible components of leadership development, neither would be useful in addressing the interactive dialogic approach to exploring professional ethics between or among school administrators. The focus in the venue sought must accommodate a more sensitive range of topics: personal, professional, and educational philosophy and values.

Co-mentoring and partnership support groups

Joint inquiry and shared power between schools and universities characterize the Partnership Support Groups (PSGs) model described by Mullen (2000). The model is "practitioner centered, experiential, and research oriented, reflective and empowering" (Mullen, 2000, p. 4). The traditional mentoring relationship is fraught with presumptions of status, power, and caution that limit the potential for transformation (Diamond & Mullen, 1997). By linking what tends to be the more theory-rich approach of the university with the action of the world of the administrative practitioner, a pipeline is created via which an action research conduit is created. This engagement between and among partners can lead to group problem solving, joint book publishing, collaborative presentation, and team teaching.

In a joint publication resulting from such a partnership, Kochan and Trimble (2000) describe the status and productivity of their relationship after several months of biweekly discussions:

> We dealt with questions such as whether we wanted to change jobs, gender issues in the workplace, and how to deal with ethical conflicts. We also talked about the human side of administration, such as how to deal with the hurt when someone we trusted betrayed us. (p. 23)

By working on specific problems and discussing concerns, mistakes, and fears they learned to ask guiding questions rather than giving answers to one another. "It was a time of taking risks, engaging in self-analysis, trying out new behaviors, and seeking and receiving feedback on the results" (p. 23). This description has the positive connotations of peer coaching without the limiting parameters of a skills-based focus. Both emerging and established professionals benefited from engaging in the co-mentoring relationship. Because the physical setting available in the project described by Mullen (2000) included proximity between school and university, she described the relationship as walkways that were open, and best traveled without hurry.

The aspect of time is forever the caveat in the lives of hurried practitioners. It is critical that time and location to meet be creatively negotiated. It is possible that opportunities to break bread together be provided between dyads, and among all participants of the group when the venture is at an institutional level. Scheduling time during supervision activities such as athletic events and performances is another strategy to cross boundaries and "find time."

Jipson and Paley (2000) describe their co-mentoring experience as a collaboration that began serendipitously and lasted over the course of 25 years of professional experience.

Jipson recalls the words of one person explaining why they are helping another: "Because no one gets there alone" (p. 38). They recognize a pattern of seeking support when they experience "a-tension" and then give each other "attention." This results in what they describe as "Heaps: 'Ideas on top of ideas'" (p. 39), far preferable to unreasonable heaps of false certainty from lack of considering alternate points of view.

Back to theory

Throughout the course of this study much use has been made of theory as a base from which to spring. It is natural to focus on questions such as, "Well, what did it all mean?" and "So, what can be done differently and better?" It is equally exciting to answer the question, "What theories can be adapted and brought forward next?"

Taking a critical look at Schön's (1987) concept of "reflection-in-action," Beckett (1996) considers it the equivalent of what he calls "hot action"— a hot and immediate slice of practice within which the professional can make a difference then and there (p. 140). Multiple discretionary judgments are required of professionals in the school setting. His description of the professional workplace challenge is apt: "We may call such discriminatory processes 'critical' because they admit of substantial but astonishingly flexible evidential justification" (Beckett, 1996, p. 135). He suggests a concept of "feed forwardness" as a byproduct of reflection. The significance is that emerging understanding is fueled by feedback mechanisms. Using a philosophical psychological argument he makes the point that the collegial dialectic should be conceptualized as such a feedback mechanism. It should be recognized as knowledge and energy that feeds forward as the individual develops capacity to meet potential challenging circumstances.

The connection between shared reflection and the energy of feeding forward may explain the enthusiasm with which participants spoke of their participation in educational cohort groups. This cannot be misconstrued to apply only to administrators new in the field, because just as often, cohort participants had years and depth of experience and were preparing for the superintendency.

The concept set forward by Beckett has similar directionality to the thesis of Arendt, (1973). Her work, *The Life of the Mind*, moves from *Volume I: Thinking*, which she set out in its entirety before her death, to *Volume II: Willing*, which was completed posthumously by a colleague. The plan for a third volume that was to be titled "Judging" was never written. The forward pattern of increasing challenge is analogous to the intellectual challenge faced by school administrators in their work. The act of willing personalizes the task of ethical thinking, determining what ought to be. "Judging" lands the philosophical traveler directly back at the beginning, determining what is the good and the right, and how it is known. Judging is the emerging challenge of the 21st century, as in both the micro and macro people are struggling, if not warring, to claim the good and the right.

Educators work in a psychosocial cauldron that presents endless challenges demanding nearly immediate judgment. By learning more about how school administrators individually and collectively face ethical issues, progress can be made in developing ethical fitness, a readiness of strength and judgment to face choices of what is good, fair, just, and best in a multitude of settings and situations. Developing trust within educational and professional networks is key to the access of information and support for the professional development of school administrators to learn from each other through dialogue. Time and opportunity for communication within professional networks need systemic support through professional

organizations and as a district priority. This communication is likely to be built around local and regional networks. It is important, however, to be mindful that although occurring less frequently, dilemmas related to the truth/loyalty paradigm require opportunities to engage the expertise and support of professionals outside one's usual professional network.

School administrators have multiple impending challenges. Developing efficacy in dealing with questions of personal, professional, and educational values, ethical issues, and ethical dilemmas is just one of multiple competing concerns in the work lives of school administrators. Perhaps the processes by which ethical challenges can be better understood will apply to understanding and improvement in other areas of school renewal as well.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Conduct a similar study using a snowball method in which participants recommend successive potential participants.

2. Conduct a similar study teaming a male and female researcher to learn more about the effect of gender as an influence in the interview and analysis process.

3. Conduct a study using similar research questions focusing on another specific administrative group or grade level of educational administrators.

4. Conduct a similar study interviewing multiple groups of stakeholders in a district known to be dealing with or recently having dealt with a difficult ethical dilemma. This would allow for comparison and contrast between and among school board members, superintendent, principal(s), assistant principal(s), counselors, teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members.

5. Conduct a study to learn more about the truth/loyalty paradigm using a critical case study method to learn more about the paradigm through comparison and contrast of multiple cases.

6. Conduct a study to learn more about the truth/loyalty paradigm using an interdisciplinary approach, collaborating with a professional with expertise in sociology, political science, business, media, film, and/or literature.

7. Conduct a study investigating the effects of administrative co-mentoring as a method of providing support to administrators facing ethical issues.

8. Conduct an ethnographic study using repeated interviews over time with several participants who are moving through the process of dealing with an ethical dilemma.

9. Conduct focus group interviews of an educational cohort group to determine if there are differences in how administrators in a one-on-one conversation and administrators in groups communicate about ethical issues.

