10-14-2013

Perceptions Of Educational Administration Pre-Service Training By Former Illinois Superintendents Currently Serving As University Professors

Douglas Raymond Kaufman
Illinois State University, dkaufman@d230.org

Recommended Citation

Kaufman, Douglas Raymond, "Perceptions Of Educational Administration Pre-Service Training By Former Illinois Superintendents Currently Serving As University Professors" (2013). *Theses and Dissertations*. 25.
https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/etd/25

PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PRE-SERVICE

TRAINING BY FORMER ILLINOIS SUPERINTENDENTS

CURRENTLY SERVING AS UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

DOUGLAS R. KAUFMAN

PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PRE-SERVICE

TRAINING BY FORMER ILLINOIS SUPERINTENDENTS

CURRENTLY SERVING AS UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

DOUGLAS R. KAUFMAN

DISSERTATION APPROVED:

Date	Dianne C. Gardner, Chair

Date	Wendy G. Troxel

Date	James C. Palmer

Date	Joseph Pacha

PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION PRE-SERVICE

TRAINING BY FORMER ILLINOIS SUPERINTENDENTS

CURRENTLY SERVING AS UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Douglas R. Kaufman

179 pages   December 2009

The 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk* was the start of the latest chapter in the long history and development of the public school superintendent. *A Nation at Risk* brought new pressure and awareness on university programs that train school administrators coupled with suggestions on how to improve their effectiveness. This study describes many of these suggested reforms and investigates their effectiveness and rate of implementation.

This qualitative study describes the experiences and perceptions of pre-service learning from the perspective of individuals who have completed pre-service training, worked as public school superintendents and currently teach in a pre-service program for future superintendents. The opinions of these individuals on pre-service training are unique as they have seen the impact these programs can have from three unique perspectives. Through an interview format, these individuals describe how their pre-service training helped them succeed as a superintendent as well as their frustrations with the process. They also elaborate on how they attempt to prepare future educational leaders with the skills they feel their students need.

This study adds to the knowledge base of pre-service training for the superintendent endorsement by describing the impact these programs have had from the perspective of individuals who have gone through pre-service training, served as superintendents and the program to the student and the professor. Prior research has focused on one or two of these aspects but has never brought all three together. The findings from this study may lead to future research on how to make pre-service experiences more applicable to the real world or help students see the connections between what is being learned and how it will help them in future administrative positions. Other findings suggest a need for better transitions to the superintendent through organized and continued support provided by the university, the school district and other administrators in the field.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without the love and support of several individuals in my life. Although there is not enough room to list everyone who has helped me at various stops along my journey, I would still like to thank a select few

First, I would like to thank my friend and mentor Tom Lahey. As a young administrator you trusted me to handle great responsibility which allowed me to develop confidence early in my career. Your guidance, advice and support have always been appreciated. John Hackett and Lee Harsy. In your own way, each of you has helped me understand myself better and provided different viewpoints on a variety of subjects. Your advice and guidance were instrumental to my development.

I wish to thank my dissertation committee and especially Dr. Gardner for her patience and advice while guiding me through the completion of this work. I would also like to thank Dr. Azinger for launching me on this journey and helping me focus and narrow my topic. This was a very long and difficult journey and I thank you both for your efforts at the beginning and end of the process.

To my sister Barbara who started this journey with me so long ago, this experi-ence allowed me to know you better and to grow closer to you as a friend. I hope you someday resume your efforts toward your Doctorate. To my mother, you have always been my grounding force. You have taught me more about administration from the

i

perspective of a teacher than probably any course I have ever taken. To my father, you are my hero and the pinnacle I hope to reach as a professional and as a human being. Hopefully you can consider this dissertation a fulfillment of your efforts so many years ago.

Last, but certainly not least, my wife and children. You are the heart and soul of my life. Elizabeth, your faith and honesty have kept me in check while encouraging me to continue to work toward my dream. There is not a day that goes by that I do not thank the good Lord for "sending" me to Southern Illinois where I was lucky enough to find you. Madison, you are the shining light in my life. I know you will go as far as your dreams will take you. Just think that I started my first "official" class only two days before you were born. Grant, you are the essence of my hope for the future. Always realize that with hard work and effort, you can achieve your goals in life and know that God is always with you when you have faith and believe.

To anyone I may have left out, thank you for your support along the way.   You will never know how the simple question "have you got that doctorate yet?" kept me moving forward.

Thank you.

D. R. K.

CONTENTS

iii

TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The changing makeup of American schools and the increasing demands set upon school administrators have resulted in greater scrutiny of university programs that prepare future school leaders. Studies into the effectiveness of superintendent preparation programs have often questioned the methods used in training and the program's ability to identify and rectify any deficiencies. This study looks at superintendent preparation programs in an attempt to identify specific tensions and describe the differences that exist in how those programs prepare future superintendents.

American society is constantly evolving. Schools, to be effective, must adapt with society to meet the changing needs of their students. As educational leaders for school districts, superintendents must be prepared to meet these challenges and forge a new identity for those school districts. They must be able to meet the educational needs of all students and have core values based on "inclusion, education for democracy and a constructionist view of knowledge" (Murphy, 1992, p. 222). The question then becomes, have we made these changes? Has the curriculum been changed to interlace theory with practical applications? According to Mulkeen, Cambron-McCabe, and Anderson (1994), despite the need to change the way in which our educational leaders are trained, "administrators continue to be trained, not to challenge the status quo, but to maintain it, not to reconceptualize schools, but to reproduce them" (p. 252). Researchers have

1

pointed out many of the new challenges for educational leaders.

> Minority enrollment in America's schools is rising, as is the proportion of less advantaged youths. There is a rapid increase in the number of students whose primary language is other than English. The traditional two-parent family, with one parent employed and the other at home to care for the children, has become an anomaly. (Murphy, 1992, p. 122)

Wilson (1993) points out "many of our children bring to school complex problems that are not essentially educational but that directly affect their ability to find success in school. Language, culture, health, poverty, and abuse are issues that must be addressed" (p. 221).

The role of the superintendent has changed dramatically over the past few years. "Immense new social and economic challenges have been added to the leadership agenda. The fabric of American society is being rewoven in some places and unraveling in others, resulting in changes that promise to have a significant impact on schooling" (Murphy, 1992, p. 122). One problem is that the way we have prepared our educational leaders in the past may not be sufficient to meet the needs of our children today or in the 21st century. It is important to examine the different aspects of preparation programs and decide what changes need to be made.

Wilson's (1993) view is very similar to Murphy in that our educational system is designed for the traditional white, middle-class two-parent household families. However, that no longer describes the make-up of many of the schools today. "We must change not only how we prepare leaders for our Nation's schools, but also why (p. 234). Factors of globalization are and will continue to affect schools in the United States. Immigrant children are the fastest growing sector of children in the United States (Suárez-Orozco, 2003). This in turn is having an obvious affect on schools and education. What is still

unclear is how this growth will affect school needs. For instance there is some evidence that many of the new immigrants are moving up the socioeconomic ladder quicker than previous immigrant group before them. However, other new immigrants continue to hover near the economic bottom of society. How will these factors affect school needs and what skills do educational leaders have to create effective strategies to meet these issues?

The role of the superintendent has shifted from instructional leadership and helping teachers to teach better to one that responds to outside pressure and political influences from government regulation, financial issues and student accountability from legislation such as NCLB (Bredeson, 2007). Hurley (2001) points out that the number of students being serviced in special education programming has increased dramatically, accounting for an increasingly larger percentage of the school population, and the new regulations governing these students require more administrative time and effort to complete. Other policies and statutes that have changed the face of public education in the past 30 years include the enactment of Title IX and other legislation that has increased administrative workload as well. The past few years have also seen the increase in school safety reforms with requirements to develop new school security policies. This is especially true after several highly publicized school shootings in recent years and with increased fears of domestic terrorism since the attacks on September 11, 2001.

Although each of these three areas has great merit and helps to improve the lives of millions of children, it is clear that they have also changed the face of school administration by adding more responsibility and pressure on those in leadership positions. As evidence of this, Bredeson (2007), who compared results of questionnaires and inter-

views administered in 1994 and again in 2003, found that the work of superintendent has increased dramatically to the point of work overload that can hamper the effectiveness of the leader in this position. He also points out that superintendents often complain that with the increasing number of mandates, there is too much that needs to done and not enough time to do it. The time and energy used by superintendents has already increased so much in the past few years that it cannot continue to expand as it has. There is already a discrepancy in what superintendents say is important for them to work on and what they actually spend their time doing. Superintendents are interested in and want to spend time on curriculum and instruction but often cannot find adequate amounts of time to devote to these areas. Superintendents, instead, have shifted large portions of their time to external accountability issues dealing with student achievement data and state test scores.

In order to function effectively in this ever-changing environment, schools need strong educational leaders who are able to act as change agents. By creating a sense of urgency based on a strong vision and commitment, they will be able to communicate their ideas to their constituents in order to get them on board with the initiatives. When data analysis alone is used to describe a need, it usually is not sufficient to stir people into action because it often fails to inspire or evoke deeper emotions. Educational leaders need to help others see and feel the reasons for the reforms to help break down roadblocks to change (Kotter, 2002). However, Bredeson (2007), points out that external policy initiatives and a superintendent's personal and professional interests can be used by schools to predict how a perspective candidate may respond in certain situations, and the external policy initiatives centered on student accountability can also be used to help legitimize the superintendent's views in the area of curriculum, instruction and

assessment. University preparation programs for school administrators can be part of the solution to school needs. With some reform implementations, they have the power to train future administrators on how to lead modern schools into the next century and to meet the needs of their students (Murphy, 1992).

Role of Graduate Schools in Professional Education

Elementary and high schools have changed dramatically in the last century. The one room schoolhouse has been replaced by much larger and more complex institutions. To address these changes, bureaucratic structures were added within schools to accommodate the growing size and specific needs of the education system along with specialty positions such as school counselors, librarians, and administrators. For example, the head teacher evolved into the school principal as the amount of responsibility attached to the position grew. This new supervisory position required special knowledge in areas such as evaluation and scientific management so the person holding the position could properly instruct teachers on how to perform and then to supervise them (Clifford, 1988). This led to a wider assortment of training needs and opportunities. Universities created masters degree programs in several different areas to meet the needs of their constituents. The requirements to receive these awards became more stringent due to the changing needs of the schools (Clifford, 1988).

As educational systems continued to grow and become more complex, educational leaders looked for advanced training and degrees that would provide even more specific training in education. In the early 1920s Harvard introduced the first doctoral-level degree for practicing educators in the United Sates, the Ed.D. or Doctorate of Education (Westmeyer, 1985, Scott, 2004). The Ed.D. differed from the more traditional

Ph.D. in that it was intended for professions already working in the field who were looking for higher advancement by gaining the required advanced qualifications (Scott, 2004). The Ed.D. was designed and intended to train participants "how" to do a particular job instead advancing the production of knowledge within the profession. Ed.D. candidates tend not to become research experts and their programs generally include more coursework and periods of internship and/or practice as well as shorter dissertations than a typical Ph.D. candidate (Scott, 2004). Although a Ph.D. or an Ed.D. is not legally required to obtain Superintendent Certification in the State of Illinois, many districts expect candidates to have one or the other before considering them for an open position. As a result, these programs are very popular with prospective superintendent candidates.

As was evident in this short review, the educational system we have today is vastly different in terms of membership, reasons for attending, size and purpose than those started, in some cases, prior to the birth of our nation. Many of these changes have occurred as a reaction to outside events, perceived needs and/or desired outcomes. Understanding the progression of change in these institutions over time can help plan future courses of action. As for this study, it will be important to realize the progression of events that shaped the current system so as to better comprehend their effects on participants in the study.

Statement of the Problem

University graduate schools have faced the same perennial challenge for well over 100 years. How do faculties in professional programs balance the need for scholarship and service to the field? According to Herbst (2007), graduate school professors struggle with their determination of what the appropriate relationship should be between theory

and practice and how they should go about bringing that to the learner. Early American universities were originally founded as places for dissemination of religious philosophy and to gain "gentlemanly" knowledge (Westmeyer, 1985). However, this started to change in the mid to late 1800s as universities began to shift their focus to professional training. "A university's reputation for academic excellence assured the public of the competence of its professional graduates" (Herbst, 2007, p. 415). However, that competence was based on their scholarly approach. Now they have added pressure from practicing professionals seeking a stronger commitment to practice and real life application. Many universities have elected to address this challenge by hiring a balance of academicians and practitioners in the hopes that students will be exposed to both at an appropriate level. These efforts, while laudable, do not go far enough, according to Herbst, to address the adequacy of underlying curriculum as the bridge between theory and practice. The problem with practice-based programs is that their purpose is to create competency for the existing system, not for what the system should be. This would have to include looking at whole curricula in order to ensure program coherence. Without the curricular piece, program faculty cannot be sure that the students are getting the learning opportunities they need in order to meet standards. This study narrows the focus of the broader discussion to 11 former superintendents now serving as college professors of educational administration in an attempt to assess their viewpoints of their own training to become a superintendent, to understand how they are working to improve the next generation of school administrators, and analyzing their place within the university culture.

Background of the Study

In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education published a report entitled *A Nation at Risk*. In this report American schools and educators were criticized for a lack of student performance. As a result, schools felt pressure from the public, media, and politicians to improve (Glass, 2000). *A Nation at Risk* is often cited as the origin of current reform efforts. In one of the most dramatic texts that helped polarize the sentiment of the report against schools was the following declaration:

> If an unfriendly power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament. (p. 5)

A Nation at Risk was a major reality check for school administrators and universities. In many ways, it was the beginning of the erosion of trust that schools had enjoyed with the public since the last reform wave occurred in response to "Sputnik" in the late 1950s. In addition to academics, *A Nation at Risk* focused on the lack of safety and inequality in our nation's schools and called on educational leaders to correct these problems.

A Nation at Risk also opened the door for discussions on how universities attempt to meet the needs of educational practitioners and what the fundamental needs of these practitioners are. Universities would likely see themselves as great institutions of research. However, many students are looking for universities to provide them with insight into what strategies and techniques will help them be successful in the field. Tension exists between the university's need to develop and disseminate theory, and the

practitioners' perceived need for training that would prove beneficial to them, at least initially, in their future careers. What is the role of research in bridging the gap between theory and practice? Also at issue is the proper place for and actual amount of training that should be left for on-the-job experience as well as the place for ongoing training by universities, professional organizations, and states. This need to bridge the gap between theoretical research and practical experiences will play a major role in this study.

In the aftermath of *A Nation at Risk,* several organizations and individuals attempted to find reasons for the perceived shortcomings in America's schools and solutions to close these gaps. One of the most influential of these studies, *Improving the Preparation of School Administrators,* was published in 1989 by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). This report was very critical of educational administrator training programs and provided recommendations for improving the quality of these programs. The report called for nine major changes to the typical preparation programs for educational administration. Although it is not without its critics, one thing is clear: this report became the backbone for much of the research in this area over the last 20 years and provided a national focus toward educational evaluation programs.

A second major development in the effort to improve education administration programs was the emergence of standards. The standards movement developed partly in response to the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, and partly out of a desire to hold educators accountable for their performance. The first major set of standards, published in 1993 by the American Association of School Administrators, attempted to define the skills necessary to be a successful superintendent. These standards were followed shortly

thereafter by the more widely utilized standards from the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC).

In both cases, standards were meant to provide a framework for school leadership based on what was determined to be qualities necessary for successful school leaders (Interstate, 1996). These standards were designed to complement the NPBEA recommendations by detailing areas of knowledge, disposition, and performances to help guide preparation programs. When hiring superintendents, school districts could use these competencies to select their next educational leader.

There have been large amounts of research to determine if and how universities have adapted their programs to meet both the NPBEA and/or ISLLC standards and/or the resulting effects of these specific trends or programs. In 2005 Arthur Levine presented a policy paper in which he was critical of the improvements universities had made in the previous 15 years. His wide-ranging criticism included poor curriculum, low admission standards, weak faculty, inadequate clinical instruction, inappropriate degrees and poor research. He also included suggestions for improvement similar to those stated by the NPBEA, including a clear purpose for their program that is driven by the needs of today's educational leaders and a rigorous curriculum that includes both theory and practical integrated experiences.

Several researchers have traced the cause and effect of the recommendations and standards on educational administrative programs or the correlation between programs and future success. However, three researchers have greatly influenced the direction of the research questions used in this study. Murphy (1992, 2001, 2006, 2007) has spent the better part of two decades following up on the changes that have come about as a result

of the above mentioned reform movements. Much of his early work focused on how universities could or should change their practices to meet the suggestions of the NPBEA recommendations. Over time, much of his focus shifted to the specific ways universities have tried to implement changes and the internal and external forces working against these changes. His research has shown some positive progress in the areas of recruitment of students and other areas but much more still needs to be done.

Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994) are also important researchers in this area. They have explored proposed and applied university solutions intended to address the criticism of educational administration preparation programs. Their findings have included major criticism of these solutions, including a lack of consistency between programs and poor enforcement of program quality. One of their major criticisms has been that some universities have attacked the symptoms of the problem instead of the systematic underlying issues. As a result, many reforms have missed their mark. They address what they consider the core issues of current programs and offer suggestions to improve the success such as "a sequence of core experiences addressing theories of learning, curriculum strategies, program evaluation, decision making, and planning as they occur within a collaborative organization" (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe, 1994, p. 23). They would also like to change the way students take courses to ensure that all students receive the proper information in the appropriate sequence so they can see the correlation between topics, research and ideas. Much of the research and findings on how to change the overall university pre-service programs have been focused on proper recruiting strategies for professors and/or the appropriate balance between practitioners and academicians within the program. However, if these programs want to achieve real

change, they need to modify the curriculum taught within the department. Without a holistic, curricular look at the learning experiences of leadership students, no one can be sure what students are learning. The work of curriculum is ongoing work as the conditions in schools are continually changing. It is the critical and ongoing work of programs to study the curriculum in light of what students learn and go on to produce in the realm of educational leadership.

The above researchers represent only a fraction of the time and effort that has gone into studying this phenomenon over the past two decades and a more complete review of the literature is provided later in this report. However, one thing appears to be clear: universities, government agencies, perspective students, public schools and communities have taken notice of this issue, and the landscape of educational preparation programs has changed and will continue to change in an attempt to meet the needs of an ever changing society. The above researchers had a profound impact on the research questions used in this study.

Without the proper background and context as provided by the above institutions and researchers, it would be virtually impossible to study superintendent pre-service training in a coherent manner. Their work toward improving school leadership programs has formed the basis for thinking about this topic and a path for future research. However, where most researchers have concentrated their studies on larger scale analysis of institutional changes, this study was designed to explore and describe an area more individualistic in nature. This study explores how the experiences of specific individuals, many of whom completed their own program prior to the recommendations of the NPBEA being published, were shaped during their educational preparation and how they

have used these experiences to prepare future leaders as college professors. This path had not yet been explored with any depth and was chosen to find a more humanistic or individual interpretation of how our future leaders are being prepared.

Purpose of the Study

Universities struggle in their dual roles of finding a workable balance between providing students with opportunities to think deeply about educational administration and developing specific skills required to successfully "do the job" facing their graduates and to do the job under these difficult, perennially changing circumstances. They see themselves as having a strong responsibility and need to provide students with sound, proven research in a variety of core subjects as well as to provide practical guidance for their students. Without sound preparation and adequate guidance, educational leaders will not be ready to improve educational outcomes for the nation's PreK-12 students.

Scholarship and theory is valuable in helping administrators lead districts, to determine the proper courses of action, and to provide districts with the best opportunity to properly implement ideas or techniques into the district to maximize student results. Research findings provide valuable insight so long as educational leaders are able to interpret these findings appropriately. A good grasp on educational research may help educational leaders avoid spending their time using strategies and ideas that are not effective. On the other hand, many students are looking for help implementing and running the day-to-day operations of the school or help in planning future initiatives.

This study will explore the balance that universities struggle to maintain in their dual role of balancing theory and practice and explore solutions from the individual participants involved. By speaking to former superintendents, currently employed as

university professors of Educational Administration, the goal was to gauge their perceptions of what the proper balance is between theory and practice and what aspects of each are most important to learn in educational administration programs or even how this balance could be achieved. These individuals had lived in both worlds. They had experienced the realities of what a superintendent is expected to know and do on the job to be successful. On the other hand, they understood the importance of research to the overall focus and development of new and useful ideas. They were equally positioned to characterize this struggle, how they dealt with it, and what they thought could be done in preparation programs.

Research Questions

The research questions were designed to elicit responses from former superintendents now serving as educational administration professors on their perceptions of their own preparation to meet the challenges of the superintendency. In addition, the questions allowed the participants the opportunity to discuss their perceptions of how superintendent pre-service programs should change to better meet the needs of the students and/or how they are addressing these perceived weaknesses.

Four questions drove this study:

1. What are the perceptions and beliefs of former superintendents currently serving as professors of educational administration regarding their graduate school preparation? How well do they think/perceive they were prepared to assume the role of superintendent?

2. To what extent, if any, does the tension between theory and practice at the university impact the views of the subjects about superintendent preparation programs?

3. How have the participants attempted to bridge the gap between practice and theory in their classrooms?

4. How do you use practicum experiences to help with the preparation of prospective school superintendents?

Study Design

This descriptive study was designed to elicit the perceptions and beliefs of a small number of former superintendents who were currently employed as university professors of educational administration regarding how they viewed the tensions between theory and practice in educational administration preparation programs at the university where they were currently employed and how they attempted to address these tensions. Participants were contacted initially by mail and subsequently by telephone to determine if they would be willing to participate in the study. Those who gave their consent were interviewed by the researcher and asked a series of semi-structured questions about their personal experiences in identifying and addressing the tensions between theory and practice. The questions were limited to the educational administration preparation program in which they currently worked. Relevant follow-up questions were asked of the participants during the interview. Participants were also allowed to review transcripts of their interviews and had a chance to clarify, correct, or add to their particular answers. This was an important aspect of the study given the small sample size and the in-depth nature of the study. Participants were provided with personal contact information so I could answer their later queries. Specific demographic information pertaining to the individual superintendent and/or his or her university was altered in such a manner as to protect the identity and confidentiality of the participant without altering the importance of the findings.

Type of Study

The study was conducted using a qualitative approach, because such a method allowed the researcher the flexibility to ask for more intimate and lengthy responses than

typically would be possible with a questionnaire or other quantitative research model. Qualitative research also allowed the flexibility to ask necessary follow up questions.

The study asked a small number of individuals to share their perceptions about the demands of the university professor, as well as the demands inherent in being a superintendent and having lived in both worlds attempt to bring them together in practice as professors in departments of educational leadership. This information may help us better understand how and why these universities, in the opinion of the selected individuals, have attempted to bridge any perceived gap and to explain the tensions that exist pertaining to this issue.

According to Strauss (1988), qualitative research is "any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (pp. 10-11). Strauss also states:

> In speaking about qualitative analysis, we are referring not to the quantifying of qualitative data but rather to a nonmathematical process of interpretation, carried out for the purpose of discovering concepts and relationships in raw data and then organizing these into a theoretical explanatory scheme. (p. 11)

Within the qualitative tradition, Janesick (1994) points out that grounded theory is the opposite of quantitative theory. Quantitative research attempts to prove or test a theory; grounded theory, on the other hand, studies a setting and develops theory grounded in the data. In other words, this study did not attempt to prove or disprove a specific hypothesis but rather sought to get at the core of believes of specific individuals in the real world to better understand them. The use of grounded theory was therefore appropriate in this case because this study was an attempt to reflect the reality of the situation for the participants. As Strauss (1998) points out, "grounded theories, because they are drawn

from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action" (p. 12).

Significance of the Study

Educational administration programs for superintendents were created to prepare superintendents for the challenges they will face in the job. This study describes how the educational leadership programs at selected universities attempt to do just that. It also asked participants to describe the challenges inherent in the job and ways to address them. From this personal perspective it was possible to extrapolate how changes in delivery might help meet, to a greater extent, the needs of these participants.

This study obtained demographic and professional information on a select group of former superintendents in an effort to determine how they attempted to bridge the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge for their students. It also allowed these former superintendents to share their views on how they attempted to meld these two aspects into the classroom as well as provide insight into the struggle universities may be having with conveying the importance and need for theory driven learning and how it can be used in the field through practicum based learning.

Limitations of the Study

This study was based on several assumptions. First, the researcher fully antici-pated that each of the respondents would provide truthful and accurate responses to the questions. Second, the researcher believed that the questions asked were pertinent to the stated research problems. Third, it must be understood that it was difficult to account for variations in experiences as superintendents and as university faculty. Finally, the researcher understood that information gleaned from participants in this study was only

applicable to those specific participants personally and could not be assumed to encompass or include the opinions and beliefs of all superintendents in the state or nation. This study was merely intended to be an in-depth description and analysis of how these specific participants used their knowledge of theory and their knowledge of practice to prepare others.

Organization of the Study

In Chapter I, an introduction, background of the study, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, organization of the study and place of self in study were presented. Chapter II, Review of the Literature, is divided into an introduction, history of educational administration preparation programs, recommendations for change, additional criticisms of programs, the emergence of standards, recent changes, and the dual role of the university. Chapter III lays out the methodology used for the study and the reasons for choosing this specific method. This chapter includes the selection process for participants and the interview procedures. Chapter IV contains the findings collected from the participants in the study for each of the questions asked. The qualitative analysis involved an interpretation and organization of data with the intent to discover concepts and relationships. Chapter V provides a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study or actions as a result of the data collected and analyzed.

Place of Self in Research/Conceptual Framework

As a researcher, I am currently enrolled in an educational administration program seeking my doctorate. I have completed all requirements set by the university and state of Illinois for the *Superintendent Endorsement*, currently hold such licensure, and have

completed my final comprehensive examination. I have worked at the high school level for 17 years, mostly in the greater Chicagoland area, as a teacher and administrator and became interested in this subject as a result of my graduate-level course work. I experienced tensions firsthand between theory-based learning and the need for application of these theories in the real world. As a result, I was curious to discover the parts of my training that would benefit me most in the "real world" and the areas of knowledge I might have missed.

The perennial challenge facing university graduate schools trying to balance the need for scholarship and practice became more apparent in the late 1980s with the publication of the NPBEA recommendations. With the publication of these recommendations, more people in and out of the field of education started to think and talk about this issue and, in some cases, devise fresh ways to meet these challenges. Herbst (2007), for example, compared educational training with medical training. In medical training, scholarly research and dissemination of information went hand-in-hand with practical learning as these colleges created medical learning centers. Curricular development creates cohesion and helps ensure that all students receive the appropriate balance of scholarship and practice throughout their pre-service training.

Chapter Summary

Superintendent pre-service training programs continue to struggle in their dual role of scholarship and service to the field. They face internal and external pressure to modify their programs to meet the real or perceived needs of one group or another, including pressure from practicing professionals seeking a stronger commitment to practice and real life application. Universities have responded to these pressures in a

variety of ways, including an attempt to hire a balance of academicians and practitioners in the hopes that students will be exposed to both at an appropriate level. However, without a broader look into the overall curriculum of the program, universities may be destined to either follow the same path or become reactionary and move too far in the opposite direction.

By speaking to former superintendents who are currently employed as university professors of educational administration, this study will attempt to gauge the perceptions of these individuals on their view of the proper balance between theory and practice, what aspects of each are most important to learn in educational administration programs, and how they are attempting to teach these to their students.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Institutions of higher learning have been in existence for almost a millennium. These early institutions were either established or heavily influenced by religion in society. The founders of several early American institutions of higher education were trained under the European model and, consequently, many traits of these new institutions can be traced back to their European roots. Public K-12 education, on the other hand, is relatively young, at 150 or so years old. As with higher education, these early K-12 institutions were influenced by the society around them, namely the industrial revolution. In many ways, they were designed to meet the needs of an industrial society at that time by promoting punctuality, following directions and learning how to read and write. Even though society and its needs have changed dramatically over time, several of these early influences of scientific management are still prevalent in schools today.

