Leadership effects on student achievement and sustained school success

Stephen Jacobson

University at Buffalo-State University of New York, Buffalo, New York, USA

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of leadership on student achievement and sustained school success, especially in challenging, high-poverty schools.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper combines a review of the leadership literature with findings drawn from longitudinal studies of the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP).

Findings – Direction setting, developing people and redesigning the organization were practices common to successful principals in all contexts, including those in challenging, high-poverty schools. How these practices manifested varied in relation to national context and tradition. Distributed teacher leadership and professional self-renewal emerged as processes central to sustaining success, and, in at least one US case, a change in organizational governance was necessary to allow these processes to continue over time.

Originality/value – The paper adds to the literature on leadership effects on student achievement and sustaining school success, especially in challenging high-poverty schools.

Keywords Leadership, Principals, Schools, Students

Paper type Research paper

Introduction and overview

The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of principal leadership on student achievement and sustained school success, especially in challenging, high-poverty schools. It begins with a brief review of several lines of research that examined direct and indirect school effects on student achievement, starting with the 1966 *Coleman Report* through the effective schools and school improvement literatures, and ending with the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP), an ongoing examination of principals who have led successful school improvement initiatives in over a dozen nations. Building upon these earlier lines of research and utilizing Leithwood and Riehl's (2005) claim that direction setting, developing people and redesigning the organization are core practices necessary for school success in any context as its conceptual frame, ISSPP research teams found that these core practices were used in all study sites, but enacted differently depending upon differences in national context. When it came to challenging, high-poverty schools, principals exhibited these core practices but typically began their initiatives by creating safe learning environments and engaging greater parent and community involvement. In one case in the USA, a change in the school's formal governance was necessary to sustain student success over time. Ultimately, passion, persistence and commitment to improving the life chances of impoverished youngsters were the traits common to the successful principals studied.

Review of the literature: influences on student achievement

The 1966 US *Report on Equality of Educational Opportunity* countered long-held beliefs about the factors that most influence student achievement (Coleman *et al.*, 1966). Utilizing a production function approach with student performance on standardized test scores as the outcome measure, the report found that out-of-school factors such as family background, socio-economic status and race explained more of the variation in student performance than in-school variables such as teacher qualifications, expenditures and facilities. Although the effects of these in-school contributions were more limited than formerly assumed, when student achievement was plotted against socio-economic status there emerged small clusters of statistical "outliers", typically inner city elementary schools serving predominantly low socioeconomic African-American students, that performed at higher levels than would have been predicted (Rosenholtz, 1989). Subsequent studies of these sites, which came to be known as the "effective schools" research, offered renewed hope for the potential of in-school effects to overcome the educational disadvantages of poverty.

Effective schools and school improvement research

Contrasting effective schools research with earlier studies of school effects on student learning, particularly leadership effects that focused almost exclusively on skill acquisition, Duke (1987, p. 23) argued that examinations of such skills in the absence of measurable outcomes mean little if administrators are more concerned with control or employer satisfaction than student achievement. "What counts is output. A school leader's effectiveness is based on how well students achieve".

The effective schools research revealed differences in leadership, structure and climate in schools that improved student tests scores as compared to those with declining scores (Brookover and Lezotte, 1979). Principals who led effective schools worked tenaciously to create safe and orderly learning environments; set clear instructional objectives; expect high performance from teachers and students through increased time on task; and develop positive home-school relations (Jacobson and Bezzina, 2008). As a result, "instructional leadership" came to be seen as the linchpin between principal practices and student achievement. Emphasizing the outcomes of principals' actions, as opposed to their pre-existing skills, researchers began analyzing the processes leaders employed to promote school improvement.

Initially, these "school improvement" studies focused on school change, self-evaluation and how teachers engaged in the improvement process, rather than calculating correlates of improved outcomes. Criticized for being conceptually fragmented and offering little that was useful to classroom practice (Reynolds, 1999), these studies nevertheless had a positive impact by highlighting "limitations of externally imposed changes, the importance of focusing on the school as the unit of change, and the need to take the change process seriously" (Hopkins, 2001, p. 29).

In time, a confluence of the effective school and school improvement perspectives brought together the value-added methodology for judging effectiveness with a growing knowledge base about "what works" (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000). Instead of emphasizing the process itself, the focus shifted to whether the improvements were powerful enough to affect pupil outcomes, and recurring themes such as the effects of leadership and leaders' focus on teaching and learning, capacity building and staff development, and parental and community involvement began to emerge.