Conclusion

In the mid 19th century Emerson challenged the individual to recognize and use one's own genius in the essay, "Self-Reliance." It has been common to equate knowledge with power. Now, in the early 21st century, it is becoming more apparent that it takes more than knowledge and power to build wisdom. Individually through thought and reflection, and collectively through dialogue and support, it is necessary to utilize Bloom's levels of cognitive and affective thought above the level of knowledge: understanding, application,

analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. It takes strength, communication, and collective wisdom to develop both individual and organizational ethical fitness.

Words from Emerson's essay describe this researcher's motivation to undertake this study:

> There is a time in every [person]'s education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. (Emerson, 1836, p. 133)

After more than 12 years in the classroom, and during five years as an assistant principal and principal at the middle and high school levels, there were experiences and events that raised important questions in the mind of this researcher. This inquiry has been an opportunity to till that plot of ground.

Ethical practice in the work lives of high school principals takes place within a social and cultural context where the good and the right pulse from moment to moment through circumstances, events, and decision making. Acknowledging and exploring the complexity creates a space for educators who choose to face the challenges of public schooling to exercise educational leadership. As moral agents in the educational setting they are charged with managing issues of truth and fairness, seeking positive outcomes while working within an imperfect system.

There will no doubt be new words and symbols which become part of the public consciousness signaling the urgency to better think, learn, teach, lead, and live ethically. A worthwhile goal is to contribute to the recognition and establishment of personal, professional, and organizational responsibility for ethical practice as a key component in the process.

APPENDIX A. INVITATION LETTER AND CONSENT FORM

August 10, 2001

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Ms/Mr. Name:

I am an Educational Administration doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership and Policy Studies Department at Iowa State University and am conducting my dissertation research on the topic of **School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues**. Ethics is the study of moral values, including the deliberate process of examining, prioritizing and integrating our moral values. Through this inquiry I hope to discover more about the strategies and tools that school administrators find helpful as they collect information, make decisions, and take action on the ethical issues they face.

As an Iowa public school high school principal you have been selected as a possible candidate for this qualitative study. I am writing to request your permission to be interviewed by me, face-to-face, for approximately one hour. During these interviews I hope to hear how high school principals deal with the underlying complexity of competing rights and values encountered in ethical dilemmas. Any follow-up contact is optional and would be by choice of the participant. A Consent Form is enclosed, which gives a more detailed description of the type of interview methodology I will be using. Confidentiality will be protected by the use of personal and organizational pseudonyms in written reports and oral presentations of this research. Your participation is completely voluntary. The identity of persons choosing or declining to participate will be kept strictly confidential. If you have faced challenging ethical issues in a particularly difficult situation, or in a variety of situations that you would like to explore, I hope you will agree to participate.

If you are interested in participating, please complete the Consent Form and mail it to me in the enclosed stamped envelope. I intend to conduct interviews within the next few months and will schedule these sessions at a mutually convenient time and location. If you have not returned the Consent Form or contacted me within two weeks of receipt of this letter I will assume you decline to participate. If you have any questions, you may contact me at 515-294-9090 or <dhhunter@iastate.edu>, or my major professor, Dr. Donald Hackmann, at 515-294-4871. Thank you for giving this opportunity your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deb Hunter, Ph.D. Candidate   Donald G. Hackmann, AssociateProfessor
Iowa State University   Educational Administration

Enc.

Consent Form
School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues

I consent to be interviewed by Deb Hunter, doctoral candidate, Educational Administration, Iowa State University. I understand that I will be a participant in a dissertation research study to develop understanding of how school administrators face ethical issues. I understand that I will be interviewed at a mutually agreed upon location and at a time that is convenient to me. One interview of approximately one hour in length will be required. I may agree to follow-up contact but this is not required. I have been informed that the interview will be audiotaped, transcribed, and additionally documented through researcher notes.

The interview will consist of questions related to how I have faced ethical issues as a secondary principal. The researcher will ask follow-up questions and probe for clarification. I may elect to provide supporting documentation, such as letters, memos, notes, sketches, maps, articles, pictures or other items which might be helpful in telling my story(ies). I will also have the opportunity to consider and give feedback on theories and strategies that may be helpful in making meaning of ethical issues faced.

I have been informed that my participation in the interview is voluntary, and I understand that I can refuse to discuss any specific issues during the interview, or may elect to terminate the interview at any time. I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and the data collected pertaining to my participation will be destroyed. My participation is confidential and this confidentiality will be maintained through storage of data and notes in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Personal and organizational pseudonyms will be used in written reports and oral presentations of this research. Identifying information will be removed from fieldnotes, transcripts, and documents or other artifacts I may provide.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to me as a participant in this research. Benefits to be gained from participation in this research may include personal and professional satisfaction that I am helping to illuminate a difficult area of practice for school administrators. Results of this study will be published in the researchers' doctoral dissertation and also may be used as the basis for conference presentations and publications. At the conclusion of the study a summary of the results will be provided to me upon request.

Questions about this research or my participation may be directed to Deb Hunter, at N243 Lagomarcino, Ames, IA 50011; (515) 294-9090; <dhhunter@iastate.edu>; or Dr. Donald Hackmann, Associate Professor, at N229D Lagomarcino, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011; (515) 294-4871; <hackmann@iastate.edu>.

I consent to participate in the research study named and described above:

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher Signature: _____ Date: _____

**APPENDIX B. REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE
OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Representative Sample of Interview Questions

- In your current position as a building-level school administrator what situation or situations stand out as dealing with difficult ethical issues? (Consider a situation or situations from the past or present)

  - What were the circumstances?

  - How did you go about collecting information?

  - Who was involved?

  - What were the issues?

  - Did you solicit help or advice? If so, how? From whom? If not, why not?

  - How did you make a decision? What did you decide? Why? How did it turn out?

  - How satisfied were you?

  - Provide as much detail as you believe is relevant.

- What do you think would be helpful to school administrators facing ethical issues? (Theories? Strategies? Actions? Communications?)

- Do you think facing ethical issues affects how you feel about your job? If not, why not? If yes, How? Why?

- Is there anything else you'd like to discuss or clarify?

APPENDIX C. PARTICIPANT PROFILE FORM

.

School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues
Participant Profile Form
(For Use by the Researcher Only)

Name: _____

Office Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Total number of years taught _____

Total number of years in school administration _____

Title of Current Position _____

Number of years in current position_____

Circle grade levels that apply to current position: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Indicate type of district (check those that best apply):
O urban   O suburban   O rural

Indicate district size by student population:
      O 1000 students or less
      O more than 1000 students but less than 2,500 students
      O 2,500 students or more

Title of Position Prior to Current Position: _____

Number of years in prior position_____

Circle grade levels that applied to prior position: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Indicate type of district (check those that best apply):
O urban   O suburban   O rural

Indicate district size by student population:
      O 1000 students or less
      O more than 1000 students but less than 2,500 students
      O 2,500 students or more

Indicate all that apply:

O I am interested in the topic in general

O I am interested in discussing a variety of ethical issues I have faced as a building level school administrator.