Likewise, preparation programs for superintendents have been around for nearly a century as well. As problems in society have been identified, various leaders have looked to public education as either a means to solve these problems or as place to affix the blame. This historic situation will be even more pronounced as 40% of current principals and even a greater percentage of superintendents are expected to leave their positions in the next decade (Levine, 2005). It is imperative that institutions charged with training

21

our future educational leaders are ready to meet the current needs of their students and society. Many of the changes that have been made in educational leader preparation programs have been fueled by attacks and sharp criticism of current attempts at training administrators (Murphy, 1993a). From the research, it is apparent that superintendent preparation programs have gone through four main phases or eras as a result of these attacks. These four eras listed in order include the Ideological Era, the Prescriptive Era, the Scientific Era, and the Dialectic Era. Near the end and at the beginning of each of these phases, there is a period of transition. These transitional phases make it difficult, if not impossible, to give exact dates for when a specific era starts and ends or even when the period of transition starts and ends. This difficulty may partially be due to the fact that there has never been a nationally-run educational system, and schools are influenced at a different rate depending on their geographic location, size, demographics, as well as, other such factors (Campbell, 1973).

History of Educational Administrative Preparation Programs

In general, the position of superintendent of schools developed before any specific programs were created to train people for this new position. Many of these early super-intendents performed the clerical duties of the district. Superintendents were "managers" who were expected to assist the local school board with the day-to-day routine of running the school district (Carter, 1997, pp. 23-24). Glass (2000) points out that superintendents were first appointed in large school districts to help run the day-to-day operations. They also served as head teachers and clerks. Kowalski (1999) supports this analysis, indicating that superintendents emerged as a separate position in the early to mid 1800s as a tool to help boards manage the affairs of the school. As schools increased in size so

did the administrative requirements of running the district. This was the beginning of school administration.

Ideological Era

Murphy (1993a) characterizes several general eras for educational administration preparation. He points out how periods of ferment typically have occurred during the transition period from one era to the next. According to Murphy, the first era, which encompasses the time period before official training of superintendents occurred, was known as the Ideological Era and lasted from approximately 1820-1900. This era was so named for the notion that superintendents were setting the ideology or tone for the district through their actions and beliefs. In this era there was little, if any, formal training of administrators. "The education received by superintendents and principals was largely undifferentiated from that of teachers until the onslaught and wide-spread acceptance of the scientific management movement throughout the corporate world between 1910 and 1915" (Murphy, 1993a, p. 4). Superintendents learned on-the-job, as it were, how to run the school.

> Politics played a large part in the life of the superintendent even at this early stage.
>
> Prompted primarily by political fears, powerful individuals in the community often exerted influence to ensure that the very first superintendents were relegated to doing menial assignments and detail work. The status of the superintendents was purposely reduced so that they would act as servants to, rather than leaders of, the school board. (Glass, 2000, p. 6)

The fear, of course, was that this new position could exert a large amount of influence yet be able to steer clear of other political frays in a community. This role is in stark contrast to many of today's superintendents who are expected to be educational leaders for the district and school board members.

Many early superintendents faced serious challenges, including the survival of the common school movement itself…in some respects, many early superintendents were like secular clergy. They served as the moral role model, disseminators of the democratic ethic, and, most importantly, builders of the American dream. (p. 1)

Usually men who held these positions had little training in managing finance, people, or other material sources and were assigned without much rhyme or reason (Kowalski, 1999). Kowalski and Reitzug (1993) note that some teachers

…were elevated to administration because they were perceived by school trustees, or others legally in control of the school, as possessing the qualities of a leader; some were selected because they were effective teachers; others were advanced because of political connections; and still others were promoted simply because they were men. (p. 9)

In addition to the views expressed by Kowalski and Carter, other researchers have used similar terms to classify this period before formal training. Callahan (1966) refers to the role of the superintendent from the end of the Civil War until 1910 as that of a scholarly leader. Superintendents were expected to be the teacher-of-teachers, to determine the needs of the school, to identify the problems, and then to resolve them. It was assumed that they could fill this role because, as experienced quality teachers, they had shown the ability to pass their knowledge onto others.

Around the turn of the century, Fredrick Taylor's scientific management was the predominant management technique for American industry. Taylor's methods of conducting studies appeared to use a scientific approach, hence the name "scientific management." The main thrust behind scientific management was efficiency. Under the right conditions, businesses would be able to maximize efficiency by manipulating the work environment in specific ways (Kaiser, 1993). Eventually the belief started to take hold that if scientific management worked in the business world, it should apply in

education as well. By the early 1900s, business leaders had developed considerable influence over how school administrator preparation programs would be run (Murphy, 2001). As a result, many "practicing administrators were chastised for their lack of grounding in the management principles of the corporate world" (Murphy, 1993a, p. 7). Both of these factors helped contribute to the early development of preparation programs and explain the influence of scientific management.

With large influxes of immigrants arriving in America to obtain industrial jobs, business leaders needed to find ways to prepare future workers. Scientific management helped schools "Americanize" the overflow of new immigrants in the early 1900s (Glass, 2000). Life in the factory under scientific management depended on workers following rules without question and doing specific specialized tasks. Only a few workers would need advanced training. Most factory jobs could be learned by simple observation. The purpose of schools was not to train workers to do specific professions but rather to provide obedient workers that could follow directions (Mulkeen, 1994). As a result, schools at this time were designed to be orderly and efficient.

"Administrators were expected to assure a school world that was rational, linear, non-ambiguous, and predictable" (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe, 1994, p. 17). "Differentiation, standardization, control, and rationality became their operating guides" (Mulkeen, 1994, p. 6). Pre-service education for school executives stressed the technical and mechanical aspects of administration, specific and immediate tasks and the practice dimensions of the job (Murphy, 2001). The intent of training was to bring efficiency to a growth institution and cut taxpayer waste (Glass, 2000).

Prescriptive Era

This leads us to the second major era of superintendent training. According to Murphy (1993a), the Prescriptive Era occurred from around 1900-1946. As stated earlier, before this point few courses in school administration were offered at universities. In fact, Teachers College at Columbia University granted the first two doctorates in school administration in the early 1900s (Cooper & Boyd, 1987; Campbell, 1973; Callahan, 1964). From 1910 on, universities offering courses in school administration expanded course offerings in administration, especially in areas such as business methods, finance, and efficiency techniques (Callahan, 1964). Students entering these first specialized training programs for school administrators were also trained in management functions in order to carry out operational tasks (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe, 1994). Scientific management was the driving force behind the creation and need for these programs.

"Most all of the educational administration students during this era, like the faculty, were quite homogenous. Almost all were white males. Nearly all took course work while maintaining the full-time positions as teachers or, most likely, administrators" (Murphy, 1992, p. 27). During the early part of the 1900s, faculty in education administration programs "were drawn almost exclusively from the superintendency. They usually carried a heavy course load and showed little proclivity for research" (p. 3). Much of the teaching of these professors consisted of nothing more than anecdotes and "war stories" about how they, or other successful administrators, conducted business or handled various situations. According to Forsyth (1999), there was little, if any, theory or quantifiable data behind their "teaching." They did not do a good job of teaching either

the information that can be taught in class (research) or the information that can only be learned by doing (field experience).

The superintendent in this era was considered a manager in a "scientific" environment. Callahan (1966) refers to the role of the superintendent from roughly 1910-1930 as that of a business manager. Carter (1997), on the other hand, refers to superintendents in this era as master educators because they were expected to provide direction on curriculum and instruction dealing with pedagogical matters. These roles are evidence of the influence of scientific management principles. With the superintendents' new role being that of a manager, they were expected to be able to follow scientific management principles such as standardization, creation of hierarchic structures to accomplish tasks, and find ways to increase efficiency (Kowalski, 1999). All of these principles were stressed and learned in the new training programs.

During a period starting around 1900 and ending around 1930, the superintendent assumed the roles of educator capitalist, then business manager, and finally school executive in order to handle the increasing business transactions of the school and the calls for efficiency from the scientific management principles. The 1930s through 1950s saw the role of the superintendent, according to Cooper and Boyd (1987), change yet again to that of a social agent as a result of the great depression and World War II. The period saw the first critiques in the education world questioning the philosophies of scientific management as they applied to the needs of students and staff in schools. Unfortunately, according to Schmuck (1994), many people interpreted scientific management to mean that the work of humans, after analysis by time and motion studies, should be made as

machinelike as possible (p. 9). This philosophy in many ways is still with us today and led to the next major shift in superintendent training.

Starting in the 1930s, studies conducted in places such as the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company began to dispute the conventional thinking about scientific management. Contrary to scientific management, these studies seem to indicate that simply increasing the amount of light in a workspace or creating a more efficient system did not necessarily increase productivity (Kaiser, 1993). It was determined, for instance, that merit pay does not always work, because employees would apply pressure on each other not to set the productivity bar too high for fear that management would then expect future production to meet these new standards without the extra pay. According to the research, it appeared that workers responded most favorably, and increased their production, when they believed that their supervisors and managers were interested and sympathetic to them as individuals (Schmuck, 1994). Consequentially, researchers interpreted the findings to mean that workers were not machines and would not respond as such. Interpersonal relationships are important to the productivity and well being of the individual. Furthermore, the results were interpreted to suggest workers would tend to work harder and be more productive for someone they like (Kaiser, 1993). This changed the role of the superintendent again to reflect more relationship building as part of the job requirement.

Other factors contributed to attempts to find and try new approaches to managing workers. Due to the increased production in America, there were, in many cases, more job openings than there were employees able to fill them. If managers used the strong discipline, impersonal approaches of scientific management approaches of the past,

employees would go elsewhere for employment. However, by building relationships with their employees and demonstrating a general concern for them as individuals, they could help create happy employees. Happy employees are more likely to stay on the job (Kaiser, 1993).

Social scientists used the "Hawthorne Effect" and the disenchantment over the great depression as their basis for pushing what would later be dubbed the "Human Relations Movement" (Schmuck, 1994, p. 9). Educators were coming to realize that students were not cogs to be pushed through an assembly line but rather needed to be nurtured. With scientific management being the basis for much of the educational system in American schools, educators started to reevaluate its affects on children. This transition marked the beginning of the influence of the social scientist in education.

Around the start of the 1950s, the idea that school administrators should be grounded in the science of administration and the theory of administration started to grow. Part of this was based on an overall growth of organizational research in business and industry. This started to change the focus of preparation programs from a focus on application of knowledge in the practical setting to a more scholarly approach where research and theory held a higher position. This shift, which continued through the 1960s "increased the conflict between the practice and research as we in the United States move deeper into the political revolution in education" (Iannacone, 1976, p. 29). This conflict can still be seen even today where universities are trying to find the right balance between practice and academia in preparation programs.

The struggle between the practitioner and the scholar continued to occur until today. The struggle even extended into the professional organizations that developed to

help these professionals. The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) was founded in the 1950s to emphasize the academic aspects of the profession, whereas the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) has historically aligned itself more with the practitioner orientation (Berry, 2006). Berry did point out that the NCPEA has of late paid more attention to the scholarly aspects of the profession. However, he points out that even today, professors still tend to drift more toward one viewpoint or the other.

The growing influence of social scientists on education during the 1940s and 1950s changed the role of the superintendent to that of a behavioral scientist until the mid 1980s (Cooper 1987). Superintendents were now expected to be able to apply social science principles to schools rather than scientific management principles. As a result of this new role of the superintendent and the need for them to understand the humanistic approach, educational leadership training, in general, started to undergo the same metamorphosis.

People still refer to the years after World War II as the "good old days" and, in many ways, they are right. The United States had recently won a major war and had emerged as the world's strongest power, both militarily and economically. Jobs were plentiful in American factories and, with the invention of the assembly line, credit and payment on installment plans, American households were now able to afford more of the "modern necessities" than in the past.

On the down side, a large percentage of students in American schools were not receiving a high school education. The general feeling among educators was:

> If students dropped out of school or drifted into low-level classes, their failure
> was regrettable, but not surprising. Some students were destined to fail. So long
> as discipline and order prevailed—and the buses ran on time—a principal's job
> was secure. (Bottoms, 2001, p. 5)

Disruptive or special education students were simply moved out of the school setting.

Society, as well, did not seem to be concerned about these statistics because there were

still well-paying factory or farm jobs waiting for students when they left school with

little, if any, real training.

Universities preparing aspiring educational leaders in the 1940s and 1950s were

still using scientific management as their basis. The problem was that by this time

scientific management, as it was applied to public education, was not achieving the

desired results. As an example of the problems found in many universities at this time,

the average faculty member in educational leadership training programs was most likely

recruited from the ranks of former school administrators. They were not specialists in

any field and taught primarily from the practitioner's point of reference (Murphy, 1993a;

Campbell, 1973). They did not rely heavily on research but focused instead on their own

personal successes or failures as a means to teach students how to be good superinten-

dents. By this time "considerable criticism was [already being] leveled against the naked

empiricism, personal success stories, and maxims or untested principles that constituted

the knowledge base of educational administration at the time" (Murphy, 1993a, p. 6).

Scientific Era

Universities preparing superintendents started to evolve to include a social

scientists point of view in their curriculum. Murphy (1993a) labels the time of social

scientist influence as the Scientific Era, because ideas and practices were to be grounded

in theory and research. As stated, the major catalyst for this change was the

…infusion of content from the social sciences into preparation programs. Education was starting to use methods of scientifically proven and substantiated methods and knowledge of leadership based on research and theory outside education. The infrastructure for this activity was the expansion of the conceptual and theoretical knowledge base of the profession through the development of a science of administration. (Murphy, 2001)

Future leaders were now trained in this new humanistic approach that came from the Hawthorne studies.

A common theme during each of these eras had been that schools and subsequently preparation programs often face tremendous pressure to alter their practices based on the changing priorities of society. The 1950s were no different. For instance, the launching of Sputnik in 1957 and the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s dramatically affected the way children were educated. Schools were criticized after Sputnik for letting American students fall behind their Soviet Union peers in math and science. To correct this balance, the federal government infused large amounts of money into education and, with it, influence over curriculum. The civil rights movement and the statutory and judicial laws that resulted also affected the way schools operated. Carter (1997) refers to the role of the superintendent in the late 1950s as that of a *chief executive officer for the board.* Superintendents were expected to serve as the experts and advisors to the board to help them interpret and enforce the new regulations. This represented another layer of responsibility being added to the position.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, it became evident again that the programs preparing our educational leaders were out of sync with the needs of society. The most recent need for change occurred for a variety of reasons. Demographically, as a society, we became less white, less Protestant, and less rural than in the past; consequently, the

system that was set up to teach these children needed to change as well (Murphy, 1993b). The number of minority and underprivileged students in America's schools was on the rise. An infusion of immigration brought a larger number of students entering the schools speaking a language other than English. The traditional American family had changed as well. The number of children from divorced households, with mothers going to work or single-parent households, was increasing (Murphy, 1992). During a time when the number of minorities was increasing, a study conducted by Campbell (1973) showed that 97% of the professors of educational administration responding to a questionnaire were white and 98% of the respondents were male. So, in other words, those preparing our future educational leaders did not represent the population in the schools. If educational leaders are expected to address these issues in order to make schools more productive, training institutions needed to better recruit and prepare more diverse and qualified leaders.

Economic factors also played a role in changing the needs of education. Most of the manufacturing jobs that our students could have counted on in the past have disappeared or been farmed out to other countries throughout the world. America needed a new kind of worker. Students in the information age need to be technologically literate and have the cognitive skills and abilities to handle a high paced technologically advanced society and world (Mulkeen, 1994). The skills we taught in the past (to be attentive, timely, etc.) that worked for manufacturing jobs just did not meet the needs of employers or students anymore. Schools were not preparing their children to meet this new reality. As Murphy (1992) discussed the changing needs of society in the late 80s to early 90s he stated:

On the one hand, administrators are being asked to restructure schooling in order to prepare students to for a postindustrial society, one in which valued knowledge is considerably more complex than ever before. This shift will require dramatic changes in the core technology of education and in the ways in which schools are organized, governed, and managed. It will necessitate a different model of leadership training than that found in most preparation programs. On the other hand, educational leaders are being asked to help devise educational systems that address the demands of a changing school-aged population—one that is becoming increasingly diverse. (p. 6)

This new reality requires a different set of skills from those developed in the past to help acclimate to the changing workplace environment.

A key element of this emerging vision is a deeper understanding of the centrality of learning, teaching, and school improvement within the role of the school administrator—a shift in focus from educational administration primarily concerned with teaching and learning. (Murphy, 2001)

This idea will become the focus of education for the next 20-plus years in large part to a study published in the early 1980s. "Starting in 1983, with the publication of *A Nation at Risk*, America's schools and educators came under fire from the public, media, and politicians to improve student performance" (Glass, 2000, p. 1). *A Nation at Risk*, is often cited as the origin of current reform efforts. One of the most dramatic paragraphs that helped polarize the sentiment of the report against schools the commission states:

If an unfriendly power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament. (p. 5)

A Nation at Risk was a major reality check for school administrators and universi-ties. In many ways, it was the beginning of the erosion of trust that schools had enjoyed

with the public. *A Nation at Risk* also focused on the lack of safety and inequality in our nation's schools and called on educational leaders to correct these problems.

Dialectic Era

Murphy (1993a) refers to this era of educational administration preparation as the Dialectic Era. He estimates this era as having started in the mid 1980s and continuing until today. Unfortunately, "the typical faculty member in educational administration at the end of the scientific era was likely to be a discipline-focused specialist with little or no practical experience, concerned primarily with the professorial (if not scholarly) aspects of the profession" (Murphy, 1993a, p. 7). However, the needs of educational leaders had appeared to change considerably.

Criticism started to focus on the weaknesses of the social science framework and the division created between practice and academic arms of the educational leadership profession (Murphy, 1992). We went from an era in which university professors concentrated almost exclusively on the practical side of training to one in which the professorate relied mostly on research and theory with little if any practitioner experience. The balance between the theory and practice aspects of preparation programs seemed to tip once again in many non-research oriented programs.

During this current movement, which is still evolving, every aspect of the preparation of educational leaders has been called into question. Recommendations for reform, such as those proposed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (1989), have called not only the strategies being used to prepare future education leaders into question but also the quality of the students and faculty themselves.

One of the focuses in the last 10-15 years has been the standards movement and its effects. Starting with *A Nation at Risk* and continuing through the *No Child Left Behind* initiative, standards and standards-based testing have been heavily promoted. Standards have also been created for teachers and educational leaders. The standards for educational leaders will be discussed in detail later. The standards movement itself is showing some dividends. As Glass (2000) points out, "previous reform movements, such as 'scientific management' in the 1920s, progressive education in the 1930s, and the Sputnik 'scare' in the 1950s, were not as far reaching as the 'standards movement' in the 1980s and 1990s" (p. 1).

Modern superintendents, besides being experts on a variety of educational issues, must also be politically astute (Glass, 2000). They must be able to interact with not only school boards, other administrators, and teachers, but with parents, businesses, community members, government officials and the media as educators gain increasing attention across sectors (Policy, 1999).

Different researchers have used other terms to describe the role of the superintendent and/or have broken the timeline differently, although never completely differently, for when one role starts and another phases out. The position of superintendent continues to change, expand, and evolve from one era to the next as the expectations and needs of society change. The changing role of the superintendent should be seen more as an evolution rather than a complete change. As one era comes to an end and another takes its place, several features of the old remain. For example, Glass (2000) points out how the hierarchic structures and bureaucracies put in place during the scientific management era to promote efficiency are still in existence today, even though many people speak out

against them. For example, most schools employ specialized helpers, such as social

workers, psychologists, and school nurses, and most teachers specialize in only one or

two subjects. Each of these trends had their start during the scientific management era,

and these specialized roles continue to this day. One thing seems clear: the role of the

superintendent in the early 21st century will continue to evolve, leaving the question of

how do we change schools to meet the changing needs of our students and society in

general?

Recommendations for Change

As practicing administrators will attest, the match between formal pre-service

training and the actual demands inherent in the principal's job is not a particularly good

one (Lumsden, 1992). As a result, more energy is being devoted to assessing and

addressing deficiencies in pre-service training so future principals will be better prepared

for the realities of leadership.

Much of the contemporary criticism of university programs that prepare school

leaders in the last 20 years has resulted from a report published from the National Policy

Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). In fact, this report, entitled *Improving*

the Preparation of School Administrators: The Reform Agenda, has so dramatically

shaped future research in this area that it would be very difficult to cover this topic

without first introducing some of these key concepts. In addition to the Interstate School

Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, which will be discussed later, this

report has been the driving force behind much of the critical writing pertaining to

education administration preparation programs in the last 20 years.

Once it became apparent that our universities were not preparing educational leaders to meet the needs of the public school system, a group of representatives from various groups of educational leaders and educational associations came together to draft a set of guidelines. The newly established framework would be used to reform the way our educational administrators are trained in the hope that a change in preparation would result in better-qualified candidates and improvement in our schools. They studied the issues that they felt most dramatically influenced or hindered the preparation of the best possible educational leaders. In this report, the NPBEA called for nine major changes to the typical preparation programs for educational administration under three general headings: People, Programs, and Assessment. Since its inception in 1989, much attention has been paid to the recommendations put forth by the board's report. The next section will attempt to outline many of the general areas of criticism about these programs, starting with those mentioned by the NPBEA.

Recruitment of the Best and Brightest

The **first** recommendation made by the NPBEA was that

Vigorous recruitment strategies be mounted to attract
o The brightest and most capable candidates, of diverse race, ethnicity, and sex, and
o A minority enrollment at least comparable to the region's minority public school enrollment. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

One of the recurring criticisms of educational administration programs is that they do a very poor job recruiting the "brightest and most capable candidates, of diverse race, ethnicity, and sex" (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5). The board found that typically universities did not have recruitment strategies. In fact, most students lived and worked within commuting distance of the university they attended, and the recruitment strategies to

attract minority students were not very effective (NPBEA, 1989). One researcher found that "fewer than 10% of the students report that they were influenced by the recruitment activities of the training institutions" (Murphy, 1992, p. 80). Harsher still was the statement professing that "teachers and administrators are drawn from the bottom of the intellectual barrel and then poorly trained for their roles" (p. 5) so what results is a very poor pool of candidates.

Levine (2005) argues that universities providing training to those who will replace principals and superintendents due to retire over the next decade are not adequately preparing their replacements. He argues that schools, in order to compete for students, lower their admission and curriculum standards in order to attract and retain students. These programs are often moneymaking ventures for the university, where students are more concerned with counting credits to move up on the salary schedule in their district than earning a meaningful degree they plan to use. Furthermore, several of these degree-granting programs are offered at non-research intensive or extensive institutions and are diminishing the quality of leadership programming. The more degree outlets available, the more suspect the rigor and quality becomes as the focus shifts away from practical and theoretical knowledge and skill acquisition. The coursework often has "minimal relevance to practice" (p. 24).

As Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994) point out,

We are not likely to achieve significant changes in schools without substantial improvements in the quality of the leaders. Toward this end, there must be active recruitment of the best people. School districts need to be involved in the recruitment process, both in identifying exceptional individuals and in providing incentives for them to pursue administrative credentials. (pp. 20-21)

Murphy (2007) cautions that the vigorous recruitment of candidates may increase the quality of the "raw materials" in these institutions but will not significantly change the overall quality of the finished product if the curriculum in these programs does not change. He cites the stronghold of the behavioral science professoriate or academia and their reliance on theory over practice for this reason.

According to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (2001), American classrooms are becoming much more integrated and diverse. Many of these minority students entering the school system are immigrating from a variety of foreign countries. Many of these families do not speak English as their native language. Many of these students are also coming in with a much wider array of religious backgrounds. Yet, due to poor recruitment strategies, "most students do not have the opportunity to benefit from a diverse teaching force, nor a cadre of diverse school leaders" (p. 2).

Murphy (1993b) points out that there is a great need to attract quality minority and women applicants to the preparation programs. The addition of a greater percentage of minority and female candidates in the program could help alleviate some of the issues discussed previously, including the ability to meet the changing needs of our students, challenging stereotypes, and helping all candidates understand diverse student popula-tions. Higher education has historically been a male-driven profession, whereas K-8 education is female-dominated. Secondary school has been a mix of the two genders. With this in mind, it is important to ensure that men and women are properly represented on each rung of the educational ladder.

> As the demographics of the nation continue to transform the face of this society
> into a more diverse learning community, the same transformation is not evidenced

on university and college campuses across the nation, nor is it in the ranks of school and district leadership. (American, 2001, p. 2)

According to the NPBEA (1989), without top candidates being enrolled in educational administration preparation programs, the chance of these institutions producing highly successful administrators is greatly diminished. Universities need to find new and better ways to attract a superior pool of candidates to draw from and to reach out to minority groups as well as other quality applicants outside their typical geographic borders. Before engaging in the expanded recruitment efforts, however, Murphy (1993b) encourages university faculty to create a plan to attract a different kind of student by developing "carefully reasoned conceptions of the abilities, values, and interests that they prize in students" (p. 229). Otherwise, the university would not know what characteristics or qualities they prize in a candidate.

Raising the Bar

The **<u>second</u>** major recommendation by the NPBEA was that

Entrance standards to administrator preparation programs be dramatically raised to ensure that all candidates possess strong analytic ability, high administrative potential, and demonstrated success in teaching including
- o Assessment of analytic ability and administrative aptitude by a standardized national test, with admission to preparation programs limited to individuals scoring in the top quartile, and
- o Assessment of teaching excellence by state licensure, a master's degree in teaching, and evidence of successful teaching in a classroom setting. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

According to the NPBEA report, the typical educational administration preparation program usually was not very selective about who was allowed to enter its program so long as they met very minimal standards for admission. The result was a candidate pool that was not likely to develop to meet the needs of scholars and districts or qualified to hold one of these positions (NPBEA, 1989). As a result, schools were finding a

shortage of qualified school administrators, not necessarily certified school administrators (SREB, 2002). A report from the Feistritzer (2003), finds this trend to be continuing. In fact, many states report a high rate of educators receiving administrative certificates who never actually go into these positions. Students are apparently getting their administrative credentials through these programs, but many are not using them. Levine (2005) points out that many participants are taking the course not to prepare for a career as an educational leader but rather to earn enough credits to move up on the salary schedule.

Consequently, the board recommended tightening the requirement for entrance into educational administrative preparation programs in order to ensure that only top quality candidates committed to leadership are accepted, and, furthermore, to ensure that those educators holding certification are truly qualified to hold one of these positions. To that end, they recommended either a new test be developed for acceptance into an administrative training program or different more stringent qualifications be applied. Some examples of these different qualifications might include recommendations from peers or demonstrations of excellence in teaching as opposed to current standards such as the completion of a set number of years teaching (NPBEA, 1989). A quality selection process may also limit the number of candidates who seek admittance into these programs for the sole purpose of moving up on the pay scale (Feistritzer, 2003).

History has shown us that the self-selection of candidates into these programs does not work. Universities, school districts and even states need to take a proactive approach. They need to seek and find the best candidates from the teaching pool who have shown leadership potential and encourage them to seek training or help them find alternative paths to educational leadership (Southern, 2003).

According to Andrew (1994), "we must go beyond traditional simplistic, academic criteria (i.e., Graduate Record Exam, undergraduate grade-point average, graduate grade-point average) for selection into our training programs" (p. 204). Although these are obviously important indicators of student success, they do little to help us predict how successful candidates will be as educational leaders. "We must measure communication skills, attitudes toward children, and views about teaching and learning, and allow for assessment by colleagues who are fellow teachers" (Andrew, 1994, p. 204). He points out that a change in the process will not improve the product without quality candidates. The selection of quality faculty and students is as important to the success of a preparation program as the process used to train them.