What is high quality leadership?

Although teacher quality has the greatest influence on student motivation and achievement, the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of their teaching, which subsequently effect student performance (Fullan, 2001; Leithwood *et al.*, 2004; Marzano *et al.*, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2001). Moreover, these indirect effects of high-quality leadership appear to be especially important in schools serving low socio-economic students who at greater risk for academic failure (Scheerens and Bosker, 1997).

But what is high quality leadership? Traditional views of leaders perpetuate individualistic and non-systemic perspectives that reinforce a focus on short-term events and charismatic heroes. The contemporary view is associated with systemic forces, empowerment, transformation, collective learning and community (Senge, 1990). School leadership no longer refers only to officially designated positions; instead it has become a collective construct that can be distributed among teachers and support staff (Gronn and Hamilton, 2004; Spillane *et al.*, 2007) through the cultivation of relationships and networks (Fullan, 2001). Silns and Mulford (2002) argue that if schools are to become better at improving student learning they must nurture opportunities for teachers to innovate, develop and learn. In other words, student outcomes are more likely to improve when leadership is distributed throughout the school and its community and when teachers are empowered in areas they believe are important (Crowther *et al.*, 2000). Unfortunately, the urgent often takes priority over the important, which is why so many principals often feel they spend too much time on administration, budget, and other school problems and not enough working with teachers on instructional issues (Southworth, 2003). They regret not having the time to be the "instructional leaders" they believe they are supposed to be. Therefore, to address constraints imposed by time, successful leaders begin to focus on building the capacity of their teachers through the use of staff development, in order to create more favorable conditions for learning.

Capacity building in a school has been defined as "creating the conditions, opportunities and experiences for collaboration and mutual learning" (Harris, 2002: 3), and "the collective competency of the school as an entity to bring about effective change" (Harvey, 2003, p. 21). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) recommend that schools develop a collaborative culture that draws upon the skills and expertise of its members – a culture that differs from the individuality more characteristic of schools heavily dependent on the principal. School leaders can cultivate greater capacity by providing high-quality professional development that allows teachers to engage in collective explorations of diverse approaches to teaching and learning (Frost, 2003; Harris, 2002). Yet, staff development will not have its intended impact if delivered as discrete, unconnected projects (Fullan, 1992) or without ongoing support (Harris, 2002). Authentic teacher involvement in learner-focused school improvement initiatives must be central to this process. For improvement to take place, participants need to be involved and engaged, eventually becoming "communities of practice" (Sergiovanni, 2000) that provide a context for collaboration and shared meaning. Simply put, collegial relations and collective learning are at the very core of building a school's capacity for sustained improvement (Bezzina, 2006).

When focusing specifically on schools located in high-poverty communities, leaders have to contend with issues far more onerous than time constraints. They typically

confront problems related to poor nutrition, high rates of transience, drug use, crime and other by-products of socio-economic disadvantage, as well as community perceptions that the school has little to do with their lives and aspirations (Louis and Miles, 1990). In addition to building the capacity of their staff members, leaders in such schools must also build bridges to their community and form relationships with parents and families. Harris and Chapman (2002) found that schools with solid links to the community are more likely to gain their support and loyalty in difficult times. These links include opportunities for parents to come in to school, to talk to teachers, to use the facilities and to see the school as a resource for both their children and themselves. Hargreaves (1995) describes this as a "cultural relationship" with the parent community founded on principles of openness and collaboration. As we shall see, this was an approach common to many of the more challenging school sites studied in the ISSPP. But before discussing the findings of the ISSPP, we need to consider Leithwood and Riehl' (2005) claims about school leadership, which served as the conceptual framework of the ISSPP and neatly summarizes the literature presented thus far.

Core practices for success

Leithwood and Riehl (2005) reviewed the extant research on school leadership and reached the conclusion that there exists a set of core leadership practices that are necessary, but insufficient, for improved student achievement in all contexts. Specifically, they listed setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organization, which though not rigidly sequential, represent a logical progression of practices by which values and ideas are translated by school leaders into meaningful actions. Direction setting requires leaders to identify and articulate a vision, foster the acceptance of group goals and create high-performance expectations for children and adults. Developing people to meet these expectations requires intellectual stimulation, individual and collective support, and for the leader to provide an appropriate role model. In essence, the practice of developing people this is the building of personal and collective capacity necessary to create and sustain the "communities of practice" prescribed in the literature. Finally, the educational organization itself must be redesigned to strengthen school cultures, build collaborative processes and remove obstacles to success. In other words, to increase the likelihood of student success, leaders need to create a sense of coordinated purpose within their school, then provide the resources and appropriate motivation to enable the staff to develop the skills necessary for their collective undertaking, while consciously working to remove any barriers that might impede the creation of these collaborative cultures, structures and goals. To get a better sense of the practical application of these core practices across diverse national contexts, we turn next to the work and findings of the ISSPP.

The International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP)

Begun in 2001, the ISSPP organized research teams from seven nations (which has since grown to 15 nations) to create a database of cases that would examine what successful school leaders do to improve student learning across diverse contexts. Principals were selected for the study based on the effective schools premise that results matter and their schools had to show positive student outcome measures during the principal's tenure such as evidence of improved student achievement on

standardized tests, exemplary reputations, and/or other indicators of site-specific success. The research teams then examined the practices and processes employed by the principal to improve student performance. The seven principals examined by the US team worked in schools located in challenging, high-poverty communities and six similar schools were also studied in England and Australia.

Using a common, semi-structured interview protocol developed specifically for the ISSPP, "multiple-perspective" data were collected from interviews with principals, teachers, support staff, parents and students, asking these participants if they believed the principal had played a key role in their school's success and, if so, how?

In essence, the ISSPP connects school effectiveness concerns with student results to school improvement concerns with process, focusing specifically on the core practices of the school's formal leader as enumerated by Leithwood and Riehl, and then expands this inquiry trans-nationally (for more details about the ISSPP, its methods and findings, see Day and Leithwood, 2007).

Initial ISSPP findings
Analyzing the first national reports of the ISSPP, Leithwood (2005, p. 622) noted that the core leadership practices for success were, in fact, evident in all the contexts studied, "but highly adaptable and contingent in their specific enactment". The national research teams in Australia, China, England, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the USA found the core practices being utilized successfully, but differently in relation to national policies and traditions. In the USA cases, direction setting by principals tended to be short-term and explicitly linked to national, state and local demands for greater accountability (Jacobson *et al.*, 2005). A relatively single-minded focus on high-stakes testing enabled the successful principals studied to shape the narrative of direction setting around goals related to student academic mastery, using scores on standardized state tests to leverage heightened expectations for student and faculty performance (Jacobson *et al.*, 2007). In terms of the three core leadership practices, state tests and other accountability data were used to set school goals and improvement plans and monitor progress towards those goals – direction setting; stimulate collaborative dialogue and determine plans for professional development – developing people; and identify obstacles to progress – redesigning the organization (Giles *et al.*, 2007). In contrast, direction setting by Australian principals focused instead on life-long learning rather than just annual achievement gains (Gurr *et al.*, 2005), while the development of democratic values in the service of responsible citizenship was central to direction setting in Norway (Moller *et al.*, 2005), Denmark (Moos *et al.*, 2005) and Sweden (Hoog *et al.*, 2005). Developing people in China took the form of principals helping teachers to self-analyze their practice through the use of model lessons by master teachers (Wong, 2005), while in Australia (Gurr *et al.*, 2005) and Norway (Moller *et al.*, 2005) teachers engaged in collective critical reflection and debate about good practice were more often the case. Although expectations of good practice tended to be contextually sensitive, helping others reach that goal as a function of professional development was common to all the national sites.

As suggested by the literature reviewed (Sergiovanni, 2000; Bezzina, 2006), we found that across sites organizational redesign in successful schools often revealed itself as cultures of collaboration, cultures that included various forms of distributed leadership (DL), with teachers assuming formal and informal leadership

responsibilities. DL has gained considerable currency of late, and while some view it as a deliberate element of organizational redesign having potential for school improvement (Gronn and Hamilton, 2004; Firestone and Martinez, 2007, Leithwood *et al.*, 2007; Mayrowitz *et al.*, 2007), others have reservations about who should be included and when, depending upon their expertise and whether they have their own agenda that counters the organization's (Timperley, 2005). Still others see DL as an alternative perspective to common notions of leadership/followership that explains regular interactions between formal leaders and their subordinates (Spillane *et al.*, 2007). Since ISSPP examined the work of principals, the distribution of leadership functions to others was not an initial focus of the project, but when it emerged repeatedly we began to consider DL an aspect of organizational redesign that requires further examination, especially in terms of how it may influence student outcomes.

Successful leadership in challenging, high-poverty schools
Since the ISSPP began, the US team has focused on successful leadership in schools serving high poverty communities. Of the 65 original ISSPP cases, 13 (20 percent) were such sites, including six schools in Australia and England as well as seven in the USA. A common commitment was noted among the principals studied across these sites, specifically a passion for the socially just treatment and equitable education of the children and communities they served (Ylimaki *et al.*, 2007). These principals all desired to make a difference in the lives of children and in many cases had knowingly assumed leadership of a school with high needs and few resources. They relished the challenge and believed they could be successful. Their enthusiasm was accompanied by persistence and optimism, and in these high accountability contexts, they leveraged external demands typically related to measurable student performance indicators to overcome resistance, particularly among teachers who questioned the academic abilities of students living in poverty. These principals truly believed in the ability of all students, so they focused on improving the learning environment, applied pressure early in the process to encourage adherence, and then used whatever resources they could generate to engage teachers in professional dialogue and development. They also worked hard to involve parents and other community members in school activities and decision-making. Reconnecting the school to its community was absolutely central to their school improvement efforts (Jacobson *et al.*, 2005, Ylimaki *et al.*, 2007). But first, they recognized that improving the learning environment, especially in terms of creating a physically safe and nurturing space for both children and adults, was an absolute prerequisite for leading a successful school improvement initiative in a challenging school. Teachers and parents at the US study sites expressed concerns about their own physical safety and that of their students and children before the principal arrived. In response to these concerns, one of the very first things principals did was to physically secure the building. This included screening visitors, limiting access to the school and to classrooms, and reducing disruptions to instruction. These initiatives were coupled with efforts to make the school more inviting to children and adults alike. "In essence, while doors were being locked, the school was actually more open than in the past, so long as your purpose in coming to school passed the aforementioned test of being in the interest of children". (Jacobson *et al.*, 2005a, p. 33)

From the ISSPP cases in Australia, England and the USA it is reasonable to suggest that leading a school in a challenging, high-poverty community is not for the faint of

heart. It takes courage and persistence, in addition to the core leadership practices, to successfully lead school improvement initiatives in schools such as these (Ylimaki *et al.*, 2007).

Collectively, the initial ISSPP cases reveal that leadership for student success in all schools, especially those in challenging, high-poverty communities, is a dynamic, ongoing process. This suggests that one- to two-year examinations of what has transpired in a school are insufficient to truly understand leadership effects over time, especially as we come to understand that school improvement cannot be dependent upon one person.

ISSPP teams realized the need for longitudinal studies to determine if and how school success can be sustained. To that end, ISSPP teams decided to return to a few of the original study sites five years after their first visits to see what had transpired during the intervening period. The national teams could revisit schools or principals selected on the basis of the following possible scenarios:

(1) the principal had remained in place and the school showed continued, measurable improvement;

(2) the principal was no longer at the school, so the team examined what had occurred since s/he left; and/or

(3) the principal had moved to another school, so the team examined whether s/he had begun another successful school improvement initiative at the new site (for details about these studies, see Johansson and Moos, 2009).

Based on the first scenario, the US team returned to one site where the principal had remained, but in order to sustain the achievement gains of her students she had to reorganize the school's governance structure (Jacobson *et al.*, 2009).

Sustaining school success
Of the original seven principals studied and reported by Jacobson *et al.* (2005), five years later, four had retired, one had moved to central office, two were still at the same school, but only one had managed to sustain her school's success. Under her leadership, her school had experienced a remarkable turnaround in student performance as revealed in our 2002-2003 data (Jacobson *et al.*, 2005). But sustaining success over the long term is different to building a school's capacity to meet short-term organizational goals. Sustainability requires the capacity of key school stakeholders to self-renew (Giles and Hargreaves, 2006), and a self-renewing orientation is dependent upon both the conscious creation of supportive organizational conditions – structure, shared commitment and collaborative activity, knowledge and skills, leadership, feedback and accountability (Marks and Louis, 1999), and the building of networks of relationships grounded in mutual support, care, trust and consensus (Giles *et al.*, 2007).

Therefore, using a research protocol only slightly modified from the earlier study, we once again analyzed standardized test scores, school report card data and interviews with school leaders, teachers and parents to determine how these supportive organizational conditions and networks of relationships had evolved over the five years between our visits. We found that the school had remained faithful to the direction originally set by the principal, which involved holding everyone accountable for children learning at mastery levels within a caring and nurturing environment.

Sustaining success required an ongoing effort to support and reward organizational learning through self-renewal and personal and collective professional development. But fidelity to these goals necessitated redesigning the organization by converting from a traditional public school to a district charter school in order to maintain the continued growth of the staff.

When we first visited the school in 2001-2002, it was a traditional public school in New York State's second largest and poorest urban district. Funding and human resource decisions were handled by the district's central office in accordance with the teacher contract. Subsequent to that first visit, a very weak local and state economy led to severe district budgetary constraints that threatened teacher layoffs. Even though the school had gone from being one of the worst to one of the best in the district, under the teacher contract, seniority and not performance would determine who got laid off and how transfers would be determined. "Last hired – first fired" rules applied, and where opportunities arose, veteran teachers from any school in the district could "bump" the school's junior teachers, regardless of how productive those junior teachers might have been. Having seniority rather than performance determine the composition of the school's faculty was an option leadership found problematic in light of investments already made in staff professional development.

Discussions began about how to sustain achievement gains made against the threat of teacher lay-offs and transfers. The only feasible option was to become a conversion charter, wherein the school remains in the same building, keeps its same students and protects its most valuable investment – those committed faculty and staff who want to stay. To complete this transition both the district and the State require a majority of parents vote in support. In this case, the election produced a parent turnout of over 80 percent, with almost 100 percent voting to support the conversion. This overwhelming level of support was based on parents' trust of the school's leadership team, in good measure because of its stability, with the school's principal-assistant principal tandem having worked together for close to a decade, and the principal having been in place since 1994.

Becoming a charter provided the school greater with fiscal autonomy and human resource flexibility. Funding now flows through the district to the school, allowing for far greater discretion over such expenditures as professional development. Seniority "bumping" rights and hiring constraints were no longer an issue. Instead of having to accept whomever the district sent, candidate recruitment and selection was now the school's responsibility and the Principal could hire faculty who truly believed in the school's mission. The only hesitation for some teachers was that the State's Charter School law prohibits them from receiving tenure; instead they operate under renewable, multi-year contracts. Fear of losing tenure led to the departure of many teachers, and since becoming a charter in 2004, almost 67 percent of the school's teachers left, leading to the school's most pressing problem – bringing new teachers up to speed quickly.

Confronted with this problem, the Principal continued to work hard at sustaining high expectations for teaching and learning and engaged her committed veterans in helping bring new teachers on board quickly. Sustaining school improvements depended on the self-renewal of the teaching force through careful selection and hiring, supportive socialization and ongoing professional development offered by these veteran colleagues. Teachers acknowledged the pressure of sustaining the success of

the program, but they also felt empowered by their new, informal leadership roles. Faculty conversations focused on the "craft" of teaching and improvements in student learning, and though there was an initial leveling off of student performance, achievement scores are once again exceeding those in other district schools.

When we first reported on the school, we documented the remarkable turnaround of a once failing, high-poverty urban school that coincided with arrival of an exemplary principal. At that time, questions remained as to whether the school could sustain its success. Based upon this second analysis, it is clear that it has and that the principal is still the central figure in maintaining the school's direction. But a significant organizational redesign was required to allay concerns about continued long-term success, even beyond the Principal's eventual retirement. Structures for staff self-renewal are now in place that has created a culture of on-site collegial professional development and collaborative learning through leadership distributed to the teachers themselves.

Conclusions and recommendations for future research
The ISSPP findings support the existence of essential core leadership practices of direction setting, developing people and redesigning the organization as necessary for improved student achievement but more importantly they reveal that these practices are best realized in ways that are culturally sensitive. Moreover, the ISSPP findings support the idea that, in addition to the core leadership practices, improving the learning environment is a necessary prerequisite for successful school initiatives in challenging, high poverty environments. This was an absolute necessity in the schools studied by the U.S. team, where students and teachers had legitimate concerns about their physical safety. Finally, in at least one case, a significant organization redesign was required in order to promote and maintain a culture of collaborative learning through teacher leadership necessary to sustain student success over time.

The review of the literature and findings from the ISSPP indicate that researchers and policymakers have a fairly good idea about "what works" for leaders as they work to improve student achievement in their schools. But this knowledge base needs to be further informed by rich descriptions of cultural expectations and the national and local policies in which these practices will be embedded. Expanding both the number and type of national contexts studied, something the ISSPP has already begun addressing, should help to fill existing gaps in what we know about how leadership effects student achievement across diverse national contexts. In addition, future research needs to further tease out the individual and combined influences of key classroom and school factors such as time on task, quality of instruction, the curricular and instructional climate, developing a safe and orderly climate, school culture, and teacher commitment – to name just a few – and how these factors are themselves influenced directly and indirectly by school leadership and national and local context.

Prior research, as far back as the Coleman Report (Coleman *et al.*, 1966), and evidence from the ISSPP cases also suggest that certain demographic and personal characteristics, such as student background factors socio-economic status, wealth, prior achievement and family educational culture; or organizational characteristics such as governance (e.g. public, private), location (e.g. rural, suburban, urban), size (in terms of numbers of students and faculty) and level of instruction (elementary, middle, secondary), and even the dispositions of school leaders themselves (e.g. passion,

persistence and a commitment to social justice) may affect a school's success in improving student achievement, but yet there remains insufficient evidence at this time to feel confident about making strong claims with regard to these factors.

Some obvious questions worthy of further exploration include:

- What happens to schools after a successful leader leaves?
- How can distributed leadership and organizational learning sustain improvement over time?
- Can effective leaders bring their templates for success to subsequent schools?
- Can leadership succession planning help schools sustain improvement initiatives?

References

Bezzina, C. (2006), "'The road less traveled': professional communities in secondary schools", *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 45 No. 2, pp. 159-67.

Brookover, W. and Lezotte, L. (1979), *Changes in School Characteristics Coincident with Changes in Student Achievement*, Institute for Research on Teaching, East Lansing, MI.

Coleman, J., Campbell, E., Hobson, C., McPartland, J., Mood, A., Weinfeld, F. and York, R. (1966), *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC.

Crowther, F., Hann, L., McMaster, J. and Ferguson, M. (2000), "Leadership for successful school revitalization: lessons from recent Australian research", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of AERA, New Orleans, LA.

Day, C. and Leithwood, K. (Eds) (2007), *Successful Principal Leadership in Times of Change: An International Perspective*, Springer, Dordrecht.

Duke, D. (1987), *School Leadership and Instructional Improvement*, Random House, New York, NY.

Firestone, W. and Martinez, C. (2007), "Districts, teacher leaders, and distributed leadership: changing instructional practice", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 3-35.

Frost, D. (2003), "Teacher leadership: towards a leadership agenda", paper presented at the Symposium "Leadership for Learning: the Cambridge Network", 16th International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Sydney.

Fullan, M. (1992), *Successful School Improvement – The Implementation Perspective and Beyond*, Open University Press, Buckingham.

Fullan, M. (2001), *Leading in a Culture of Change*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Fullan, M. and Hargreaves, A. (1996), *What's Worth Fighting for in Your School?*, Teachers College Press, New York, NY.

Giles, C. and Hargreaves, A. (2006), "The sustainability of innovative schools as learning organizations and professional learning communities during standardized reform", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 124-56.

Giles, C., Jacobson, S., Johnson, L. and Ylimaki, R. (2007), "Against the odds: successful principals in challenging US schools", in Day, C. and Leithwood, K. (Eds), *Successful Principal Leadership in Times of Change: An International Perspective*, Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 155-68.

Gronn, P. and Hamilton, A. (2004), "A bit more life in the leadership: co-principalship as distributed leadership practice", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 3 No. 1, pp. 3-35.

Gurr, D., Drysdale, L. and Mulford, B. (2005), "Successful principal leadership: Australian case studies", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 539-51.

Hargreaves, A. (1995), "Rethinking educational change", invited Keynote Address to the ACEA International Conference, Sydney, July.

Harris, A. (2002), *School Improvement – What's in it for Schools?*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Harris, A. and Chapman, C. (2002), *Effective Leadership in Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances*, National College for School Leadership, London.

Harvey, S. (2003), "Looking to the future", *Ldr*, Vol. 1 No. 7, pp. 21-3.

Hoog, J., Johansson, O. and Olofsson, A. (2005), "Successful principalship: the Swedish case", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 595-606.

Hopkins, D. (2001), *School Improvement for Real*, Falmer Press, London.

Jacobson, S. and Bezzina, C. (2008), "The effects of leadership on student academic/affective achievement", in Crow, G., Lumby, J. and Pashiardis, P. (Eds), *The International Handbook on the Preparation and Development of School Leaders*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 80-102.

Jacobson, S., Johnson, L., Giles, C. and Ylimaki, R. (2005), "Successful leadership in US schools: enabling principles, enabling schools", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 607-18.

Jacobson, S., Johnson, L., Ylimaki, R. and Giles, C. (2009), "Sustaining school success: a case for governance change", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 47 No. 6, pp. 753-64.

Jacobson, S., Brooks, S., Giles, C., Johnson, L. and Ylimaki, R. (2007), "Successful leadership in three high poverty urban elementary schools", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 6 No. 4, pp. 1-27.

Johansson, O. and Moos, L. (2009), "Guest editorial: Sustaining successful school leadership", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 47 No. 6.

Leithwood, K. (2005), "Understanding successful principal leadership: progress on a broken front", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 619-29.

Leithwood, K. and Riehl, C. (2005), "What do we already know about educational leadership?", in Firestone, W. and Riehl, C. (Eds), *A New Agenda for Research in Educational Leadership*, Teachers College Press, New York, NY, pp. 12-27.

Leithwood, K., Seashore Louis, K., Anderson, S. and Wahlstrom, K. (2004), "How leadership influences student learning", Learning from Leadership Project, University of Minnesota and University of Toronto, commissioned by The Wallace Foundation, New York, NY.

Leithwood, K., Mascall, B., Strauss, T., Sacks, R., Memon, N. and Yashkina, A. (2007), "Distributing leadership to make schools smarter: taking the ego out of the system", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 37-67.

Louis, K. and Miles, M. (1990), *Improving the Urban High School: What Works and Why*, Teachers College Press, New York, NY.

Marks, H. and Louis, K. (1999), "Teacher empowerment and the capacity for organizational learning", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Vol. 35 No. 5, pp. 707-50.

Marzano, R.J., Waters, T. and McNulty, B.A. (2005), *School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA.

Mayrowitz, D., Murphy, J., Seashore Louis, K. and Smylie, M. (2007), "Distributed leadership as work redesign: retrofiting the job characteristics model", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 69-101.

Moller, J., Eggen, A., Fuglestad, O., Langfeldt, G., Presthus, A., Skrovset, S., Stjernstrom, E. and Vedoy, G. (2005), "Successful school leadership: the Norwegian case", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 584-94.

Moos, L., Kresjsler, J., Koford, K. and Jensen, B. (2005), "Successful school principalship in Danish schools", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 563-72.

Reynolds, D. (1999), "School effectiveness, school improvement and contemporary educational policies", in Demaine, J. (Ed.), *Contemporary Educational Policy and Politics*, Macmillan, London.

Rosenholtz, S. (1989), *Teachers' Workplace: The Social Organization of Schools*, Longman, White Plains, NY.

Scheerens, J. and Bosker, R. (1997), *The Foundations of Educational Effectiveness*, Elsevier, New York, NY.

Senge, P. (1990), *The Fifth Discipline*, Doubleday, New York, NY.

Sergiovanni, T. (2000), *The Lifeworld of Leadership*, Jossey-Bass, London.

Sergiovanni, T. (2001), *Leadership: What's in it for Schools?*, Routledge Falmer, London.

Silns, H. and Mulford, B. (2002), *Leadership and School Results: Second International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration*, Kluwer Academic Press, Dordrecht.

Southworth, G. (2003), "Balancing act – the importance of learning-centred leadership", *Ldr*, Vol. 1 No. 6, pp. 13-17.

Spillane, J., Camburn, E. and Pareja, A. (2007), "Taking a distributed perspective to the school principal's workday", *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 103-25.

Teddlie, C. and Reynolds, D. (Eds) (2000), *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research*, Falmer Press, London.

Timperley, H. (2005), "Distributed leadership: developing theory from practice", *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 37 No. 6, pp. 395-420.

Wong, K. (2005), "Conditions and practices of successful principalship in Shanghai", *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 552-62.

Ylimaki, R., Jacobson, S. and Drysdale, L. (2007), "Making a difference in challenging, high-poverty schools: successful principals in the US, England and Australia", *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp. 361-81.

Corresponding author
Stephen Jacobson can be contacted at: eoakiml@buffalo.edu

الاستشارات

www.man