O I am interested in discussing a particularly difficult ethical issue I've faced (or am currently facing) as a building level school administrator.

O Other:

Questions:

O I prefer that you contact me by e-mail: _____

O I prefer that you contact me predominantly by phone: _____

APPENDIX D. ANALYSIS MAPS

Spheres of Influence (Fouad & Bingham, 1995)

Society/Global

Dominant/School

Socioeconomic

Race/Ethnicity

Family

Gender

Core

Zones of Ethical Choices (Scott, 1998)

Society as a Whole

Local Community/Public

Work/Business/Professional Associates

Board   District   Building: Admin   Teachers/Staff   Students   Student's Family

Friends/Distant Relatives

Family/Intimate Others

Self

Dilemma Paradigms (Kidder, 1995)

Dilemma Paradigm: Truth/Loyalty

Dilemma Paradigm: Individual/Community

Dilemma Paradigm: Short-term/Long-term

Dilemma Paradigm: Justice/Mercy

Resolution Principles (Kidder, 1995)

Resolution Principle of Ends-based Thinking

Resolution Principle of Rule-based Thinking

Resolution Principle of Care-based Thinking

Ethical Fitness

APPENDIX E. HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW FORM

Iowa State University
Human Subjects Review Form

(Please type and use the corresponding instructions for completing this form)

IRB

AUG 0 7 2001

1. Title of Project: School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues

2. I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to insure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are protected. I will report any adverse reactions to the committee. Additions to or changes in research procedures after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review. I agree that all key personnel involved in conducting human subjects research will receive training in the protection of human subjects. I agree to request renewal of approval for any project continuing more than one year.

Deborah H. Hunter   08-01-01
Typed name of principal investigator   Date   Signature of principal investigator

Educational Leadership Policy Studies   N243 Lagomarcino
Department   Mailing Address for Correspondence

WK: 294-9090 HM: (515) 572-4764 dhhunter@iastate.edu
Phone number and email

2a. Principal investigator
☐ Faculty   ☐ Staff   ☐ Postdoctoral   ☒ Graduate Student   ☐ Undergraduate Student

3. Typed name of co-principal investigator(s)   Date   Signature of co-principal investigator(s)

____Donald Hackmann   8/3/01

3a. Co-Principal investigator(s) (check all that apply)
☐ Faculty   ☐ Staff   ☐ Postdoctoral   ☐ Graduate Student   ☐ Undergraduate Student

3b. Typed name of major professor or supervisor   Date   Signature of major professor or supervising
(if not a co-principal investigator)   faculty member

Dr. Donald Hackmann   08-01-01

4. Typed names of other key personnel who will directly interact with human subjects.
None

5. Project (check all that apply)
☐ Research   ☒ Thesis or dissertation   ☐ Class project   ☐ Independent Study (490, 590, Honors project)

6. Number of subjects (complete all that apply)
18 # adults, non-students   ____ # ISU students   ____ # minors under 14   ____ # other (explain)
                                                         ____ # minors 14-17

7. Status of project submission through Office of Sponsored Programs Administration (check one)
☐ Has been submitted   ☐ Will be submitted   ☒ Will not be submitted

7a. Funding Source: None

8. Brief description of proposed research involving human subjects: (See instructions, item 8. Use an additional page if needed.) (Include one copy of the complete proposal if submitting to a Federal sponsor.)

7/01

Research Problem

The problem to be examined is that public school administrators are frequently faced with difficult ethical issues. These challenges are always situation specific and require the administrator to collect information, decide what information to gather from whom, when to probe further, and when to cease data collection and make a decision/take action. He/she must determine which situational details to give most consideration. He/she must determine what relative weight or strength to give various insititutional guidelines, rules, expectations, personal and professional moral duties as well as various anticipated outcomes. The complexity of this process is compounded because of situational nuances, complication of competing values and beliefs, specific multiple points of view represented by those involved in the situation as well as a base of social/cultural pluralism in the public school setting.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to understand how public high school principals in the state of Iowa make meaning of the ethical issues they face. It is also to determine what theoretical frameworks and practices they find to be helpful when considered in the light of their own stories of specific experiences. Exploration of how to apply the findings can improve the support and professional development of practicing and aspiring administrators.

Research Questions

This study will focus on five research questions:

1. What circumstantial/situational detail do high school principals perceive as important in understanding the context of, and in the resolution of an ethical problem or dilemma?
2. Does gender and/or size of district play a role in how high school principals face ethical issues in schools?
3. What theoretical frameworks (such as ethical fitness, dilemma paradigms and resolution principles) play a role in how high school principals make meaning of ethical issues?
4. How does the satisfaction of a high school principal, when reflecting about the outcome of an ethical problem or dilemma, contribute to change in his/her stated attitude toward the job/profession?
5. How can the experiences of high school principals positively impact professional development for other school administrators as they learn to better face ethical issues?

Methods

In this qualitative inquiry eighteen high school principals in the state of Iowa will be identified to participate in a one-hour, one-on-one semi-structured interview conducted by the researcher. The interview will be audio-taped, transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. Participants will have the option prior to the interview to read the "Representative Sample of Interview Questions" (attached).

Potential participants will be identified using the Iowa Educational Directory 2000-2001. Criteria for invitation to participate in the study include:

1. The person is listed in the 2000-2001 Directory as being a principal in a 10-12 or a 9-12 grade public high school in the State of Iowa.
2. The person is identified via a stratified random selection process in one of six Enrollment Size/Gender categories.
3. The person has been in his/her position for at least one year.

A purposive, strategic (stratified random) selection process will be used to identify three administrators fitting the selection criteria in each of the following six categories:

1) Male high school principal in a school district with enrollment of less than 1,000students (Small).
2) Male high school principal in a school district with enrollment of 1,000 to 2,999 students (Medium).
3) Male principal in a school district with enrollment of 3,000 student or more (Large.)
4) Female principal in a school district with enrollment of less than 1,000students (Small).
5) Female principal in a school district with enrollment of 1,000 to 2,999 students (Medium).
6) Female principal in a school district with enrollment of 3,000 student or more (Large.)

A copy of the adjusted transcribed interview (identifiers removed, pseudonyms used) will be provided to participants who indicate interest in follow-up contact (member checking) after the interview. No computer

generated analysis package will be utilized. The researcher will utilyze an analytic strategy relating interview content to the research questions, dilemma paradigms, reslolution principles, ethical map, and other theory that emerges.

9. Informed Consent: ☒ Signed informed consent will be obtained. (Attach a copy of your form.)
☐ Modified informed consent will be obtained. (See instructions, item 9.)

10. Confidentiality of Data: Describe below the methods you will use to ensure the confidentiality of data obtained. (See instructions, item 10.)