The quality of the input (candidate pool) is also important (Achilles, 2001). General Records Exam scores from 1996 show that "average scores of EA (education administration) examinees are lower than the averages of examinees in the eight other broad fields of graduate study (p. 92). He goes on to point out that "the most important steps now are to reverse the evident trend and to assume that EA persons have the intellectual firepower to restore confidence in America's public schools" (p. 93). To do so, we must recruit and select the best and brightest students possible. Schools should be proactive in recruitment for high quality applicants; they should provide fellowships or grants to full-time students and interns, provide more distance learning opportunities, all of which should increase the pool of qualified candidates and thus encourage more qualified candidates to earn a degree. According to the NPBEA (1989), without top candidates being enrolled in educational administration preparation programs, the chance of these institutions producing highly successful administrators is greatly diminished.

"The most common recruitment or selection strategies accept future administrators into programs under three criteria: (a) grade point average, (b) GRE scores, and (c) letters of recommendations with little evidence of consistent standards of acceptance" (Creighton, 2001, p. 103). He points out a particularly troubling finding. Many university preparation programs have implemented a waiver of one or more of the requirements for entrance into the program. For example, if a candidate has a higher than required grade point average, but scored low on the GRE, he or she is admitted 'conditionally' with the condition being a completion of 6-9 hours of course work with at least a B average. The 'haunting question' returns: "What is the correlation between a student maintaining a B average and his/her administrative potential?" (Creighton, 2001, p. 103). It may also prove valuable to determine the correlation between the GRE and future success in administrative leadership. Until the appropriate tools matching the qualities, skills and knowledge school districts need and want in the educational leadership are utilized in the acceptance process, university preparation programs will continue to accept inferior students into their programs.

Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994) point out that with all the new responsibilities being placed on educational leaders, the

> …faculty [of the college] must identify the qualities that enable individuals to be transformative leaders, and they must design admission criteria to assess those qualities. Faculty must be definitive about what is meant by the recruitment of the "most capable candidates." Objective criteria prevalent in present admission policies based on numerical ratings related to test scores, academic grade point averages, years of experience, and similar factors certainly do not address this question (p. 21).

Another important factor for the proper recruitment of candidates, according to Kotter (1990), lies in their ability to successfully lead change in a district. His research

has found that management skills can generally be taught to just about any adult who is willing to put in the effort and take the training. Leadership, however, is much more challenging. He identifies four specific traits that seem to be necessary to be an effective leader: intelligence, drive, mental health and integrity. Beyond this, individuals able to effectively set the direction for an organization should have developed other traits, such as a strong knowledge of relevant issues to the change, comfort and ability to take risks, good communication skills, and an understanding of how to work with others and to empathize with their problems. If candidates do not have these attributes, they will not be effective leaders and should not be accepted into these programs.

Building the Educational Administration Faculty

Another major criticism of educational administration programs, according to the NPBEA, is the number of quality faculty members in the department necessary to meet the needs of a quality program (NPBEA, 1989).

The **third** recommendation presented by the NPBEA was that

The quality of faculty in administrator preparation programs be ensured by
o Strengthening faculty recruitment, selection, and staff development programs,
o Maintaining a critical mass of at least five full-time faculty members,
o Providing the bulk of teaching, advising, and mentoring through full-time faculty who have demonstrated success in teaching, clinical activities, and knowledge production in the field, and
o Ensuring a student-faculty ratio comparable to other graduate professional degree programs on campus. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

The board recommends that institutions preparing our future leaders use the same rigorous standards to recruit and select its faculty as it does its students. The number of fulltime faculty should be increased to at least five members, student-teacher ratios should match that of other graduate level departments in the university, and faculty should be encouraged to research, publish, teach and connect with schools in the field.

To meet these goals, universities would need to make a commitment to decrease the student/teacher ratio, which can only be done by hiring more staff or limiting the number of students accepted into a program. This would be a costly proposition and departments would be challenged to stay within the budget confines of the universities. As discussed previously, some universities use educational administration as a way to help the university or department remain economically solvent by taking on numerous and/or unqualified candidates. The result has been faculty members who are forced to spend large amounts with these unqualified graduate students instead of concentrating on developing the top candidates (NPBEA, 1989).

Another way to shorten the student/faculty gap would be to hire more full-time and adjunct professors. Sirotnik (1993) and others such as Levine (2005) have concerns about hiring more adjunct professors.

> The use of adjunct professors is usually done to allow the tenure-line faculty member to be released to do other things. The problem is that these adjunct professors are not properly prepared to teach in the program and usually disrupt the continuity of the program. (Sirotnik, 1993, p. 80)

If adjunct professors are used, it is imperative that institutions spend the time and resources necessary to prepare part-time professors to teach in the program. Levine also adds that several full-time professors have little, if any, recent professional education experience, which can put them at a disadvantage when it comes to training.

Simply hiring more staff will not necessarily lead to better-prepared students. The same rigorous standards universities use to recruit students should be used when selecting faculty. Faculty members in these programs must model what we know about good teaching. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for Ed.D. candidates to learn

classroom methods such as cooperative learning from a professor using only a lecture format (Policy, 1999).

Universities also need to look at the barriers to faculty and program change, specifically the reward system. "The barriers to change in the university are quite often the participants themselves: the professor, their departmental and school structures, their programs, or the reward system they use to reinforce behaviors and attitudes that they protect" (Cooper, 1994, p. 79). For wholesale change to be successful in a university setting, it is vital for the faculty to feel a sense of urgency and importance toward the new approach. "At the university and college levels, change efforts….often run head-on into well-entrenched expectations and ways of doing things" (Murphy 1993b, p. 245). This is important to note because, in many institutions of higher learning, tenured professors may have the power to or use their status to decrease the effectiveness of reforms or kill them altogether. "Change, it seems, can threaten professors' domains, fields, self-concepts, self-esteem, and patterns for how they do what they habitually do" (Cooper, 1994, p. 78). "Virtually any faculty member (except perhaps the vulnerable untenured ones) can object, prevaricate, and slow or halt the process of reform" (p. 78). Cooper continues by stating that often, tenured staff members have little incentive to change because there is no guarantee that changes in the program will necessarily increase the effectiveness of educational leaders. These particular faculty members must be shown that changes will have a positive affect on the school leaders they are producing.

According to Murphy (1993b), "Faculty are concerned about encroachment on their autonomy and personal needs, especially: the loss of control over individual courses, worries about the homogenization of staff, a natural inclination to avoid the conflict that

often accompanies serious dialogue" (p. 247). These considerations must be clearly

thought out before any attempts to change programs are considered.

> Program change is perhaps the most troublesome reform for faculty; altering the curriculum of an educational administration program disrupts formal practices and often requires significant personal adjustments. Under normal circumstances, professionals teach courses their own (known, traditional) ways. (Cooper, 1994, p. 72)

The rewards for change are usually small and many professors do not want to start over.

According to Forsyth (1999), universities preparing future educational leaders

must allow their faculty the time to create practical, real-life experiences, possibly at the

expense of publication and research. One way to accomplish this goal would be to

eliminate traditional punishments associated with lack of publication (i.e., non-issuance

of tenure). Andrews (1994), agrees that "we must change the reward system from a

preoccupation with teaching, research, and service to a definition of *scholarship* based on

discovery, development, demonstration, and dissemination" (p. 215).

Several researchers pointed out the critical nature of getting the faculty on board

with these changes for them to be successful. A territorial nature can exist within a

faculty, especially for those who feel comfortable in their current positions. The faculty

will have to devote their time, talent and energy for these changes to work (Murphy,

1993b; Cooper, 1994; Andrew, 1994). Additionally, the faculty themselves need to

become more familiar with the inner working of schools. In some cases, professors do

not have first-hand knowledge about professional practice within the school setting due to

their concentration on research or teaching. Consequently, they are not great advocates

of those professional practices (Forsyth, 1999; Murphy 2007). Unfortunately, in "many

cases of reform the actual final program often is more a result of what was possible,

given real and perceived barriers, than what was ideal" (Cooper, 1994).

Doctorate in Education for All Superintendents

A fourth concern brought up by the NPBEA was that a master's degree level edu-

cation was not sufficient for educational leaders. They recommended that "a doctorate in

educational administration (Ed.D.) be a prerequisite to national certification and state

licensure for full-time administrators who are in charge of a school system" (NPBEA,

1989, p. 5).

> The **fourth** recommendation by the NPBEA is that:
>
> The doctorate in educational administration (Ed.D.) be a prerequisite to national certification and state licensure for full-time administrators who are in charge of a school system, and
> - Sixth year or specialist degree programs in educational administration be abolished for this level of position,
> - Programs in educational administration terminating in a master's degree be abolished altogether. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

The recommendation of the board would be for all educational administrators to

hold an Ed.D. before being certified to run a school. To that end, the masters and

specialist degrees required in some states to hold these positions should be eliminated and

this one standard would replace it completely. In essence, the board proposed that there

should be more education and training beyond the superintendent endorsement to be

qualified to run a school district.

Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994) seem to echo some of the same arguments

about the need for change in the certification for educational administrators. They argue

that programs for the Masters level, the sixth-year program leading to certification, and

doctorate are very similar and overlap. "Students take courses haphazardly, seemingly at

random. Program sequence and content are not clearly defined" (pp. 21-22). In other

words, these programs are not designed to build expertise and do not result in a consistent education for all participants.

Levine (2005) would seem to disagree with this particular suggestion from the NPBEA. He points out that there has been little consistency on what an Ed.D. or Ph.D. really means. Different universities use the terminology in different ways and may award different degrees for similar work. In fact, Levine favors eliminating the Ed.D. completely because it is too often used by the university as a means to award doctorates to their students in an attempt to gain credibility for both the student and the university. This degree has led to a culture in which school districts searching for a superintendent expect the candidate to have a doctorate and often stress the credential more than the competence of the candidate. Levine argues for the Ph.D. to then be reserved only for those preparing to become researchers and be reserved for only a few universities able to provide adequate resources to properly prepare these candidates. This would eliminate doctoral level courses in several universities.

Practical Application of the Skills

The **fifth** recommendation by the NPBEA is that

One full-time year of academic residency and one full-time year of field residency be included in the Ed.D. preparation program. Modification in the type or duration of the clinical residency are permitted for candidates with full-time administrative experiences in education. Additional appropriate program requirements are to be determined by the faculty of the graduate school or graduate division in education at each institution. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

Educational administrators make numerous key decisions that affect the whole school district on a daily basis. The problem is that many of these administrators have not been properly trained to make many of these important decisions. Many administrators have not taken enough course work or the course work they have taken is a hodge-

podge of disconnected subjects that do not interrelate, develop student's skills and abilities or align with work in the field. The typical student completes his or her course work in the evening after working a full-time job, his course work lacks consistency from one class to the next, and often the same material is repeated in different classes or deleted all together. Fieldwork is also similarly disorganized or hollow of any true value to the participant (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe, 1994). The NPBEA board feels that before administrators are allowed to make such decisions that could affect the lives of so many, they should first be properly educated by engaging in a one full year of inter-connected course work and one full year of field residency under the guidance of a fellow qualified administrator. Financial support for these students is also a consideration (NPBEA, 1989). The NPBEA recommends:

> One full-time year of academic residency and one full-time year of field residency be included in the Ed.D. preparation program. Modifications in the type or duration of the clinical residency are permitted for candidates with full-time administrative experiences in education. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

The greatest obstacles for this proposal seem to be financial. It is unrealistic to believe that working adult educators would give up a full-time paying position for 2 years in order to pursue a degree in educational administration. Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994) lay out the important steps that need to be in place before such an initiative could be implemented including, but not limited to, paid sabbaticals for full-time study and tuition support. Universities must provide increased scholarship aid and underwrite tuition costs with state support or external funds. Another recommendation is for states or the federal government to provide fellowships to candidates to allow them to experience full-time internships (Achilles, 2001). Although some school districts and

states are providing tuition, stipends, or salary to students in EA programs (Policy, 1999),

little support of this kind is taking place.

In the absence of full implementation of the NPBEA's recommendation, some

researchers looked for ways to improve on the status quo, such as having university

students work through a series of carefully selected problems that relate directly to the

educational issues they would face in the real workforce (Murphy, 1992).

> If thoughtfully planned and guided by the faculty team, the learning activity
> would form a tapestry in which practice and theory could be inexorably linked,
> and in which the individual disciplinary threads and understandings from
> philosophy and the humanities would be tightly interwoven. (p. 153)

Core Principles of Educational Administration

The **sixth** recommendation proposed by the NPBEA was that:

The elements of the curriculum be developed to transmit a common core of
knowledge and skills, grounded in the problems of practice, including
o   Societal and cultural influences on schooling,
o   Teaching and learning processes and school improvement,
o   Organizational theory,
o   Methodologies of organizational studies and policy analysis,
o   Leadership and management processes and functions,
o   Policy studies and politics of education,
o   Moral and ethical dimensions of schooling. (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5)

Preparation programs have not clearly defined or delivered a knowledge base and

core concepts that educational administrators need to know to be successful. In most

states and institutions, these core concepts centered on requirements for licensure;

however, they were usually delivered in a scattered pattern throughout the program with

no real rhyme or reason. The board felt that theory and practice should be intertwined

around a consensus of core concepts of learning and should include teaching and

learning, research, developing learning skills, and moral and ethical decision making

(NPBEA, 1989). Achilles (1990) would expand the core concepts to include the

"practice of administration, research and theory, tradition and folklore" (p. 14). Programs

preparing educational leaders should be designed to help candidates improve educational

outcomes and include "learning theory, understanding curriculum, human development,

leadership, and evaluation" (p. 18). Schools "need administrators who can think

critically and adapt to change while viewing themselves as teachers and coaches and not

as managers in a bureaucratic structure" (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe, 1994, p. 22).

Preparation programs also may serve their students well to let them draw upon their own

life lessons and skills by empowering them to help design the program they will complete

(Murphy, 1993b).

According to Murphy (1992), in contrast to how students had been taught in the

past "comprehensive contact with a small number of issues (depth) would be the focus,

rather than maximize exposure to a variety of knowledge domains (breadth)" (pp. 153-4).

The old adage of "a mile wide and an inch deep of knowledge" would be replaced by

something closer to "an inch wide and a mile deep." This depth should come in the areas

of the core concepts.

> At the core of these alterations is a shift away from impersonal, certification-
> based, calendar-based, and discipline-based arrangements. There is a movement
> away from the current emphasis on seat time and units completed. Structures in
> the reformed training programs are based more on learning theory and exhibits or
> demonstrations of learning than on administrative convenience. (p. 156)

School-University Partnerships

The **seventh** recommendation by the NPBEA centers around the concept that

"long term, formal relationships [should] be established between universities and school

districts to create partnership sites for clinical study, field residency, and applied

research" (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5). The board recognized that many programs were

structured in such a way that students were not allowed to practice their newly acquired skills through clinical experiences in the field. This would be remedied by having the student complete the one full-time year of field residency in one or more settings in which the student would have the opportunity to use guided practice of new skills and techniques while under the supervision of a participating administrator (NPBEA, 1989). Murphy (1993b) suggests that partnerships between university and school districts can help bring academics and practice together for the student.

School-university partnerships are complex and trust must exist between the two parties. "As universities work to redesign their school leadership programs, they must also work to overcome this history and find common ground upon which to collaborate" (Norton, 2002, p. 5). Together universities and school districts could select from the best-qualified candidates, create schedules that accommodate class work and mentoring activities, and provide quality internships. With both sides working as partners, the likelihood increases that these initiatives will work.

Universities must examine the means and context of administrative preparation programs. As suggested by the NPBEA, the program must focus more on problem-based and practical applications of the knowledge. Andrew (1994) points out that "we must change the process by which [students] are educated from a 'sit and get' isolated, course-driven treatment to an academically and practice intensive program based on critical inquiry" (p. 215). The coursework would provide the knowledge and theory and the partnership would provide the practical application.

The concept of building lasting meaningful relationships with local schools and providing the students with meaningful experiences is often lost because of the way

courses are set up. Preparation programs spend large amounts of time teaching students

how to deal with large organizational strategic decisions that do not have to be made very

often. Universities very well may "overeducate for the unusual and fail to teach students

to recognize the strategic potential in everyday activities" (Kerchner, 1993, p. 17). On

the other hand, field experience can be very valuable, especially if it is well designed and

implemented with the help of skilled practitioners. Often, however, these programs

suffer from poor design and supervision. Students are assigned meaningless tasks or

busywork simply to meet the number of hours required by the internship guidelines (Hart,

1999). This type of assignment defeats the purpose of the internship and often wastes the

student's time.

How information is presented is also very important to student success as well as

the environment in which it is learned. Information is usually presented to the students in

a redundant, fragmented manner in which there is rarely an opportunity to experience or

practice real-world application of the information, and the course work is usually not

challenging enough for the students (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe 1994).

Murphy (1999) found that relations between universities and schools were, for the

most part, still very traditional. In lieu of this, or to enhance the existing partnerships

between schools and universities, some institutions have opted to utilize some new and

creative approaches to research and field training. "A number of programs were designed

to provide virtual schools in which a variety of problematic situations can be posed and

decision-tree alternatives pursued with multiple implications" (Hart, 1999, p. 121). Hart

continues, that in an attempt to increase the knowledge base of the student and to help

prepare them on how to manage difficult situations, a series of ill-structured problems,

real or created case studies, and other types of problem solving skills were created (Hart, 1999). Through the use of these problem-based learning scenarios, students can be introduced to a variety of problems covering a wide array of topics that would be difficult to reproduce during on-the-job training.

Van Mater (1999) also looked at the idea of a virtual university where multiple universities across the nation would be connected through the Internet allowing students and professors across the country to share and cross-pollinate ideas. Simulations and scenarios would be created for students to solve. With the completion of each simulation, several possible strategies or solutions could be shared and discussed.

A technique that many universities are using to attempt to solve some of the problem of content delivery is the use of cohorts. According to Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994),

> The core of a well designed curriculum would focus around a cohort group who would progress through the preparation program together. The course study would revolve around a planned sequence of core experiences addressing theories of learning, curriculum strategies, program evaluation, decision making, and planning as they occur within a collaborative organization. (Mulkeen & Cambron-McCabe, 1994, p. 23)

By having students take their coursework using the cohort method, it is easier to assure that all students have taken the proper courses in the sequence they were intended and that information will not overlap from course to course.

The cohort model will also help students build professional and supportive relationships with other students who may also be educational leaders someday. As Hirth (2001) points out "another reason we chose a cohort model was our observation that students work best in groups, especially when they have a common interest" (p. 235). He goes on to note that many students in the traditional Ph.D. program drop out due to the

"lack of peer support." Thus, with the added support provided by the cohort model, it could be anticipated that the dropout rate would decrease.

> To date, the cohort students have provided support for each other, with many of them 'bonding' as if family members. The retention rate has ranged from 80 to 90 percent. Those who have dropped out have done so for personal reasons (divorce, family health problems, etc.) and not due to dissatisfaction with the program. (p. 235)

Shapiro (1994) found much the same sentiment in his findings. "The cohort offered the graduate students support, friendship and networking possibilities. It provided a unifying aspect to the whole graduate student experience" (p. 172).

National Certification for School Administrators

The **eighth** recommendation proposed by the NPBEA is that "a national professional standards board consisting primarily of practicing school administrators be established to develop and administer a national certification examination and that states be encouraged to require candidates for licensure to pass this examination" (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5). The board found that most students in education administration programs earn an A average throughout their tenure at the university whether they deserve it or not (NPBEA, 1989). A national exam would in theory help to justify the grades and degree earned by educational administrative students. As Murphy, (1993b) points out, academic rigor and integrity of the program are often sacrificed for greater enrollment and compliant behavior on the part of the students (1993b). The national certification could help deter this practice. Faculty members often find it difficult to hold part-time students, who work full-time during the day, to the same high standards that they would expect from other students working at such a level of study. Under the current system, if one university is seen as too "difficult," they may lose prospective candidates to another

university in the area offering an "easier" curriculum (Cooper, 1994). However, national certification would encourage the most qualified candidates to seek universities providing programs with a greater chance to help them achieve on the exam. In addition, if a neighboring institution does not meet the new tougher standards, it would lose accreditation causing their reputation and, subsequently, its enrollment to suffer. The NPBEA recommends a national standards test be created that all students must pass in order to get certification and licensure in educational administration. Students earning an A average would now have to prove that they truly deserves such high marks (NPBEA, 1989).

Achilles (1990) seems to reinforce the board's finding that "no universally accepted set of competencies exists for administrators to possess: indeed those preparing administrators often disagree on what constitutes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be taught as the core of educational administration" (p. 14). Once those essentials are figured out, universities will need to determine if students learned what they were supposed to. The problem is that:

> Education administration preparation programs do not yet have recognized sets of evaluation tools for assessing the competence of their students. Sound methods of assessing student competence are needed both in the classroom and on the job. Those responsible for preparation need ways to ascertain whether or not the skills to be taught were, indeed, taught. (p. 26)

Until these requirements are figured out, it will be difficult to test students to see if they meet the requirements, and schools of education will remain "notoriously resistant to change and [continue to be] viewed as largely irrelevant to practice" (Mulkeen et al., 1994, p. 254).

Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994) argue, "Law, medicine, business administration, and public administration have evolved their own distinctive models of graduate

education tailored to the specialized knowledge and skills required for effective performance in their professional roles. School administration has not" (p. 24). Until education follows the lead of many other departments in the university and develops a standard set of core knowledge that all members accept, it will be difficult to test and assess the effectiveness of preparation programs for educational leaders.

National Program Accreditation

The **final** recommendation given by the NPBEA is that "national accreditation of administrators preparation programs be withheld unless the programs meet the standards specified in this report and that criteria for state accreditation and program approval include these standards" (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5). The NPBEA was very concerned with the quality of the preparation programs that produce education administrators. They suggest that many of these programs are offered simply to attract students and, subsequently, dollars into the institutions. By having a national or state board accredit these institutions based on how well they meet specific qualifications, these institutions would either have to improve the quality of their program or risk losing accreditation and funding when students choose not to go there. These boards could also recommend the reduction of universities offering these programs. The accreditation should include the areas of faculty, program, and student quality (NPBEA, 1989).

There has not been a universally accepted national set of requirements for educational administration programs to follow. Universities typically have attempted to follow the recommendations or requirements of some outside organization, should it be a state or an education association, by meeting only "minimum criteria that knowledgeable professionals deem necessary to ensure program quality" (Achilles, 1990, p. 15). "Much

of what these programs [were] based on is reports and ideas that themselves are not

research but get quoted so much that they are considered true" (p. 17). In other words,

some programs were based on "inadequate sources such as state rules, license require-

ments, practice of administration, research, and theory, tradition and folklore" (p. 14).

Achilles also points out that the effectiveness of many of these programs is measured by

the organization themselves and partially based on the perception that they were

maintaining, at least on paper, some outside set of standards.

The reason why many universities neglect to change their course offerings can be

found in Cooper (1994):

> Once a course or program is reviewed and approved by the state education
> agency, it is usually up to the local faculty to set program admission standards and
> determine the precise content, activities, readings, and assignments for individual
> approved courses, as well as course sequences and patterns for course offerings.
> Nevertheless, because of the length of the process and the possibility of denial,
> the process often discourages needed efforts to redesign programs and curriculum.
> Thus, tinkering with course titles and numbers often replaces major program
> change. (p. 64)

National accreditation may be a strong enough impetuous for this needed change and

force universities to change.

However, universities would not necessarily want to make some of these changes

due to the difficulty. "At the most specific level, such reform means developing new

routines-policies, regulations, and practices-that both restore academic integrity to

preparation programs and create an infrastructure to guard against the emergence of new

bargains and treaties" (Murphy, 1993b, p. 228). Hart (1999) has noted some positive

outcomes of these trends.

> Where change in licensure, certification and accreditation has begun to occur, the
> most notable trend is the emphasis on authentic standards and assessment. That

is, standards for the preparation and development of administrators are closely tied to the nature of administrative work, focusing on the knowledge and skills necessary to perform leadership functions. (p. 137)

This connection between the development of administrators and the knowledge and skills can have a positive lasting affect for years to come.

The Levine Report

In his policy paper on the subject, Levine (2005) argues that universities are involved in what he calls "A Race to the Bottom" due to factors such as an incoherent curriculum, low admission standards, a weak faculty, inadequate clinical instruction, inappropriate degrees and poor research. This work had proven to be an important next step in the evolution of this topic.

Levine's suggestions for improvement are very similar to those stated by the NPBEA. He argues that successful programs incorporate or adhere to the following nine points.

1. They have developed a clear purpose for their program that is driven by the needs of today's educational leaders.

2. These programs have a rigorous curriculum that teaches the skills and knowledge needed by educational leaders.

3. Theory and practice are both integrated into the curriculum.

4. Faculty includes persons from both academia as well as practitioners, and, ideally, the professors have experience with both.

5. Students in successful programs are recruited based on their merit as candidates not simply because they applied and met low minimum standard.

6. At the end of the program, the degree bestowed upon the individual is appropriate for the profession and based on high standards.

7. Research is meaningful and relates to the education profession.

8. Universities provide adequate finances so the program continues to meet the above stated needs.

9. The program engages in continuous improvement and reflection to remain current and viable.

In response to this report, the Illinois State Action for Education Leadership Project (IL-SAELP) Consortium (2006) formulated their own set of recommendations for administrative preparation programs relevant to the state of Illinois. These recommendations are clearly tied to the Levine report as well as the NPBEA findings. This project was funded by the Wallace Foundation, which, according to their website, is dedicated to supporting ideas, sharing solutions and expanding opportunities, to "complete a project aimed at strengthening education leadership throughout the state." The IL-SAELP goal was to create broad based initiative to enhance student learning through stronger leadership and to remove barriers to becoming effective leaders. The end result of the effective leadership development would be improvement of student achievement.

This IL-SAELP report attempts to expand and tailor their responses and suggestions to fit the needs of institutions within the state of Illinois. For instance, the committee agreed with Dr. Levine with regard to the need to raise admission standards into these preparation programs; however, they decided to focus more on aligning "admission criteria and standards that better predict individuals qualified with the skills needed to be instructional leaders as well as the interest to pursue careers in the field" (IL-SAELP, 2006, p. 8). In addition, they wanted to make sure that those entering the institutions were prepared for the job they wanted. The committee suggested that, in addition to creating a single entrance point with higher admission standards, alternate exit points should also be created as well as programs tailored to the student's individual

needs based on their exit point. This would allow, for instance, someone interested in obtaining a position as a lead teacher, as opposed to superintendent, to only take those courses relevant or specific to the position they are interested. This way, they would be prepared for the specific job they are interested in, would be less likely to take courses simply to move up on the salary schedule, and would, thus, help to eliminate unqualified or uninterested candidates from being prepared for upper administrative positions they never plan to obtain.

<div align="center">**Additional Criticisms and Suggestions**</div>

Skill Development

There are other criticisms leveled against university educational administration preparation programs beyond those stated in the NPBEA report. Among this criticism is the opinion that many professional development programs for principals do not address the skills that leaders really need or they neglect recent research on effective teaching and schooling and how to be effective instructional leaders. Achilles (1990) pointed out that these programs should include "learning theory, understanding curriculum, human development, leadership, and evaluation" (p. 18). According to the Policy Forum on Education (1999), up to three-quarters of current principals in some studies were not skilled in instructional leadership. This finding is devastating, considering that most principals and superintendents are supposed to spend the majority of their time improving the instruction in the school or district.

Bulach (1998) feels educational administration programs should help candidates develop their interpersonal skills in order to help them better relate to others while working in a professional environment. Leaders of tomorrow need the help, loyalty and

commitment of others in the organization both above and below them in order to succeed. Learning interpersonal skills, as well as verbal and communicative skills, will help school leaders improve their chances of success.

Licensure Requirements

The Southern Regional Education Board (2001) has identified several strategies for improving the way educational leaders are prepared including changing the licensure procedure used for new administrators. According to their plan a two-tiered licensure system should be created. New administrators would receive an initial licensure for 3 years. Once a practitioner has met several specific benchmarks and proven his or her worth as an administrator, they would then be granted a professional license.