During the interview the participant will be able to mask the identity of people, places and situations to whom they refer while they are speaking or instruct the researcher to make changes such as the use of personal and institutional pseudonyms during the transcription process which accomplishes the desired level of anonymity desired by the participant.

The fact that the pool of participants includes 18 high school principals randomly selected from more than 456 high schools across the state of Iowa increases the liklihood that identification of persons, locations, and/or situations would not subsequently be discerned.

Any participant expresessing interest in member checking subsequent to the interview, will be sent a copy of the transcript to check for adequate adjustment (removal of situational identifiers from the transcript and use of pseudomyms). The single copy of the tape, transcription, and any archival materials supplied by the participant will be retained by the researcher in a secure (locked) location accessible only the the researcher. Audio tapes will be destroyed by 08-01-02.

11. Will subjects in the research be placed at risk or incur discomfort? Describe any risks to the subjects and precautions that will be taken to minimize them. (The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to subjects' dignity and self-respect as well as psychological or emotional risk. See instructions, item 11.)

Minimal if any risk or discomfort to participants is likely during this study. Prior to the interview they will be aware that the researcher has 17 years of experience as a public school teacher and five years of experience as a public school administrator. Knowing that there is a common language and experiencial background with the researcher should increase their level of comfort in the interview. They will also have the option prior to the interview to read the "Representative Sample of Interview Questions" (attached). They will already know via the letter and consent that if at any point during the interview the participant is uncomfortable due to the nature of the content of the topic or for any other reason they will have the option to adjust the situation or discontinue the interview. At any time during the research process he/she will be able to withdraw from the study.

12. CHECK ALL of the following that apply to your research:
☐ A. Medical clearance necessary before subjects can participate
☐ B. Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to subjects
☐ C. Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects
☐ D. Samples (blood, tissue, etc.) from subjects
☐ E. Administration of infectious agents or recombinant DNA
☐ F. Application of external stimuli
☐ G. Application of noxious or potentially noxious stimuli

☐ H. Deception of subjects
☐ I. Subjects under 14 years of age and/or
☐ Subjects 14-17 years of age
☐ J. Subjects in institutions (nursing homes, mental health facilities, prisons, etc.)
☐ K. Pregnant women
☐ L. Research must be approved by another institution or agency (attach letters of approval)

If you checked any of the items in 12, please complete the following in the space below (include any attachments):

Items A-G   Describe the procedures and note the proposed safety precautions.

Items D-E   The principal investigator should send a copy of this form to Environmental Health and Safety, 118 Agronomy Lab for review.

Item H   Describe how subjects will be deceived; justify the deception; indicate the debriefing procedure, including the timing and information to be presented to subjects.

Item J   For subjects under the age of 14, indicate how informed consent will be obtained from parents or legally authorized representatives as well as from subjects.

Items J-K   Explain what actions would be taken to insure minimal risk.

Item L   Specify the agency or institution that must approve the project. If subjects in any outside agency or institution are involved, approval must be obtained prior to beginning the research, and the letter of approval should be filed.

Iowa State University Human Subjects Review Form

PI Last Name _____ Title of Project

Checklist for Attachments

The following are attached (please check):

13. ☒ Letter or written statement to subjects indicating clearly:
   a) the purpose of the research
   b) the use of any identifier codes (names, #'s), how they will be used, and when they will be removed (see item 18)
   c) an estimate of time needed for participation in the research
   d) if applicable, the location of the research activity
   e) how you will ensure confidentiality
   f) in a longitudinal study, when and how you will contact subjects later
   g) that participation is voluntary; nonparticipation will not affect evaluations of the subject

14. ☒ A copy of the consent form (if applicable)

15. ☐ Letter of approval for research from cooperating organizations or institutions (if applicable)

16. ☐ Data-gathering instruments

17. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:

First contact	Last contact
08-13-01	08-01-02
Month/Day/Year	Month/Day/Year

18. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or audio or visual tapes will be erased:

08-01-02
Month/Day/Year

19. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer   Date   Department or Administrative Unit

_9-5-2(?)_

20. Initial action by the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

☐ Project approved   ☐ Pending Further Review _____   ☐ Project not approved _____
                                                   Date   Date

☐ No action required _____
                      Date

21. Follow-up action by the IRB:

Project approved   ☐ _____   Project not approved _____   Project not resubmitted _____
                     Date   Date   Date

Rick Sharp
Name of IRB Chairperson   Signature of IRB Chairperson   Date

Iowa State University Human Subjects Review Form

Hunter

PI Last Name _____ Title of Project School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues

---

Checklist for Attachments

The following are attached (please check):

13. ☒ Letter or written statement to subjects indicating clearly:
    a) the purpose of the research
    b) the use of any identifier codes (names, #'s), how they will be used, and when they will be removed (see item 18)
    c) an estimate of time needed for participation in the research
    d) if applicable, the location of the research activity
    e) how you will ensure confidentiality
    f) in a longitudinal study, when and how you will contact subjects later
    g) that participation is voluntary; nonparticipation will not affect evaluations of the subject

14. ☒ A copy of the consent form (if applicable)

15. ☐ Letter of approval for research from cooperating organizations or institutions (if applicable)

16. ☐ Data-gathering instruments

---

17. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:

    First contact   **Last contact**
    08-13-01   08-01-02
    Month/Day/Year   Month/Day/Year

18. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or audio or visual tapes will be erased:

    08-01-02
    Month/Day/Year

19. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer   Date   Department or Administrative Unit

    9-5-01

20. Initial action by the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

    ☒ Project approved   ☐ Pending Further Review _____   ☐ Project not approved _____
                                                         Date   Date

    ☐ No action required _____
                         Date

21. Follow-up action by the IRB:

    Project approved ☐ _____   Project not approved _____   Project not resubmitted _____
                     Date   Date   Date

    Rick Sharp   5/9/01
    Name of IRB Chairperson   Signature of IRB Chairperson   Date

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

DATE: August 13, 2001

TO: Deborah Hunter

FROM: Janell Meldrem, IRB Administrator

RE: **"School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues" IRB ID 02-027**

TYPE OF APPLICATION: ☒ **New Project**   ☐ **Continuing Review**   ☐ **Modification**

The project, "School Administrators: Facing Ethical Issues" has been approved for one year from its IRB approval date September 9, 2001. University policy and Federal regulations (45 CFR 46) require that all research involving human subjects be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) on a continuing basis at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk, but at least once per year.

Any modification of this research project must be submitted to the IRB for prior review and approval. Modifications include but are not limited to: changing the protocol or study procedures, changing investigators or sponsors (funding sources), including additional key personnel, changing the Informed Consent Document, an increase in the total number of subjects anticipated, or adding new materials (e.g., letters, advertisements, questionnaires).

You must promptly report any of the following to the IRB: (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) any other unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

You are expected to make sure that additional key personnel who are involved in human subjects research complete training prior to their interactions with human subjects. Web based training is available from our web site.

Ten months from the IRB approval, you will receive a letter notifying you that the expiration date is approaching. At that time, you will need to fill out a Continuing Review/and or Modification Form and return it to the Human Subjects Research Office. If the project is, or will be finished in one year, you will need to fill out a Project Closure Form to officially end the project.

Both of these forms are on the Human Subjects Research Office web site at:
http://grants-svr.admin.iastate.edu/VPR/humansubjects.html.

REFERENCES

AASA's code of ethics. (1996). *The School Administrator, 53*(9), 16.

Abelson, R., & Friquegnon, M. (1987). *Ethics for modern life.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Andrews, K. R. (Ed.). (1989). *Ethics in practice: Managing the moral corporation.* Boston:

Harvard Business School Press.

Arendt, H. (1973). *The life of the mind.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1996). *Organizational learning.* Reading, MA: Addison-

Wesley.

Bandura, A. (1991). Social cognitive theory of moral thought and action. In W. M. Kurtines

& J. L. Gewirtz (Eds.), *Handbook of moral behavior and development* (pp. 45–103).

Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bay, D. D. (1997). Determinants of ethical behavior: An experiment. *Dissertation Abstracts*

International, 59(09), 3528A. (UMI No. 9907076)

Beck, L. G. (1992). Meeting future challenges: The place of a caring ethic in educational

administration. *American Journal of Education, 100,* 254–296.

Beck, L. G. (1996). Why ethics? Why now? *The School Administrator, 54*(9), 8–11.

Beck, L. G., & Murphy, J. (1993, October). *Preparing ethical leaders: Overviewing current*

efforts and analyzing forces that have shaped them. Paper presented at the annual

meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Houston, TX. (ERIC

Document Reproduction Service No. ED364936)

Beck, L. G., & Murphy, J. (1994). *Ethics in educational leadership programs: An expanding*

role. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Beck, L. G., & Murphy, J. (1997). *Ethics in educational leadership programs: Emerging models*. Columbia, MO: The University Council of Educational Administrators.

Beckett, D. (1996). Critical judgment and professional practice. *Educational Theory, 46*(2), 135–149.

Beckett, J. (1997). Skirting the swamp: Using case studies for developing leadership skills. *Journal of Public Administration Education, 3*, 234–238.

Bell, C. (1995). "If I weren't involved with schools, I might be radical": Gender consciousness in context. In D. M. Dunlap & P. A. Schmuck (Eds.), *Women leading in education* (pp. 288–312). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bellah. (1996). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Benhabib, S. (1987). The generalized and the concrete other: The Kohlberg-Gilligan controversy and moral theory. In E. F. Kittay & D. T. Meyers (Eds.), *Women and moral theory*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield.

Beyerstein, D. (1993). The functions and limitations of professional codes of ethics. In E. R. Winkler & J. R. Coombs (Eds.), *Applied ethics: A reader* (pp. 416–425). Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Bishard, T. G. (1993). Communication regarding sensitive personnel matters by school board members and the management team (Doctoral dissertation, Kansas State University, 1993). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 54*(08), 2811A. (UMI No. 9402678)

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bok, D. (1990). *Universities and the future of America*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bondeson, W. B. (1981). Philosophy. In A. W. Chickering (Ed.), *The modern American college* (pp. 355–369). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Boon, S. L. Z. (1998). Principalship mentoring in Singapore: Who and what benefits? *Journal of Educational Administration, 36*(1), 29–43.

Boothe. J. W., Bradley, L. H., Flick, T. M., Keough, K. E., & Kirk, S. P. (1992). Questions of ethics. *The Executive Educator, 14*(2), 17–24.

Bowman. J. S. (1998). The lost world of public administration education: Rediscovering the meaning of professionalism. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 4*(1), 27–31.

Boylan. M. (2000). *Basic ethics*. Saddle River: NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Brennan. A. D. H., & Brennan, R. J. (1988). The principal, ethics, and special education decisions. *NASSP Bulletin, 72*(512), 16–19.

Britt, D. W. (1997). *A conceptual introduction to modeling: Qualitative and quantitative perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Broadnax, W. (1997). Educating tomorrow's public administrators: Embracing theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Education, 3*, 391–396.

Brown. T. (1996). Values, knowledge, and Piaget. In E. S. Reed, E. Turiel, & T. Brown (Eds.), *Values and knowledge* (pp. 137–170). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Buckman, M. S. (1998). Ethical dilemmas in administrative decision-making: An exploratory study of core ethical values and organizational influences as perceived by elementary school principals in selected Illinois public schools. (Doctoral dissertation, Northern Illinois University, 1998). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 60*(04), 947A.

Bull, B. L., & McCarthy, M. M. (1995). Reflections on the knowledge base in law and ethics

for educational leaders. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 31*, 613–631.

Burgess, R. G. (1991). Sponsors, gatekeepers, members, and friends: Access in educational

settings. In W. B. R. Shaffir & A. Stebbins (Eds.), *Experiencing fieldwork: An inside*

view of qualitative research (pp. 43–52). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bushnell, M. (2001). This bed of roses has thorns: Cultural assumptions and community in

an elementary school. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 32*(2), 139–166.

Callahan, D., & Bok, S. (Eds.). (1980). *Ethics teaching in higher education*. New York:

Plenum Press.

Carter, S. L. (1996). *Integrity*. New York: Harper Collins.

Catron, B. L., & Denhardt, K. G. (1994). Ethics education in public administration. In T. L.

Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (pp. 49–61). New York: Dekker.

Chase, S. (1995). *Ambiguous empowerment: The work narratives of women school*

superintendents. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Christie, K. (2002). Expectations for students with special needs. *Phi Delta Kappan, 83*,

650–651.

Clark, L. A. (1998). Perceptions and validation of ethics in public schools. *Dissertation*

Abstracts International 60(04), 1060A. (UMI No. 9926959)

Cooper, T. L. (Ed.). (2001). *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed.). New York: Marcel

Dekker.

Council of Chief State School Officers. (1996). *Interstate School Leaders Licensure*

Consortium: Standards for school leaders. Washington, DC: Author.

Crawford, G., & Nicklaus, J. (2000). *Philosophical and cultural values: Applying ethics in schools*. New York: Eye On Education.

Crow, G. M., & Mathews, L. J. (1998). *Finding one's way: How mentoring can lead to dynamic leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Dempsey, D. (1988). Ethics and the principal: Five vignettes. *NASSP Bulletin, 72*(512), 21–25.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (1998). *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J., & Tufts, J. H. (1909). *Ethics*. New York: Henry Holt.

Diamond, C. P. T., & Mullen, C. A. (1997). Alternative perspectives on mentoring in higher education: Duography as collaborative relationship and inquiry. *Journal of Applied Social Behavior, 3*(2), 49–64.