Others would like to see the requirements for licensure increased to ensure that all those holding certification are adequately prepared. The shortage of quality applicants necessary to fill educational leadership roles in schools is more a reflection on the large number of certified candidates that are inadequately prepared to be effective leaders. In almost every state, more than enough educators hold the required credentials on paper to fill all the open administrative positions. However, many of these certified administrators would not make good leaders (Southern, 2003). To put it another way, "certification, as it exists today, is not proof of quality" (p. 2). Norton (2002) would agree with the inade-quate pre-service training received by many potential educational leaders. "Although most states continue to require potential school leaders to complete university course work before they assume leadership positions…there is little evidence that the university program, as now conducted, make any difference in preparing principals who create high-performing schools" (p. 24).

Sequencing of Courses

Another criticism of educational preparation programs focuses on the sequencing and reinforcement of courses. Taking courses such as finance and law several years before acquiring an administrative position may not be beneficial because "by the time the information was needed, it had either been forgotten or much of it was out of date" (Bottoms, 2001, p. 23). Other research proposes having practicum-like experiences earlier in the program sequence instead of being used as capstone project (Southern, 2003). According to Levine (2005), another problem in addition to sequencing is the rigor and usefulness of courses. He points out that at many universities the curriculum continues to consist of various survey level courses that fail to meet the needs of the students and provides the minimum standards set by the universities. In essence, the courses students are being asked to take are not rigorous enough to prepare candidates to fulfill the demands of the job.

Alternate Routes for Certification

The use of alternative certification is the final complaint against educational leadership programs to be discussed in this paper. The reason for its inclusion is to demonstrate that critics and opponents of the current system are not sitting idly by waiting for change to happen but rather actively looking for other solutions to what they see as problems in the current system. Since 1999, Illinois has had an alternate route for the certification of superintendents but not principals. The reason for this difference is the belief that principals need to be educational leaders for the school and can only gain the experiences necessary for this role with a teaching background. Administrative knowledge should come through a standard educational administrative preparation

program. The rationale was that superintendents did not necessarily need to be strong educational leaders and thus should be allowed to gain alternate certification. This alternate certification program is offered through Western Illinois University (Feistritzer, 2003). It was envisioned that individuals with business and military experience would be willing to use these alternative routes to move into leadership roles in schools, especially the superintendency. In reality, this has not and should not happen in very large numbers for a variety of reasons. Achilles (2001) agrees with the use of alternative certification for teachers to attract qualified candidates to education as well as increase the job satisfaction for the job of principal in a variety of ways.

When exploring alternative ways to move individuals into educational leadership positions, we typically think of training only those outside the field of education, such as business leaders or military personnel. We tend to forget about the quality teacher who has shown leadership ability but does not have formal training in administration. As fewer candidates are using existing alternative routes to certification, a closer look at this approach may be needed (Southern, 2003).   Individuals recognized as good teachers with proven leadership abilities should qualify as candidates to go through such a program. With the dwindling supply of qualified, not just certified, candidates available in the future, this may be an option that has to be explored. However, according to Levine (2005), despite the mounting pressure from outside forces and the growing use and acceptance of alternative certification, most universities have continued to do as they have in the past.

Alternative Resistance

Elmore (2006) was very critical of university preparation programs. He referred to them as cartels for their "interlocking and self-perpetuating system of state agencies,

cash for-credit university programs, and hopelessly inadequate local hiring practices" (p. 517). He feels that, as long as they have a monopoly on preparation programs, universities will never improve enough in their preparation of future administrators. He advocates strongly for alternative routes for certification and for the removal of the universities stronghold on certification. He feels that programs should be centered on an "instructional core" to better prepare candidates "through the direct management of instructional practice" (p. 517). He believes that states have failed to regulate these institutions, which has resulted in a system where "universities cannot resist using educational administration programs as cash cows" (p. 518).

Making this challenging is that, according to Creighton (2003-2004), the number of institutions nationwide offering graduate degrees in educational leadership has continued to grow to the point that, by the year 2004, a total of 371 Educational leadership programs were available in the U.S. and Canada. Furthermore, the percentage of educational leadership programs offering the doctorate has increased almost 20% as well. These data coincide with that provided by Glass (2000), indicating the percentage of superintendents holding a doctorate level degree had increased more than 15% from the early 1970s to 2000. The issue is that the more educational administration programs that exist, the harder it is to ensure the quality and the more diligent the perspective student needs to be.

Murphy (2006) refers to schools of education as "slow-stepping elephants when it comes to leadership education—sluggishly adjusting to today's call for new blood, stronger content, more relevance, and higher quality" (p. 419). NCLB and other demands on schools have raised the stakes for the preparation of administrators who can make a difference and get results. He discusses the pressure and need for these institutions to

change their ways before they become marginalized or replaced by other certification

methods. He also discusses the success of superintendents in some big cities that came

from outside the education world and have held their own professionally. In short, his

argument is that if universities do not change and improve the product they are putting

out, others outside that realm will fill this need, which could lead to a dramatic change in

the way future administrators are prepared. As stated by Murphy (2007),

> The university monopoly on the preparation of school leaders has already been
> broken, and new foundations are being poured. We must find ways to make
> practice the center of preparation, so that, this time around, the thoughtful work
> underway in universities and in other settings will do more than produce marginal
> results. (p. 585)

Challenges and Responses

Although many challenges have been outlined above, improvement and possible

solutions can only occur if needs are clearly defined and all participants have a say in the

decision. As communities, businesses, technologies, and schools evolve, the role of

superintendents will continue to adapt to meet these changing needs. The programs that

prepare these future leaders must change as well.

The Emergence of Standards

Partly as a result of the publication of *A Nation at Risk* and partly out of a desire

to hold educators accountable for their performance, various sets of standards have

emerged. One of the first well-publicized attempts to create a set of standards to help

define what it means to be a superintendent was published in 1993 by the American

Association of School Administrators (American 1993). The AASA (Appendix A)

standards attempted to create guidelines for how superintendents should act and what

knowledge they should possess. Superintendents were expected to be proficient in all

areas of standards and schools could use them as a tool when selecting their next educational leader for the district. *The Professional Standards for the Superintendency* consisted of eight separate standards that dealt with topics including Leadership, Community Relations, Organizational Management and Curriculum Planning and Development.

Seven years after the National Policy Board of Educational Administration published their recommendations for improving educational leader training and 3 years after the publication of the AASA standards, a consortium consisting of 32 educational agencies and 13 educational administration associations known as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) came out with their own framework for school leadership based on what they determined to be qualities necessary for successful school leaders (Interstate, 1996). The ISLLC standards (Appendix B) are not meant to compete with the NPBEA recommendations but rather to complement them. The consortium considers its work to be part of their role of upgrading the profession on a regular basis. Beyond each standard, the consortium determined areas of knowledge, disposition, and performances that are necessary to accomplish the standard successfully. "The job domain categories based on the *Standards for School Leaders* consist of indicators (knowledge, performance, and disposition statements) that define standards reflecting best practices for effective school leadership" (Holloway, 2001).

The purpose of the ISLLC standards is to help practitioners and preparation programs concentrate on the key skills and attributes of successful educational leaders. "The recurring theme that runs through the standards and their indicators mandates that school leaders focus on such crucial issues as teaching and learning, collaboration with

stakeholders, and articulation of a shared vision for education and the school" (Holloway, 2001 p. 17). Holloway also points out that by "using job analysis and a national body of standards for school leaders, we can create both evaluation and professional development opportunities for school leaders" (p. 17).

The ISLLC standards were adopted, in part, to counter criticism of educational administration preparation programs specifically, attacks on current programs "for focusing on the academic dimensions of the profession to the near exclusion of actual practice. They have also lambasted programs for ignoring the ethical and moral dimensions of the job" (Murphy, 2001, p. 14). Preparation programs for superintendents have also been attacked for too strong a focus on management issues as opposed to educational leadership training. As Murphy (2001) states; "the problem with educational leadership preparation programs today is that they are driven by neither education nor leadership" (p. 14). Murphy continues,

> Turning to the methods used to educate school leaders, nearly every program component has been found wanting in the past decade. Quality leaders are not actively recruited and selection standards are low. Program content is often irrelevant, connected neither to the central mission of schooling not to the practice of leadership. Instruction is dull and the faculty members are only marginally more knowledgeable than their students. Standards of performance are often conspicuous by their absence. (p. 15)

The consortium's standards are also important because they "provide the DNA for reculturing the profession of school administration" (Murphy, 2001, p. 16). Universities around the country are starting to restructure their preparation programs for educational administrators around the standards.

Forsyth (1999) points out that in many cases, especially early on, researchers focused on the behavior of administrators rather than the tasks he/she must perform

and/or how these tasks might affect the school. As the author points out, it is like studying how a doctor behaves as opposed to how his/her actions affect the well being of the patient. Before the standards, educational leaders were more likely to concentrate on behavior as opposed to tasks that administrators perform.

The standards themselves are not a random or haphazard approach to reorganizing education administration preparation programs. They "were carefully developed from literature about the changing landscape of society and education and research about effective leaders in schools and other organizations" (Shipman, 2001 p. 69). "The intent of the developers of the standards and indicators was to strengthen school leadership in such arenas as preparation program reform, professional development, and assessments for licensure and relicensure" (p. 69).

A 50-state survey completed in late 1998 indicated that more than two-thirds of the states have adopted or adapted the standards. Other states are either considering adoption of the standards or plan to utilize them as a research tool while trying to create their own standards (Shipman, 2001). In addition to states, several individual universities are redesigning their preparation programs by using the ISLLC standards for guidance. "The common strategy has been for a state to adopt the standards and then require all universities and colleges in the state to redesign their programs on the basis of the standards" (Shipman, 2001 p. 69). Murphy (2002) argues that:

> The ISLLC *Standards* are an empirically-based set of values that go a long way in redefining the field of school administration. They provide the core technology of the business—i.e., learning and teaching—as well as the knowledge about how to develop schools where all youngsters learn well—i.e. school improvement. They acknowledge the critical nature of the political, managerial, and organizational dimensions of the profession, for sure. But, in a break from the past, they link

these elements, or put these dynamics, in the service of education—learning, teaching, and school improvement. (p. 6)

Murphy (2002), who helped create the standards, asserts that:

The game plan to bring the *Standards* to the center stage of school administration is quite straightforward and highly instrumental: (1) identify all the major leverage points that provide that texture and shape to the profession and then (2) reform each of these leverage points using all the governmental, professional, and market forces that can be harnessed. (p. 6)

The ISLLC is trying to find other ways to make the standards part of the function of education. They work closely with many of the professional organizations and state organizations to create forms of certification, assessment, and professional development based on the standards as well as advising universities on their preparation programs (Murphy, 2002). "What is absolutely clear, however, is that control over licensure is an especially robust, government-based strategy for reweaving the fabric of school administration writ large and the content of preparation programs in particular" (p. 5).

Building upon the standards set forth by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, on behalf of The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, revised and updated the standards to create *The Standards for Advanced Programs in Educational Leadership; for Principals, Superintendents, Curriculum Directors, and Supervisors*, published in January 2002. These new standards (Appendix C) are the result of an integration of the guidelines set forth by the NCATE, the main accreditation body for university programs of this sort, and the ISLLC standards, while adding doctoral-level program reviews and added performance assessments.

As is evidenced in the title, these standards are meant to be used while preparing school leaders in both school and district level positions. Thus, each of these new

standards is categorized for meeting the specific needs of building and district leadership.

The standards are also broken down within these two categories for each of the specific

requirements in the standard. For example, the first standard has guidelines specifying

how a school or district leader should develop, articulate, implement, steward, and

promote community involvement in a vision (National, 2002).

Each standard is also followed by a narrative explanation of how/why the standard

meets the needs of educational leaders and the community they serve. Examples are pro-

vided describing promising practices of candidate performance activities. These examples

should not be used as a canned performance exercise. On the contrary, they are merely

intended to represent various types of performance activities that could be adapted or used

to ensure that the standards are being met (National, 2002).

The effectiveness of the new standards will also be assessed by performance-

based measures after students have completed the requirements set for by an institution.

These performance-based measures will attempt to gauge the effectiveness the program

has had on its students as it relates to mastering these new skills in real-world

applications.

The new standards should help institutions find better ways to change their

programs to assist students in gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the

ever-changing needs of society. Quality schools often start and end with quality leaders.

These standards should help future leaders and institutions narrow the focus on what

research says is the most vital attributes of good practice. Berry (2006) does caution,

though, that the standards are the minimum expectation or requirements for pre-service

training at the Masters level. They are not and should not be the pinnacle of what a

program should encompass and should be revised to meet the changing needs of schools and students.

The standards movement is not without its critics. The AASA standards were quickly criticized from many different angles. Some of the criticism characterized the standards as too broad, that few if any superintendents could live up to all the expectations, or that no performance indicators were present (Carter, 1997). Advocates of these standards point out that many of these issues have already been addressed with the ISLLC standards.

According to Coleman (2001), "the difficulty with standards are that they are typically written in obtuse language, so they are difficult to measure" (p. 55). He continues that in many instances, in order to get accredited, universities are forced to "disaggregate" the standards and find instances in the curriculum where they are being met. The situation becomes even more tedious when performance indicators are then added. Universities are forced to incorporate indicators into course syllabi. These indicators help the accreditation agencies determine if and where specific standards are being met. An important question posed by Coleman is whether or not these standards and indicators are reliable and/or valid in the first place or just politically correct. Universities may be spinning their wheels in order to meet standards that may or may not actually improve performance on the job. Coleman adds that the reason why the NPBEA, ISLLC, and other reform movements have not been widely accepted is because the predictive reliability of their individual proposals was never established. Studies have not shown that high success in meeting the measures within the documents has resulted in high degrees of performance in practice.

Coleman (2001) also argues that standards may not be the answer in improving

administrator performance on the job. He states,

> Standards are outcomes and terminal. Skills are procedural and instrumental. An
> infinite number of standards can be written, but skills are finite. The number of
> standards that can be written are virtually endless depending on the group sitting
> around the table when the standards are developed. However, only a limited
> number of skills exist. (p. 57)

Coleman feels that educators should concentrate more on the skills and assessments

necessary to be successful rather than on standards.

Elmore's (2006) criticism of the standards was for different reasons. As he states,

"Educational administration programs are typically characterized by what might

charitably be called 'list logic': here is a list of courses, take some or all of them, do an

internship, and, presto, you're qualified to be an administrator" (p. 518). It is his opinion

that standards, including the ISLLC standards, are in the end just another list of things to

be checked off. He continues;

> Strong practices derive not from lists, but from ordered, integrated frameworks
> that say, for example, what is central and what is peripheral to the knowledge
> required for the job, where the locus of practice begins, what skills and
> knowledge are associated with that domain, and what it looks like when the work
> is being done well. Strong practices stipulate cause-and-effect relationships
> between practice and its consequences for student learning, and these
> relationships are falsifiable on the basis of evidence. (p. 518)

According to Coleman (2001), data "suggest that skills rather than standards

produce better administrators. Stated somewhat differently, good skills will lead to

higher performance irrespective of standards used" (p. 57). Coleman, however, cautions

that good skills do not always lead to success in every instance. Skills can be situational,

in other words they may work well in one setting but not another. Coleman feels that

"universities would do well to focus on developing both the knowledge and the skills of

students, irrespective of standards. A highly defined set of skills correlate favorably with standards, apparently, regardless of the publisher" (p. 60)

Recent Changes

A study performed in 1996 by Murphy (1999) was conducted as a follow-up to a similar study he conducted in 1989 to gauge the differences in education administration programs as a result of the educational movements discussed earlier. According to the survey, some positive changes in several areas of educational leadership preparation such as selection/recruitment, clinical experiences and others over the 7-year period. However, there is still much to do. For example, many sample universities have reported gains in the recruitment of minorities and other non-traditional students. Specific evidence shows that the mix or type of student entered into educational administration preparation programs is including not only more minorities but more women as well. Other findings show that among university faculty many feel that as a department they are "arriving at more coherent and more shared understandings of leadership as well as more robust knowledge about experiences necessary to nurture leadership among students" (Murphy, 1999, p. 177).

As a result of this shared understanding "the picture of the type of student who fits that vision becomes much clearer. In turn, some programs are being more aggressive in seeking out these types of students rather than simply waiting for the traditional drop-in trade" (p. 177). There appears to be evidence that the standards used to measure student performance, as well as the qualifications for student admittance, has increased. There is also evidence that some "traditional selection measures such as grade point average and Graduate Record Examination scores had been ratcheted up" (Murphy, 1999,

p. 177). These changes in the recruitment/selection process geared towards diversity and

quality should have positive effects on the quality of the product being produced at

participating universities.

> Murphy (1999) continues by pointing out that:

> The focus on clinically based experiences in these programs has increased; there
> has been a significant increase in the role of fieldwork in administrator
> preparation. This enhancement can best be characterized as the strengthening of
> the full array of clinical components, from class-based activities to full-blown
> internships. (p. 180)

Among the more noteworthy differences was the infusion of more authentic materials and

opportunities for reflection. By having been provided with authentic assessments and

real-life experiences, the students should be more prepared for the challenges that lie

ahead of them professionally.

With so many educational institutions offering degrees in educational adminis-

tration (over 500 at last count), one must speak in general terms when describing changes

that are occurring. Data on change is often conflicting and only a general pattern

emerges. For instance, in a study conducted by McCarthy and Kuh (1997), many partici-

pants argued that educational leadership preparation programs are not in the midst of a

great change. In fact, many of the institutions studied felt that their programs are doing

an adequate job preparing educational leaders. Only a small handful of institutions are in

the process of overhauling their programs. Of all the NPBEA recommendations, the only

one that has been implemented extensively involves an increase in field experience for

prospective students (McCarthy, 1997). These surprising findings may be a result of

institutions trying to deflect the growing concern over educational administration

programs as a problem associated with other institutions and not theirs. One possible

limitation of this research is that it is self-reported by the department chairs of the institutions involved (Murphy, 1999). Although we would like to take such data at face value, it is important to remember that sometimes self-reflection can be tainted by the inability to see one's own weaknesses and the political pressures to prove one's worth or the improvement over time.

Some researchers, such as Van Meter (1999), do not necessarily see a nationwide movement to improve schools. He argues,

> Most program changes are ultimately a product of individual department and program faculties making improvements on the basis of their interpretation of what is needed and feasible within the context of their institution, rather than attempting to adopt an intact model, idea, or program design. (p. 158)

He goes on to state that recent program reforms seem "not to seriously challenge traditional graduate school policies and requirements that have been adopted at most universities" (p. 159). It would seem that institutions are correcting, piecemeal, those things that they themselves view as weaknesses and leaving intact the rest.

Cambron-McCabe (1999), who views educational leadership programs as essentially unchanged over the past decade, maintains that it "has been a time of ferment and spirited conversation" (p. 218). This ferment and conversation has lasted longer than many had anticipated. "Over the past decade, we have made some program changes, presumably fixing the problems identified by our critics. More, however, is being demanded of us in this restructuring wave; no check-off list exists" (p. 225). The author points out some areas of concern or in need of follow up including the idea that "although there is agreement (for the most part) regarding the importance of connecting preparation programs to practice, we have not sufficiently examined how these linkages promote

better leadership or school transformation rather than simply maintaining the status quo" (p. 222).

Achilles (1990) has voiced concern in letting organizations make changes without outside assurances that they are being made correctly and effectively. One of the major concerns in this area is that university program reports are usually self-administered, leading to the question of whether schools are making actual changes or simply "creating a paper trail to appear so?" (p. 15).

Cambron-McCabe (1999) also wrote about the university-school district relation-ship and pointed out that "formal partnerships provide opportunities not only for critical inquiry but for the development of case studies and problem-based learning (PBL) experiences for instruction" (p. 224). However, "although significant rhetoric exists regarding the efficacy of partner or professional development schools, the number of long-term collaborative partnership arrangements is small. Few universities have managed more than several pilot sites on a sustained basis" (p. 225). Reasons for not developing site-based partnership expressed by Cambron-McCabe can often be traced to one fact: they are very time and resource consuming. Usually there is no clear reward or advantage in creating such a program, especially when it is not a top priority of the university. As a result, most fieldwork programs occur individually as faculty build their own separate relationships with the schools. Similar to the reasons stated earlier in this paper by Andrew (1994), these types of changes are time consuming and often fly in the face of the actual reward system of most universities- research and publishing. According to Murphy (1993b), for this type of initiative to succeed, vast amounts of time and money will be necessary as well as a change in the current reward system.

In the area of selection and recruitment, Clark (1999) argues, "We must change our mindset from quantity to quality. No aspect of our preparation programs is more damaging than the perception held by or university colleagues, and by many classroom teachers, that we are a haven for mediocre teachers" (p. 229).

> We do not 'owe' anyone the right to be admitted to graduate study in educational leadership. But we do owe the children, youth, teachers, parents, and citizens who support public education an obligation to prepare only the most promising educators to compete for leadership roles in the schools. (p. 229)

This philosophy, although logical, will be difficult for many to accept. We live in a society that feels it is entitled to certain things and universities are driven more and more by the financial bottom line. Education administration programs in many universities are "cash cows" that can and are being exploited. If a university cannot survive by accepting lower numbers or after raising its selection qualifications, that institution probably should not exist.

Clark (1999) also points out that his early advocacy for full-time doctoral students was impractical. He would rather see students "immersed" in intensive study for a short concentrated period of time, preferably in a cohort. The change in philosophy was based on the realization that a requirement to have doctoral students attend full time will never work under the current configuration. As an acceptable compromise, universities should try to incorporate the best of the full-time doctoral program, namely the mastery of leadership, and a focus on content. If it is done correctly, the university can deliver a systematic program for the students in such a way that it will ensure mastery of the content in a supportive environment such as the cohort. As quoted earlier in this paper, research seems to bolster the argument that in a controlled cohort, students can get core knowledge delivered to them in a supportive environment. According to Clark (1999),

preparation programs should try to incorporate other subjects into their programs such as morality, C & I, early childhood, and ESL to help create a well-rounded leader.

Clark (1999) also points out that many educational administration instructors are still "storytellers" similar to those in the early 1900s. Other are not concentrating enough on classroom instruction, or taking enough care of the student issues, whereas still others concentrate on their own research and other professional concerns often due to the pressure to publish and gain recognition for the department.

Shakeshaft (1999) points out some of the problems she encountered while attempting to improve the preparation program in her institution. Many of these concerns were common throughout the country. Her specific concerns centered on the problems of recruitment and selection. This issue is critical in improving the quality of educational leaders.

> [First off] our traditional recruitment and selection process did little to help us diversify our student body. Typically, we have expected that word-of-mouth discussions of our programs by graduates and current students would bring in additional students. Although this may be true, this method is most likely to reproduce—not expand—the kind of student we already serve. (p. 241)

Secondly, "although we say we want student folks who think out of the box, we have no mechanism for determining who among our applicants might be such a professional" (p. 241). If a university cannot identify and correct these types of oversights it will be difficult for them to improve.

According to Mulkeen et al. (1994), many different solutions have been proposed to solve problems in educational administration preparation programs but rarely has there been consistency and enforcement of program quality. In many cases,

rather than trying to reinvent preparation programs, most university reform efforts viewed the crisis as primarily one of technique, organization, and funding. Solutions stressed technical concerns rather than social, political, or moral issues. It was argued that raising standards for admission to education administration programs, adding more courses, increasing the rigor of existing courses, tighter certification requirements, competency-based licensing, and supervised school site internships were the answers to the pressing problems in educating school administrators. (p. 251)

Mulkeen et al. would seem to be advocating many of the tenants of the standards proposed by the ISLLC, which look more at these types of social, political, and moral issues.

Haller (1997) questions altogether the notion that graduate study in educational administration actually improves job performance of administrators. Tinkering with existing programs probably will not change the quality of the outputs created by these systems. They are expensive and the costs to the individual, the school district and greater community often do not justify the expense. The cost to the individual is obviously the outlay of time and money to earn the degree. The cost to the school is incurred when those teachers who are capable of assuming greater leadership roles decline the opportunity to earn an advanced degree and, thus, decrease the quality of the applicant pool. The author continues that the current glut of certified applicants that are not of high quality attests to the fact that these programs are faulty. This glut of unqualified, yet certified candidates, begs the question, if we are training candidates that are not or cannot take these jobs, are we simply wasting valuable resources that could be allocated elsewhere? This brings us to the costs to the society that mandates pre service preparation programs for administrators. To the extent to which "tuition does not cover program costs, taxpayers subsidize graduate programs in educational administration" (Haller, 1997, p. 223).

According to Hart (1999), three main themes have developed since the emergence of the NPBEA recommendations for improving administrative preparation programs. The first is the "effort to strengthen and clarify the knowledge base for educational leadership" (p. 115), as well as new delivery techniques. This would include the development of core knowledge and concepts. The second theme of the era is professional practice. This includes the use of internships or other ideas focusing on getting the student practical field experiences. The third theme is the development of "new licensure, certification, and accreditation standards and assessment techniques for school leaders" (p. 115).

Kowalski (2009) found in a recent study he conducted that "novice superintendents were asked to identify the three greatest strengths, weaknesses, and omissions in their preparation" (p. 21). The areas listed as strengths included school law and finance and, to a lesser extent, networking, internship, research, data-driven decision making, personnel administration, and intellectual stimulation. Interestingly enough,

> the least beneficial aspects included over-reliance on theory and a lack of professors with experience as superintendents. When asked how preparation programs could be improved, superintendents recommended that greater coverage be given to school finance, law, school board relations, politics of education, and collective bargaining. (p. 21)

Dual Role of the University

For over a hundred years the institutions that prepare educational leaders have been trying to assess the effectiveness of their programs and determine possible changes that need to be made to these program. Throughout this tumultuous history, there has been a back-and-forth mentality about how our educational leaders should be trained. Forsyth (1999) points out very clearly that "as a rule, when universities control professional preparation, they undervalue the knowledge of artistry and the importance of

experience, sometimes to the point of making professional practice irrelevant. When practitioners control preparation, they undervalue technical knowledge and research" (p. 254). Educational leaders, to be effective, need to be proficient in both academic research and field experience.

Universities like to see themselves as great institutions of research, whereas students are looking for insight into what strategies and techniques will help them be successful in the field. Tension exists between the universities' need to expound upon and disseminate theory, and the practitioners need for training that would prove beneficial to them in their future careers. Also at issue is the proper place for and actual amount of training that should be left for on-the-job experience, as well as the place for ongoing training by professional organizations and states.

Universities see themselves as having a strong responsibility and need to provide students with sound, proven research in a variety of core subjects such as law, finance, educational theory, and other areas. They believe that understanding research is vital for educational leaders for a variety of reasons. Not only will it help them determine the proper course to take in their district, but it will provide them with the proper knowledge to implement new ideas or techniques into the district for maximum results. University research provides valuable insight so long as educational leaders are trained to interpret it correctly. It should also help educational leaders with their time management by helping them determine the correct research to look at and avoid using strategies and ideas that are not effective.

University structures are designed to gather, further, and disseminate research and theory. As a result, most institutions still reward staff based on research-driven criteria

such as the amount of work they have had published and not on other factors such as the

success of their students (Andrew, 1994). Although research and theory has its place in

the university and in the preparation of tomorrow's school leaders, it insufficiently meets

all of the needs of the practitioner. The next section will cover the importance and

inherent difficulties in setting up practical experiences for students in educational

administrative programs.

According to the policy brief put out by the Policy Forum on Educational

Leadership (1999), curriculum in most university programs preparing educational leaders

is mainly focused on management theory, finance, school law, and other state related

content. Issues such as instruction and school improvement are usually glossed over.

Most participants, however, felt that the primary characteristic of an effec-tive leader is

the ability to provide instructional leadership. So how can principals and superintendents

provide effective leadership if they are not properly prepared to do so?

Although universities are usually effective in teaching the concepts behind

research theories, they often fall short in providing the experiences necessary to practice

these concepts in the real world. "Typically students are inundated with theory but have

few opportunities to wrestle with applying educational theory to specific professional

problems and challenges" (Lumsden, 1992, p. 2). However, insufficient time is usually

spent in the planning, supervising, and evaluation of these real-world experiences, and

the relationship between theory and practice is often not stressed enough.

> Opportunities for learning leadership in real school settings are limited to fixed
> periods, rather that infused throughout the curriculum. Candidates are deemed
> ready for a leadership job based on how many credits they have accumulated,
> rather than how well they perform in a school situation. (Policy, 1999)

Most students felt that their fieldwork experiences were sterile or ineffective. As is pointed out by the Policy Forum on Educational Leadership (1999), people learn to be leaders by actually leading. Effective fieldwork should not be a "canned" experience that is the same for everyone. It should require a candidate to work on meaningful, challenging issues alongside other students or practitioners while completing meaningful goals. These experiences should also provide the student with a professional mentor or someone to talk to about the process.

One technique that many universities are using in an effort to provide more meaningful practical experiences is through the use of cohorts. According to Mulkeen and Cambron-McCabe (1994),

> The core of a well designed curriculum would focus around a cohort group who would progress through the preparation program together. The course study would revolve around a planned sequence of core experiences addressing theories of learning, curriculum strategies, program evaluation, decision making, and planning as they occur within a collaborative organization. (p. 23)

By having students take their courses using the cohort method, it is easier to assure that all students have taken the proper courses in the sequence they were intended and that information will not overlap from course to course. They will also have the opportunity to work closely with other students in a shared decision making process.

The costs inherent in changing a program to include worthwhile practical experiences will be high. A great expenditure of human capital will be necessary to redesign training experiences in order to make them more realistic and meaningful. Synthesizing theory with practice could be both time and resource consuming. As an example, long-term partnerships with local schools could be developed. This relationship would need to be established "to create partnership sites for clinical study, field residency, and applied

research" (NPBEA, 1989, p. 5). To successfully implement such a program, universities would need to focus on the quality of applicants more so than the quantities required to fill classrooms, thus eliminating a major source of income for the university.

Partnerships with school districts, however, could prove beneficial to both sides in the long term. School districts today are faced with difficult problems that need to be addressed but often lack the adequate human resources or the knowledge to do so. Universities, on the other hand, have a need to provide practical experiences for their students to study but have difficulty "creating" real problems. As part of the partnerships, universities could provide the research in addition to the opportunities for students to work with school officials to help address their problems all the while gaining valuable experience (Policy, 1999). Schools would also benefit from having a larger applicant pool of qualified administrators from which to choose.

Even if all aforementioned changes occur at the university level, a need for on-the-job training will still remain. "The expectations among districts will never be fully defined or regulated because of the divergent interests and expectations that exist in each district" (Carter, 1997, p. 17). Even within the same district, the needs of the children will change over time. As a result, administrators need to be able to deal with shifts in demographics, economics, and philosophies that are likely to occur after the point of accepting the job. Universities cannot be expected to specifically prepare students to meet every future need of every district in the nation. In fact, the longer a student has been out of the program, the less relevant some of what they have learned will become (Bottoms, 2001). The key then is to teach students the skills necessary to solve future problems by addressing the problem, breaking it down, and finding a working solution.

In some ways, problem-solving skills could be the most important part of leadership training, understanding how to handle situations as they arise.

One proposed means to teach students how to be effective leaders is through the use of problem-based learning strategies. According to Hallinger (1997), in Problem-Based Learning (PBL) the problem comes first. In other learning techniques, the information is first learned then applied. In PBL the problem is presented and then it is up to the students to decide what knowledge is necessary to solve the problem, thus making the newly acquired knowledge more meaningful and memorable. PBL favors problem solving or process skills. By utilizing these techniques, students will be prepared to address and solve future problems in the same way, even if they are not familiar with the situation at hand. Another advantage of PBL, according to Hallinger, is that the retention rate of the material learned is much higher than traditional methods of rote or book learning, even when applied to pre-planned activities.

Chapter Summary

Chapter II has provided a brief history of superintendent preparation programs and a general overview of some of the research and changes in this area in the past hundred years or so. The literature review makes it clear that changes will still occur in these areas for the foreseeable future. Researchers, educators, politicians, action committees, and community members will continue to work to improve the training our future superintendents receive and will continue to evolve to meet those specific needs for the next generation of students.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the specific course and rationale for the qualitative methodology utilized in this study. The research model utilized the constant comparative method with aligned data collection and analysis models. The study described individuals who made the transition from educational leadership classroom theory to practical application of those concepts. They then made the transition from the practical world to the world of academia and are now asked to reconcile these two concepts in a manner that is valuable to their students. The study is descriptive in that it describes the participants and their experiences.

Purpose of the Study

Some practicing administrators have attested to their belief that the match between formal pre-service training and the actual demands inherent in being an administrator is not a particularly good one (Lumsden, 1992). As a result of this finding and others like it, large amounts of energy and time have been devoted to assessing and addressing deficiencies in pre-service training so that future educational leaders will be better prepared for the realities of leadership. This study was a step in that same process.

The purpose of this study was to explore the insights and experiences of partici-pants who were in a unique position to speak about the duties, experiences and pressures of both the public school superintendent and a university professor. They were uniquely

situated to speak to the specific requirements of each position and their relationships to

what they had experienced and learned. This study explored and analyzed participant

experiences and explored facets of each career. The analysis provided information about

how practicing superintendents were trained, their areas of concern for their training, and

how they were training tomorrow's educational leaders. However, what made this study

unique was the fact that these participants have lived in both the practitioner and now the

academician world. Their experiences can help bridge this gap and suggest possible

changes to make this connection more meaningful.

<div align="center">**Reason for the Study**</div>

Universities can struggle in balancing their dual tasks of finding a workable

equilibrium between providing students an opportunity to think deeply about educational

administration and developing specific skills required to successfully "do the job" facing

their graduates. They see themselves as having a strong responsibility and need to

provide students with sound, proven research in a variety of core subjects such as law,

finance, and educational theory. Universities realize that understanding research is vital

for educational leaders for a variety of reasons. Research and theory is valuable in

helping administrators lead districts, in the determination of the proper course of action,

and in providing them with the best opportunity to properly implement ideas or

techniques into the district to maximize student results.

Research findings provide valuable insight so long as educational leaders are able

to interpret these findings appropriately. Knowing and using educational research may

help educational leaders avoid spending their time using strategies and ideas that are not

effective. On the other hand, many students are looking for help implementing and

running the day-to-day operations of the school or help in planning future initiatives. This study explored the tensions that exist in universities as they struggled with this dual role and sought possible solutions to address that tension, as it existed in superintendent training programs. By speaking to former superintendents who were currently employed as university professors of Educational Administration, it may be possible to gauge their perceptions of what the proper balance should be between theory and practice and what aspects of each are most important to learn in educational administrative programs or even how this balance could be achieved. These individuals have lived in both worlds. They have experienced the realities of what a superintendent was expected to know and do on the job to be successful. On the other hand, they also understand the importance of research to the overall focus and development of new and useful ideas. They were uniquely positioned to characterize this struggle, how they dealt with it, and what they thought could be modified in preparation programs to address these concerns.

The constant comparative method was originally designed to assist researchers in developing theories in different areas by using specific targeted sources. This qualitative technique was used by the researcher to look for distinct patterns and themes within the data that helped code the information in different groupings or clusters. From these clusters, the researcher looked for distinctive characteristics that describe the phenomenon under study.

Research Questions

Four sets of questions drove this study:

1. What are the perceptions and beliefs of former superintendents currently serving as professors of educational administration regarding their graduate-school preparation? How well do they think/perceive they were prepared to assume the role of superintendent?

2. To what extent, if any, does the tension between theory and practice at the university impact the views of the subjects about superintendent preparation programs?

3. How have the participants attempted to bridge the gap between practice and theory in their classrooms?
   a. What skills do they find important for their students to learn?
   b. How do they attempt to teach these skills to their students in their role as a professor?
   c. What theory do they find important for their students to learn?
   d. How do they attempt to teach the theory they think students should learn?
   e. What in their opinion is the appropriate balance should occur in preparation programs between theory and practice?
   f. What do the participants consider the role of research to be in the university experience?

4. How do you use practicum experiences to help with the preparation of prospective school superintendents?

Method Used

The specific qualitative analysis technique used in this study is most often

referred to as the constant comparative method.

> Constant comparative analysis allows the researcher to develop grounded theory. A grounded theory is one inductively derived from the study. Data collection, analysis, and theory are related reciprocally. One grounds the theory in the data from statements of belief and behavior of participants in the study. (Janesick, 1994, p. 218)

Bogdan (1998), points out that the constant comparative method was developed to assist

researchers working with multiple data sources. The technique involves "comparing and

contrasting each topic and category to determine the distinctive characteristics of each…

Researchers develop categories from their data by constantly comparing each category

with other categories to identify their distinctive attributes" (McMillan, 1993, p. 487).

Constant comparison also "stimulates thought that leads to both descriptive and

explanatory categories" (Lincoln, 1985, p. 341). Constant comparison can be used when

the researcher "seeks to develop an understanding that encompasses all instances of the process, or case, under investigation" (Denzin, 1994, p. 202). This method also allows the researcher to focus on negative cases and how they affect outcomes.

Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss first developed the constant comparison method in 1967. In their work, they described the four stages for the method: "(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory" (Glaser, 1967, p. 105). The authors continue to state that, as each stage grows, it transforms into the next stage; however, the work within the previous stages remains in continuous operation until the analysis is completed.

In later writing, Glasser (1978) described the steps in the following manner. The researcher should start to collect data in the field then analyze it by looking for key issues, recurrent events, or activities. This will help the researcher to generate theory or categories of focus. The researcher will then collect new data that relate to the categories of focus while attempting to see differences within the categories. The researcher can then start to write about the categories in order to describe and account for the data collected in order to discover the basic relationships within the data. The researcher will then engage in sampling and coding. If all data cannot be coded it will need to be checked to determine why it is outlying data and /or if the data still cannot be coded then the emerging theory does not fit completely and should be modified. The final writing focuses on the core categories of study.

Even though the constant comparative method was divided into distinct steps in the above explanation to help explain the different facets of the technique, all the

activities actually occur on simultaneously as more data is collected from other sources and coding continues. As Strauss (1998) maintains, "a researcher does not begin a project with a preconceived theory in mind…rather, the researcher begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data" (p. 12). Consequently, "theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection" (Strauss, 1994, p. 273). Patton (1990) reaffirms the fact that patterns, themes, and categories of analysis "emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 390).

Participant Selection

Participant selection is an important aspect of any study design, especially when dealing with a small sample size. In such cases, the sample size must be very purposeful. In this study, participants were required to adhere to very specific criteria. They must currently hold a position at an accredited university as a full time faculty member in a department preparing educational administrators and they must have held the position of superintendent. The reason for these selection criteria is as follows: to truly understand the internal dynamics of both positions, the participant must have recent experience in both "worlds." By holding the position of superintendent, the participant would have fully experienced the inherent pressures of the position in the field and their memory of the position should still be strong. These participants are uniquely qualified to understand the questions being asked having lived in both the academic and practitioner worlds. In many cases, the university that currently employs these former superintendents actively sought them as faculty members because they believed them to be superior superintendents who would also have the qualifications to be high quality faculty members.

Participants for this study were selected from a pool of former superintendents currently serving as professors in educational administration programs. To find participants, the researcher contacted public universities in the state of Illinois that offer a superintendent endorsement program. From there, the researcher identified faculty members that met the parameters of the study. Each possible participant was then contacted via phone or e-mail. A brief explanation of the purpose of the study was given and participants were asked to participate. Of the 17 qualifying participants in the state of Illinois, 11 (65%) eventually responded that they would be willing to participate and were subsequently asked to sign a letter of consent (Appendix D), fill out a brief questionnaire (Appendix E), and be interviewed. Second e-mails and phone messages were sent to the remaining seven possible participants. One participant stated that he did not have time to participate in the study at this time. He was subsequently contacted 3 months later but did not respond. The six remaining qualifying participants never responded to the first or second e-mail or phone messages. In the end, participants were interviewed from five of the seven (71.4%) public universities in the State of Illinois that offer this endorsement, not including Illinois State University where the researcher was currently enrolled.

Data Collection and Management

This study utilized purposeful sampling. Participants had to fit the above description but also be willing to work with the researcher and be available to be interviewed. Limitations were also placed on the study sample by restricting participants to those working at universities within the State of Illinois. The largest reasons for these limitations were the accessibility of participants, and geographical interest of the topic for the analyst. These limitations were also a means to control key variables that could

change if private schools or additional states were invited to participate in the study.

Prior to contacting potential official participants, two individuals working at Illinois State University fitting the participant requirements were interviewed to pilot the research questions and the interview protocol. Their answers were used to focus and refine the questions asked during the final interview process. However, their answers were precluded from the final product as the researcher was earning his Ed.D. from Illinois State University and did not want their information to sway the final analysis.

<center>**Interviews**</center>

Participants were given the option for a face-to-face interview or a telephone interview. The telephone interview was offered to help the researcher cover a larger section of the State of Illinois in a reasonable amount of time with resource efficiency. However, no preference was shared with participants. In the end, all participants opted for the latter stating the convenience it provided them in scheduling. Participants were interviewed using a preselected set of interview questions (Appendix F). All telephone interviews were recorded using an Olympus VN-3100PC digital voice recorder with an Olympus TP7 attachment designed specifically to record telephone conversations. Originally, the protocol for this study called for the use of a professional secretary to transcribe each of the interviews. However, the researcher decided to complete all transcriptions on his own utilizing *Dragon Speak* voice recognition software. After the original transcription was complete, the researcher listened to the recordings a second time and made final edits for accuracy. Interview length ranged from just under 30 minutes to more than 45 minutes. Some participants were more willing to share their thoughts and to expand upon earlier answers. The final encompassing question response

times varied greatly as well. After the transcripts were in their final form, they were e-mailed to each individual participant along with a summary of the findings. Participants were given the opportunity to edit, clarify or delete any information on the transcripts. All participants responded with acceptance of the transcripts and summations.

Data Analysis

While using the constant comparative method, researchers will start to develop initial categories from analysis of data while still in the field (Janesick, 1994). "The analyst will continuously move back and forth between the logical construction and the actual data in a search for meaningful patterns" (Patton, 1990, p. 411). Bogdan (1998) points out "formal analysis begins early in the study and is nearly completed by the end of data collection" (p. 66). All of this made it necessary to carry on all the above steps at once. New raw data helped guide the focus of the research, making it necessary to modify and in some cases re-gather data from earlier participants. In other words, this study was a work in progress in which some attributes changed as new categories or areas developed along the way based on data gathered.

As the interviews were still being conducted, initial patterns or themes emerged from the data. Once all participants were interviewed and the data transcribed, the official process of clustering data and responses into categories or themes began. An important question to consider with any qualitative study is when to stop or how does the researcher knows when to stop data collection and analysis? Glaser (1967) points out that "since no proof is involved, the constant comparative method in contrast to analytic induction requires only saturation of data—not consideration of *all* available data, nor are the data restricted to one kind of clearly defined case" (p. 104). Theoretical saturation

helps limit the number of categories and the number of subjects. It refers to the point in data collection when further participant responses do not add additional categories or add to the categories being studied. At this point, additional information would only work to add more bulk to the data and would add nothing to the theory (Glaser, 1967). Due to the nature and limitation placed on participants, overall numbers were low. However, rich data were collected and clear clustering of responses was evident. Data saturation was not achieved, but emerging saturation was evident in several areas prior to the end of all interviews.

Limitation of the Study

As alluded to earlier in the chapter, there were a few limitations to this study. For example, the specific requirements utilized to identify potential participants limited the number of possible candidates. Furthermore, the non-response of six potential partici-pants and the decision to exclude private or data from states other than Illinois limited this pool even more. However, it was determined that limiting the scope of participants to public institutions within the state of Illinois was more meaningful to the intended audience than gathering data from a wider and deeper pool with less commonality. The study clearly used a much smaller purposeful sample, as opposed to a representative sample. These specific participants were selected because they were most likely to facilitate the expansion of a developing theory (Bogdan 1998).

A second limitation to this study was that its findings can only be attributed to the specific participants interviewed. Each participant had unique attributes and histories that could affect their answers such as their experiences leading up to their first superintendent position, the university they attended, and the unique demographics of the

schools they attended or worked for. Each of these could theoretically affect their responses and overall results. However, general observations may be derived from the findings, making it applicable to other individuals with similar situations or positions. The goal of constant comparative research is not to develop theory applicable to the total population. To accomplish such a goal, a large random sample would be used to provide the expectation of finding a sample similar in proportion to what would be found in the general population. However, quantitative data does not provide the rich detail, stories, and quotes associated with interviews and observations.

Another possible limitation of the study was that each superintendent interviewed was already retired from public K-12 education and, therefore, was at least in his/her mid 50s or older. This limitation would more than likely mean that the participants each completed their degree prior to any reforms made as a result of the NPBEA recommendations, ISLLC standards, or NCLB. This study looked to these more recent changes through the lens of the participants as professors, who more than likely experienced a much different education than their current students. To get a better picture of how these more recent changes have affected the preparation of future superintendents, a different kind of study would need to be done.

Initially, I was concerned that I might not find female ex-superintendents now serving as educational administration professors. During my experiences in preparation programs, I encountered several female ex-superintendents, but they were all at the Master's level. Evidence of this concern is the fact that of the 17 qualifying participants only 2 were female.

The final possible limitation of the study was the lack of participants from two of the universities within the State of Illinois that offer a superintendent degree. More specifically, one of these universities considers itself a "research" institution. I had hoped to compare the results of different "types" of universities with the assumption that "research" universities would recruit and hire different types of practitioners than schools that were described as "practical" universities. On the surface, the goal of "research" universities may be more in line with producing college professors or professional researchers, whereas the "practical" university would focus on producing future superintendents for the field.

Ethical Safeguards

Safeguarding the names and identities of the participants in this study was very important. As a result, the following safeguards were provided. First, permission to conduct the study was asked for in writing and then granted from the Illinois State University Internal Review Board based upon a written research proposal. As part of that review, the researcher was required to submit a written plan on how the names and identities of the participants would be protected, and it included the following provisions. The purpose and expectations from the study were presented to participants during their initial contact, and verbal and written consent were obtained from each participant. During this process, participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Each interview was digitally recorded to provide accuracy in transcription and coding. The files were accessible only to the researcher and were transcribed by the researcher and subsequently erased at the publication of the dissertation. Once the interviews were transcribed, participants were given the opportunity to review a written

copy of their transcripts and were asked to report any errors in transcription, corrections to what they had said, or additions they would like to add. No changes were reported. In this same communiqué, a brief summary of their overall responses was sent for the same purpose. For the dissertation, participants were given pseudonyms and the names of their former district and current university were omitted from the report. Throughout this whole process, the committee chairperson helped guide the process to point out areas that needed strengthening, and the entire dissertation committee reviewed the results section to ensure anonymity for the participants and their schools. These safeguards helped ensure the identity of individuals in this study.

Summary

This chapter described the specific methods and approaches used during this qualitative study. The researcher was interested in exploring the insights and experiences of former public school superintendents as they discussed their educational administrative pre-training. Having a different perspective of these training programs, as a college professor in the same type of program, the participants were uniquely situated to speak to their training and how that training affected them in the professional career and currently as a professor in such a program.

The constant comparative method was utilized for this study because it best fit the parameters to find the desired information, namely, the beliefs of the participants based on their experience in their educational administrative program, their first few years as a superintendent, and eventually, the professorship. The analysis provided information about how practicing superintendents were trained, their areas of concern for their training, and how they currently train tomorrow's educational leaders. However, what

made this study unique was that these participants have lived in both the practitioner and the academic world of education. The premise was that their experiences could help bridge any perceived disconnection between university training and student needs and could suggest possible changes to allow more meaning from these connections.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Participants as Educators

Participants for this study were selected from a pool of former superintendents currently serving as professors in educational administration programs. Their experiences as both educators and superintendents were varied. Some of the participants served in small rural districts, with only a few hundred students, whereas others served in larger urban areas with several thousand students. Some of the participants had very little experience in the classroom and/or as principal before assuming their first superintendent position.

All participants in the study have been given pseudonyms to protect their identities. The names of the school districts and universities that employed them have been deleted or altered in their statements as well as the institutions from which they graduated. These measures have been done to secure the identity of the participants and to eliminate negative consequences as a result of their participation in this study. Participants must know that their answers cannot be traced back to them, so they are free to give open and honest responses to the questions asked. Many of their responses were critical of the university they attended and/or the university at which they currently work. If their identities were to become public and responses directly attributed to them, serious embarrassment would occur for both the participants and/or the universities.

103

The participants in the study took very different paths to the position of superintendent. Table 1 provides information as it relates to the participants' experiences as public K-12 educators. Three of the participants had as few as 4 years as a teacher before moving into administration, with the longest serving teacher remaining in the classroom for 17 years. Interestingly, the median number of years in the classroom was 6, and the mode was 4. Administratively, the shortest tenure prior to assuming the superintendent position was 3 years, with 1 as a principal and 1 in the central office. Two of the participants served in administrative roles for 18 years prior to their first superintendent position. All but one of the participants served at one point as principal, with less than half serving in the central office. The shortest tenure as superintendent prior to retirement was 2 years and the longest was 26, with the median being 14 years.

Table 1

Participants' Experiences as Public K-12 Educators

Pseudonym	# Years Teacher	# Years Principal	# Years Central Office	# Years Superintendent	Central Office or Support Positions Held
Brian	6	18	0	9	N/A
Christopher	12	2/4	0	17/19	N/A
Carl	4	16	2	2	Associate Superintendent
David	8	1	2	15	Asst. Supt. for C & I
Jonathon	11	12	0	11	Guidance Counselor
Karen	12	6	5	15	Curriculum Director Asst. Supt. for C & I
Kevin	4	4	4	25	Asst. Regional Supt.
Lorraine	17	8	0	11	N/A
Paul	4	4	0	26	N/A
Steven	13	0	11	10	Asst. Supt. for Business
William	5	4	0	14	

Participants as Professors

Tables 2 and 3 describe the participants in relation to their experiences as college professors. The majority of participants have held their current positions as college professors for under 4 years. The longest serving professor has served for 17 years. The most common taught courses by the participants in their current position were five in finance followed by collective bargaining, and curriculum and organizational dynamics were at four apiece; three participants taught school law.

Table 3 illustrates the areas the participants felt were most important for them to learn prior to becoming a superintendent, where they learned these, and additional information or skills they wish they had prior to their first superintendent position. Five participants felt it most important to have learned people skills such as how to work with groups or team building. Four listed finance, and three listed law and curriculum. It is important to remember that this does not necessarily mean the skills or information that they felt was most important to have learned, rather the most important they had actually learned prior to their first superintendent position. Interestingly, nine of the participants felt they had learned the skills they found to be most important to them as a superintendent from practical experiences. Two of the participants felt a combination of experience and academic coursework were responsible.

Table 2

The Participants' Experiences as College Professors

Pseudonym	# years college professor	Courses taught at University	What skills do you teach	What aspects of theory
Brian	3	Supervision of Instruction Organizational Dynamics Collective Bargaining Capstone (online) Intro to research (online & campus) Organizational Dynamics	Organizational Dynamics Critical Supervision Model	Construc-tivism Cooperative Learning
Christopher	2	Personnel management Educational Technology Collective Bargaining Management of Organizations Finance	Communication Relationships Organization	Bolman and Deal's frames
Carl	4	Introduction to leadership Policy Educational law Educational Law 2 Special Educational Law Personnel	How to interpret data	Human Resources Interpersonal relationships
David	17	School Law Introduction to Masters Program Introduction to Specialist Program Supervisor for Interns	Habits of a good leader Habits of growing others Teambuilding	Types of organizations Types of theories
Jonathon	4	School Finance School Public Relations School Business Management The Superintendency	Group work Group process	Leadership or group dynamics
Karen	2	The Principalship Curricular Leadership Program Evaluation and Assessment School Law	Leadership skills Understanding networks	Curriculum theory
Kevin	3	Curriculum Management Superintendency Finance for CSBO–Revenue Finance for CSBO–Expenditure Superintendent capstone Politics of Education (Principals) Clinical Experience for CSBO	Communication Supervision Organization Communication	Learning communities

Table 2 continued

Pseudonym	# years college professor	Courses taught at University	What skills do you teach	What aspects of theory
Lorraine	2 years 5 in the early 80s Adjunct for 20+	Finance Facility Management Superintendent & Board Relations Secondary Principalship Curriculum and Technology Leadership Theory School Business Management	Connecting theory to application Getting the job done	Appreciation of theory
Paul	8	Finance, Collective Bargaining Politics Clinical	School Finance Collective Bargaining and Politics	Theory discussed at a minimum
Steven	8	Educational Leadership Organizational Design Supervision Policy Curriculum Superintendency Principalship	How to manage change Practical side of change management	Change Theory Neuroscience
William	2	Collective Bargaining Organizational Dynamics	The art and science of leadership	Leadership aspects Organizational dynamics

Table 3

Areas Participants Felt Important to Learn Prior to Becoming a Superintendent

Pseudonym	Most important things you learned prior to becoming a superintendent	Where Learned	Wish you had learned
Brian	How to work with groups How to identify the needs of a building curriculum	As a principal By making mistakes	How to plan a budget How to read annual report
Christopher	Communication Relationships Organization	Mentors and role models	Budget Financing
Carl	Finance Law	Principal	Negotiations Human Resources
David	Professional Development Problem Solving Team Building Empowerment	Assistant superintendent	Federal and State regulations Accreditation
Jonathon	N/A	Principal	Ability to utilize group experiences
Karen	Intrapersonal skills Leadership skills	From experience	School Finance
Kevin	Budgets Levies Financial workings	Elders in the region	None listed
Lorraine	Community relations Financing	Principal	Political end of the job Impact of legislation Lobbying
Paul	How to deal with people Law	Guidance counselor	School Finance
Steven	Finance side of operation Curriculum	Cur – academic/job experience Finance – academic	Better background in psychology
William	Nothing specific	Experience and academics	Finite financial issues that could not be learned without doing

The final column of Table 3 identifies areas the participants wish they had learned more about prior to that first superintendent position. Five participants listed finance or budgeting as an area they wished they had learned more about. Three participants listed items in the area of politics such as lobbying, regulations, and annual reports. It is worth noting that 9 of the 11 participants listed finance as an area that was either most important for them to have learned or an area they wished they had learned more about prior to their first superintendent position.

Interview questions were broken into three distinct sections reflecting the different stages of the participants' careers. The first set of questions focused on training to become a superintendent and their initial experiences after achieving the position. The second set of questions focused on their transitions from superintendent to college professor and their experiences as a full time professor in an educational administrative program. The final set of questions asked them to reflect, explore, and interpret how their current university deals with specific issues in the area of training future superintendents. As the research progressed, several themes emerged from the data.

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions and beliefs of former superintendents currently serving as professors of educational administration regarding their graduate-school preparation? How well do they think/perceive they were prepared to assume the role of superintendent?

The purpose of the first research question was to elicit responses from participants about their personal experiences and perceptions pertaining to how well they were prepared to assume their first superintendent position. The interview questions were written in such a way as to draw out how well they perceived they were prepared prior to

assuming their first superintendent position, how well their training translated to their actual on the job experiences, and what areas they perceived to be strongest and weakest. Their responses ranged from one participant who thought he was "totally prepared" to another who was "not prepared at all." Categorically, three participants thought they were very well prepared, six were moderately well prepared, and two were not prepared at all. However, it was evident from their responses that some participants, who went into their first superintendent position feeling well prepared, found that they were in fact not prepared.

Several factors contributed to the participant's perception of their graduate school preparation and how well it prepared them to become a superintendent. The most common theme from the data was that practical experience prior to taking over their first superintendent position was the most important factor in the comfort level. All participants cited their administrative experience as a bonus as they were asked to multi-task and learn first-hand what to expect. In fact, all but one participant considered their practical experiences to be more valuable than their coursework in preparing them for the role of superintendent.

A second theme in the data was that the participants were frustrated or disappointed in the academic pre-service training they received. They felt that their coursework and academic training inadequately prepared them. The third theme centers on the need for more practical training in pre-service programs. The fourth theme centers on the use and importance of mentors to help in the transition to their first superintendent position. Finally, the perception by many of the participants that their coursework and practical experiences should completely prepare them to assume the superintendency.

Central Office/Principal Experience

The data indicated that one of the factors affecting the likelihood that a participant felt very well prepared to assume his/her first superintendent position was having central office or principal experience. Several participants cited the importance of having the opportunity to learn aspects of the job from a current superintendent while working in other administrative positions. In general, participants who had prior administrative experience in the district office as assistant superintendent or public directors noted that they had already assumed many of the duties and tasks reserved for the superintendent.

In addition to his formal education, William had experience working closely with his superintendent and the central office where he was allowed to perform several tasks of the superintendent. He believes that these experiences helped complete his overall preparedness to assume his first superintendent position:

> Working with this man for 4 years he exposed me to every aspect of the superintendency. And without that I would have told you that I was somewhere beyond halfway prepared, but I was just so fortunate to have that balance of academics and then on-the-job training.

He saw his pre-service training as "a perfect balance of academic preparation with me making certain that I was taking courses, not only for a doctorate, but a doctorate focused towards K-12 superintendency."

Karen also considered herself "experientially rich" due to her time as a central office employee and principal in a large school district where she was expected to "do a lot of the work of a superintendent." She was placed in a position as close to the superintendent as possible and gained a good sense of what would be expected in the job. However, unlike William, she did not give much credit to her coursework. As she put it,

"the coursework I don't think was nearly as beneficial as was the experiences that I had."

In other words, her perceptual belief was that she was ready to become superintendent more because of her years of administrative experience than the coursework in her preparation program. She partially blamed their university preparation program for not providing more of these experiences. Prior administrative experience was a major factor for several other participants as well. Lorraine's principal experience in particular helped her to multi-task and handle finance, "which is a big part of the superintendency." She relied on her experiences prior to their first superintendency to help navigate through the early experiences. Kevin found that even with all his years of experience, he still felt inadequately prepared to assume many of the financial responsibilities of the job and that practical experience was not enough. Karen also quickly learned that she was not ready to "sit in the chair."

Coursework

Several participants gave most, if not all, of the credit for their feelings of preparedness to their prior administrative experience. These participants did not believe that their pre-service program prepared them to handle the issues and responsibilities they faced as superintendent. Carl even went as far as to say that "most everything that I learned that was useful I learned in my previous position working with the superintendent in the district where I was a principal." He went on to say that in his preparation program,

> I learned a lot of interesting things, but they weren't really relevant to me at the time to what I was doing. So I guess I would have to say most everything I learned, I learned from the superintendent I worked with.

The two participants who felt least prepared to assume their first superintendent position were very clear in their statements that they did not feel they were adequately

prepared and they squarely placed the blame on their preparation programs. David, who "felt totally unprepared in terms of all the demands" of the position, pointed out that he had learned a lot of interesting information during his preparation work but that much of it was not very useful:

> I had a great time, you learned a great deal, but in terms of things I've been called upon in the last 35 years to do, it didn't suffice as a preparation program….good people, good information so forth but really did not address the changes that I had to face over the last 30 years or so.

Paul was one of the few participants without central office experience. In addition, he had served as a principal for just a few years. He stated that "I thought I was actually not prepared for many of the issues, many of the responsibilities that I faced. I did not feel well prepared." In his situation, he did not have the opportunities to learn in the central office as so many of the others did and, as a result was lacking many of the experiences that had helped many of the other participants. "I don't think the university preparation programs I went to prepared me very well."

Practical Experiences

Participants expressed a desire to have had the opportunity to apply the theories they were learning in their coursework to real life applications. As Steven stated "Theory does inform practice but it's the university or the professor's job to tie them together so the student understands more deeply what's going on in practice because they understand the theoretical basis to things."

Practical experiences can help students avoid pitfalls. Tying theory to the practical world helps guide decisions and avoid mistakes made by others in similar situations. Some of the participants in this study looked at theory as a way to help future

administrators steer clear of avoidable mistakes. Brian talked about how many lessons are learned on the job, and successful superintendents remember their mistakes and try not to make the same ones twice. He feels educational administration classes can help future superintendents avoid some of those pitfalls and mistakes by paying attention to the classes that are taught, especially if they are taught in a practical way. Preparation programs can "save them from making some of the mistakes perhaps we made because we didn't have the theories taught or weren't paying attention, whichever the case may be."

Mentors

The data revealed another factor that contributed to the perceived preparation to assume their first superintendent position: mentors. Mentoring is a term generally used to describe a relationship between a less experienced individual, called a mentee or protégé, and a more experienced individual known as a mentor. Traditionally, mentoring is viewed as a long-term, usually face-to-face, relationship between these two where the person in the supervisory role guides the novice through his/her initial transition into a position or with his/her professional, academic, or personal development (Donaldson, 2000). For the purpose of this study, the mentor-mentee relationship is between a seasoned superintendent and a novice superintendent in the field.

Several of the participants cited the assistance from other administrators within the district, or in neighboring districts, as being helpful when they took their first position. These stories about being "taken under the wing" of a more seasoned administrator attest to the value placed on these relationships. This was above and beyond the training or mentoring they received as principal or central office staff. This assistance, or in some cases a person to talk to, was instrumental in helping the participants. These participants

encompassed a wide range of prior experience levels and types of districts. For instance, Paul, who had very little administrative experience prior to his first superintendent position, relied on a patient bard and guidance from more seasoned administrators inside and outside the district to be successful. In his case, the veteran bookkeeper helped him through one of the most important duties of a superintendent and one he did not feel ready to assume, finance and budgeting.

Paul's experience was not isolated. David, who worked in a large district setting, relied on the expertise of the other administrators to help him through the first few years. He also relied on the help and mentoring of other local superintendents to make it through the first years. Even though Kevin had several years experience in the central office, he still found an informal network of outside mentors from other area schools to help him. He told the story about how he started in an era.

> When a new superintendent, especially a young superintendent, came into a position, the elders in the region always called said, "Hi Hello, if you have a problem give us a call," and they called and they checked to see how you were doing when it was time for certain things to be done and from them I learned a lot.

These "mentors" allowed him to ask questions and checked up on him from time to time, mainly in the area of finance.

William also talked about the personal mentor he had who helped him through the first few years. This mentor let him know that he was as close as the telephone and that no question was too technical or too basic. This ability to reach out helped him feel more comfortable about handling different situations. The use of mentors was a factor in the comfort level of these superintendents and a way for them to get their questions answered in a safe and reliable way. The use of mentors was valuable even for those that felt well

prepared going into their first superintendent position because they have to keep learning anyway. As William pointed out, his mentor could help him through very technical issues that he would have learned in his coursework but are hard to actualize until he has to do them. These are the perfect uses of a good mentor because they have experience and can provide technical assistance and warn of potential pitfalls.

In general, the mentors provided more than just guidance; they provided comfort. The new superintendents knew there was someone out there looking out for them who would not let them forget an important meeting or deadline and who, when needed, would provide them with encouragement or constructive feedback. Interestingly enough, none of the participants in this study mentioned a formal mentor program but, rather, an informal system where veteran superintendents did their "duty" or felt an "obligation" to help the younger superintendents in the area as they had been helped. In turn, it was expected that someday these superintendents would help other young superintendents along the way. These relationships can go both ways; the veteran superintendent can gain more insight into some of the newer theories and ideas being taught in the university setting. All of the participants in this study were retired superintendents and had completed their pre-service training several years prior to their retirement. Mentoring newer superintendents could help them keep current on these topics.

Mentoring took many forms. Some of the participants spoke with their counter-parts over the telephone, went to dinner with them, or met them at professional development activities. For most of the participants, these mentoring opportunities occurred before the advent or wide use of e-mail, list serves, or the Internet in schools, so the relationships had to be forged in more personal ways. Some of the participants intimated

that these technologies, although they have helped immensely in many ways, have taken some of the personal touch out of these relationships.

Entry Level Preparedness

Even with prior administrative experience many of the participants still struggled early in their first superintendency. The assumption of many of the participants was that, once they completed their initial training with practicum, they would immediately be ready to succeed as a superintendent. Many of the participants came to realize that, until you actually step into the role, you will not know exactly what to expect or where initial difficulties will arise. Christopher fell into this category. He described his experiences this way: "I think it's one of those things where theoretically you can be prepared but when you actually step into the role it's always different than you anticipated it would be." Specifically, "the reality of dealing with things on a day-to-day basis, the reach of your decisions I think is sometimes something that can be a little overwhelming initially."

This factor that seems to separate William from many other participants. He had an acute awareness that, even with the rich practical experiences, he would still only be prepared as an entry-level superintendent, and there would be aspects of the job he would still need to learn. He was resigned to the fact that he would not or could not be totally prepared for his first superintendent position.

> The past is never a perfect road map for the future, as unforeseen changes in society, legislation, and research can quickly alter the landscape of education. The ability to change to meet these needs and have a base to address these changes is crucial.

Although he may have assumed some of the superintendent duties while he served as an assistant superintendent, there were some that he simply could not. This understanding

may be the reason why William was the only participant that did not express some frustration and/or negativity towards his/her superintendent preparation program. He understood that it is nearly impossible to teach certain skills required for the job, either in the classroom or through practical experiences, to the point where the candidate would be 100% ready to assume the reigns as superintendent. There are certain skills or comfort level that can only be achieved by performing the duties on one's own.

Jonathon, who thought he was "as prepared as anyone can be for a totally new job," talked about how his coursework was "textbook based" and not nearly as beneficial as the practical experiences he learned in other administrative positions. He felt comfortable with his background and "what was about to happen" because most of his experiences "that made me feel comfortable assuming the superintendency were experience-based high school principal experiences rather than preparation program experiences. Similar to William, Jonathon was also resigned to the fact that he could not learn everything he needed to know prior to actually being a superintendent when he said "there's always things that come up that you wish you had background on, but there's no way to anticipate." This attitude would serve him well.

Even thought David felt unprepared to become superintendent, he was understood that there would be a learning curve when it came to his/her new position. He pointed out that he had accepted the fact that he would probably never be completely prepared for what the job would entail until he actually had to do it: "I felt very much like everyone else feels if they're really honest with themselves, that I was way over my head. But, you're supposed to feel that point as you move up the professional ladder." Whereas William felt his preparation program was a good mix with his practical experiences,

David did not feel he had enough and could have used more connection between the two.

The first research question attempted to elicit responses from participants pertaining to how well they perceived themselves to be prepared to assume their first superintendent position. Their responses ranged from "well prepared" to "moderately well prepared" to "not well prepared at all." All of the participants found that no matter their comfort level going into the position, they still found areas they were not prepared to handle. Participants also found ways to address their perceived shortcomings.

Research Question 2

To what extent, if any, does the tension between theory and practice at the university impact the views of the subjects about superintendent preparation programs?

The purpose of the second research question was to determine if the participants perceived any tension at the university level between the teaching of theory and the teaching of practical applications. The participants from this study are in an enviable position to answer this question having experienced life as both a superintendent and a college professor. Most of the participants were fairly new to the college experience as well. It was important to understand if the participants felt tension between the study of theory and practice at the university level and if so, from what source.

Participants were asked, "To what extent, if any, have you found tension between theory and practice at the university level and how has this impacted superintendent pre-service programs? The espoused view of most participants was that there was either very little or manageable levels of tension within the university setting. However, the responses and explanations of several participants told a different story. When tensions were discussed, they were related more to the comfort level within the organization as a

whole than a belief in the importance of either theory or practice over the other. Tensions within the university setting were clustered under four main themes; the philosophy of the university, interpersonal tensions within the faculty, increased influx and utilization of former superintendents as college professors and the system itself.

University Culture and Philosophy

It was clear from the data that some universities within the State of Illinois have different cultures and philosophies when it comes to the approach they take in preparing future superintendents. As Kevin pointed out, some universities are geared toward preparing students for research and others toward practice. In his opinion, "the tension comes when you have people teaching in the research area who are from the practical side and in the practical school that are preparing people to take over administrative positions, and they are more research bound." If the philosophy of the school and professor matches then there should be very little tension. This was the case for Carl, who credited the lack of tension he felt mostly to the match in hands-on nature philosophy between himself and the university he works for:

> We're pretty much focused on the practical, we do have a couple of professors who are more theory based and I think that's fine because I think you have to have a little of both, but the focus for us is more on the practical hands-on.

Data from other participants in the same university was similar and attest to the espoused purpose of the university. In general, this university sees itself as being very practical in nature. Their espoused goal, at least as far as the professors were concerned, was to meet the practical needs of its students. Theory was primarily utilized as a means to support or enhance practical application. They believe this was the best way to produce school leaders ready to assume the role of the superintendent.

Interpersonal Tension

In some universities, the tension has become interpersonal. These tensions occurred when a distinction was made between academicians and practitioners. Kevin shared his belief that, in extreme cases, this disconnection between staff can lead to a sense of "paranoia that one is out to get the other" to the point that some academicians will "shy away because they don't have any practical experience, they've never been an administrator in a school system and they take a real inferior type complex." It is important to note that "academicians" were not interviewed for this study, and a result, there is no evidence supporting or countering the feeling espoused for them in the above statement. Kevin admits that at times, when it comes to something research based he doesn't know much about, he has a tendency to ignore academicians. Although he realizes this type of response is part of the problem and can lead to tension, he ultimately views his role or purpose being "to train leaders for the schools that have kids in them and I think that may be a significant difference from what some research schools are looking at."

Steven had the following insights into why tensions might actually exist within the university setting. In his opinion,

> The practitioners want the researchers to be a little more down to earth, and the researchers want the practitioners to be a little more lofty in their thinking. So there's a little bit of tension there, it's natural, but it's not debilitating tension.

Unfortunately, it does not appear that the two parties are willing to sit down and talk about this in more detail and come to an understanding that would be mutually beneficial.

William mirrors these same sentiments when he stated that,

> I'm not sure that the academics appreciate the practitioners to the degree that they should. And I'm not sure that the practitioners really appreciate the academics to the degree that they should. And it would probably be better if we got it out in the open and talked about a little bit more but it's kind of an underlying grind that is out there.

In other words, each side has value added traits that help form a better program. When the university and pre-training program does not have cohesion among its staff or a shared value as individuals, it is left to the students in the program to sort out what is most important. Not only is this a problem, but it is not fair either. He goes on to add that,

> Research oriented people want more rigorous dissertations and data analyses whereas the practitioners are okay with case studies and things like that. The research oriented people want some hard-core quantitative, crunch the numbers sort of things. So, if the student wants to do a qualitative study, they've got to explain a little bit more and be a little more prepared.

Others discussed the key to controlling interpersonal tensions was having respect for both academicians and practitioners and to collaborate and work together to maximize the strengths each bring to the table to support the students to their fullest potential. Many of the participants in this study were conscious of the recent attacks on their "social scientist" colleagues but, at the same time, were frustrated by the slow rate of change within the system or the "misplacement" of faculty without practical experiences in classes they felt could be better taught by those with practical experience.

Recent Influx of Former Superintendents

William hinted that some of the tension within school administrative preparation programs may be derived from the increased number of former superintendents being hired as college professors. From his observations of different universities within the State of Illinois, he found that "they've gone through periods of way too many academics

with no practitioners and of late we seem to be maybe a little heavy on the practitioner

side with not enough academics." Paul agreed that the increase in former practitioners

turned professors is a good thing to help increase the emphasis on practice and practical

experiences. However, unlike William, he felt that most educational administration

preparation program courses should be taught by former or current administrators. In

most areas of the preparation of future administrators, it was "absolutely necessary to

have been a school administrator to do this….and the practical attributes seem to

predominate." In the wrong environment, this philosophy would cause great tension

between academicians and practitioners.

The incorporation of adjuncts to a pre-service program can bring more practical

depth to the program but it can also increase the tension. In William's experience

"fulltime academics are intimidated by the adjunct practitioners. And they say it in such

a way as to put them down because they're not pure academics and therefore it's

something less than a real professor if you're adjunct." Although many of the

participants in this study had served as an adjunct at one point during their career,

adjuncts were not specifically targeted. As a result, this study does not propose to state

the perspective on this issue from that of an adjunct professor.

System Causing Tension

The university system itself is where Christopher has found tension. As he states,

I used to be of the mind that public schools, the change process, was fairly slow
and I've come to realize that the university, by comparison, is glacial in terms of
their willingness and their ability to change. I mean it just doesn't happen.

He goes on to state that,

> I fear that there is a lot of new ideas, a lot of things coming onto the scene that universities should be looking at and a lot of it is passing us by just because the system is so inept and unable to really respond and apply some of these things that we're learning.

Jonathon expressed his frustration with the "system" as it is and the inherent problems it causes in this area. He would like to see more practitioner professors, especially those closer to the prime of their career. He argues that, "probably the lowest 10 or 15% [of superintendents in the State of Illinois] are making equal to or more than universities can pay beginning professors. So what you have is this void of experience in the principal prep, superintendent prep programs." He pointed out that this is not the case with law professors at most universities, who make a salary comparable with a practicing attorney and can therefore justify leaving their practice to teach. In the current system, a superintendent in his prime is not going to take that large of a pay cut to become a professor. As a result, "you either get a lot of adjuncts….who don't have time to develop programs to make them better… or you have retired practitioners who are only going to be in it for 4 or 5 years."

The data suggested that tension at the university level in regard to the either the quantity or quality of theory or practice being presented was a result of personalities or interests colliding. In other words, when academicians and practitioners looked for mutual benefit from one another, they were able to coexist within the university, but when they did not value what the other had to offer, tension resulted. Tension also existed when one side felt intimidated or underappreciated by the other. Added to this was the clear indication from the data that some universities in the state consider themselves to be "practical" universities. To the professors in these institutions, when

theory is discussed, it is reinforced with practical examples or assignments. Participants felt that professors should find universities that matched their teaching style or philosophy. Many participants spoke of tension, when it exists, and left the impression that little, if any, tension existed in their university but that it did in others.

Research Question 3

How have the participants attempted to bridge the gap between practice and theory in their classrooms?

Having experienced life in the position most of their students aspire to achieve, the participants in this study are uniquely situated to help their students bridge the gap between theory and how it relates to the everyday world of a superintendent. The purpose of this research question was to elicit the techniques and strategies utilized by these former superintendents to do just that. The factor that was clearly the most important to them was their professional experience as a superintendent. Every partici-pant utilized their career decisions to help determine what skills to teach and to shape their attempts to teach these skills. Many of the participants in this study had not been graduate students for a very long time.

Each of the skills listed below indicates an area the study participants wanted their students to master before leaving their class. Some of the skills were much easier to identify with specific theories than others, such as leadership and change. For example, their overall responses suggested that the participants believed the application of knowledge was more important than the specific theories that may surround it. They felt that mastering these managerial and leadership skills would better prepare their students for the "real world" of administration and that was their number one focus.

Skills

As college professors in educational administration preparation, it was interesting to know what these participants felt were the most important skills to teach their students, how they attempted to teach these skills, and why they thought these specific skills were the most important.

Communication. The participants listed a number of skills they try to teach their students to help prepare them for the role of superintendent. The most common response was the need to be good communicators. The superintendent is the face of the organization and they must have the ability to articulate and sell their ideas. Christopher tries to determine if his students are organized and nurture positive relationships while working through hypothetical fact patterns. David, on the other hand, attempts to model the behaviors he is looking for from his students and provides case studies for them to look at. He pointed out that,

> I'm trying to teach people to understand the concept of developing options for the decision-making process and then look at all the ramifications of each option and then try to decide from a formative thinking point of view, what's the best option.

> Kevin believed that several students lack the ability to understand the

organization and to be able to communicate in the organization. As he points out,

> The young superintendent of today is dealing with three generations…and I think that communicating with both groups above and below your generations is pretty key. And being able to listen and hear what they're saying and then act upon that. It's pretty significant.

He wants his students to "recognize a lot of situations before they get to a position that it's the "uh-oh time." In other words, by communicating effectively, the administrator can help others in the organization formulate their ideas and plans early in the process

and guide them on their journey. This may help to sidestep potential problems that could

have been avoided by listening and communicating possible problems.

      Networking. The second most frequent response was the need for networking or

group facilitation skills. Karen stresses "leadership skills and understanding

networking." She points out that, as a superintendent, you will not have all the answers,

but "you better know who to call and have a strong network." She teaches this skill by

actually having students build connections within the class and then invites outside

administrators to help them build their own networks: "I talk about networking and give

them experiences." To Jonathon, the answer is not nearly as important in these scenarios

as the process by which a workable solution was found. The fact that there is no right or

wrong answers can be troublesome to students and "probably one of the hardest things to

realize as a leader in any field. They're all situational, to think I can apply step one to

five and always get the right answer is never gonna work."

      Every participant had one thing in common; no matter the particular skill each

professor attempts to teach to his/her students, he/she tries to connect it to practice-based

learning. Whether they used problem-based learning, data analysis, modeling, or case

studies, students were asked to apply theory to find a desired outcome. Students are

encouraged to find multiple solutions to achieve the same end. The class would then

discuss the merits and pitfalls of each solution.

Important Theory

      Having lived several years of their professional careers as practitioners, it was

important to know the aspects of theory the participants felt were most important for their

students to learn and how they taught these to their students.   Participant spent more time

talking about the use of practical applications to help students apply theory than the actual theories themselves. However, several did stress the importance of theory in general. As William puts it, "there's nothing more practical than theory because it's the nuts and bolts that change at the speed of light it seems like, but it's the theory that lasts and will take you through what you need to know."

      Leadership theories. The most common types of theories discussed were "leadership" theories and how they can help new superintendents effectively do their jobs. For example, David has students look at different types of organizational and leadership models to help determine when each should be used and applied. He freely admits to not being "a real big theoretician." and feels that theory is best used "when we can make an application of it and I try to deal with theory from that point of view." He looks for positive and negative ramifications of using one theory over another in given situations and creates a process to help students decide which one to chose. He utilizes case studies to put students in different and realistic situations where, through a discovery process, they learn what theories could have been used to get the same or better result. Others, such as Jonathon, try to "give a foundation for a concept in theory then give them a practical application and let them play with it." He tries to give them a theoretical background on present situations, and then he assigns students to work in groups to find solutions for the stated problem. He likes to expose his students to a variety of theories and theorists because, as he so aptly puts it, "we're not all going to take the same theories and internalize them and make them part of our decision-making process. So we've got to play with a lot of different models to see which one fits my style best."

Process for teaching theory. Several of the participants did not list specific theories they teach in their class. Rather, they concentrated more on the process of how to teach theory in general. Kevin, for example, espoused his personal belief on theory: "

> Theory in itself is good. One in establishing a planning approach, whether it be PDSA (Plan-Do-Study Act) or it be some other organizational approach where you can solve a problem, look at the research, develop your plan, evaluate your plan, put it into effect, reevaluate it.

This helps put the district on a consistent and defensible path. He teaches these concepts using group projects to show students how modifications can, and should, be made to tailor results for each specific situation. That is the reality side of theory. The important piece is that students apply the process to the problem to find a workable solution.

William put it very succinctly,

> The nuts and bolts, the particulars, the rules and regulations, the laws, the reports, the timelines. All that kind of stuff you just learn as you go along. It really is the theory that will stay the same and bring you through all of it.

To maximize their time together in class and while working on assignments, he makes sure "that all the discussions, all of the readings; all the assignments are specific to the issue of organizational development, of theory, of leadership." He then utilizes case studies to form discussions of how a particular situation was handled, how he might have handled it differently, and the solutions that students came up with to handle the situation. This exchange of ideas, based around theory, teaches them different ways in which the theory can be applied to meet the specifics of different situations.

Theory as a guide to practice. Karen states that, "without the theory…you're floundering as a practitioner." She wants students to know the theory and the events that led to our current situation so we have a better understanding of where we are right now

and where we want to go: "I think there is a balance, but I think the practicality is of such importance that in the field, if you don't have the theory, you don't have the directionality of where you want to go." Without that direction, "you might get to where you want to go by accident but you'll get to where you want to go by intention when you understand the theory of what you're doing."

William expanded on her argument when he pointed out that sometimes it is just as important for a superintendent to look like they know where they are going as the path they finally choose. Board members and the community usually trust the superintendent to set the direction for the district. This confidence in the superintendent is more likely to be maintained and followed when the superintendent can clearly and succinctly lay out the path the district is headed in and the theory behind these decisions. Without this path and direction, the district will appear to be have lost direction in some cases no matter the outcome of the decision. Theory allows the superintendent to direct and articulate the path of the district and improve confidence.

Kevin reinforced this argument. Theory is good "in establishing a planning approach." He argued that superintendents in today's climate need to back their decisions with theory:

> Having all of that data and having the data drive your decisions ends up being a significant part of the planning process and if that planning process is utilized by the entire team of administrators in any size of district then everyone is consistent in how they're going about getting their results.

This helps to justify expenditures and decisions and the academic direction that you have. Theory and research prepares you for "when the questions come about why, and how, and when, that we have all the answers; that we know why we're doing what we're

doing." Without this clear direction and heading the strategic planning may be more difficult to follow.

As discussed in Chapter II, when former practitioners were first used as college professors to teach aspiring superintendents, they tended to tell war stories and anecdotes. This lack of scientific data and analysis actually led to the shift to the social scientist as the main educator in these programs. The data collected from these participants indicated that the new generations of practitioner professors are more familiar with theory and more apt to use it to in their teachings. They have adapted the "war stories" mentality to include multiple ways to solve issues using multiple scientific theories. Students are able to practice these theories while utilizing case studies or other real world applications. Furthermore, students are expected to discuss their results as a class. This allows for more viewpoints to be heard and the individualization for each situation to be expressed. This is much different than listening to a lecture on how someone else solved a particular problem in a particular situation or context. In addition, the participants in this study seemed to understand that the public is much savvier than in the past, and they expect decisions must be based on research and progress measured along a defined path.

The data for research question number three showed variance on the part of the participants in terms of the percentage of theory that should be taught in preparation programs, how it should be taught, and by whom. However, the one constant subtheme coming from the participants was that theory should be used to enhance practice.

Balance Between Theory and Practice

Participants were asked for their perceptions of the appropriate mix of theory and practice in an educational administrative preparation program. What the data showed

was that every participant thought that both theory and practice had its place in the preparation program and that one without the other would not make for a good program. In other words, theory guides practice, and practice gives meaning and credibility to theory. All participants answered the above questions in terms of the actual percentages of time spent or staff members hired. The appropriate mix as determined in the established curriculum was not mentioned. Two major themes emerged from the data. Balance based on time spent and balance based on staffing.

Time. Christopher felt that,

If you could equate them equally, I think you should. If you learn theory and you look at a lot of theorists and then look of a lot of different perspectives that's going to inform your practice and that's going to help shape the kind of school leader you are.

He would like to see

…a 50-50 blend of presenting the theorists, talking about the theorists, learning about the theorists. Then the practicum side of it is you're getting a chance as a student to go out and implement and use some of those theories and find out which ones actually work for you.

The blending helps shape the type of leader the university will produce.

Carl, felt the best approach was to "give them a background and look at some of the research behind it but then we go straight to real-life applications, case studies, hands-on projects." He pointed out that some instructors in the program will undoubtedly use a higher percentage of theory than practice in the classes whereas others will use more practical based learning. His point was that, in the end, the department will balance out between the two.

Staffing. Christopher acknowledged that there is a place in pre-service training for academicians teaching classes for researchers. However, as he pointed out,

I also think the university needs to really value the practical experience and I think when you can marry those two… in a classroom and bring a practical perspective to highlight and enhance that research perspective, that's when students really get the best of both worlds.

He talked about academicians and practitioners having the ability to round out what the other brings to the table.

However, the participants in the study were very clear in their belief that practitioners were more valuable to pre-service students than academicians, the assumption being that professors needed to live the experience to fully explain or explore a topic. Karen talked about the importance of hiring former superintendents for education administration preparation programs because, in her opinion, they clearly understand the importance of what is needed before a person becomes a practitioner. Former superintendents understand the importance of theory as a footing, and the richness "of hiring a practitioner in the training program is that when you come to a theory or you come to some history or discussion topic, you can actually make it real." As a professor, practitioners can combine the theory and their own experiences to show students where it applies in the life of a school administrator: "If you've never been a superintendent or principal and you're a university professor you are at an extreme disadvantage I think because you cannot show them where that theory makes sense in the real world."

Paul took these sentiments even further. He feels courses such as School Law, Finance, Curriculum, The Principalship, and Collective Bargaining should be taught by practitioners because they can bring realistic expectations to the class. He is troubled by the fact that in some universities these courses are taught by academicians. As he puts it,

I don't see how in the world students can be taught how to be a superintendent if the people that are teaching them, with some exceptions, have not been in the field, at least as an administrator. I find that absolutely a basic need.

He conceded that in courses such as research, academicians would actually be a better fit than practitioners. He was happy with the latest trend to hire more practitioners to teach pre-service training courses because "the theory part and the theory that goes into most college instruction seem to be less necessary and pressing for my particular field. And the practical attributes seem to predominate."

However some participants espoused a desire to balance the needs of the students for different types of experiences. For example, Lorraine believes a good balance between practitioners and the academicians is important.

Programs that have pure practitioners and don't have professors that are scholars are short changing their leadership candidates by not letting them know how important it is to be able to research and reflect, to observe and reflect, and draw some conclusions and results and add to the body of work out there for ed leaders.

Kevin would also like to see the hiring of both practitioners and academicians to "realize the significance of each and how each can work and help each other." In his opinion, academicians and practitioners each have their role or place in the training of future superintendents.

William thought the best program would be a program that has a "real healthy balance…" He personally advocates for a program with

…about an even number of academics to practitioners and then a smattering of adjuncts that not only are practitioners but are still practicing so that you get just enough taste of not just old warhorses like me but people who are currently doing it.

He was one of a three participants who discussed the importance of adjuncts. He referred to adjuncts as "the spice that keeps things really relevant." Adjuncts, he argued, are

usually practicing administrators, who are out there on a day-to-day basis dealing with current real life issues that they can then bring to the classroom "right from four o'clock today…to the graduate class in the evening time." This can increase feelings of relevance to the material presented in class. Adjuncts can speak to today's issues that superintendents are facing. For example, very few of these former administrator professors were around to experience the full affect of NCLB legislation. He continues, "for us to be able to put theory into practice against real-life experiences, we've got to keep those experiences very fresh." He continued that he "would never want to see a school administration preparation program that's too strong in any one area." The scholarly professors in a department can add benefit to a program with what they have to offer. Academicians can look at that world from their perspective, practitioners from a

Role of Research

Participants were asked for the value they placed on research and how they incorporated it into their courses. Every participant stated that research was an important part of a good pre-service program. However, their views on how and why it should be utilized differed. The main themes from the data centered on teaching students to become better consumers of research, the importance of validation skills, and the transfer the research to their daily lives.

Consumers of research. Several participants perceived the role of research at the University in superintendent pre-service programs was to teach students how to become better consumers of research more so than better researchers themselves. They needed to know how to apply research to every day school situations. For example, Steven thinks it is "important for the students to engage in research at the university level

so that they can transfer that when they're analyzing data in the field in their own district and knowing what constitutes good research and how to (analyze) data." He felt the best way for students to know how to use research was to engage in it firsthand. "Research helps us understand our field better, but it also allows us to take techniques into the field, into practice, and utilize the research technique so that we can make better decisions in our school." Similar to William, he felt teaching future superintendents to be consumers of research is more important than teaching them to be producers of research, especially considering that these are not academicians. William believes that,

> Graduate students, particularly at the doctoral level, need to do research at least at the fundamental levels so that they can understand how it's done and why it's done…giving them the rudimentary skills in research so that as they become administrators then they become much better consumers of the research that other people do.

He believes that students should do actual research to help them understand how it is done and why it is done. They will then be able to use the research of others more effectively.

Validation skills. Another important role for research in pre-service programs is to help students validate sources and research. This is very similar to the idea of being consumers of research, but the emphasis placed on validation separated it from the above category. Carl tells his students that, "my role is not to help them to get a job but to help them keep a job once they get it." He feels that future superintendents need to know and understand research so they will not try to implement a program that has not been successful in similar situations. This idea of pitfall avoidance can be an important part of the success of a superintendent. He wants his students to be good consumers of the research with a critical eye for how well something works before implementation is attempted.

David also wants his students to look at research critically to help determine if a particular program or idea would work in a given situation. He points out that research can "give you one set of results under one set of circumstances and may give you a totally different set of results under the other." He teaches students to look at the multiple variables within a study before jumping on the bandwagon. He points out that research should be used to help us understand what may or may not work based under specific conditions laid out in the study. Students need to know how to determine what these conditions are before attempting to implement a strategy designed for a completely different situation. He wants students to "have a critical eye and critical mind" when looking at research. "We err when we try to attribute absolute results or certainty to research." He shows students research findings from different decades or settings that seem to contradict one another; then he follows up with questions geared to help students look critically at these findings to determine why these different results occurred. As Lorraine pointed out, as good consumers of research, superintendents can modify the theory to fit the local situation and address problems in the district. Students need to realize that these theories are "not just someone's idea." They are based on research and real life situations. When they understand that, they understand how theories can help in a given situation.

Practical/action research. Participants were united in the idea of what research should not look like. A common assertion by the participants was that the writing that students were asked to partake in for their doctorate level training was not very practical for what they need in the "real world." Although this study was focused on the superintendent endorsement, the coursework between the superintendent endorsement

and the doctorate in educational administration often intermix giving this statement meaning.

Several participants, such as Christopher, saw a disconnection between the "perception of research and the real world students… live in." He, and others, would like to see universities focus their efforts on teaching students to be good "consumers of research rather than developers of research." His argument is that most good school administrators are not out completing studies, but they are "reading the research and using that information to guide their practice but they're not themselves doing research." He talked about the problem of using the dissertation as the capstone for most doctoral programs. Practicing administrators rarely, if ever, reference back or use their dissertation in their jobs and will likely never write another one again. He goes on to point out that they are much more likely to write memorandums than 15-page papers. Research should be used to help students become better data-driven decision-makers instead of researchers themselves. He believes that this can, and should be, done without lowering the rigor associated with writing a dissertation by changing the focus of student effort.

Paul would agree that research is a weakness in most universities today because there is not enough practical research and skill in writing. Similar to Christopher, he thinks "skill in writing and being able to communicate effectively and in a professional manner is an essential skill," and he works to "improve their practical writing skills as well as research." He acknowledges that "research can be very effective in analyzing a problem for a district and how to attack or solve the problem using analytical research." He simply adds the skills of writing professionally to the mix.

The data in this section was fairly consistent among participants. They all felt that students in educational administrative programs should develop skills that allow them to use research effectively in their districts. They should be able to look at the impacts of a study, analyze its meaning, and determine how it relates to their district. The participants were also consistent in their call for students to understand how to do a review of the literature to help prepare them for when they would need to do this as a practicing superintendent. They were also consistent in their belief that the research some universities ask from their students is not as practical as it needs to be.

Research Question 4

How do you use practicum experiences to help with the preparation of prospective school superintendents?

Participants were asked how they use the practicum or other practical experiences to help in the preparation of future superintendents. Not surprisingly, all participants agreed that the incorporation of practicum experiences into a preparation program was essential and each provided explanations for how these experiences were intended to help future superintendents when they take that first position. All participants had a propensity to use their own personal experiences to demonstrate how theory translates to real world experiences and/or to provide them with realistic situations to discuss, then attempt to solve using what they have learned in class. For example, Lorraine uses case studies from the real world, especially those from her own experiences, to allow students to practice what they have learned. She tries to find examples of situations she felt she handled correctly and others she felt could have been handled better to show students the

implications of their decisions. Once they come up with a workable solution or a better solution than hers, they grow in confidence.

Two main themes emerged as participants discussed the use of practical experiences in the classrooms. First, the notion that students should be able to practice the theories they have learned prior to their first superintendency. As William states in his assessment of the importance of practice in administrative preparation programs, it is

>…where the rubber meets the road. It gives people an opportunity to practice what they know, practice what they think they know, and kind of exercise the administrative philosophy that they've developed to see their comfort level in actually putting those things to work.

He believes that practice helps students develop the poise that will allow them to be successful. The second theme that emerged from the data was that practice builds confidence and provides direction. Lorraine believes practice to be invaluable because it "adds a great deal of credibility to the future practitioner through the experiences you want them to have in the future." In addition to credibility, it adds "a sense of confidence that they can now pursue it and know the information they have is useful."

Practice Proves Theory

Three of the participants use practicum experiences to help prepare future superintendents by providing opportunities to put the theory or coursework they have learned into practice. Brian felt practice was "highly important, incredibly important." It helps "bring practical daily experiences to the theory that is taught." Once the theory is taught, practice shows them that "these are not just words and this is not just a class that you're gonna have to get through so you can move on." He likes to provide personal examples from his experience to show how things have worked or have not worked, so students can

utilize this when they are in the real world. Students can learn from his mistakes and successes to see how theory relates to practice before trying it on their own. Similarly, Jonathon also feels that practice proves theory.

> Some programs tend to want to be all academic and textbook based and I think until you put that into practice it's not much use. And putting it into practice for the first time on the job doesn't to me appear to be a very logical model.

When he explains different theories or processes, he brings personal experiences into the discussion because he can share both positive and negative results to demonstrate what life as a superintendent can be like. This awareness should help them understand the type of decisions they will face and the thought process of one individual to solve a particular problem.

Practice Builds Confidence and Provides Direction

The second major theme coming from this research question was the notion that practice builds confidence and adds credibility to their classroom experiences. Participants used the practicum and other practical experiences to build the confidence of their students. They felt that once students were allowed to put their education to use in a practical setting they realize they can succeed in the position. Practicum experiences were used to provide direction when it comes to decision making and creation of a path or plan of action. Karen believes that "if they don't have practical experiences they will be lost when they get out of the University." Applying their knowledge for the first time in the field is not a good plan.

According to Kevin, the lack of practical experiences would mean that "You're giving them a theoretical base with no actual applied practical research base. And that is of no use to anybody." The practice should be applicable to the duties of a superintendent

because "you're preparing people for the practical everyday superintendency. And I think that it's very significant that you lay that foundation." The practicum provides the direction they need to help tie all the information they have learned, and are now practicing, into a coherent and logical package.

Carl felt practice added credibility to the classroom content. "If they just read about it in a book that doesn't do anything for them. They need to experience it first-hand." Practicum experiences prepare them for future roles in education by providing firsthand opportunities. In turn, these experiences build confidence in the student and a sense that they understand what the expectations of the job will be.

As mentioned earlier, every participant discussed the need for practical experiences as part of the student experience but no participant discussed in any detail the required practical experiences required by the university or how these experiences are officially incorporated into the curriculum. This absence of any discussion of how practical experiences fit into the prescribed curriculum was noteworthy.

Chapter Summary

The participants in this study have the ability to discuss superintendent pre-service training programs from three unique perspectives: that of a student in the program, as a superintendent applying the knowledge he/she has learned, and as a college professor teaching the next generation of administrators. The data collected from the participants sheds light into each of these areas.

Participants agreed that their practical experience prior to taking over their first superintendent position was the most important factor in the comfort level. In fact, all but one participant considered practical experiences to be more valuable than coursework

in preparing him for the role of superintendent. In addition, all but one expressed some frustration or disappointment with the pre-service training received and felt that coursework and academic training inadequately prepared him.

The majority of the study was dedicated to the participant's transition from the superintendent role to that of the professorship and their teaching priorities. A variety of tensions within the university setting were discussed and focused on appropriate placement within the university or relationships amongst staff. As professors, their focus was placed on preparing their students for the "real world" of administration through the incorporation of case studies and other practicum experiences into their classes. Drawing on previous experience as students and superintendents, the participants shared the difficulties of balancing expectations of universities, realities of the position, and concerns of students.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Students working toward their superintendent endorsement and doctorate in education have voiced interest in how the information they were learning and the classes they were taking could help them meet future challenges in their careers. At times, they failed to see a connection between what was being taught and their personal experiences at work. After starting the literature review, it became clear others had these same concerns and the same disconnection and that it was happening in other places throughout the United States. The goal was to explore and personalize this subject to provide guidance to others in the field and to understand this educational learning experience better.

Research Questions

In analyzing and discussing the findings in this study, focus is directed on the themes, implications, and recommendations in relation to the research questions:

1. What are the perceptions and beliefs of former superintendents currently serving as professors of educational administration regarding their graduate-school preparation? How well do they think/perceive they were prepared to assume the role of superintendent?

2. To what extent, if any, does the tension between theory and practice at the university impact the views of the subjects about superintendent preparation programs?

3. How have the participants attempted to bridge the gap between practice and theory in their classrooms?

4. How do you use practicum experiences to help with the preparation of prospective school superintendents?

144

Summary of Findings

Holding the position of Superintendent in the State of Illinois can be a daunting task. There are pressures exuded on the position from internal sources within the school, external sources from the community, school board members, and district staff. With these pressures in mind and a new awareness and concern within many communities about academic results and fiscal responsibilities, superintendents must be prepared to handle the role early on in their tenure and start to establish a course for the district.

Management skills are the skills that help the superintendent run a "tight ship." These skills, such a creating a budget, following regulations and laws set forth by the legislature or court system help the district maintain order and responsibility but do little to inspire greatness. However, they are necessary for all other activities to be successful. These management skills are what help superintendents maintain their employment and, if not done well, can signal their demise. The second set of skills is leadership-based. These skills would include organizational development and the ability to adapt or generate change. These skills can also be learned and help the superintendent and district achieve great accomplishments through thoughtful and well conceived strategic planning.

The following section categorizes the key findings from this study into three areas: Preparation for the Superintendency, Preparation for the Professorship and Balanced Preparation Program. A brief explanation of each category precedes the findings, and a discussion of the findings as a whole follows.

Preparation for the Superintendency

The findings below each relate to the comfort level of the participants in the study as to their own preparedness to assume the responsibilities and duties of the

superintendent. Of interest is that all participants felt that finance was a weakness in their

personal preparedness and that their previous administrative experience was very helpful

in their comfort level.

- Over ¾ of the participants did not feel their educational administrative program adequately prepared them to assume the role of superintendent. Of those that felt well prepared or moderately well prepared, only one credited their university experience for that preparedness. The others gave most of the credit to their prior administrative experiences.

- The one area that every participant felt they were not prepared for was finance.

- Over ¾ of the participants believed that the mentoring they received from other superintendents, either as a principal or assistant superintendent, and/or later from other seasoned superintendents upon taking the position were very helpful in the their development and success.

- All participants cited their administrative experience prior to assuming their first superintendent position as a bonus.

- Several of the participants felt that their experience as an adjunct helped them in their transition to the role of college professor.

Preparation for the Professorship

The findings in this category each pertain to what the participants felt was impor-

tant for them to distill in the students they now teach in their classes. The strong theme

running through these findings was the importance of practice. The general belief was

that learning skills and theory in isolation does not help students when they have to put

these ideas into practice in the real world. They must be given the opportunity to learn

through doing.

- All of the participants felt the best approach to teaching skills and theory was to incorporate a strong theory or base of content knowledge then use practical application examples or experiences to illustrate how to utilize this knowledge

in the field. The typical response was to use case studies, real life scenarios, and role playing activities that look at past issues or problems and allow students to formulate their own plans or actions to address the concerns.

- Participants felt students should be exposed to practical experiences to help them develop both in the area of skill development and theory acquisition. They should be allowed to learn through practice in a safe environment where their reasoning and thought processes can be analyzed and discussed.

- All participants agreed that superintendent candidates need opportunities to hone their craft in the real world.

- All participants felt that knowledge and the ability to use research was important for students to learn. Most felt the research should be practical in nature and/or help students understand the implications or restrictions inherent in the specific data. To accomplish this, several participants mentioned the need for students to conduct research to help them better understand the process.

Balanced Preparation Program

The findings in this category focus on the mix and relationship among university professors within the department of educational administration. Departments need to focus more on hiring individuals that can utilize a balanced curriculum with theoretical offerings and practical applications to shape the integration of the two into instruction and assessment. This researcher understood that perhaps the word integration instead of balance would have been better to determine the right mix of practice and theory in the university. The resulting answers were more quantified in nature. Several participants gave me the appropriate percentage of each, not how they should be incorporated into the coursework.

- All participants agreed that there should be some mix of academicians and practitioners in superintendent preparation programs. However, the exact percentage varied greatly.

- Almost half of the participants mentioned their belief that certain courses such as Finance, Law and the Superintendency should be taught exclusively by practitioners. Other courses such as Research could be taught by academicians.

- Over ¾ of the participants felt that the tension that existed in the university setting tended to focus on mistrust or misunderstandings between academicians and practitioners more than the material that should be covered. The participants, for the most part, understood the importance and place of theory in these programs. The area of contention centered on who should teach the more practical courses and how much theory should be incorporated in them.

- A few of the participants showed frustration with the university tenure system. They felt it was not conducive to recruiting and maintaining practitioners in the role of professor. They would like to see a variety of options or creative means to evaluate and show progress as an academic practitioner that will help them grow in meaningful ways.

- Universities need to do a better job informing or clarifying with students that they cannot prepare them for every situation they may encounter as a super-intendent. Students should understand that they will be provided with a solid foundation in theory to help them diagnose problems and formulate strategies to resolve or manage issues. They should also provide practical experiences in the classroom by using these theories to create solutions to real life experiences or case studies with discussions on alternative responses grounded in theory or scholarship.

- Different universities have different views on their purpose when it comes to preparing future school leaders. Some universities have the mindset that they are there to give their students practical advice to help them succeed while others focus more on a combination of theory and practice. These are very different philosophies that would result in very different leaders.

Discussion of the Findings

Several main themes have emerged from this study. The participants credited their preparedness to assume the role of superintendent more to their prior administrative experiences than their pre-service training courses. These same participants were committed to bringing real life or realistic scenarios into the classroom to help students

interpret, implement, and understand the necessary skills and theory to successfully perform the duties of the superintendent. The vast majority of the participants in this study were not completely satisfied with the preparation they received during their pre-service training for the superintendent. Reflecting back on their experiences early in their superintendent career, they each found specific areas they viewed that could have received additional training. Participants reflected that training for management-based responsibilities could have been improved with more practice. For example, they pointed out they could have been better trained to handle the management aspects of finance. Several agreed that these skills could not really be mastered until they had to do them on their own for the first time. This also seemed to be the area where mentors were especially helpful in pointing out or reminding the mentored when these "tasks" needed to be completed.

The challenge for the universities seems to be twofold. First, they must help students understand that they will never be able to prepare them for every possible scenario. Instead, they can give them the proper tools to help them adapt to the specific situation or surroundings they find themselves in. This ability to think critically and respond to the needs of the district using theory as the base will not only provide a roadmap for the district but can help others understand the vision or path the district is following.

Second, it appears that universities need to give their students more opportunities to practice their craft before they are given their endorsement. One of the suggestions given by the NPBEA was to develop partnerships with local schools to provide internships and practical experiences to students during their pre-service training. The

difficulty in allowing full time internships was noted in Chapter II; however, there may be other possible solutions universities can develop and explore. These real life experiences can help student's connection between learning theory and practice. As it was, no matter how prepared the participants in this study felt they were prior to accepting the new role, they quickly learned that they were not ready once the responsibilities of the position were thrust upon them. Each superintendent position and setting is unique. This is one of the primary reasons why the acquisition of theory is so important. Theory can serve as the base for launching different approaches to address these district concerns.

The findings in this study seem to indicate that professors in the educational administration programs that are former practitioners feel that the use of case studies, real life scenarios, and problem based solutions are essential pieces in the delivery of content in these courses. If students are not able to practice what they are learning then the theories may never be fully incorporated into their repertoire of leadership and management skills. Some of the participants considered themselves well versed in the theories of educational administration and attempted to show how the theory can be used to guide practice. Others were more about disseminating "war stories" of how they handled situations followed by the students trying to solve other similar situations.

Implications

The findings of this study could have several implications for future use or study. These implications are outlined in accordance to the different stakeholders of this study, which are future preparation students looking for a university of study, university professors, and universities themselves.

Implications for Future Preparation Students

Prospective candidates have several options when it comes to educational institutions that offer superintendent preparation programs and several more for preparation to become a principal. Prospective students need to take the initiative to interview the university they plan to attend, or talk to administrators who have attended the program they are interested in attending, before making a decision. This can help them find a program that fits their needs and philosophy. As Kevin pointed out, "many times, students go to programs because there's one close by for the doctorate program, and I think that many times schools get people just because of their location." He advises that prospective students should approach this decision as they would a problem in their school. Identify the problem, decide what you want to accomplish, and find a program that meets those needs. He does acknowledge that this decision should be made within reason though. Unfortunately, he does not believe that this happens very often and students have a tendency to get "frustrated with the directions of the program and what they were really looking for."

Taking this a step further, the literature review referred to the existence of "cash cow" institutions that produce a large number of administrators who are not necessarily prepared to succeed, or who even want to be administrators, but instead who want to move up the pay scale in their school. This is also important because, in many cases, students that attend these "diploma mills" continue their education toward the superintendent without an adequate base of theory or clinical experience. Both Kevin and William warn against these institutions. They point out that academic requirements and admission standards are often cut at these institutions to encourage more students to

enter. The more students that attend, the more economically viable they become for the university. Unfortunately, this is not "fair to the kids that are going to have those people as their building principal."

The second and very closely related implication affecting prospective students is finding the university that fits their personal belief and philosophy. As indicated in Chapter IV, some of the universities for which the participants work had very different philosophies. Some universities within the state have developed philosophies or personas that cause them to lean to a more practical approach or a more research based approach. The prospective candidate needs to find the one that fits their desired outcome from the program. This alignment will help the student relate to their program better and hopefully result in a better experience.

Implications for University Professors

This study sheds light on several implications for university professors within educational administration departments. For practitioners, the continued use of case studies, real life scenarios, and role playing that allows students to apply the new knowledge they are acquiring is a key function and must continue. These activities help students understand that there are different ways to address the same problem based on specific situations and indicators. Professors need to effectively combine their "war stories" with relevant theory to create practical experiences that are grounded in solid research and theory and help students understand how to formulate and implement effective strategies.

Practitioners need to call on the expertise of their academic colleagues in the department to strengthen their own understanding of research and theory. In return, they

must assist academicians in the department to find and understand relevant practical examples to tie their material to as well. Students transitioning between a more theory-based class to a more practical based class, or vice versa, should find the process smooth, and the difference and purpose of each should make sense to the students. This can only happen if all professors in the department work together to create this cohesive environment.

Implications for academician professors also exist in this study. Academician professors need to continue to be a major source for research knowledge for students and the driving force behind theory acquisition in the university. This acquisition of theory is an important facet of these universities. However, the reality is that academicians will probably always be looked upon with some skepticism by practicing educators who may not see the immediate connection between what they do and "someone who has never stepped foot in a school." To counter these perceptions, academicians need to find more effective ways to connect the world of theory and the world of practice for their students. Only then can they bridge the gap between the material they are presenting and the job the students hope to one day have. In turn, this will provide them with the credibility that has been attacked so frequently over the past two decades.

There are also implications for adjunct professors serving in educational adminis-trative preparation programs. As stated earlier, adjunct professors play an important role in preparing future superintendents by bringing the day-to-day happenings of the superintendent to the university experience. However, the major criticisms of adjunct professors are that they are not well connected to the university and do not use enough theory or research in their classroom. As non faculty members, they may not be subject

to the same discussions full time professors are having. In some cases the adjuncts do not teach on campus and, therefore, have little, if any, contact with other professors. Some universities may have adjuncts that come in and out of the program depending on the needs of the university or the schedule of the adjunct. As a result, the courses several adjuncts teach may not have a strong connection to the rest of the curriculum as they should. In addition, as practicing administrators, the classes they teach are not their primary occupation, and as such, they may not have the time to properly research or read up on the theory associated with their coursework. The evaluation system for adjuncts is different, and they are not held to the same standard as other former practitioners serving as full time professors.

To combat this perception of inadequacy, adjuncts must take the initiative to get more involved in the university. They must learn from their full time counterparts and incorporate the same connection techniques discussed above. Adjuncts can also serve as important resources for former practicing administrators and academicians. Many former practicing administrators have been out of public pre-K-12 education for a few years. Adjuncts can help all professors remain current with the latest happenings in terms of legislation and such and how they changes are actually affecting the schools. These conversations can help them create a symbiotic relationship within the department with full time professors gaining latest trends, issues, and scenarios from today's schools and the adjuncts receiving a better understanding and utilization of theory and research in the classroom. Adjuncts may always have to fight the perceptions that they are not providing as good of a quality education as their full time counterparts. However, with increased connectivity within the university setting and building of reciprocal relationships,

adjuncts can truly become an important piece of the overall university experience by helping bridge the world of the academia and the world of practice.

All university professors, practitioners, academicians, and adjuncts need to work together to achieve the common good for the university and students. Each of these three types of professors bring unique attributes to the profession. Only by respecting and learning from one another can they create a program with an appropriate balance between theory and practice. Only then can they feel comfortable in their role and confident in their own abilities that what they have to offer can play a major role in developing an all around superintendent.

Implications for Universities

Analysis of the participant data demonstrated that most of the participants felt they were ready to assume the role of superintendent only to discover they were not. The implication is that graduates of these programs may not be aware of the actual demands of the job until they have been hired for their first superintendent position. Second, they may not realize that the goal of the university is not to prepare them for each and every scenario they will face but, rather, to give them the tools to adapt to their surrounding and the ability to make sound decisions based on proven theories and research.

Participants expressed the desire to have had an administrative experience that was more practical based. This was evidenced by their responses in conjunction to how they teach skills and theory in their classes and their belief in the proper balance between theory and practice. Every participant acknowledged the advantages of theory in superintendent studies while they tried to tie these experiences to real life, practical scenarios.

Knowing now that the majority of participants in this study did not feel they had enough useful practical experiences and/or understand the purpose of theory in their preparation program, universities should make every effort to explain how and why theory can be used to help them in their future positions. They should allow more opportunities to practice theories using real life scenarios and situations to create a more realistic environment. Students should be encouraged to share their ideas and solutions to demonstrate how different theories can be used to solve the same problem and vice versa. These discussions can help students see the errors in thought and problem-solve more appropriate responses in a safe environment free of consequences. Universities should work to clarify the purpose of the material they are teaching. Managerial tasks should be made as concrete as possible and tied to specific practical experiences. Theoretical concepts should be used to create different scenarios that may/can contain various solutions, where each of which should be tied to solutions and their explanations for the choice.

To better serve their constituents and to bring better cohesion within the university, clear common curriculum that incorporates theory with practical applications should be created and/or enforced within the department. This curriculum can help ensure all students understand the meaning and connections to the real world for everything they learn. A clear curriculum can help balance the need for scholarship and service to the field.

Another implication from this study is that universities may be splintered along academician and practitioner lines. They may find it necessary to help their faculty come together and talk about these factions so academicians, practitioners, and adjuncts can learn to appreciate what each has to offer and build upon each other's strengths. These

discussions can also be used as springboards that interconnect the ideas and content of each class into a more cohesive program.

Universities should seek partnerships with public K-12 districts to encourage and provide mentors for new superintendents. These formal and informal mentoring opportunities were critical to the success of many of the participants. Formalization of this process will ensure that no superintendent gets lost in their initial transition. Currently, too many of these placements are random and may not meet the needs of the participants. The relationship can be symbiotic as well. School districts can help ensure the veteran superintendents are available to help the new superintendent, and this mentor process will help the mentor grow in his/her own understanding of the job. Hall (2006) would advocate for this process and for lifelong networking systems to help in the continued growth of administrators.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

As a result of this study, several recommendations have emerged for professional practice. With any study, it is important to be careful that the recommendations are based strictly on the data and point toward follow-up or future research. Recommendations are outlined in accordance with the research questions.

To develop programs focused on preparing school administrators to lead instructional improvement, universities need to train and hold students to performance and competency standards and equip aspiring superintendents with "the skills, knowledge, and habits of mind necessary for transforming schools" (Stein, 2006, p. 522).

Universities need to do a better job clarifying what they will prepare their students to do and emphasize the fact that they cannot prepare their students for every circumstance.

According to Hall (2006),

The traditional model of administrator preparation that delivers packaged, abstract learning that is disconnected from the realities of the school or the central office is not sufficient to prepare educational leaders for the organizational complexities we face. Leadership education must connect university training and practice. (p. 524)

Universities can, and should, help students develop a solid foundation of theory and "craft knowledge," so they develop the skills necessary to successfully lead our schools. The combination of these ideas can help them formulate appropriate solutions to future problems and achieve management tasks. To accomplish this, universities need to provide practice using these theories to help students create solutions to real life scenarios or case studies and discuss the resulting ideas or solutions to determine what worked well, did not work so well, and brainstorm other ideas on how they could have done it differently. For their part, participants should understand that the superintendent endorsement is actually a novice license to practice, and similar to a young teacher, they will need time to grow and develop in that new position. They will not be completely ready on day one no matter what program they attended or what administrative experience they have had prior to the role.

Many first time superintendents find that their new position is very different from what they expected. This seems to be true no matter how much previous experience they have had or their academic training (Kowalski, 2006). That being said, a strong recommendation is for universities to develop mentor programs in conjunction with school districts, administrative organization and/or the state board of education to help new

superintendents in their transitions. These mentors can help their new colleagues by providing guidance and a safe place to bounce ideas or look for suggestions. Several school districts assign their new teachers mentors to help them transition, and the State of Illinois requires mentors for new principals. Shouldn't the same be true for superintendents as well? Universities could develop a mentor training program and encourage their former students to attend these sessions and make themselves available to mentor current students. These ideas could also be incorporated into the pre service training course regiment and the importance of the process stressed throughout the program. Hall (2006) advocates that aspiring leaders should be placed in their internships early in their program so they can utilize and practice the information, theories, and skills they are receiving continuously instead of waiting until near the end of the program when the practicum usually begins. They should also be allowed to have mentoring activities in real-world settings for the same purpose. Experienced practitioners should be recruited to work with these aspiring candidates to help them bring meaning to their learning.

Universities should find ways to incorporate their adjunct professors into department discussions, with a clear purpose and strategic use, on a greater basis. This would accomplish two goals. First, it would help the adjuncts connect to the latest research and ideas available from these members, whose primary job it is to develop and keep track of the latest research. These meetings could also be used to help adjuncts understand the philosophies and goals of the university. Conversely, the adjunct could provide information on the latest trends and issues affecting schools. Even a few years removed from being a practitioner can result in some dating of the information they have and the

applicability of their experiences. Adjuncts can provide specialization and, as William stated, spice to the program.

Although Kowalski (2009) focused his closing comments on novice superinten-dents employed in small districts without professional support staff, his recommendations are still sound. He argued that "exposure to one or more professors who have been super-intendents should be deemed essential" (p. 24). That being said, a final recommendation would be to alter the university tenure system for practitioners that do not have long term plans to stay in the professor position or interest in the tenure track. One option would be to create university professor positions outside the tenure track specifically for practi-tioners or to modify the tenure track to include more options for advancement not tied to the notion of "scholarly" work. Not everyone who can contribute to the college or university must be a scholar. The tenure track could be expanded to allow for practical experience or application opportunities for advancement. As currently configured at many universities, the tenure system may be causing some good candidates for these positions to not apply or may force others out earlier than they wanted because they refuse to "jump through the hoops" as required by the tenure track.

The current pay disparity between a superintendent in the prime of his/her career and a college professor already ensures that most practitioners, if not all, will be retired administrators. The system should be orchestrated to attract the best and brightest of this crop to come and teach and then stay as long as possible when they do. As Stein (2006) pointed out when discussing the Levine (2005) report, "it is rare for faculty members to have so much breadth of practical knowledge and academic productivity. Instead, Ed. Schools must provide the necessary incentives and concrete support to grow such

faculties" (p. 525). One way to do so is to create incentives for faculty to work in the university doing research or academia that makes sense for the student, the school they are working with and the university. The short career of these retirees is an issue that needs to be addressed. Universities need to find ways to recruit and retain these professors for longer amounts of time through adjunct roles, partnerships, and tenure changes. The experiences they bring to the classroom are an integral part of the future of educational administration.

Recommendations for Future Work

This study highlights the viewpoints and beliefs of a small number of unique individuals who have transitioned from the superintendent position to college professor who prepares future superintendents. The study was intended to add to the body of research by exploring how the initial recommendations made by the NPBEA affected some of the hiring practices of universities. At the time of these recommendations, the majority of professors in educational administrative programs were social scientists (Cooper, 1987; Murphy, 1993a) and not former practitioners. After the recommendations, universities started to employ more former practitioners as full time professors. This study looked into the role these "new" professors are playing in reshaping these institutions. The insight into their training and how they attempt to mold the next generation of school administrators should be very valuable in understanding the dynamics of the university department today. As a result of the interviews and findings from this study, some additional ideas or concepts could be considered to expand the original premise and scope of this study:

1.   Look into how and why universities recruit and select former superintendents to serve as college professors for educational administration preparation programs.

2.   Study programs that attempt to bridge coursework and the superintendent position.

3.   Study mentor programs for new superintendents to compare and contrast comfort levels of new superintendents who were given a mentor and those that were not.

4.   Reproduce the same study using different participants from within the state or participants from other states.

5.   Produce a study using the same research questions with an additional focus on the participants' espoused views of what they consider important skills and theories compared to their actual assignments and syllabi.

6.   Conduct a similar study with participants trained after changes made to superintendent pre-service training programs as a result of the NPBEA recommendations, ISLLC standards, and/or NCLB. The purpose of this study would be determine if the modifications made to superintendent pre-service training programs, as a result of the above mentioned events, have made significant differences.

7.   Conduct an in-depth study to show how different administrative experiences prior to assuming a first superintendent position can help build confidence and effective-ness. What experiences tend to lead to an easier transition to the superintendent role?

8.   Investigate the various ways universities help students understand theory and its role or purpose for a practicing superintendent.

9.   Study the reasons why candidates selected the pre-service university they attended. Was their selection based on reputation of the university, its location, the

philosophy of the college, or other factors? The researcher could then compare the

reason for the selection to other variables such as satisfaction with the program,

preparation levels and other factors.

Conclusion

As participant Christopher pointed out,

> I used to be of the mind that public schools, the change process, was fairly slow
> and I've come to realize that the university, by comparison, the university is
> glacial in terms of their willingness and their ability to change. I mean it just
> doesn't happen.

This study has outlined areas where universities have changed over the last two decades in

terms of the recruitment of new and different faculty. However, pressure still exists on

these institutions to continue to change or be replaced by other forms of accreditation.

This study has outlined suggested changes that could be made to further the cause for the

university to remain the focal source for accreditation and ways to help their clientele

succeed in the workplace. Included in these has been the idea of establishing mentoring

programs, better communication and cooperation among staff, better communication of

how theory can impact future success, and the incorporation of more practical application

in the program. Without continued changes to their programs, pre-service training for

superintendents will continue to undergo pressure from outside sources and possible

legislation that may do this for them. These institutions have started down the correct path

with the hiring of more former practitioners and the incorporation of more practical

application into coursework to help create an appropriate balance of ideas, thoughts, and

practices. However, these institutions cannot rest. They must continue to evolve to meet

the ever-changing needs of their students and society in general. It is better to be

proactive then reactive to the force of legislation or other restrictions on their ability to

determine what needs to be changed.

REFERENCES

Achilles, C. M., & Keedy, J. L. (2001). The intellectual firepower needed for
educational administration's new era of enlightenment. In T. J. Kowalski (Ed.),
21*st* *Century challenges for school administrators.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow
Press.

Achilles, C. M., & Ramey, M. C. (1990). Evaluating preparation programs for school
administrators. In M. F. Berney & J. B. Ayers (Eds.), *Evaluating preparation
programs for school leaders and teachers in specialty areas.* Boston: Kluwer
Academic Publishers.

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2001). *PK-12 educational
leadership and administration: A white paper of the association of colleges for
teacher education.* Retrieved from
www.aacte.org/membership_Governance/edleadership.pdf

Andrews, R. C. (1994). New directions for preparing schools leaders? In T. A. Mulkeen,
N. H. Cambron-McCabe, & B. J. Anderson. (Eds.). *Democratic leadership: The
changing context of administrative preparation.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

American Association of School Administrators. (1993). *Professional standards for the
superintendency.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.

Berry, J., & Beach, R. (2006, Aug. 14). K-12 leadership and the educational administra-
tion curriculum: A theory of preparation. National Council of the Professors of
Educational Administration. Retrieved from http://cnx.org/content/m13772/latest/

Bogdan, R. C., & Bilken, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An
introduction to theory and methods*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bolman & Deal (2004). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership.*
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bottoms, G., & O'Neill, K. (2001, April). *Preparing a new breed of school principals:
It's time for action.* Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board. Retrieved
from www.sreb.org

Bredeson, P. V., & Kose, B. W. (2007, March 14). *Responding to the education reform
agenda: A study of school superintendents' instructional leadership*. Education
Policy Analysis Archives, 15(5).

165

Bulach, C., Pickett, W. & Boothe, D. (1998, June). Mistakes educational leaders make. *ERIC Digest.* Eugene, OR: Clearinghouse on Educational Management

Callahan, R. E. (1964). *Education and the cult of efficiency: A study of the social forces that shaped the administration of the public schools*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Callahan, R. E. (1966). *The superintendent of schools: A historical analysis*. Eugene, OR: ERIC.

Cambron-McCabe, N. H. (1999). Confronting fundamental transformation of leadership preparation. In J. Murphy & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational administration: A decade of reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Campbell, R. F., & Newell, L. J. (1973). *A study of professors of educational administration: Problems and prospects of an applied academic field*. Columbus, OH: University Council for Educational Administration.

Carter, G. R., & Cunningham, W. G. (1997). *The American school superintendent: Leading in an age of pressure*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clark, D. L. (1999). Searching for authentic educational leadership in university graduate programs and with public school colleagues. In J. Murphy, & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational Administration: A Decade of Reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Clifford, G. J., & Guthrie, J. G. (1988). *Ed school*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Coleman, D., Copeland, D., & Adams, R. C. (2001). University education administration program development: Administrative skills vs. achievement standards as predictors of administrative success. In T. J. Kowalski (Ed.), *21st Century Challenges for School Administrators.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Cooper, B. S., & Boyd, W. L. (1987). The evolution of training for school administrators. In J. Murphy & P. Hallinger (Eds.), *Approaches to administrative training in education* (pp. 3-27). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Cooper, B. S., & Muth, R. (1994). Internal and external barriers to change in departments of educational administration. In T. A. Mulkeen, N. H. Cambron-McCabe, & B. J. Anderson. (Eds.). *Democratic leadership: The changing context of administrative preparation.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Creighton, T. (2001). Lessons from performing arts: Can auditioning help improve the selection process in university administration preparation programs in the 21st century. In T. J. Kowalski (Ed.), *21st Century challenges for school administrators.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Creighton, T., Lunenburg, F., Irby, B., & Nie, Y. (2003-2004). Educational administration directory 2003-2004. Huntsville, TX: National Council of Professors of Educational Administration.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Donaldson, S. I., Ensher, E. A., & Grant-Vallone, E. J. (2000). Longitudinal examination of mentoring relationships on organizational commitment and citizenship behavior. *Journal of Career Development*, *26*, 233-249.

Elmore, R. (2006, March). Breaking the cartel. *Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(7), 517-518.

Feistritzer, C. E. (2003, May). *Certification of principals and superintendents in the U.S.* National Center for Education Information. Retrieved from www.ncei.com/2003_Principals_Superintendents/2003_Summary.pdf

Forsyth, P. B., & Murphy, J. (1999). A decade of changes: Analysis and comments. In J. Murphy, & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational administration: A decade of reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Gall, J. P., Gall, M. D., & Borg, W. R. (1999). *Applying educational research: A practical guide.* New York: Longman.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research.* Chicago: Aldine.

Glaser, B. (1978). Th*eoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory.* Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glass, T. E., Bjork, L., & Brunner, C. C. (2000). *The study of the American school superintendency: A look at the superintendent of education in the new millennium.* American Association of School Administration

Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant leadership; A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness.* New York: Paulist Press.

Hall, B. L. (2006, March). Rethinking leadership education for the real world. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *87*(7), 524-525.

Haller, E. J., Brent, B. O., & McNamara, J. H. (1997, November). Does graduate training in educational administration improve America's schools? *Phi Delta Kappan*, *78*(3), 222-227.

Hallinger, P. (1997). *Problem-based learning: Resources for urban school leadership training.* Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

Hart, A. W., & Pounder, D. G. (1999). Reinventing preparation programs: A decade of activity. In J. Murphy, & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational administration: A decade of reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers.* Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Herbst, J. (2007). Rethinking American professional education. In *The history of higher education* (3rd ed., pp. 412-420). Boston: Pearson.

Hirth, M. A., & McInerney, W. D. (2001). Technological and programmatic challenges confronted in delivering a distance learning doctoral program. In T. J. Kowalski (Ed.), *21st Century challenges for school administrators.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Holloway, J. H. (2001, February). Setting standards for the school superintendent. E*ducational Leadership,* 84-85.

Hurley, J. C. (2001). The principalship: Lee may be more. *Education Week*, *20*(37), 1.

Iannacone, L. (1976, May). *50 years of deed, program, and research in educational administration.* Paper presented at the conference on 50 Years of Deed, Program, and Research in Educational Administration, University of Tel Aviv.

IL-SAELP Consortium. Center for the Study of Education Policy (EAF). (2006, January 6). Recommendations of the IL-SAELP administrator preparation committee.

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium. (1996). *Standards for school leaders.* Washington DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. Retrieved from www.ccsso.org

Janesick, V. J. (1994). The dance of qualitative resrach design: Metaphor, methodology, and meaning. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Kaiser, J. S. (1993). *Educational Administration*. Mequon, WI: Stylex.

Kotter, J. P. (1990). *A force for change: How leadership differs from management*. Free Press: New York

Kotter, J. P., & Cohen D. S. (2002). *The heart of change: Real-life stories of how people change their organizations*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Kowalski, T. J., & Reitzug, U. C. (1993). *Contemporary school administration: An introduction.* New York: Longman.

Kowalski, T. J. (1999). *The school superintendent: Theory, practice and cases.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall

Kowalski, T. J. (2006). Evolution of the school district superintendent position. In L. Björk & T. Kowalski (Eds.), *The contemporary superintendent: Preparation, practice and development* (pp. 1-18). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin

Kowalski, T. J., Peterson, G. J., & Fusarelli, L. D. (2009, Winter). Novice superintendents and the efficacy of professional preparation. *AASA Journal of scholarship and practice*, *5*(4), 16-26.

Kerchner, C. (1993). The strategy of teaching strategy. In P. Hallinger, K. Leithwood, & J. Murphy (Eds.), *Cognitive perspectives on educational leadership* (pp. 5-20). New York: Teacher College Press.

Lee, A. (1999). *Research and knowledge in the professional doctorate.* Paper presented at symposium: Professional doctorates in new times for the Australian university, AARE, Brisbane, December 1997.

Levin, A. (2005, March). *Educating school leaders.* Washington DC: The Education Schools Project. Policy paper retrieved from http://www.edschools.org/reports_leaders.htm

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Lumsden, L. S. (1992). Prospects in principal preparation. *ERIC Digest.* ERIC clearinghouse on educational Management. Eugene, OR. Retrieved from www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed350726.html

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. ASCD: Alexandra, VA.

McCarthy, M. M., & Kuh, G. D. (1997). *Continuity and change: The educational leadership professoriate*. Columbia, MO: The University Council for Educational Administration.

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1993). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. New York: Harper Collins.

Mulkeen, T. A. (1994). The evaluation of the one best system: Administrator preparation. In T. A. Mulkeen, N. H. Cambron-McCabe, & B. J. Anderson (Eds.), *Democratic leadership: The changing context of administrative preparation.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Mulkeen, T. A., &. Cambron-McCabe, N. H. (1994). Educating leaders to invent "tomorrow's" schools. In T. A. Mulkeen, N. H. Cambron-McCabe, & B. J.

Anderson. (Eds.), *Democratic leadership: The changing context of administrative preparation.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Mulkeen, T. A., Cambron-McCabe, N. H., & Anderson, B. J. (1994). Continuing the conversation. In T. A. Mulkeen, N. H. Cambron-McCabe, & B. J. Anderson (Eds.). *Democratic leadership: The changing context of administrative preparation.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Murphy, J. (1992). *The landscape of leadership preparation: Reframing the education of school administrators.* Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press

Murphy, J. (1993a). Ferment in school administration: Rounds 1-3. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *Preparing tomorrow's school leaders: Alternative designs.* University Park, PA: University Council for Educational Administration.

Murphy, J. (1993b). Alternative designs: New directions. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *Preparing tomorrow's school leaders: Alternative designs.* University Park, PA: University Council for Educational Administration, Inc.

Murphy, J. (1999). Changes in preparation programs: Perceptions of department chairs. In J. Murphy, & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational administration: A decade of reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Murphy, J. (2001, November). The changing face of leadership preparation. *School Administrator*, *58*(10), 14-17.

Murphy, J. (2002, Winter). The ISLLC standards at work. In *The American Educational Research Association Division A-Educational Administration Newsletter.* Retrieved from www.aera.net/divisions/a/news/winter02.pdf

Murphy, J., & Datnow, A. (Eds.). (2003). *Leadership lessons from comprehensive school reforms.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Murphy, J. (2007, April). Questioning the core of university-based programs for preparing school leaders. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *88*(8), 582-585.

Murphy, J. T. (2006, March). Dancing lessons for elephants: Reforming ed school leadership programs. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *87*(7), 489-491.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for school reform.* Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Education.

National Policy Board for Educational Administration. (1989, May). *Improving the preparation of school administrators: The reform agenda.* Charlottesville, VA: Author

National Policy Board for Educational Administration. (2002, January). *Standards for advanced programs in educational leadership: For superintendents, curriculum directors, and supervisors.* Retrieved from www.npbea.org/ELCC/ELCC%20Standards%2001-02.pdf

Norton, J. (2002, Fall). *Universities in the lead: Redesigning leadership preparation for student achievement.* Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board. Retrieved from www.sreb.org

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newcury Park, CA: SAGE.

Policy Forum on Educational Leadership. (1999, June). *Effective leaders for today's schools: Synthesis of a policy forum on educational leadership.* Perspectives on education policy research. Retrieved from www.ed.gov/pubs/EffectiveLeaders/Title.html

Porter, N. (1878). *The American colleges and the American public* (2nd ed). New York: Arno.

Ranjit, K. (1999). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. London: SAGE.

Rice, R. E., & Richlin, L. (1993). Broadening the concept of scholarship in the professions. In L. Curry, J. F. Wergin, & Associates (Eds.), *Educating professionals; Responding to new expectations for competence and accountability.* San Franicsco: Jossy-Bass.

Schmuck, R. A., & Runkel, P. J. (1994). *The handbook of organizational development in schools and colleges.* Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.* New York: Basic Books.

Schon, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner; Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Scott, D., Brown, A., Lunt, I., & Thorne, L. (2004). *Professional doctorates: Integrating professional and academic knowledge.* New York: Open University Press.

Senge, P. M. (2002). *Afterword*. In Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant leadership; A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness.* New York: Paulist Press.

Shakeshaft, C. (1999). A decade half full or a decade half empty: Thoughts from a tired reformer. In J. Murphy & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational administration: A decade of reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Shapiro, J. P, & Parker, L. (1994). Educational administrators as leaders: Research implications. In T. A. Mulkeen, N. H. Cambron-McCabe, & B. J. Anderson. (Eds.). *Democratic Leadership: The Changing Context of Administrative Preparation.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Shipman, N. J., & Murphy, J. (2001, February). Standards for school leaders: Gaining momentum. *Principal Leadership, 1*(6), 69-70.

Sirotnik, K. A., & Mueller, K. M. (1993). Challenging the wisdom of conventional principal preparation programs and getting away with it. In J. Murphy (Ed.). *Preparing tomorrow's school leaders: Alternative designs.* University Park, PA: University Council for Educational Administration, Inc.

Southern Regional Education Board. (2003). *Good principals are the key to successful schools: Six strategies to prepare more good principals.* Atlanta, GA. Retrieved from www.sreb.org

SREB Leadership Initiative. (2002). *Creating effective principals who can improve the region's schools and influence student achievement.* Southern Regional Education Board. Atlanta GA. Retrieved from www.sreb/main/leadership/pubs/o2v51_LeadershipInitiative.pdf

Stein, S. J., (2006, March). Transforming leadership programs: Design, pedagogy, and incentives. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *87*(7), 522-525.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Suárez-Orozco, M. M. (2003). The challenge of a changing nation. In M. Pierce & D. L. Stapleton, *The 21st century principal: Current issues in leadership and policy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Van Meter, E. J. (1999). The persistent saga: Changing instruction and curriculum to better prepare school leaders. In J. Murphy & P. B. Forsyth (Eds.), *Educational administration: A decade of reform.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Veysey, L. R. (1965). *The emergence of the American university.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Westmeyer, P. (1985). *A history of American higher education.* Springfield, IL: Thomas.

Wilson, P. T. (1993). Pushing the edge. In M. M. Milstein (Ed.), *Changing the way we prepare educational leaders.* Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press.

THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE SUPERINTENDENCY

The American Association of School Administrators (1993)

Standard 1: Leadership and District Culture. This standard consists of creating a vision, helping to shape the school culture, and representing the welfare of all students.

Standard 2: Policy and Governance. This standard involves developing the procedures necessary to work with the board and formulating district policy and regulations.

Standard 3: Communications and Community Relations. This standard involves articulating the purpose and priorities of the district and its policies. It also includes relaying the vision of the district to the media and educational community.

Standard 4: Organizational Management. This standard consists of the ability to use the information at hand to aid in decision-making and formulation of solutions to problems.

Standard 5: Curriculum Planning and Development. This standard involves designing and implementing appropriate curriculum through the use of a strategic plan and proper evaluative tools to further enhance teaching and learning capabilities. This standard also includes the use of computers and other learning technology.

Standard 6: Instructional Management. This standard involves using research findings about learning and instructional strategies, time, and technology to further enhance student learning.

Standard 7: Human Resource Management. This standard involves developing a staff evaluation and development system to improve performance. It also includes applying the legal requirements for personnel selection, development, retention, and dismissal.

Standard 8: Values and Ethics of Leadership. This standard involves understanding and modeling and appropriate value system, ethics, and moral leadership. It also requires the exhibition of multicultural and ethical understanding of diverse constituencies and the coordination with social agencies and human services to help each student grow and develop as a caring, informed citizen (American, 1993).

173

APPENDIX B

STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (1996)

Standard 1: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

Standards 2: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student and staff professional growth.

Standard 3: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Standard 5: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Standard 6: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context" (Interstate, 1996).

APPENDIX C

THE STANDARDS FOR ADVANCED PROGRAMS IN EDUCATIONAL

LEADERSHIP: FOR PRINCIPALS, SUPERINTENDENTS,

CURRICULUM DIRECTORS, AND SUPERVISORS

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2002)

Standard 1: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.

Standard 2: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.

Standard 3: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Standard 5: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairly, and in an ethical manner.

Standard 6: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Standard 7: Internship. The internship provides significant opportunities for candidates to synthesize and apply the knowledge and practice and develop the skills identified in Standards 1-6 through substantial, sustained, standards-based work in real settings, planned and guided cooperatively by the institution and school district personnel for graduate credit. (National, 2002)

175

APPENDIX D

CONSENT LETTER

Dr.:

My name is Douglas Kaufman. I am a graduate student at Illinois State University working on my Doctorate. The working title for my dissertation is: *A study into the perceptions of former public school superintendents in Illinois now serving as university professors as to the need for both leadership and management in administrative training.* The purpose of the qualitative study is gain a better understanding of university preparation programs and how they may be altered to better meet the needs of students. By speaking to former superintendents who are currently employed as university professors of Educational Administration I hope to gauge their perceptions of what the proper balance should be between leadership training and management skills and what aspects of each are most important to learn in educational administrative programs or even how this balance could be achieved. As these individuals have lived in both worlds they are the best source of this knowledge. This research project will be conducted from March 2008 until August 2008. The data from these interviews will be analyzed and synthesized into a written dissertation and possibly used at future research symposiums or professional conference.

As a current university professor of Educational Administration you understand the importance your participation can have on this project and I would hope you would be willing to participate in this study. Your participation would include being interviewed once or twice for approximately forty minutes to an hour each time. I would ask questions pertaining to your personal experiences both as a superintendent and university professor.

All interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed. However, the only persons with access to these tapes will be a hired transcription secretary and myself. When all research is complete the audio recordings will be destroyed. All information will be confidential apart from general descriptions of you and the types of schools you have worked.

Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from participation at any time, for any reason and with no penalties of any sort.

If you have any questions about this research or your rights as a participant, please contact my academic advisor at Illinois State University Research Office, or myself. Contact information is provided below.

Douglas Kaufman	Dianne, Gardner	Illinois State University
(███) ████████	(309) 438-2040	Research and Sponsored
████████@comcast.net	dgardne@ilstu.edu	Programs
		309-438-8451

Please, sign and return this form to indicate your understanding and acceptance to participate in the research study tentatively entitled; *A study into the perceptions of former public school superintendents in Illinois now serving as university professors as to the need for both leadership and management in administrative training.* To fax this form, please use (███) ████████.

Sincerely,

Douglas R. Kaufman
Division Chair for Social Studies, Foreign Language and Art
Andrew High School
9001 W. 171st Street
Tinley Park, IL 60487

I understand the project and am willing to participate.

_____
Signature of Participant

APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTOR OF PARTICIPANTS

Name of Participant: _____

K-12 Teaching and Leadership

Please provide demographic information for each K-12 school in which you have worked as both a teacher and/or administrator.

School/District Name	Position held	Years in position	Student enrollment	Grade level	Minority %	% F/R lunch

Higher Education Teaching and Leadership

Name of Institution where you received your doctorate and year awarded: _____
_____

Current job title: _____

Length of time in current position or other university teaching experiences: _____
_____

Classes you teach/have taught in the Educational Leadership program: _____
_____

The Information provided will be used to help the researcher gauge the background and experiences of the candidates. It will be used to provide general trends among participants but specific information about candidates will not be shared.

178

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

As you assumed your first Superintendency…

- How well did you feel you were personally prepared to assume the responsibilities of the position?
- What were the most important things you learned prior to taking over your first superintendent position? Where and how had you learned them?
- What did you wish you had learned more about prior to accepting the position?

In Your Role as a Professor….

Skills

- What skills do you find important for your students to learn?
- How do you attempt to teach these skills?

Theory

- What aspect of theory do you find important for your students to learn?
- How do you attempt to teach theory to your students?

Research

- What do you consider the role of research to be in the university experience? What are the essential research-based theoretical/conceptual ideas that students must master before earning their degree?
- How do you attempt to teach research to your students?

Practicum

- What is the importance of practical experiences in the university setting?
- How do you use practicum experiences to help in the preparation of prospective school superintendents?

Having experienced life as both a superintendent and a college professor…

- To what extent, if any, have you found tension between theory and practice at the university level and how has this impacted superintendent preparation programs?
- What do you believe to be the value of theory-based as well as practice-based learning? In your opinion, what is the appropriate balance between the two and how can this balance be achieved?
- How would research and practicum experiences fit into the preparation experience?