Doggett, M. (1988). Ethical excellence for school-based administrators. *NASSP Bulletin, 72*(512), 6–8.

Dunlap, D. M., & Schmuck, P. A. (Eds.). (1994). *Women leading in education*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Dustman, P. J. A. (1998). Messengers on the highwire: Superintendent politics, risks, and results. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 59*(10), 3701A. (UMI No. 9910300)

Egan, K. (1990). Ethical codes: A standard for ethical behavior. *NASSP Bulletin, 74*(528), 59–62.

English, F. W., & Steffy, B. E. (1997). Using film to teach leadership in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 33*, 107–115.

Enomoto, E. K. (1997). Negotiating the ethics of care and justice. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 33,* 351–370.

Erickson, W. (2001). *The report of Governor Bill Owens' Columbine Review Commission.* (2001, May). Retrieved April 15, 2002, from http://www.state.co.us/columbine.

Etzioni, A. (1996). *The new golden rule: Community and morality in a democratic society.* New York: Basic Books.

Farmer, D. J. (1998). Against myopia: Public administration and ethics. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 4*(1), 33–38.

Feinberg, W. (1990). The moral responsibility of public school. In J. I. Goodlad, R. Soder, & K. A. Sirotnik (Eds.), *The moral dimensions of teaching* (pp. 155–187). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fenstermacher, G. D. (1990). Some moral considerations on teaching as a profession. In J. I. Goodlad, R. Soder, & K. A. Sirotnik (Eds.), *The moral dimensions of teaching* (pp. 130–151). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fisch, L. (Ed.). (1996). *Ethical dimensions of college and university teaching: Understanding and honoring the special relationship between teachers and students.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fox, C. F. (2001). The use of philosophy in administrative ethics. In T. L. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed.) (pp. 105–130). New York: Dekker.

Frankena, W. K. (1973). *Ethics.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Frederickson, H. G. (1994). Research and knowledge in administrative ethics. In T. L. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (pp. 31–47). New York: Dekker.

Freitas, D. J. (1991). Successfully resolving ethical dilemmas in the school. *NASSP Bulletin,*

    75(531), 86–90.

Frost, S. E. (1962). *Basic teachings of the great philosophers.* New York: Doubleday.

Fullan, M. (1997). *What's worth fighting for in the principalship.* New York: Harper & Row.

Fullan, M. (1999). *Change forces: The sequel.* London: Falmer Press.

Gaarder, J. (1994). Sophie's world: A novel about the history of philosophy (Paulette Moller,

    Trans.). New York: Berkley. (Original work published 1991.)

Gardiner, J. J. (1998). Quiet presence: The holy ground of leadership. In L. C. Spears (Ed.),

    Insights on leadership (pp. 116–125). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Garmston, R. J., & Wellman, B. M. (1997). Developing adaptive schools in a quantum

    universe. In A. L. Costa & R. M. Liebmann (Eds.), *The process-centered school:*

    sustaining a renaissance community (pp. 101–118.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

    Press.

Geirsson, H., & Holmgren, M. (Eds.). (2000). *Ethical theory: A concise anthology.* Ontario,

    Canada: Broadview Press.

Gilligan, C. (1977). In a different voice: Women's conceptions of self and of morality.

    Harvard Educational Review, 47, 481–517.

Gilligan, C. (1981). Moral development. In A. W. Chickering (Ed.), *The modern American*

    college (pp. 139–157). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development.*

    Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gonzales, S. A. (1999). Superintendency ethics: Definitions, applications, and patterns.

    Dissertation Abstracts International 60(12), 4262A. (UMI 9956837)

Goodlad, J. I., Soder, R., & Sirotnik, K. A. (Eds.). (1990). *The moral dimensions of teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gortner, H. F. (2001). Values and ethics. In T. L. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed.) (pp. 509–528). New York: Dekker.

Green, R. L. (2001). *Practicing the art of leadership: A problem-based approach to implementing the ISLLC standards*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Greenfield, W. D. (1991, April). *Rationale and methods to articulate ethics and administrator training*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED332379)

Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. New York: Paulist Press.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In E. G. Guba & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 195–220). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Habermas, J. (1990). *Moral consciousness and communicative action* (C. Lenhardt & S. W. Nicholsen, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Harden, G. D. (1988). The principal's ethical responsibility and the parent's right to know. *NASSP Bulletin, 72*(512), 12–14.

Hare, R. M. (1997). *Sorting out ethics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Harris, S., Arnold, M., Carr, C., Lowery, S., & Worsham, S. (2001, November). *Why leaders leave: A study of motivating and inhibiting factors of the principalship in three states*.

Paper presented at the University Council of Educational Administrators, Cincinnati, OH.

Hart, A. W. (1995). Women ascending to leadership: The organizational socialization of principals. In P. A. Schmuck (Ed.), *Women leading in education* (pp. 105–124). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Hatch, T. (2002). When improvement programs collide. *Phi Delta Kappan, 83*(8), 626–639.

Held, V. (Ed.). (1995). *Justice and care: Essential reading in feminist ethics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Heslep, R. D. (1997). The practical value of philosophical thought for the ethical dimension of educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 33*, 67–85.

Hodgkinson, C. (1991). *Educational leadership: The moral art*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Hopkins-Thompson, P. A. (2000). Colleagues helping colleagues: Mentoring and coaching. *NASSP Bulletin, 84*(617), 29–36.

Hostetler, K. D. (1997). *Ethical judgment in teaching*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Hufstedler, S. M. (2002). The once and future K–12. *Phi Delta Kappan, 83*, 684–689.

Hummel, R. P. (1997). On the uselessness of theory to practitioners. *Journal of Public Administration Education, 3*, 375–382.

Iltis, A. S. (2002, February). *Business ethics and health care ethics: The emergence of organizational ethics*. Paper presented at the Association for Practical and Applied Ethics, Cincinnati, OH.

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium. (2002). Retrieved January 15, 2002, from

  http://www.ccsso.org/isllc.html.

Jipson, J., & Paley, N. (2000). Because no one gets there alone: Collaboration as co-

  mentoring. *Theory Into Practice, 39*(1), 36–42.

Johnson, O. A. (Ed.). (1994). *Ethics: Selections from classical and contemporary writers* (7th

  ed.). Orlando, FL: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Judge, W. Q. (1999). *The leader's shadow: Exploring and developing executive character.*

  Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kahle, B. (2002). The September 11 Web Archive. Retrieved April 15, 2002, from

  http://www.september11.archive.org.

Kaigler, M. F. (1997). Factors relating to the ethical decision-making of teachers.

  Dissertation Abstracts International 58(08), 2930A. (UMI 9807501)

Kalish, J., & Perry, D. (1992). Setting ethical standards. *The Executive Educator, 14*(2), 24–

  26.

Kant, I. (1959). *Foundations of the metaphysics of morals* (L. W. Beck, Trans.). New York:

  Bobbs-Merrill. (Original work published 1785.)

Kanungo, R. N., & Mendonca, M. (1996). *Ethical dimensions of leadership.* Thousand Oaks,

  CA: Sage.

Katz, M. S., Noddings, N., & Strike, K. A. (Eds.). (1999). *Justice and caring: The search for

  common ground in education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Keefe, J. W., & Jenkins, J. M. (2002). A special section on personalized instruction. *Phi

  Delta Kappan, 83*, 440–448.

Kidder, R. M. (1995). *How good people make tough choices: Resolving the dilemmas of ethical living*. New York: Fireside.

Kimbrough, R. B. (1985). *Ethics: A course of study for educational leaders*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.

Kirby, P. C. (1990, April 16). *The ethical reasoning of school administrators: The principled principal*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED320253)

Klinker, J. L. F. (2000). An analysis of responses to ethical narratives by state principals of the year (Doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University, Ames. 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 61*(10), 3840A.

Knight, K. (Ed.). (1998). *The MacIntyre reader*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press.

Kochan. F. K., & Trimble. S. B. (2000). From mentoring to co-mentoring: Establishing collaborative relationships. *Theory Into Practice, 39*(1), 28–29.

Koehn, D. (1998). *Rethinking feminist ethics: Care, trust and empathy*. New York: Routledge.

Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development*. New York: Harper & Row.

Kohlberg, L., Levine, C. G., & Hewer, A. (1983). *Moral stages: A current formulation and a response to critics*. New York: Karger.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (1993). *Credibility: How leaders gain and lose it, why people demand it*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Krathwohl, D. R., Bloom, B. S., & Masia, B. B. (1969). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals; Handbook*. New York: David McKay Company.

Larsen, L. V. (2000). Hostage to OBE: A case study of a superintendent under stress

(Doctoral Dissertation, Iowa State University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts*

International, 61(07), 2538A.

LeCompte, M. D., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational*

research (2nd ed.). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Letcher, R. A. (1998). Excursis: On teaching doing ethics in public service. *Journal of Public*

Affairs Education, 4(1), 39–44.

Letwin, O. (1987). *Ethics, emotion and the unity of the self.* New York: Croom Helm.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

MacIntyre, A. (1984). *After virtue* (2nd ed.). Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press.

Marshall, C. (2000). The emperor and research on women in school leadership: A response

to Julie Laible's loving epistemology. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 13,* 699–704.

Marshall, C., & Kasten, K. (1994). *The administrative career: A casebook on entry, equity,*

and endurance. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Marshall, G. S. (1997). Theory and generation X. *Journal of Public Administration*

Education, 3, 397–403.

Mattingly, C. (1991). Narrative reflections on practical actions: Two learning experiments in

reflective storytelling. In D. A. Schön (Ed.), *The reflective turn: Case studies in and on*

educational practice (pp. 235–281). New York: Teachers College Press.

Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage.

May, W. F. (1980). Professional ethics: Setting, terrain, and teacher. In D. Callahan & S. Bok

(Eds.), *Ethics teaching in higher education* (pp. 205–244). New York: Plenum Press.

McAdams, R. P. (1998). Who'll run the schools? The coming administrator shortage. *The American School Board Journal, 185*(8), 37–39.

McCay, E. (2001). The learning needs of principals. *Educational Leadership, 58*(8), 75–77.

Mead, J. V. (1993). Three wise monkeys: Teaching ethical content through case studies (Volumes I and II). *Dissertation Abstracts International 54*(10), 3639A. (UMI No. 9406525)

Medvedev, G. (1991). *The truth about Chernobyl.* New York: Basic Books.

Menzel, D. C. (1997). Teaching ethics and values in public administration: Are we making a difference? *Public Administration Review, 57*, 224-230.

Merchant, B., M., & Willis, A. I. (Eds.). (2001). *Multiple and intersecting identities in qualitative research.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Milgram, S. (1974). *Obedience to authority.* New York: Harpers.

Miller, H. T. (1997). Why teaching theory matters. *Journal of Public Administration Education, 3*, 363–373.

Mullen, C. A. (2000). Constructing co-mentoring partnerships: Walkways we must travel. *Theory Into Practice, 39*(1), 4–11.

Nielsen, R. P. (1996). *The politics of ethics: Methods for acting, learning, and sometimes fighting with others in addressing ethics problems in organizational life.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring, a feminine approach to ethics and moral education.* Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (1999). Care, justice, and equity. In M. S. Katz, N. Noddings, & K. A. Strike (Eds.), *Justice and caring: The search for common ground in education* (pp. 7–20). New York: Teachers College Press.

Nolan, R. T. (1982). *Living issues in ethics.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Palmer, P. J. (1998). Leading from within. In L. C. Spears (Ed.), *Insights on leadership* (pp. 197–208). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Payne, S. L., & Charnov, B. H. (1987). *Ethical dilemmas for academic professionals.* Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas.

Perry, W. G. (1981). Cognitive and ethical growth: The making of meaning. In A. W. Chickering (Ed.), *The modern American college.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Peshkin, A. (1982). *The perfect union.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Piaget, J. (1965). *The moral judgment of the child.* New York: Free Press.

Piper, T. R., Gentile, M. C., & Parks, S. D. (1993). *Can ethics be taught? Perspectives, challenges, and approaches at Harvard Business School.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Plant, J. F. (1998). Using codes of ethics in teaching public administration. In J. S. Bowman & D. C. Menzel (Eds.), *Teaching ethics and values in public administration programs: Innovations, strategies, and issues* (pp. 161–178). Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Pops, G. M. (2001). A teleological approach to administrative ethics. In T. L. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed.) (pp. 195–206). New York: Dekker.

Purpel, D. (1989). *The moral and spiritual crisis in education; A curriculum for justice and compassion in education.* New York: Bergin & Gervey.

Randall, D., & Gibson, A. (1990). Methodology in business ethics research: A review and critical assessment. *Journal of Business Ethics, 9,* 457–471.

Rawls, J. A. (1971). *A theory of justice.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rebore, R. W. (2001). *The ethics of educational leadership.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Report of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident. (No. 0-157-336). (1986). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Rest, J. R., & Narvaez, D. (1994). *Moral development in the professions: Psychology and applied ethics.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Rich, J. M. (1984). *Professional ethics in education.* Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Riley, R. W. (2002). Education reform: Through standards and partnerships, 1993–2000. *Phi Delta Kappan, 83,* 700–707.

Rizzo, A. M. (1998). Inventing narratives in ethical reasoning in an administrative ethics course. *Journal of Public Affairs Education, 4,* 1–10.

Robinson, G. M. (1985). *Ethical problems in higher education.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Rodriquez, J. R. (1996). *A review of ethics and educational leadership a philosophical statement.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northern Arizona University.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rudder, C. F. (1991). Ethics and educational administration: Are ethical policies "ethical"? *Educational Theory, 41*(1), 75–88.

Rudder, C. F. (1999). Ethics and educational administration: Are professional policies ethical? In D. E. Fenner (Ed.), *Ethics in education* (pp. 41–66). New York: Garland Publishing.

Russell, T., & Munby, H. (1991). Reframing: The role of experience in developing teachers' professional knowledge. In D. A. Schon (Ed.), *The reflective turn: Case studies in and on educational practice* (pp. 164–187). New York: Teachers College Press.

Schmuck, P. A., & Schmuck, R. A. (1990). On the road. *The American School Board Journal, 177*(7), 30–37.

Schmuck, P. A., & Schmuck, R. A. (1993). Schooling in rural and small-town America. In C. A. Capper (Ed.), *Educational administration in a pluralistic society* (pp. 203–237). Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Schmuck, P. A., & Schubert, J. (1994). Women principals' views on sex equity: Exploring issues of integration and information. In D. M. Dunlap & P. A. Schmuck (Eds.), *Women leading in education* (pp. 274–287). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner.* New York: Basic Books.

Schön, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Schrader, D. E. (1999). Justice and caring: Process in college students' moral reasoning development. In M. S. Katz, N. Noddings, & K. A. Strike (Eds.), *Justice and caring: The search for common ground in education* (pp. 37–55). New York: Teachers College Press.

Schwandt, T. A. (1998). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 221–259). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Scott, G. G. (1998). *Making ethical choices, resolving ethical dilemmas*. St. Paul, MN: Paragon.

Seldin, C. A. (1988). Ethics, evaluation, and the secondary principal. *NASSP Bulletin*, *72*(512), 9–11.

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.

Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R., Roth, G., & Smith, B. (1999). *The dance of change: The challenges of sustaining momentum in learning organizations*. New York: Doubleday.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Shakeshaft, C. (1987). *Women in educational administration*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Sharp, W. L., Walter, J. K., & Sharp, H. M. (1998). *Case studies for school leaders: Implementing the ISLLC Standards*. Lancaster, PA: Technomic.

Sichel, B., A. (1993). Ethics committees and teacher ethics. In K. A. Strike & L. P. Ternasky (Eds.), *Ethics for professionals in education* (pp. 162–175). New York: Teachers College.

Sirotnik, K. A. (1999). Making sense of educational renewal. *Phi Delta Kappan, 80,* 574–575.

Smith, D. C. (1996). The ethics of teaching. In L. Fisch (Ed.), *Ethical dimensions of college and university teaching: Understanding and honoring the special relationship between teachers and students* (pp. 5–14). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Smith, R. W. (1998). Teaching public and private sector ethics: Some fundamental differences and surprising similarities. In J. S. Bowman & D. C. Menzel (Eds.), *Teaching ethics and values in public administration programs: Innovations, strategies, and issues* (pp. 179–200). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Smith, S. J. (1996). Women administrators: Concepts of leadership, power, and ethics. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 57*(05), 1935A. (UMI No. 9630632)

Sola, P. A. (Ed.). (1984). *Ethics, education and administrative decisions*. New York: Peter Lang.

Starratt, R. J. (1991). Building an ethical school: A theory for practice in educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 27*, 185–202.

Steffy, B. E., Wolfe, M. P., Pasch, S. H., & Enz, B. J. (Eds.). (2000). *Life cycle of the career teacher*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Stein, H. (1982). *Ethics (and other liabilities)*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Stevenson, J. (1998). *Complete idiot's guide to philosophy*. New York: Alpha Books.

Strike, K. A. (1999). Justice, caring, and universality: In defense of moral pluralism. In M. S. Katz, N. Noddings, & K. A. Strike (Eds.), *Justice and caring: The search for common ground in education* (pp. 21–36). New York: Teachers College Press.

Strike, K. A., Haller, E. J., & Soltis, J. F. (Eds.). (1988). *The ethics of school administration*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Strike, K. A., & Soltis, J. F. (1988). *The ethics of teaching.* New York: Teachers College

Press.

Strike, K. A., & Temasky, L. P. (Eds.). (1993). *Ethics for professionals in education:*

Perspectives for preparation and practice. New York: Teachers College Press.

Taylor, S. J., & Bogdan, R. (1997). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A*

guidebook and resource (3rd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Thomas, R. M. (1997). *An integrated theory of moral development.* Westport, CT:

Greenwood Press.

Torbert, W. R. (1981). Interpersonal competence. In A. W. Chickering (Ed.), *The modern*

American college (pp. 172-190). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Turiel, E. (1996). Equality and Hierarchy: Conflict in values. In T. Brown (Ed.), *Values and*

knowledge (pp. 75–101). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Uline, C. L. (1995). John Dewey's reflective methods: Implications for educational

administration as moral practice (Doctoral dissertation, The Pennsylvania Sate

University, 1995). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 56*(05), 1619A.

van den Hoonaard, W. C. (1996). *Working with sensitizing concepts: Analytical field*

research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Walker, K. S. (1999). Decision-making and ethics: A study of California superintendents.

Dissertation Abstracts International, 60(09), 3231A. (UMI No. 9944527)

Walker, M. U. (1995). Moral understandings: Alternative "Epistemology" for a feminist

ethics. In V. Held (Ed.), *Justice and care: Essential reading in feminist ethics* (pp. 139–

151). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Walker, M. U. (1998). *Moral understandings: A feminist study in ethics*. New York: Routledge.

Welch, D. (1994). *Conflicting agendas: Personal morality in institutional settings*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.

Weschler, L. F. (1997). Learning about theory through the path of reflective experience. *Journal of Public Administration Education, 3*, 383–389.

Weston, A. (1997). *A practical companion to ethics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weston, A. (2001). *A twenty-first century ethical toolbox*. New York: Oxford University Press.

White, J. E. (2000). *Contemporary moral problems* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Williams, B. (1985). *Ethics and the limits of philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Winkler, E. R., & Coombs, J. R. (Eds.). (1993). *Applied ethics: A reader*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Winter, P. A., Rinehart, J. S., & Muñoz, M. A. (2001, November). *Principal certified personnel: Do they want the job?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Cincinnati, OH.

Wittmer, D. P. (2001). Ethical decision making. In T. L. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed.) (pp. 481–507). New York: Dekker.

Yoder, D. E., & Denhardt, K. G. (2001). Ethics education in public administration and affairs: Preparing graduates for workplace moral dilemmas. In T. L. Cooper (Ed.), *Handbook of administrative ethics* (2nd ed.) (pp. 59–77). New York: Dekker.

Zimbardo, P. (2000). *Prison experiment.* Retrieved March 27, 2002, from http://www.

prisonexp.org.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS