A HERMENEUTICAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE ROLE OF NEW
SECONDARY SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
By
David Joseph Stanton IV

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Liberty University
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ABSTRACT

A HERMENEUTICAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE ROLE OF NEW
SECONDARY SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS: (Under the direction of Dr.
Angela M. Smith). School of Education, April, 2012. This phenomenological study
followed five secondary school assistant principals during the 2010-2011 school year.
The participants range in age from their early 30s to early 50s, three of the participants
serving as assistant principals in high schools; and two as assistant principals in middle
schools.   All five participants work in two school districts in Oakland County, Michigan,
a suburban county northwest of Detroit and were promoted to administrative work within
the past three years.   The participants provided monthly calendars and journals along
with discipline reports to demonstrate through their schedules, duties, and, most
importantly, their own words, the experiences of new secondary school assistant
principals.   The study focused on these shared experiences of new administrators by
allowing for the participants to voice their own words and thus add to the body of
knowledge.

This phenomenological study focused on the lack of mentoring capabilities for new
administrators, specifically those in public secondary schools.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Jodie…Thank you for your love and support during this long process.   What you do to sacrifice for me in so many areas is such a true picture of God's love.

To my beautiful daughters - Christine, Joanna, and Margaret… Though you may not understand now, you are the reason I will always work as hard as I can.   I pray that my example will show you what a man should be in how he loves his wife, his children, and follows the Lord in all aspects of his life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Administrators in their first few years in that role are so singularly focused on learning their new position that they often find no time to be mentored into what an administrator can and should be in a school. With many new assistant principals coming straight out of the teaching ranks, it is not surprising that so many are left "burnt out" after the initial adjustment to their new position. Administrators now experience much longer hours at school, no summers off, and the majority of their day is not focused necessarily on their goals of improving student learning or advancing research to the staff, but on discipline matters involving students and business operations of the school.

The participants' opportunities to speak through this project revealed their beliefs about the subject of mentoring and what they were able to best describe, from firsthand knowledge, the importance mentoring should play in public secondary schools.

Background

Given the intricacies of school administration and the change from teaching to administration, what benefits would these new administrators receive from formal mentoring? With a great amount of turnover in education, and in administration in particular, added to the changing role of the administrator in a standards-based system, there is an increased need for mentoring of these new administrators (Fink & Brayman, 2006; Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001). As there are few studies exploring mentoring for new administrators in the literature, a phenomenological study developed to understand new administrators' shared experiences lent itself to answering this question. In this arena, many supervisory administrators are not able to likewise be the mentors

they would most likely desire to be to assistant principals, as they face the same constraints. This issue is highlighted by the importance of overall organizational support to create effective mentoring relationships. The importance of financing mentoring programs, as well as the support and time factors and considerations, are essential to creating and sustaining effective mentoring programs (Daresh, 2004).

Ultimately, it is necessary for new administrators in their first years to be effectively mentored so as to best carry out their new role, and to also have a mentor to turn to as they attempt to find direction in their new position. Few new administrators come to the job completely prepared and in need of no mentoring, even those who have been teaching for over 20 years, as the role of the administrator is vastly different than that of the teacher. The Education Alliance & National Association of Elementary Principals (2003) noted this need by declaring that beginning principals would need some type of assistance in order to become the effective leaders in a world focused on accountability (p. 9). According to Bottoms and O'Neill (2001), this need does exist to further prepare and mentor school leaders. The world of standards-based education dictates this new change in focus:

Increasingly, state accountability systems are placing the burden of school success—and individual student achievement—squarely on the principal's shoulders. The principal's job description has expanded to a point that today's school leader is expected to perform in the role of "chief learning officer," with ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of the enterprise. Today's principal must be prepared to focus time, attention and effort on changing what

students are taught, how they are taught, and what they are learning. This

formidable challenge demands a new breed of school leaders, with skills and

knowledge far greater than those expected of "school managers" in the past (pp.

5-6).

According the Education Alliance (2003), "relatively few principals have

participated in formal mentoring programs as part of their leadership training" and "fewer

than half of the superintendents interviewed for a 1998 Educational Research Service

(ERS) survey indicated that their districts had a formal induction or mentoring program

for new principals"(The Education Alliance, 2003, p. 9). Gettys (2007) notes the

importance mentoring can play for new principals and their ability to find direction

during that initial phase of principalship. Gettys notes,

> Participation in effective mentoring programs is another avenue utilized to
>
> provide the support necessary for aspiring and developing leaders. Mentoring
>
> programs provide encouragement and assistance as experienced principals work
>
> with beginning principals…" and that "mentors provide guidance and feedback as
>
> new principals develop capacity to fulfill the new roles and responsibilities (p. 3).

The National Association of Elementary Principals and National Association of

Secondary School Principals published a report in 2000, entitled *The Principal, Keystone*

of a High- Achieving School: Attracting and Keeping the Leaders We Need, based on an

ERS survey of current and past principals. When asked their own preparations for

leadership "respondents identified 'good on-the-job training under a fine mentoring

principal' as a 'strong plus'." One of the principals in the survey described his initial

time on the job as such: "the support I received was minimal. My feet hit the floor and I learned by doing" (The Education Alliance, 2003, p. 10). In her study, Gettys (2007) noted that "research has documented the importance of effective leadership in impacting instructional environments to bring about reforms necessary to meet today's required standards " (p. 68). Gettys' (2007) quantitative study of new principals in Missouri focused on six questions that generated some interesting comments. In a follow-up interview, one of the Gettys' (2007) participants noted,

> When we were looking at the documents that talked about what we were supposed to be doing, I felt like I was being told to make it look like we were complying on paper. There didn't seem to be respect for professional development processes, or even the belief that systematic professional development was necessary. I got the feeling that I needed to keep the status quo and leave things as they were (p. 98).

The importance of these mentoring relationships cannot be underestimated. Gettys (2007) utilized the language of her participants that reinforced this concept:

- The value I found in my mentorship program came from opportunities to 'talk' or 'debrief' with a peer as various events arose (p. 122).
- I've called and asked what this is and what I need to do…The budget was due last month and I had never seen one. So she walked me through that and told me what she was doing and gave me ideas that I could go back and ask my staff if they would be interested in…She calls and asks how things are going or I call her with an issue (p. 122).

- He was always available for me to ask questions (p. 122).

- I feel like I've had a great first year because, anytime I struggled, I've been able to call and say, I'm struggling – help me out (p. 122).

- My mentor is excellent as a sounding board (p. 123).

- We have built that bond together that we like our monthly talks and I certainly appreciate that going into changes of a second year (p. 124).

- Anytime I've had any kind of an issue or concern or question, I feel like she's been great because of her being removed from my situation – kink of a neutral party (p. 124).

- In other schools, you have principals from other conferences, but you really can't air your dirty laundry because you don't want to tell them what's going on in your school, so you're afraid to really be forthright, but with [mentor], I can let it all hang out and get his input (p. 124).

From this collection of responses, there are both positive and negative connotations and impressions of mentoring. This phenomenological study, then, used a neutral approach to allow the participants' perspectives to be the singular highlights, in their own words.

Statement of the Problem

The target school districts in the current study have no formalized mentoring plan for new assistant principals. One of the districts had a 45% turnover in secondary administrators over the past three years, bringing six new administrators directly from the teaching ranks. Additionally, rumored retirements suggest an additional five

administrative postings and hiring of new administrators in the near future. The second

district selected has experienced a high turnover in administration as well, with the hiring

of three new secondary school assistant principals in a two-year period. During this

time, no formal mentoring has been conducted for the new assistant principals and they

have learned their positions solely by serving in them.

<div style="text-align:center">Significance of the Study</div>

Having formal mentoring for new administrators would not only serve to improve

their abilities and skill levels, but would also increase their level of comfort in their new

role. Without a mentoring plan, I suggest that these new administrators will, at best, look

to their immediate supervisors for the necessary mentoring. Although this arrangement

may work without a formal mentoring plan or schedule, the mentoring may be simply an

ad-hoc arrangement. Certainly, veteran administrators would provide valuable insight

and direction to their subordinates, but a formal track of mentoring, similar to that which

teachers experience for tenure, could only be beneficial to these new administrators.

Teachers undergo a rigorous training period during their undergraduate studies, to include

research-based courses, teaching methodology courses, and directed student teaching.

Upon completing those numerous requirements, teachers find employment with a school.

At this point, the training is far from complete. Teachers then undergo a multi-year track

of formal observations and mentoring meetings with a veteran teacher in order to attain

tenure. In like manner, this research studied a similar track for new assistant principals

in order to evaluate and develop their potential, skill levels, and comfort level in their

new position. This is especially important, as so many secondary assistant principals

reach that position directly from the teaching ranks.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to determine the mentoring needs of new secondary assistant principals and determine their views of the most critical areas that should be addressed in a mentoring program. By comparing the attitudes and perceptions of these new administrators, I hoped to identify their mentoring needs, as well as for future assistant principals. This was accomplished by examining the phenomenon of the shared experiences of these participants and extracting the hermeneutical similarities of those experiences.

It was the intent of this study to investigate the phenomenon of new assistant principals and to examine effective solutions that would possibly increase mental stability as well as retention and confidence in these new administrators. The goal was to pursue the implementation of a structured and formalized mentoring plan.   From a beginning point, one must look at the standards created by the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). These standards "provide a clear organized set of curriculum content and performance standards that [can] be used to drive the preparation, professional development and licensure of principals" (Jackson & Kelley, 2002, p. 1). Creasap (2003) noted a Midwestern state that created a mentoring and licensure program based on the ISLLC standards and had the following five goals:

> to nurture reflective leadership and learning practices, to support the continuous
> development of leadership skills for beginning administrators by pairing them
> with veteran principals, to introduce principals to the state's new Administrator

Competencies (derived from the ISLLC standards), to discover more meaningful ways of assessing leadership performance and development, and to create a more collaborative leadership development network among the department of education, universities, professional development centers, professional associations, local school districts, and various communities of practice (pp. 16-17).

Whereas one new assistant principal might find discipline matters with students something that takes him away from what he thought he would enjoy focusing on – student achievement, professional development for the staff, keeping up on current educational research, etc., another new assistant principal might take the position that the discipline matters are his strength and the other portions of the position would take him away from what he would otherwise enjoy in this new role.

Research Questions

Research question 1. *What does it mean to be an assistant principal?* This question may be divided into two areas:

1. What are the specific roles the new secondary school assistant principal plays in the school?

2. What is difficult or easy about being a secondary school assistant principal?

Research question 2. *What are the structural meanings of administration or administrative work?* This question may be divided into two areas:

1. What are the underlying responsibilities of a secondary school assistant principal?; and 2. What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about administrators?

These research questions allowed for an analysis to determine the strength of mentoring that was taking place in the targeted schools, as well as the potential need for further mentoring or a more structured approach to mentoring.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Mentoring takes its name from Homer's *Odyssey*. Prior to departing for the Trojan War, Odysseus puts his son under the care of a wise friend, Mentor, son of Alcumus, who would not only care for Telemachus, but would counsel the young prince during the 20-year absence of Odysseus(Homer, 1946).

The task of the mentor, then, is to define a unique relationship with his or her protégé and fulfill a need unmet by any other relationship (Samier, 2000, p. 4). The best mentors are teachers/sages who act to the best of their ability within plain sight of the protégé and who engage in a compassionate and mutual search for wisdom (Bell, 1996, p. 7).According to a 2001 Public Agenda survey of superintendents and principals, published as *Trying to Stay Ahead: Superintendents and Principals Talk about School Leadership*, 92% of the respondents agreed that the time and responsibilities demanded by the job discourage many people from pursuing the principalship as a career. "The principal's job is almost overwhelming," wrote one respondent. "My desk is never clear of obligations; constant interruptions from parents, teachers, and others add to the stress of the day" (The Education Alliance, 2003, p. 8).

To begin in this review of the literature, I focused primarily on the problem question – is there a need for new administrators to be mentored? With that in mind, Malone (2001) noted, "School boards and district officials recognize that formal preparation for the principalship must include a practical component that can impart real-life skills" (p. 1). Malone (2001) continued and addressed this concept, instead of

mentoring as an apprenticeship, where "its success, or lack of success, resides in myriad factors" and "the effectiveness of this hands-on training has become more important as the growing shortage of school leaders threatens the quality of education in the United States" (p. 1).

The need for mentoring new administrators is an area that is not fully addressed in the current literature. The importance of this mentoring and the phenomenon experienced by the administrators is one that lends itself to include in this review of the literature a study of mentorship, a review of leadership in general, and then an examination of the link between these ideas to the ultimate place of leadership and mentoring for administrators in schools.

Mentoring has existed for thousands of years; it is, though, only in the last 30 years that mentor-protégé relationships have received increased attention in academia. Of note, "much of this research initially focused on classical mentoring, in which a protégé, more by chance than by merit, found a mentor willing to serve as guide and counselor. Formalized mentoring programs helped correct these inequities, but these artificial unions usually lacked organizational support and even engendered resentment among mentors who had little or no say in choosing their protégés" (Samier, 2000, p. 10).

In this literature search, I endeavored to find the various areas of leadership most impactful to school administrators. Search terms included leadership, school leadership, mentoring, administrative mentoring, school leadership, and mentoring programs.

Leadership

Leadership, whether learned or natural, is a skill that cannot simply be accepted as complete at any point. It is one that must be continually developed and polished throughout one's positions of leadership. As Maxwell (1999) stated, "leaders face the danger of contentment with the *status quo* [emphasis added]" (p. 144). It is imperative that leaders continue to strive for new education and new learning in their leadership style. Ultimately, the guiding principle of all Christian leaders should be Jesus. The Greatest Leader reflects His abilities in Matthew 4:19-20: "then He said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.' They immediately left their nets and followed Him" (New King James Version). Jesus was the perfect leader and people dropped their entire way of life to follow Him.

School Leadership

According to a joint study by NAESP (National Association of Elementary School Principals) and NASSP (National Association of Secondary School Principals), (The Education Alliance, 2003):

> Reports of a looming principal shortage alarm many educators and policymakers. …more than half of elementary, middle, and high schools reported a shortage of principal candidates. The U.S. Department of Labor has estimated that 40% of the nation's 93,000 principals are near retirement, and that the need for school administrators through 2005 will increase by 10% to 20%. The result is that an increasing number of districts are now making efforts to 'grow their own' school leaders (p. 11).

The State of Oregon (2007) noted that "an estimated 40% of the nation's

principals will retire in this decade" (p. 4). With this shortage of trained

professionals who desire to go in to school administration, the concept of proper

training and mentoring takes on a whole new light. The job of a new administrator

is a difficult one, as highlighted by Boom, associate director of the New Teacher

Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He notes that the job of a

principal "has become more difficult, and the expectations of the job have become

more ambitious. And that's coupled with the shortage of qualified candidates. So

what we're seeing are people coming into the principalship who have all of the

innate skills to succeed, but what they don't have very often is the kind of

experience that in the past prepared people to step into the job. Ten or 20 years

ago, you might have been an assistant principal for five, six, or seven years before

becoming a principal. Now, it might be six months" (The Education Alliance,

2003, p. 7).

A recent survey in Louisiana, Bloom continued, found that "of 215 teachers who

were certified as administrators…only half of them were interested in becoming

principals. Among their reasons: the increased complexity and responsibility of the job,

stressful work conditions, and a lack of resources and support. The fact is, principals have

traditionally been thrown into their jobs without a lifejacket, and they are expected to

sink or swim" (The Education Alliance, 2003, pp.7-8). Added to that sentiment is one

from the Wallace Foundation (2008) that noted:

For too long, principals have been expected to behave as superheroes or virtuoso

soloists.   But if the job of leading schools is really about single-handed heroism,

then how do we even approach the question of what an appropriate professional

education for such a preternatural role should look like? And how can we hope to

identify, much less train, enough heroes to stock more than a small number of

schools? (p. 2).

"For America to have the great schools it needs, those schools must have great

leaders – and so must their school systems" (Fordham, 2003, p. 5). In this way, the

Fordham Institute begins its manifesto on leadership in American schools and highlights

from the beginning the importance leadership should play in those schools. This

manifesto deals mainly with the academic leadership necessary to lead schools to

academic success. Fordham continues this idea in speaking about the importance of

recruiting new administrators and then training them appropriately. To make that

happen, they argue for training to acquire "the specific knowledge that they need to lead

the revival of education in America, and engaging them on terms that make it possible

truly to lead, not just administer" (Fordham, 2003, p. 6).

Reide (2003) suggested that, in New York State "none of those districts - and few

nationally - have formal mentoring programs for administrators" (p. 2). Thompson [one

of those interviewed by Reide in the article], who writes and lectures on administrative

mentoring, says that is a glaring omission, particularly since so many new and

inexperienced administrators are entering the field as those in the Baby Boom Generation

retire" (p. 3). Despite that claim by Reide, there is movement in this direction.

Vanderbilt University formed a study to rate the effects of leadership challenges in school districts. Their report (2005) suggested that "many districts use leadership assessment for formative or summative purposes" and that "there is general agreement that the current state of leadership assessment is lacking." The report's suggestion is to implement a tool "for assessing and monitoring leadership performance. The Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED) fills this gap" (Vanderbilt, 2005, para 1).

Many administrators begin their career as classroom teachers; they have either inherent or learned leadership skills based on their ability to effectively manage a classroom and curriculum. The mentoring and tenure process implemented in most states help to hone and guide that process of leadership development as well. It is when the teacher leaves the classroom and goes to the office that true leadership is tested. The new responsibilities and unique needs of the administrator's job test even the best teacher's leadership abilities. According to the Fordham Institute (2003), "today's principals face a daunting situation: they shoulder greater responsibility than ever before – now typically including politics, security, public relations, finances, personnel, and technology." With this in place, the authors continue, and state, "they have, in effect, become CEOs of small public businesses whose chief product is learning" and they "are profoundly accountable for their results" (Fordham Institute, 2003, p. 19).

Research conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the Education Alliance at Brown University highlights these facts – most new principals excelled at the work of a classroom teacher, but will need a great deal of on the job training when it comes to managing a school. "As a new principal," observes

Higgins, executive director of the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals

Association (MESPA), which offers a mentoring program for first- and second-year

principals, "you're learning the job, you're learning about the community, and you're

trying to figure out what the goals of your school are going to be. There isn't necessarily

someone you can talk to about your problems." It is this concept that causes the need for

mentoring, according to Higgins, who goes on to say that "it's imperative that you have

somebody who is neutral and somebody who understands the challenges of the job to be

able to help you walk that path" (The Education Alliance, 2003, p. 9). In light of that,

the MESPA has worked diligently to assist those new administrators in their roles. They

have:

> Always used retired principals as mentors, taking advantage of their desire to stay
>
> connected and their ability to step back and be reflective about the profession. As
>
> the funding for mentoring programs has waxed and waned, and as the demands on
>
> principals' time have increased, MESPA has adopted an approach in which it
>
> offers a 'menu' of opportunities to participants in its programs (p. 9).

The association has also recently started a program that "offers six free, after-

school seminars in a semester. The program brings together new principals to discuss

readings on leadership (by Ronald Heifitz, Richard Elmore, and others) and network with

one another" (The Education Alliance, 2003, p. 9).

 In an article about inducting new leaders, Lashway (2003) described the typical

lack of mentoring for new administrators when he stated:

Traditionally, rookie principals have been left to sink or swim; having completed a university training program, they are presumed to be prepared, and get little direction beyond bland encouragement or an occasional practical tip" (p. 2).

Lashway (2003) further argued that such things are in a state of flux "as schools realize that a scarcity of high-quality principals means promising leaders should not only be energetically recruited but carefully nurtured once they're on board" (p. 2).   And, he would say that "formal induction programs are too new to have generated a significant body of empirical research, but there is a growing literature that articulates a rationale for such programs, describes the efforts of districts to nurture new leaders, and provides early testimony that induction efforts are well-received" (p. 2).

The primary role of administrators is to support teachers in their work toward student achievement. Creasap (2007) argued that "principals face challenges of improving student achievement for all students." The problem, though, is that these same new principals "have completed university training programs without the skills needed to lead their teachers and students in these efforts" (pp. 137-138).   Fry (2005) pointed out that there are few administrator preparation programs that require internships where experience in focusing on this and the other roles of the administrator are experienced for any length of time. This, Fry argues, is one of the reasons for the development of mentorship programs (p. 14). Heck (1992) discovered that "principals in high-achieving elementary schools appear to devote substantially more time to the implementation of instructional leadership activities than principals in any other settings" (p. 30). Creasap (2007) noted this unequivocally in stating that "the instructional leadership activities that

tended to be the best predictors of student achievement included the amount of time principals spent in classrooms and an emphasis on data driven dialog…" (p. 35). She also noted that the "increased accountability contributes to the growing shortage of school administrators" and that "quality professional development is needed to assist novice principals in the transition to the high demanding job of school administration, to provide them with tools for success, and to keep them in their jobs longer" (p. 103).

In a *Newsweek* article, former General Electric CEO Jack Welch and his wife, Suzy, talk about the importance in leadership of ensuring that a leader is surrounded by the best possible subordinates. They (Welch, 2011) stated, "Winning teams win because they have the best players and a coach who knows how to make the sum greater than the parts" (para 5). They continue (2011) with four principles to continue the idea to its fullest extent. These include: "first, the leaders of winning teams always – always – let their people know where they stand;" (para 2) "second, winning teams know the game plan;" (para 10); "third, winning teams are honest;" (para 18) and, "fourth, winning teams celebrate" (para 23).

When it comes to letting the team know where they stand, the Welches (2011) noted that "effective leaders let their people know whether they are star performers without whom the organization would writhe in agony or whether they should be thinking seriously about finding another job" (para. 5). With a move toward continual observations and evaluations of teachers, the authors (2011) noted that on successful teams, "leaders spend the vast majority of their time lavishing love on top performers" (para. 7). Regarding their second point of teams knowing the game plan, they note that

"on winning teams, leaders infuse their people with crazy-positive enthusiasm about what winning will look like for the company and, more important[ly], for them as individuals" (para. 13). They summarize this concept simply as "clarity, direction outcome" (para. 17). Thirdly, the Welches (2011) noted that "winning teams are honest" and that "on every single winning team, you will discover that the leader is candid' he rewards everyone else who is candid, and outs the people who aren't candid." They continue (2011) and state, "the simple truth is that candor breeds trust and when a team is infused with trust, people play to their better angles." In that environment, "they share ideas freely" and "they help their colleagues when they're stuck and need an insight." On this third point, they conclude with the idea that candor and trust building are exceptionally important; "only in such environments will people be bold and only bold teams win" (para. 22). In fourth and final point, the Welches (2011) note that "winning teams celebrate." This is essential, they argue, because when small achievements are celebrated, "they teach people what it feels like to win" and that "it makes people want to win more." To that end, they note that "in fact, they never want the feeling to go away so they do everything to keep winning" (para 25).

Mentoring Programs

Delisio (2007) also noted that a Georgia school district had recognized the importance and burdens of administrators and looking at retention of quality administrators "to ensure that promising young administrators don't become overwhelmed and quit, the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System this year [2007] began a mentoring program for new principals and assistant principals" (Delisio,

2007, p. 1). The feel of this program, though, is not one that is simply in place to have a mentoring program on the books, but to allow that "mentors may guide, instruct, watch, or just listen. Several new principals said having that reassuring presence or voice on the phone is making all the difference as they start their careers as administrators" (para 5). Likewise, the University of Iowa, in its newsletter argued that "college courses only go so far toward preparing new school administrators for these sometimes daunting tasks. That's why the Educational Administration program designed a new program to train experienced school administrators as mentors to up-and coming school leaders" (University of Iowa, 2004, p. 2). Additional bonuses to mentoring, as described by Daresh (1994), include the "greater overall satisfaction with their job as administrators; increased recognition from peers; additional opportunities for career advancement; and renewed enthusiasm for the profession" (p. 6).

There are several types of programs currently employed to mentor administrators; and the State of Missouri's Department of Secondary and Elementary Education provides a sound example of a successful program. For those veteran administrators who wish to impart their knowledge to their novice colleagues, the Department offers them that ability through the Administrator Mentoring Program, which has the following focus (2008):

Training for New Mentors: This full day training for new mentors is designed to equip veteran administrators with the understanding and skills to support beginning school leaders. The session will focus on relationship building, mentoring perspectives and dynamics along with program requirements. This

training is offered free of charge. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed (p. 1).

Of note in this is that the veteran administrators are first trained for what they will need to successfully mentor their protégé(s). The detail does not stop with a simply one day session, though. The Department (2008) continues with a series of links on the website for such things as contact logs, updates, and new member training in addition to the described full day training, and a list of the supporting agencies of this program, to include:

"Missouri Professors of Educational Administration (MPEA); Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA); Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP); Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP); Missouri Council of Administrators of Special Education (MO-CASE); Missouri Council of Career & Technical Administrators (MCCTA); Regional Professional Development Centers (RPDC); Missouri School Board Association (MSBA); and the Missouri Center for Career Education" (p. 3).

Likewise, the State of Maine found similar requirements in its program, listing the need for training both mentor and protégé in: "Professional development and continuous support for mentors" as well as "Professional development for mentors consists of learning and practicing a variety of basic coaching skills including: trust building, listening, questioning, problem solving, assessment, and goal setting" while ensuring links to the ISLLC Standards (State of Maine, 2004, p. 4).

In a unique partnership between Arizona State University and a local school district in that state, a plan was developed to address the importance of mentoring for new administrators. Ultimately, it was important in that it was not simply mentoring for the sake of mentoring, but by focusing on school-related goals, mentors and those being mentored are able to connect theory, research, and literature to strategic innovation that occurs at the sites [schools]" (Arizona State University, 2005, pp. 3-4).

Mentoring is a difficult concept to define. As Budge (2006) stated, "definitions ranged from coach to mentor to career sponsor…" (p. 6). Budge (2006) quoted Bierema and Merriam (2002) when defining a mentor as "someone who oversees the career ad development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting or sponsoring." (p. 6). From this, Bierema and Merriam (2002) formatted eight different definitions of mentoring:

(1) a more advanced or experienced individual guiding a less experienced individual; (2) an older individual guiding a younger individual; (3) a faculty member guiding a student; (4) an individual providing academic advising; (5) an individual who shares their experience with another individual; (6) an individual who actively interacts with another individual; (7) an experienced individual guiding a group of individuals; and (8) an experienced, older individual who guides a younger, less experienced individual via internet resources (pp. 211-227).

Budge (2006) also examined the distinction between formal mentoring and informal mentoring, and notes, "In formal mentoring, a mentee is assigned to a mentor.

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Formal mentoring frequently features mentor training, planned meeting sessions, and specific matching of a mentor to a mentee." Opposed to that is informal mentoring, or a "spontaneously developing relationship between two or more individuals, where one individual provides support, advice, and guidance to the other individual" (p. 7).

Alsbury and Hackman (2006) noted that "new administrators are more likely to value the formation of supportive relationships as most important to their initial success, and enhanced developments of skills are generally a secondary concern" (p. 2). They continue in noting that mentoring "emphasizes relationship-building and professional reflection" and that effective mentoring "should provide professional feedback, role clarification, and socialization into the profession, while lessening the sense of isolation that novices typically experience when assuming their administrative positions" and it ultimately "provides an opportunity to deliver customized and individualized professional development" (p. 2). With these statements in mind, , it is essential in mentoring to see the importance not simply that professional development occurs, but also that the establishment of social relationships blossom from the professional relationships. The relationships that develop as a result of mentoring affect not only the professional life of the new administrator, but their personal life as well. In taking an interest in both aspects of one's life, the mentor shows their mentee how truly important they are to the organization in terms of more than their professional work.

"Well designed mentoring programs can be beneficial for not only protégés but also the mentors and school districts" (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006). The authors continue to note that programs that are not well connected can show their limitations through

"ineffective or uncommitted mentors, haphazardly created mentor/protégé relationships, and a lack of goal focus" (p. 3). Likewise, "poorly designed mentor programs can result in mentor relationships that are detrimental to protégé development" where "common problems include protégés who develop an over-reliance on mentors, leading to a myopic and inflexible approach to problem solving and a stifling of professional growth" (p. 3). These notations certainly suggest the importance of a clearly defined mentorship program; not simply one that is haphazardly put together to fulfill a general need. Mentors and their protégés must work within a defined program for their mutual benefit and, by extension, the benefit of the school and district they work in as administrators. In looking at this concept from a different viewpoint, Alsbury and Hackman (2003) further noted that programs that are ineffectively developed "can be systematic mechanisms to reproduce and perpetuate mediocre and ineffective leadership methods" (p. 3). The authors (2003) then rightfully reinforce how beneficial a well-structured program can be to a school by noting that it can take novice leaders to show "more confidence in their professional competence, more effectively translating educational theory into practice, developing improved communication skills, feeling more comfortable in their new positions, and becoming more aware of the 'tricks of the trade'" (p. 3).

There are some very effective mentoring programs that currently exist in the world of education. Of note is the *Oregon Principal Mentor Program* that is billed as "a research-based, cost effective approach to improve student achievement, teacher retention, and principal effectiveness" (Oregon, 2007). The State of Oregon (2007) suggests that the role of the principal, at its heart, is to "support teachers to do their best

work…" Oregon, though realizes that there are a myriad of other items that come across the principal's desk on a daily basis and that they "may find themselves in a 'sink or swim' environment, confronting situations for which they are neither trained nor experienced" (p. 4). To that end, Oregon implemented a principal mentoring program focused on achieving the following results:

> **Increase student achievement** – 75% of new principals participating in the New Leaders for New Schools program saw noteworthy progress in student achievement.

> **Increase principal effectiveness** – Studies find that principals who have received mentoring in their first two years see improvement that lasts throughout their careers (p. 4).

Doherty (1999) discussed formal mentoring programs that began in California, North Carolina, and Ohio. Some of the specific mentoring programs that have grown from the beginnings of these three states include:

- *The Ohio Lead Center*, a program supported by the Federal Leadership in Education Development Act of 1986, has developed some training materials and activities to support local induction programs in Ohio (p. 23).

- *The Management Profile Program*. This is an integrated professional development model that was developed at the Texas A&M University Principal's Center. It is modeled after a program used in the College of Business Administration, also at Texas A&M (p. 23).

There is an equal partnership and bonus in the mentoring relationship for both the

mentor and protégé. Alsbury & Hackman (2006) noted that mentoring programs also

can enhance the mentor's professional growth through increased job satisfaction,

increased recognition from peers, and further opportunities for personal career

advancement" (p. 171). Even more so, the benefits from mentoring do not end with the

members directly involved in the relationship, as "school districts benefit from mentoring

programs by gaining more capable administrative staff members with higher motivation,

improved self-esteem, and greater productivity" (p. 171)

Mentoring

Why does mentoring of new administrators not take place on a larger scale?

Daresh (1993) argued that the lack of mentoring occurs because of the myriad of

difficulties in development of such programs, the costs involved, and the inherent time

commitment not only from those who need to be mentored but from the mentors

themselves. All of these things take away from the necessary management of buildings

and from the necessity of principals to be in their buildings. Daresh (1993) continued his

expose on mentoring, adding the important benefits for those conducting the mentoring,

to include the satisfaction administrators had with their new jobs due to mentoring, a

greater sense of pride amongst their peers, as well as a sense that they were able to

advance their careers due to the lessons they learned from their mentors and the

relationships they built and networking they established in the mentoring times.

Likewise, for the protégés, Daresh (1993) notes benefits in being mentored in that they

would "feel more confident about their professional competence;" "protégés see theory

translated into practice;";communication skills are enhanced;" "mentoring is a way to learn the 'tricks of the trade';" and "mentoring makes people feel as if they belong" (pp. 5-6).

It is imperative that the benefits of mentoring positively affect not only the mentor and the protégé, but the school system as well. Daresh (1993) argued that school systems benefit from administrative mentoring in that "they report that they have more capable staff;" "an attitude of lifelong learning is created among all administrators;" higher motivation levels and job satisfaction are found in the staff;" "the staff demonstrates an improved sense of self-esteem;" and "greater organizational productivity results" (pp. 7-8). Daresh reminds school systems and argued that mentoring should not "appear as a kind of add-on activity in a school system" but one where "a structure to support the maintenance of mentoring" continues in to the future of the system (pp. 7-8).

Studies and Mentoring Plans

Many school districts and states are beginning to see the importance and crucial role of mentoring for new administrators. According to the Wallace Foundation (2008), these group "have been putting unprecedented energy and resources into improving the quality and the job-relevance of principal preparation both before and after leaders take their jobs" (p. 3). To that end, they report, "forty-six states have adopted leadership standards and many have begun applying them to evaluate leadership training programs and school leaders and to hold them more accountable" (p. 3).

It does not stop, though, at simply realizing the importance of mentoring and what it can do to help prepare or reinvigorate administrators. "Many states are pressing

universities to redesign their leadership preparation programs by applying new accreditation guidelines and more rigorous standards and are also taking steps to spread effective training practices statewide" (The Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 3). The movement to better prepare and mentor school leaders is gaining ground across the country, as over half of the states have implemented some level of leadership guidelines for administrators. Other states and school districts have gone further where the examples abound, such as the following:

- The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) in 2003 "embarked on a unique experiment to increase its pool of qualified school administrators. Through the creation of the New York City Leadership Academy (the Leadership Academy), the district asserted significantly greater responsibility for training and developing its own school leaders" (Corcoran, 2009).

- Alabama requires newly elected or appointed superintendents to participate in the School Superintendents of Alabama's Mentor and Executive Coaching Program, a free, year-long training program for new superintendents serving in member school systems (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

- Illinois provides that principals hired on or after July 1, 2008, can participate in a second year of mentoring through the new principal mentoring program (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

- Illinois also passed legislation requiring that superintendents serving on or after July 1, 2009, who have not previously served as a school district superintendent in the state, to participate in a new superintendent mentoring program for their first two school years as superintendents (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

- Iowa appropriated $225,733 to the Department of Education for FY 2009-2010 to administer the Beginning Administrator Mentoring and Induction Program.

- Utah requires mentors to have or receive training in order to mentor provisional educators and provides that mentors may receive compensation for their services.

- Washington appropriated funds for a principal support program, which includes a mentorship for new principals and principal candidates to help them build the skills identified as critical to the success of their professional growth plans (The Wallace Foundation, 2008). .

- West Virginia allocated $79,250 for principal mentorship (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

- Illinois, Chicago and Springfield have developed exemplary principal training programs and a statewide consortium of districts is working to spread those effective practices (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

- The University of Delaware has approved a dramatically redesigned

  principal preparation program that will serve as a model for other higher

  education institutions in the state (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

- Leadership academies are springing up in a growing number of states

  including Iowa, Georgia and Louisiana (The Wallace Foundation, 2008).

Perhaps the singularly most comprehensive example is that of Jefferson County, Kentucky, where mentoring and school leadership preparation is part of the normal business of this large urban school district. The recently retired superintendent in Jefferson County, Stephen Daeschner, orchestrated the need to improve leadership "as a key means for realizing better-quality education district wide." With that goal, "the district has created no fewer than 24 separate but related leadership programs for both aspiring and practicing principals. These include: Principals for Tomorrow, a series of training sessions for potential candidates who are teachers; full-year paid internships for aspiring principals; a collaborative effort between the district and the University of Louisville to tailor its leadership curriculum around the district's needs; and an Induction Support Program that provides high-quality coaching and mentoring for newly-hired principals and assistant principals" (The Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 8).

The Southern Regional Education Board (SERB) argues that the ability of the states to grant licensure to principals "can be an effective tool to ensure schools have leaders who are focused on improving instruction" (The Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 5). With that power, "the state can determine who may enter training programs, the content of their education, certification requirements for the principal's license and for licensure

renewal, the ground rules for appointments, and requirements for professional development" (The Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 5).

The Institute for Education and Social Policy at New York University published a guidebook in 2009 entitled *Aspiring Principals Program: A School-Level Evaluation*. At its heart, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) was looking "to increase its pool of qualified school administrators" (p. 2) and, "through the creation of the New York City Leadership Academy (the Leadership Academy), the district asserted significantly greater responsibility for training and developing its own leaders" (p. 2). With that in mind, it was NYCDOE, the largest school district in the United States, which emphasized, in 2003, the importance of developing their leaders internally, not relying on outside influences, but building on the inherent leadership of teachers inside the schools. With the importance of this program, the program noted that "like many cities, New York suffers from a persistent shortage of principals, due to high turnover, a surge in retirements, and the rapid creation of new schools" (p. 2). The importance was not only to develop leaders to fill the vacancies but to allow for "increasing the autonomy and day-to-day responsibilities of its [NYCDOE's] school leaders" (p. 2). This Leadership Academy is a 14-month intensive with three components (summer intensive, a 10-month apprenticeship, and a planning summer to transition to their new position). The Institute discovered in its comparison of Leadership Academy participants (who were leaders in 15% of NYCDOE's schools) the following information:

- APP and comparison principals have different characteristics

- APP principals are younger and more likely to be black than those in the comparison group. The average age of APP principals in the study was 40.9, as compared with 44.4 for comparison principals. Forty-one percent of APP principals were black versus 29 percent of comparison principals.
- Both APP and comparison principals had substantial experience in the classroom. However, APP principals had three fewer years of teaching experience on average than comparison principals, at 7.3 versus 10.3 years.
- APP principals were unlikely to have served as an assistant principal. Seventy-eight percent of APP principals had no prior experience as an assistant principal, while most comparison principals (82 percent) had some experience in this position. Comparison principals had also worked at their respective schools longer, in positions other than principal.

- APP and comparison principals were placed in schools with different demographic profiles. In elementary and secondary schools, APP principals were more likely to be located in the Bronx (32 percent versus 18 percent of comparison principals), while comparison principals were more likely to be found in Brooklyn and Queens. APP principals in high schools were more likely to be working at schools in Manhattan than comparison high school principals.
  - APP schools enrolled fewer Asian and white students than comparison schools, and had a significantly greater share of black students (43 percent in APP schools versus 31 percent in comparison schools). On average,

APP schools were smaller than comparison schools, at both the elementary/middle and high school levels. APP and comparison principals were placed in schools with different performance levels and histories

- o Schools in which APP principals were placed exhibited lower initial levels of performance than comparison principals' schools, an achievement gap that preceded the arrival of these new principals. The average APP elementary and middle school student performed substantially below their citywide grade level average in ELA and mathematics in the years before their new principal, while students in comparison schools scored approximately at citywide grade-level average. These pre-existing differences are evident regardless of whether one compares scale scores, proficiency rates, or standardized scores.4

- o Elementary and middle schools in which APP principals were placed were generally on a sharp downward trend in mathematics and ELA—relative to the citywide average—in the years preceding the new principal. This was especially evident for the 2005 cohort of APP schools. Comparison schools, by contrast, experienced relatively stable performance in these participants prior to their new principal.

- In the initial years of their leadership, elementary and middle school APP principals had comparable or better growth trends than comparison principals

- o Controlling for pre-existing differences in student demographics and achievement, APP principals bettered their comparison group counterparts

in ELA, trending upward apace with overall city-wide gains. Whereas

comparison schools fell further behind the rest of the city in their third and

fourth years, APP schools remained stable, and by the third year the

difference in these schools' trajectories is statistically significant. In

mathematics, both APP and comparison schools scores improved over

time, although APP schools trended slightly worse following the arrival of

their new principal. These differences, however, are small and not

consistently statistically significant.

- School performance differences at the high school level are small and mostly
  inconclusive

  o APP and comparison high schools differed in their average state Regents'

    Exam scores, proportions of students taking Regents exams, and

    graduation rates, both before and after the arrival of their new principal.

    The significance of these differences, however, is inconclusive, given the

    small sample of high school principals in the study (pp. 4-6).

Further work from the Institute (2009) noted that the groups that were compared

both had "substantial experience in the classroom" where "the group averaged 9.7 years

of teaching experience" (p. 13). In a show of NYCDOE's need for building level

principals, those Leadership Academy participants that had no prior experience as an

assistant principal stood at 78% whereas non-participants stood at 82% with experience

as an assistant principal. The most notable idea brought forth by these statistics is that

"because of labor market shortages…future leaders are prepared to advance into a

principalship faster" (p. 13). This point highlights an aspect of this study that notes the

speed with which teachers are advanced to administrative roles; though an enhancement

for their own career goals, the question of initial training, followed by mentoring and

post-appointment training are key factors.   With many aspiring leaders being advanced

quickly to building level leadership roles, how effective is their preparation, as well as the

follow-up on their training?

In a study entitled *How Leadership Influences Student Learning*, Leithwood et al.

(2004) noted that "different forms of leadership are described in the literature using

adjectives such as 'instructional,' 'participative,' 'democratic,' 'transformational,'

'moral,' 'strategic' and the like." Ultimately, though, the authors (2004) suggested that

any form of leadership should be set to the "same two essential objectives critical to any

organization's effectiveness: helping the organization set a defensible set of directions

and influencing members to move in those directions." They then note, with some irony

that "leadership is both this simple and this complex" as they delve in to the work of

identifying instructional leadership and the role of the building principal (p. 5).

Leithwood et al (2004), "instructional leadership encourages a focus on

improving the classroom practices of teachers as the direction for the school." The

authors continue, and state that "transformational leadership," on the other hand, "draws

attention to a broader array of school and classroom conditions that may need to be

changed if learning is to improve. Both "democratic" and "participative leadership' are

especially concerned with how decisions are made about both school priorities and how

to pursue them. The lesson here is that we need to be skeptical about the "leadership by

adjective' literature. Sometimes these adjectives have real meaning, but sometimes they mask the more important underlying themes common to successful leadership, regardless of the style being advocated" (p. 5).

In their review of literature, the authors (2004) noted:

Like every district, every school is in some fashion unique. Responding well to such uniqueness, in addition to providing the leadership basics, is crucial for the success of school leaders. But large numbers of schools share two challenges that demand responses by all or many educational leaders if they are to be successful in improving teaching and learning. One common impetus to change faced by almost all educational leaders in the United States is the extensive set of state policies designed to hold schools more accountable (Leithwood, 2001). The second challenge, faced by fewer, but still large numbers of leaders, is the conditions associated with diverse student populations (p. 28).

Margaret Orr, Cheryl King, and Michelle LaPointe (2010), in a detailed report for the Education Development Center (EDC) and the Wallace Foundation, introduced their research with the statement that "recent research on exemplary school leader preparation programs suggest that school districts, as the direct 'consumers' of program graduates, are strategically positioned to exercise meaningful influence over the content and design of program practices" (p. 2). Their research (2010) also noted that "programs preparing candidates are more effective when they work from an understanding of the challenges the districts face, collaboration with the districts on redesigning programs, and a shared initial accountability for new leader support and performance" (p. 2).

In studying eight urban school districts across the country, (Orr, 2010) identified eight findings that "offer valuable insights on effective leadership preparation practices for aspiring principals and the organizational and systemic constraints to this work." Those findings include:

1. Districts had challenging school and leadership contexts (p. 5).

2. Districts exercised consumer influence in different ways to improve quality (p. 5).

3. New program designs redefined the scope of leadership preparation (p. 5).

4. The organization and delivery of leadership preparation reflected innovation (p. 5).

5. Leadership preparation incorporated the features of high-quality programs (p. 5).

6. Creation and sustainability of programs required well-developed inter- and intra-organizational relationships (p. 5).

7. State policies complemented district actions and program approaches (p. 5).

8. District investments in leadership preparation yielded both direct and indirect educational and organizational benefits (p. 5).

Each of these areas was further explained by the authors (2010). For their finding on districts having challenging school and leadership contexts, there were, overall, two continuing challenges in regards to school leadership needs:

a continuing demand for highly qualified school leaders that exceeded the number of qualified and available local candidates; and (2) a number of

chronically low-performing schools, requiring leaders who are equipped to

dramatically improve them (p. 4).

In this, the importance of quality leaders is implicit. Though this study focused

on eight urban school districts, it is essential to compare this to not only the urban realm,

but also to extend to suburban schools, private schools, and charter schools. The need for

highly qualified and highly trained administrators and school leaders cannot be

underestimated. Without a strong leader, the school will not be a strong one, or will not

retain its current strength for long. Along those lines, the authors (2010) noted that

leadership stability was a key factor in the success of school districts. They noted that

"where leader turnover was high for both the schools and the district, there were

significant shifts in reform strategy from one administration to the next" (p. 4). This

would certainly play in to the determination that the mentorship for new administrators

would be crucial for their retention; therefore, the overall success of the school and its

associated district.

Another key factor to the eight districts studied is where the authors (Orr, 2010)

noted that universities in the area were available for support. In this study, the

universities ranged from no interest to eagerness to assist the schools in their training of

leaders. With many states requiring certification of administrators as well as continuing

education credits for administrators and teaching staff, the work and partnership with

universities is an extremely positive facet to the overall mentoring and development of

leaders. The necessity for these partnerships finds itself in the unique role of the

university to approach these items from a philosophical approach, while the schools and

districts have the ability to approach items from a practical approach. Together, great

mentorship and continuing education would thrive.

To that end, the authors (2010) noted that the most successful of the school

districts they studied and the success of their innovations was the "scope of the

preparation beyond minimal requirements for leadership licensure or certification" (p.

11). They added that "the new requirements typically included more content about

school and district systems and procedures" as well as "more applied learning

experiences" and "more time for program completion" (p. 6). The authors (2010) then

highlighted the most critical notion of their study that "the addition of multiple applied

learning experiences suggest that while formal leadership preparation programs are

important and necessary, they may not be sufficient when preparing candidates for

positions in demanding school and district contexts" (p. 6).

At the conclusion of their study, Orr (2010) noted six conclusions over the course

of the entire exercise, highlighting each of them beginning with the first:

> To effectively invest in leadership preparation, school districts need to recognize
>
> the power of their position as consumers of principal preparation programs'
>
> graduates, and the resulting influence that they can wield in shaping these
>
> programs." Secondly, the Wallace Foundation noted that "districts should look to
>
> harness the resources of local universities to develop, staff, and support leadership
>
> preparation programs that can meet state higher education standards and leaders
>
> certification requirements (p. 10).

Thirdly, according to the authors, "districts and universities can redesign leadership preparation as a multi-staged learning process" (p. 13). Continuing in their findings, the authors (2010) noted that "fourthly, districts and universities can focus on knowledge development, drawing from their respective areas of expertise" (p. 13). Advancing from there, the authors (2010) noted the next conclusion: "fifth, feedback on graduates' performance as school leaders is essential for both districts and universities to learn from their investments and to improve program quality and effectiveness" (p. 13). Finally, the Wallace Foundation concludes, "high-quality program models require more dedicated funding and cannot rely on foundation and government grants" but that they should try new strategies such as "offering full-time internships as part of leadership preparation" (p. 13).

ISLLC Standards and Leadership and Testing for Administrators

Anderson (2002), in discussing exams for licensure of school administrators, noted that ISLLC now highlights that administrators should be instructional leaders. Not only is this an additional duty for school administrators in a new age of accountability from both the national and state levels, but it is one that many administrators will need to balance on top of their already hectic schedules and responsibilities. With this shift is a feeling of a breath of fresh air from even veterans of the administrative field. Anderson (2002) highlighted this feeling when noting that "centering the [ISLLC] standards on instructional leadership is a positive development, but the standards are silent about what kind of teaching and learning should take place and what instructional leadership looks like" (p. 67).

Despite the emphasis place upon testing for administrators, Anderson (2002) noted that "the idea of an examination for school leaders contradicts one of the premises" (p. 67) ISLLC has put in place. This organization created the standards and "acknowledges that 'effective leaders often espouse different patterns of beliefs and act differently from the nor in the profession'" (p. 68). In other words, working to normalize the beliefs of the wide and varying views of all administrators in the United States is a goal that an exam may attempt to fulfill, but one that is contradictory to the mission of ISLLC, whose standards encourage "discussion and debate"(Anderson, 2002, p. 69).

Added to this new role of an instructional leader, administrators also act as a public relations manager. The previously mentioned exam set up by ISLLC (through the Educational Testing Service) promotes a "public relations approach to community involvement that fails to link parents and communities to student achievement" (Anderson, 2002, p. 67). Opposed to Anderson's criticism of the exam, Holloway (2002) defended the test for school leaders. Regardless of the positions on the exam itself, both scholars noted several of the important elements that ISLLC and its member administrators are currently grappling with as the role of the building-level administrator becomes more vast, complex, and confusing.

Holloway (2002) noted that "nearly 7 in 10 superintendents (69%) and principals (68%) believe that with the 'right leadership, even the most troubled school districts can be turned around'" (p. 67). The insistence on turning around troubled schools lends itself to the concept that the administrator is key to the success of the students, the school, and its achievement. Holloway (2002) noted that "licensure does not mean that practitioners

will be competent professionals" (p. 67). He further stated that "a license is not a

guarantee of the public's protection or the competency of the practitioner" but that "it

indicates only that an individual has met the initial requirements of education, experience,

minimum competences as measured by an examination" (Holloway, 2002, p. 67).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research study was a hermeneutical phenomenological study with an emphasis on the shared experiences of new administrators in public high schools. This particular methodology was selected to ensure the voices of the participants are heard in their own words and they could address all aspects of what mentoring means to them on an individual basis. This allowed a true picture to develop from the ground level as to the importance mentoring did or did not play in the lives of these participants. I was part of an Aspiring Principals' Academy that highlighted the great need and the current lack of training and preparation for new high school assistant principals. Combined with discussions with seasoned as well as new administrators, I therefore determined that a phenomenological study would be the most applicable methodology.

Lashway (2003) noted when it comes to mentoring or preparing new administrators, that "formal induction programs are too new to have generated a significant body of empirical research, but there is a growing literature that articulates a rationale for such programs, describes the efforts of districts to nurture new leaders, and provides early testimony that induction efforts are well-received" (p. 2).

Research Design

The research design for this study was a qualitative inquiry using a phenomenological methodology to determine the participants' experiences in their roles as secondary school assistant principals. The phenomenological study was employed to highlight and investigate the beliefs, feelings, thoughts, frustrations, and other emotions

of the participants. Through the use of the data collection procedures, these experiences

will paint informal if these administrators perceive their training as sufficient to their job

responsibilities. This process will allow for the voice of the participants to speak for

them.   Interview questions in Appendix D will be used in interviews with the

participants of this study.

A phenomenological study, according to Creswell (2007) is a narrative that

"describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept of

phenomenon" (p. 57).   Creswell continues in noting that:

> Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as
>
> they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). The basic
>
> purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a
>
> phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (a "grasp of the very nature
>
> of the thing") (pp. 57-58).

Hermeneutical phenomenology is the specific study of "research as oriented

toward lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the 'texts' of life

(hermeneutics)" (Creswell, 2007, p. 59).   In this study, I will focus on the common

phenomenon of the experiences of the subjects as new secondary school assistant

principals while interpreting the texts of their lives through hermeneutics.

The use of phenomenology (Creswell, 2007) as a research tool is grounded in the

work of the German mathematician Edmund Husserl and his followers, including

Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleaus-Ponty. This research method is popular in the social

sciences and education.

Research Questions

Research question 1. *What does it mean to be an assistant principal?* This question may be divided into two areas:

1. What are the specific roles the new secondary school assistant principal plays in the school?

2. What is difficult or easy about being a secondary school assistant principal?

Research question 2. *What are the structural meanings of administration or administrative work?* This question may be divided into two areas:

1. What are the underlying responsibilities of a secondary school assistant principal?; and 2. What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about administrators?

These research questions allowed for an analysis to determine the strength of mentoring that was taking place in the targeted schools, as well as the potential need for further mentoring or a more structured approach to mentoring.

Researcher's Perspective

My perspective is a unique one in focusing on his future hopes in secondary school administration. The study presented itself to the researcher with the hope of better understanding and appreciating the transition from teaching to administration. With personal knowledge of many teachers who have made the transition from teaching to administration and observing their struggles and frustrations, as well as their praises, I have pondered the question as to what type, if any, of formal mentoring takes place for administrators.

From a personal perspective, during the course of this doctoral program, I have moved from a classroom teacher to the role of a teacher leader in a high school, to that of a middle school assistant principal. To that end, the questions raised in my mind have solidified my perspective on the need for this study and on the timeliness for such research to go forward in this area.

Setting

The target school districts, Lakeview Area Schools and Sioux Creek Schools (pseudonyms) are both larger suburban public school districts in Metropolitan Detroit. Lakeview Area School District has 13 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 3 high schools servicing approximately to 15,000 students. Lakeview Area Schools is in the midst of major changes to its professional development program, instituting the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to bring staff to a more collaborative environment between classrooms. The district is accredited by the North Central Association of Schools (NCA) and its high schools are frequently highlighted in *Newsweek's* listing of desirable schools. The district annually scores higher than both county-wide and statewide averages on the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) and is pursuing a more data-driven approach to standardized assessments, both at the district level and in a predictor manner in advance of the eleventh grade MME. Over the past six years, the district has had to make over $21 million in cuts to programs and staffing, but continues to strive to meet its mission statement to be "the best educational system in America" (Lakeview Area Schools, 2009).

Sioux Creek School District is comprised of nine elementary schools, three middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and one alternative high school. The

student to teacher ratio is 18:1.   Sioux Creek scores above the state average on standardized testing and 87% of its high school graduates attend institutions of higher learning. They have likewise faced significant cuts to their operating budget and closed one of their middle schools at the beginning of this study (Sioux Creek Schools, 2010).

The general socio-economic makeup of the area in which both districts are situated is described as traditionally upper middle class, with many of the families working in a predominant manufacturing industry or its support industries. The general area has been adversely affected by the recent economic recession in the United States with a great loss of jobs or reduction in salaries. Many people have left the area for different cities or states to pursue gainful employment. Specifically, the bankruptcy filings of two major employers and the trickle-down effect to other industries has forced many families to either take significant pay cuts or lose their jobs. According to the Northeast Midwest Institute (2009), the April 2009 statewide unemployment rate rose to 12.9%, up from 7.9% one year previously (para 3).

New and rigorous standards have been imposed statewide, greatly affecting the stress level of the administrators of both Lakeview Schools and Sioux Creek Schools. With these new standards, administrators are facing the likelihood of making severe personnel cuts and many administrators in Lakeview Schools face the elimination of their own positions. With that in place, there is a great call for school reform in this state, which brings added stress to the life of the administrator as well.

With these contributing factors, the researcher chose Lakeview and Sioux Creek and those specific participants who have and will continue to face the very real issues of not only academic challenges, but also the challenges associated with the business and

economic climate of the area. In so doing, the phenomena experienced by the assistant

principals in the study was truly shared, and the rich text given from the participants in

light of the setting drove the conclusions and applications in unique ways.

The setting was selected based on the similar socio-economic issues faced by

Lakeview Area Schools and Sioux Creek School District as well as their proximity to

each other, their shared location in Oakland County, Michigan, and their availability of

new secondary school assistant principals.

<div align="center">**Participants**</div>

In conducting a phenomenological study, I was aware of selecting a number of

participants that would share a common phenomenon (serving as new secondary school

assistant principals) and have a sampling that would allow for the participant's voices to

be heard in the text.   Creswell (2007) noted that "a much more narrow range of sampling

strategies for a phenomenological study" were important (p. 128).

The five participants were trained as teachers and served in that capacity ranging

from 4 to 16 years. Each participant attained tenure prior to their hiring in their present

administrative posts.

The five participants were chosen for a variety of reasons. I had engaged in

conversations with them over the course of the past two years about their difficult

transition from the classroom to the administrative office, or to their impending hires as

new administrators and their overall feelings of inadequacy and ill preparation for many

of the tasks they now face on a daily basis. Likewise, administrators in the target

districts, and other districts known by the researcher, have undergone extreme increases

in their stress levels, suffered from severe headaches, gained considerable amount of

weight in a short period of time, due in large part to the added responsibilities and stress of their new positions.   These participants were chosen as well due to their involvement in county-wide initiatives and programs for new administrators, including a group that serves to share resources at the larger county level.

The five participants range in age from their early thirties to early fifties; four are male and one is female, and all hold Master's Degrees from accredited institutions in educational administration or educational leadership.   Three of the participants now work as administrators in high schools and two of the participants work as administrators in middle schools.   All five of these new assistant principals are serving in this capacity currently and were hired within the past three years.   Specifically, three of the participants were in their first year in their role as an assistant principal during the study, while two had previous experience serving as a Dean of Students.

Data Collection

This study focused on a triangulation of data collection consisting of the following instruments: document analysis, audio tapes, and an end interview with all participants. In addition, a detailed description of the environment was provided as well as an audit trail as a means of checking the path of work during the length of the study.

The documents used were both personal documents and official documents. Personal documents, as described by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) are those "produced by individuals for private purposes and limited use;" whereas official documents are "produced by organizational employees for record-keeping and dissemination purposes" (p. 64).

Document Analysis and Observations

The document analysis for this study consisted of the following: the demographics of the schools where the participants serve as assistant principals; the job description for an assistant principal in each school; the participants' business calendars; the number of monthly student office referrals for which each participant was responsible; formal or informal training or preparation specific to their job duties; and any further documentation supplied by the participants deemed pertinent during the duration of the study.

Likewise, observations of the participants were conducted by the researcher to ensure credibility of the document analysis process and to record further instances of the phenomena occurring during the course of the study.

Participant Journals

The participants were each asked to provide a monthly journal using Microsoft Word of their thoughts, experiences, highs, lows, frustrations, praises, and any items they felt pertinent to share. Participants could also elect to simply hand write their thoughts and reflections if desired. All journals will be destroyed seven years after the completion of the study.

The use of Microsoft Word as a data collection tool and data analysis tool is supported by the work of Creswell (2007) who notes: "new forms of qualitative data continually emerge in the literature" and that one of those new forms to emerge is "journaling in narrative story writing, using text from e-mail messages, and observing through examining videotapes and photographs" (p. 129).

Interviews

Each participant was interviewed at the commencement and conclusion of the study to as a baseline and to highlight their experiences over the course of the study. Interview questions were developed by the researcher in conjunction with the literature review, thus gaining face validity, and were excerpted from the work of Creasap (2003) and the ISLLC Standards. The researcher also solicited feedback from other assistant principals regarding the interview questions, leading to content validity, with all changes as well as versions of the interviews placed as appendices to this document. The interviews were general in nature to allow for a greater sense of free response by the participants. Credibility was gained through the rich, direct quotes from the participants, while dependability was achieved through member checks during the interview process. Transcribing, open coding, and use of constant comparatives of data ensured that coding was accurate and fit the appropriate similarities and differences. Interview questions are those referenced in Appendix D.

Interviews were audio taped, with the express permission of the participants. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) note this importance, as this permission has implications on the relationship between researcher and participant. Participants "want assurance that private information they share…will not be revealed to others at their expense" (p. 112).

Data Analysis

The data analysis focused on the triangulation of data collected and translated into the rich data through open coding, that generated applications and conclusions in ensuing chapters. It is through the use of the phenomenological research design that the

participants spoke to draw out the shared experiences of the phenomena.   This was done to ensure a proper representation of the participants' perspectives.

In open coding, the work of Creswell (2007) was employed as the primary resource. I began by first identifying each journal entry, discipline record, interview, and calendar by participant name and date collected. I then utilized a coding system based on Creswell's system, beginning with the "essence of the phenomenon" and moving to the following subcategories:

- Epoche (p. 170).

- Significant statements (p. 170).

- Meaning units (p. 170).

- Textural description (p. 170).

- Structural description (p. 170).

In open coding, I leaned on the work of Creswell (2007) to create categories that show the essence of the phenomenon.   In this study, the essences of the phenomenon are the following:

- Each participant is new to the role of a secondary school assistant principal.

- Each participant is learning the duties of an assistant principal

- Each participant experienced personal issues during the course of the study.

- Each participant had certain influences on their career to this point.

- Each participant had past experiences that shaped their career.

Following this, I discovered hermeneutical phenomenological similarities in each participant's phenomenon to create shared experiences:

- Student discipline

- Faculty and Staff supervision

- Calendar and Work Schedule

- Health concerns and problems

- Family issues and problems

To accomplish identifying this phenomenon and the hermeneutical phenomenon, I used a mapping protocol in Microsoft Word. Under the "Insert" tab, I selected "Smart Art" and then "Hierarchy". As data became available and I went through the coding process, I added each to the hierarchical chart in Microsoft word.

The phenomenological mode, according to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), is one that attempts "to understand the meaning of events and interactions to ordinary people in particular situations" (p. 25). The work of the researcher in this phenomenological study is best highlighted by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) in the following description:

Phenomenologists do not assume they know what thins mean to the people they are studying. Phenomenological inquiry begins with silence. This silence is an attempt to grasp that it is they are studying by bracketing an idea the information take for granted as true. That is, researchers act as if they do now know what it means and study tit to find out what is actually taken for granted. What phenomenologists emphasize, then, is the subjective aspects of people's behavior. They attempt to gain entry into the conceptual world of their informants in order to understand how and what meaning they construct around events in their daily lives. Phenomenologists believe that multiple ways of interpreting experiences are available to each of us through interacting with others, and that it is the

meaning of our experiences that constitutes reality.   Reality, consequently, is 'socially constructed' (pp. 25-26).

According to Creswell (2007), the focus of phenomenology, as discussed by Moustakas (1994) is to "first describe the personal experiences with the phenomenon under study" (p. 159); and then to "develop a list of significant statements" (p. 159). In order to accomplish this second step, Creswell directs that the researcher then

 finds statements (in the interviews or other data sources) about how individuals are experiencing the topic, lists these significant statements (horizonalization of the data) and treats each statement as having equal worth, and works to develop a list of nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statements (p. 159).

Once this is completed, these significant statements are to be taken and then grouped "into larger units of information, called 'meaning units' or themes" (p. 159). After this, the researcher is to "write a description of 'what' the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon" (p. 159). Creswell notes that "this is called a 'textural description of the experience – what happened – and includes verbatim examples" (p. 159). The final two steps from Creswell begin with writing a description of "how the experience happened" (p. 159) and "finally, write a composite description of the phenomenon incorporating both the textural and structural descriptions" (p. 159).

In all of these things, the focus was summarized by (Groenewald, 2004) who noted:

Whatever the method used for a phenomenological analysis the aim of the invesitagor is the reconstruction of the inner world of experience of the subject. Each individual has his own way of experiencing temporality, spatiality,

materiality, but each of these coordinates must be understood in relation to the other and to the total inner "world" (as cited in Hycner, 1999, pp. 153-154) (p. 20).

Triangulation

Triangulation, according to Ary (2006), is "the use of multiple sources of data, multiple observers, and/or multiple methods" (p. 505). In this study, the use of multiple sources is supported by the work of Ary (2006) who states that "a combination of data sources such as interviews, observations, and relevant documents and the use of different methods increase the likelihood that the phenomenon under study is being understood from various points of view" (p. 505).

This study provided triangulation through the use of the collected data in interviews and observations; the use of calendars and other pertinent information (both personal and official documents) supplied by the participants; and through the unscripted audio tape usage by the participants. Open coding was utilized to ensure proper representation and use of all three methods of data collection utilized during the process.

Rich data

Rich data was provided through a list of significant statements from the participants and how they experienced the phenomena; these were coded into themes. The textural description provided the *what* participants experienced with the phenomena. The ultimate rich data is a composite using both textural and structural descriptions. This shows how the participants experienced the phenomena and what they experienced with the phenomena.

To ensure the proper use of the rich data provided during the data collection and data analysis processes, the researcher used open coding. This process allowed for the best partition of responses and data gathered during interviews and observations.

Credibility

This process in the phenomenological study helped to ensure face validity through the dissertation committee's feedback and by relying on prior research findings from the literature. The potential for content validity was explored by the dissertation committee and the researcher during the defense process prior to data collection.   Creasap (2003) noted that the work of a qualitative researcher lends itself to credibility based on the rich data that is driven directly by the participants.   Their ability to reflect and to give meaning to the research from their personal words using pseudonyms and with freedom allows for a truly credible examination of the mentoring needs of new administrators.

Reflexivity

There is a certain bias that exists for the researcher in that he believes that there is not sufficient training for the leadership position of a new administrator. These administrators serve more in the role of a manager rather than an educational leader. Moreover, I knows the participants well and has had professional relationships with all participants over the past six years each and personal friendships with all for approximately the past five years.

Shortcomings

Among the shortcomings of this study was the need to ensure that interview questions addressed what they are meant to address; in other words, the interviews must have face validity (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen, 2006).

Certainly a better way to approach this study would be to have had definitive questions set forth in the interview form for a more solid approach to the statistical measures. Additionally, the use of a greater pool of participants, perhaps in going outside of the target school district to achieve a more random sampling of new administrators would have lent better material to the measures and analytical conclusions.

Potential threats

There were several inherent potential threats within the interview format. If one of the participants strayed from the guiding questions, it was essential for the researcher to redirect items back to the guiding questions themselves in order to ensure a high degree of face validity.

Likewise, as Ary et al. (2006) described, "First, how important is the topic to the respondent?" and "Second, does the questionnaire [interview] protect the respondents' anonymity?" To this second factor, the researcher must present and investigate his problem, as there are such a small number of new administrators in the district. In other words, are the participants free to share their opinions openly during the course of the study with the assurance their opinions remain anonymous?

Limitations

This study was limited to the 2010-2011 academic year; furthermore, it was limited to five secondary school assistant principals to provide for similar situations and experiences between the participants in the study. Additionally, the participants serve in

secondary schools in two similar school districts, therefore their observations and conclusions may not be necessarily reflective of all administrators. None of the schools represented by the participants is a Title I school, though one of the middle schools now features a federally-mandated breakfast program, as 20% of its students are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Though the participants represent two local school districts in the state of Michigan, there is a limitation to similar experiences due to state mandates, county policies, and similar socioeconomic characteristics of the local school districts represented by the participants in the study.

Further limitations included the amount of data recorded by each participant over the course of the study and reported to the researcher. Though the amount of information was vast, one of the participants (Ollivander) did not use his electronic calendar with nearly the regularity of the other participants, though he could readily recall meetings with ease.

As for the limitation to the five participants, Creasap (2003) notes that in qualitative research, "the ability to generalize is not the goal" (p. 25). Rather, as Erickson (1986) points out: "the search is not for abstract universals arrived at by statistical generalizations from a sample to a population, but for concrete universals arrived at by studying a specific case in great detail" (p. 130).

Participants were informed of their complete confidentiality and were told only the general topic of the study so as not to lead them in one direction or another during the course of the school year.

Definitions of Terms

Administrator - A person who manages or has talent for managing.

Hermeneutical – of or pertaining to hermeneutics; interpretative; explanatory.

ISLLC- Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium

Leadership – "the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal accomplishment" (Hersey, Blanchard, & Natemeyer, 2001, p. 321),

Mentor – 1. A wise and trusted counselor or teacher; 2. An influential senior sponsor of supporter; 3. Verb – to act as a mentor; 4. Verb – to act as a mentor to.

MESPA – Massachusetts Elementary Principals' Association

MME – Michigan Merit Exam, taken by eleventh graders in Michigan each March.

NAESP – National Association of Elementary School Principals

NASSP – National Association of Secondary School Principals

NYCDOE – New York City Department of Education

Phenomenological -1. The study of phenomena; 2. The system of Husserl and his followers stressing the description of phenomena.

PLCs – Professional Learning Communities.

Protégé – a person under the patronage, protection, or care of someone interested in his or her career or welfare.

SERB – Southern Regional Education Board

Target School Districts – the public school districts where this study was conducted.

Triangulation - a verification of the facts using three sources.

Ethical Issues

In regards to ethical issues, several were addressed by the researcher, including:

1. The kind of information obtained due to the lengthy interviews and the personal relationships that were in place and may have developed over the course of the study. Included in this was the possibility that the researcher may have been privy to information of a professional nature regarding colleagues, or disciplinary matters involving students. As a means of mitigating this, the researcher has been in such situations before due simply to having friendships with both teaching colleagues as well as administrators who are personal friends and it has not to this point created any issues or ethical challenges that cannot be overcome.

2. In like manner, there existed the potential for the researcher to have developed a more professional and open relationship with one or more of the participants.   As Ary et al. (2006) described: "Some researchers say they obtain their best data at this point [when participants forget research is ongoing]." It was essential for the researcher to maintain as much of a professional nature as was possible during the research so that this ethical issue did not create further problems. It was my that the participants were open to answering the questions based on the potential addition to the body of knowledge and not based on a personal friendship.

3. Ultimately, ethical issues were not of major concern to the researcher, not because they are unimportant, but because of the ethical compass by which I was driven in my life – of seeking for God's guidance in all matters.

Summary

This qualitative research study was the best tool with which to allow the participants to speak for themselves on this issue. The phenomenological research design

served to highlight the rich text and allowed participant-driven conclusions and applications.

This research study was a hermeneutical phenomenological study with an emphasis on the shared experiences of new administrators in public high schools. This particular methodology was selected to ensure the voices of the participants are heard in their own words and they could address all aspects of what mentoring means to them on an individual basis. This allowed a true picture to develop from the ground level as to the importance mentoring did or did not play in the lives of these participants. I was part of an Aspiring Principals' Academy that highlighted the great need and the current lack of training and preparation for new high school assistant principals. Combined with discussions with seasoned as well as new administrators, I therefore determined that a phenomenological study would be the most applicable methodology.

The research design for this study was a qualitative inquiry using a phenomenological methodology to determine the participants' experiences in their roles as secondary school assistant principals. The phenomenological study was employed to highlight and investigate the beliefs, feelings, thoughts, frustrations, and other emotions of the participants. Through the use of the data collection procedures, these experiences will paint informal if these administrators perceive their training as sufficient to their job responsibilities. This process will allow for the voice of the participants to speak for them. Interview questions in Appendix D will be used in interviews with the participants of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

In reviewing the vast amount of data produced by the participants in this study, I discovered many apparent similarities that were obvious. The phenomenon lead to textual, or hermeneutical, experiences that were shared amongst the subjects; these experiences include: adjustment to the role of an administrator; the duties of an assistant principal; faculty and staff supervision; calendar and work schedule; goals for the future; personal issues; and interview responses.

Pseudonyms for participants, their schools, and school districts are used.

Adjustment to the Role of an Administrator

Mr. Harold Reed taught at another high school in his district for nearly 20 years prior to participating in a leadership development program aimed at aspiring administrators. Upon completion, he began to actively look for administrative openings and was placed, in the summer of 2010, at South Shores High School. In his short time there, Reed has undertaken, amongst other duties, the responsibility for staff meetings, all athletic programs, one half of the discipline for this school of approximately 1,600 students, and oversight of two curriculum departments. In the initial interview with Reed, the researcher noticed an upbeat and excited man who was embarking on a new area of his professional life and one in which he saw great promise and excitement. During that initial meeting Reed (personal communication, August 27, 2010), noted that he was "so excited to see how this is going to all work out." In detail, he discussed some of his anticipation along with some mixed emotion on leaving the classroom:

I'm so excited to see how this is going to all work out. I can't wait to get started. So far, I've been focused on finding my way around the building, learning names, and trying to meet with as many parents and students as I can during registration, but once the year gets going, I know things will get busy, but I am looking forward to the challenge. This is going to be such a great challenge, though I am really going to miss teaching. I am just going to have to commit to being in classrooms a lot this year (personal communication, August 2010).

Here was an excited new administrator ready to take on the world. When I asked him the pointed question of who his mentor was and what role that might take, his answer was: "I guess it would be the Principal. No one really told me. I'm sure he'll let me know the things I need to do and how to do them."

Mrs. Ruth Highness likewise taught at another high school in her district, though not for the length of time as Mr. Reed. Mrs. Highness taught in elective courses for 12 years prior to attaining a position in administration. During that time, Mrs. Highness was involved in leadership development under the direction of her principal and with his encouragement. With that mentoring, she actively sought administrative positions and was hired as the assistant principal at East View High School in the summer of 2010.

Immediately upon hire, Highness was placed in charge of turning around the image of East View High School, which had been tarnished in the past decade by events that took place over 15 years prior. The school of approximately 1,600 students had a reputation as a tough place, a dangerous school, and was often the punch line to jokes regarding lack of any progress by others in the school district. It was with this in mind that Highness' principal, also new in his position, encouraged her to embark on re-

designing the image of East View High School, with a focus on the academic achievement and global implications for success and student achievement.   Additionally, Mrs. Highness was responsible for oversight of all student activities, including the student council, National Honor Society, and all other extracurricular clubs and groups.

In an initial interview (personal communication, August 27, 2010), Mrs. Highness noted that her biggest challenge to date was that she was never ahead in her work.   She noted "I feel I was making a difference teaching; now, I can't get caught up with the junk of the job."   She also described feelings that the job was overwhelming to her and that her family life and her own physical well-being had taken a turn for the worse.   She noted, at that point, she had gained 10 pounds, missed numerous events in her own children's' lives, and found no time at all to exercise outside of work.

Unlike the other participants, Mr. Anderson actually taught at North Forest High School in the science department for 13 years prior to becoming a Dean of Students and later, the Assistant Principal.   During his teaching tenure, Mr. Anderson taught primarily the lower achieving students at North Forest High School, which he believed suited him well for his role as an assistant principal where much of his day would be spent encountering students in a disciplinary fashion.

Part of the struggle Ollivander faced was the realization that he could not possibly accomplish all that the staff expected of their assistant principal, as this was the first year at Paul Bunyan Middle School where the school was limited to only two administrators – a principal and an assistant principal; whereas the previous 10 years had had two assistant principals.   In discussing this fact, Ollivander (personal communication, October 2010)

quickly became aware of the increased level of work he would face compared to his predecessors.

Mr. Ignotus also began his career in the teaching field before moving on to work in administration, and like both Mr. Anderson and Mr. Ollivander, Ignotus also spent time as a Dean of Students as a transitional step from teaching to administration. Ignotus spent 10 years in the classroom before taking the position as Dean of Students at another middle school in his district. In that time, Ignotus taught primarily elective courses and served in a variety of leadership positions prior to his posting as dean. Amongst those, he served as a department chair and as a building athletic coordinator at the high school level.

Ignotus struck me as the participant who struggled the most with the move from the classroom to the administrative realm. Throughout the length of the study, Ignotus displayed a great deal of frustration and began to speak about the futility of trying to catch up with his work. In various conversations (personal communications, August 2010 – June 2011) and journal entries, Ignotus expressed these thoughts:

> What did I do? What did I get myself into? I can barely complete the basics each day and then everything else hits – I'm not sure I'm going to make it through the rest of this year!...How am I supposed to possibly juggle all that it takes to do my job and then go to grad school as well?...So my new baby is four months old – I think I've spent a grand total of ten minutes with her – it's just not worth it – I only make about $5,000 more a year and I have the stress of making about $40,000 more…Why can't these teachers just take care of the simple little discipline things – do I really need to see every student they have even the

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slightest issue with?...I thought this job was supposed to allow me to become a principal someday – I feel more and more as though I'm just keeping a sinking ship afloat rather than moving forward in my career at all…

Duties as an Assistant Principal

Discipline

One of the areas that all of the participants of the study focused a majority of their time on was student discipline. All five participants commented on the students and how they learned a myriad of different lessons as they delved in to the world of discipline, which was new to most of them.

In providing detailed accounts of disciplinary actions he had dealt with (personal communication, December 15, 2010), Reed showed that of 1,376 total disciplinary actions in the school from September to December 2010, he dealt with 19% of them. Of that number, the large portion of the discipline dealt with some type of attendance issue or the use of electronic devices.   Those not involving these issues were, in Reed's words, ones "which seem to be more 'behavioral' and arguably may involve counseling, mediation, relationships, conflict, etc…" He broke the percentages down as follows:

- Academic Dishonesty – 18%

- Insubordination – 18%

- Disruptive Behavior or Conduct – 16%

- Leaving class without Teacher's Permission – 13%

- Bullying or intimidation – 13%

- Insolence – 7%

- Use of Profanity – 4%

- General Misconduct – 4%

- Inappropriate use of District Technology – 3%

- Minor in Possession of Alcohol or Drugs – 3%

- Incomplete homework assignments – 3%

- Other – 2% (fighting, dress code violations, vandalism).

By year's end, the total number of disciplinary incidents at South Shores High School climbed to 5,058. Of those, 74% remained attendance related, including tardiness, truancy, and failure to serve detentions.

In analyzing this information, Reed noted that "insubordination, insolence, and leaving without permission all tend to target teacher/student relationships; these incidents comprise 38% of all incidents other than those that are attendance related." In seeing that, Reed then expressed his desire to have more professional development regarding the need to improve and have open discussions on student-teacher relationship building. This point served as one of contention for Reed who, though he never would describe himself as anything but an average teacher, was one that was well regarded by colleagues, administrators, students, and parents alike. His ability to build relationships with students was well-known and his frustration is well understood when it came to disciplining students he thought would not have necessarily been sent to this office had either the teacher or student tried a little harder to work on their relationship. In a conversation at a county meeting (personal communication, January 18, 2011), Reed expounded on these thoughts when he stated that: "I am frustrated that I am dealing with so many seemingly simple issues. It's as though they [teachers] just get tired of a student and send them down rather than try to work with the kid." The end of the school

year totals showed this area of relationships as contributing 26% of all behavior related incidents, or 343 total disciplinary actions at South Shores High School.

In terms of her role as a discipline officer at East View High School, Mrs. Highness noted that as an assistant principal "it's harder to make the call home now." As an assistant principal she was no longer dealing with typically just the student, but much more often with parents or guardians, and with greater consequences. As she noted:

> When I would discipline a student in my class, I might give them an after school detention, at most, or maybe that had to come to my room for their lunch hour – nothing really big. The worst I could do was to send them to one of the assistant principals. Now, that's me! I have to keep track of what happened and balance advocating for the student with my feelings of frustration for what the teacher is certainly going through. Then, I need to call parents on suspensions where the parents will argue with me so their child won't get suspended. It's a lot to learn and adjust to that I didn't quite realize (personal communication, August 2010).

In Highness' reporting of discipline, the researcher adapted the categories she and all other participants provided, in order to maintain consistency between participant responses. In January 2011, the breakdown from East View High School had 1,767 discipline events and they were in the following percentages, by category:

- Academic Dishonesty – 7%

- Insubordination – 10%

- Disruptive Behavior or Conduct – 14%

- Leaving class without Teacher's Permission – 9%

- Bullying or intimidation – 7%

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- Insolence – 8%

- Use of Profanity – 23%

- General Misconduct – 2%

- Inappropriate use of District Technology – 1%

- Minor in Possession of Alcohol or Drugs – 1%

- Incomplete homework assignments – 17%

- Other – 1% (fighting, dress code violations, vandalism).

Anderson noted his opinions regarding how he handled student discipline as well (personal communication, August 2010):

Dealing with discipline seems second nature to me with my experiences here in the past as well as other administrative positions I have had in other educational fields. I found that dealing with my students as individuals and approaching each referral as not just punitive but a learning experience was important. It seems that students responded to me positively most of the year and those who were negative came back later to apologize, realizing I was just doing my job.

One of the more significant incidents Mrs. Highness dealt with was a girl who was found to not only have illegal drugs in her possession, but was selling them to other students on school property. Mrs. Highness suspended the girl for 30 school days, pending expulsion hearings at the school district level, and had to learn, in her words (personal communication, January 18, 2011) "how to do a drug bust" and that "I became a glorified cop and had to learn case law and what my limitations were compared to the police. I didn't have anyone who could help me with that – I just had to learn by doing it."

Most of the discipline issues that Highness dealt with, however, had not been to the level of a drug bust, with the exception of a large fight between several girls that resulted in multiple 10-day suspensions from school. The majority of the discipline offenses were either in the attendance realm, such as tardy to school or a specific class, as well as unexcused absences from school. Of note, the actual highest percentage of discipline referrals Highness addressed during the first few months of the school year dealt with the use of profanity by students, either in class or overheard in the hallways. She noted that this was something the administrative team had "decided to crack down on specifically," arguing that "if we were to change the way the building ran and was perceived, we couldn't allow such language to be so prevalent. We needed to change the culture from the inside first."

At the end of the year, the total number of disciplinary incidents at East View High School climbed to 5,423. Of those, the majority (68%) remained focused on the use of profanity. In analyzing this information, Highness noted that "the numbers still rose over the course of the year and it provided a great deal of frustration for us [the administrative team at East View High School] because it was typically the same students all the time that were being sent down to the office for swearing (personal communication, December 2010).

When it came to the discipline front, Mr. Anderson had a much more positive outlook, but it was more than simply words to him. In ongoing conversation (personal communication, August 2011), it was clear that he was adept at finding the most positive light for the students who were sent to him. In noting he had attended several expulsion

hearings, he remarked that "they were some of the worst days…to think we were moving forward with removing a student completely from school…it made me feel a failure."

In terms of disciplinary totals, North Forest High School divided the discipline officer responsibilities by grade level, as opposed to alphabetically. Anderson was charged with enforcing discipline for the ninth and tenth grades over the course of the 2011-2012 school year. When examining the disciplinary records at North Forest, these two grades, which comprised one half of the school's population, accounted for 58% of that handled by Anderson and his fellow administrators. When disaggregated further, Anderson's portion of the discipline (broken down by discipline officer) accounted for only 12.45% of the total discipline at North Forest High School. Having a Dean of Students and four assistant principals lead to a sharp drop in the total percentage of discipline cases handled by Anderson and his colleagues, as opposed to other participants in this study.

As for a specific breakdown of the 12.45%, Anderson provided the following information (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

- Academic Dishonesty – 2%
- Insubordination – 15%
- Disruptive Behavior or Conduct – 12%
- Leaving class without Teacher's Permission – 11%
- Bullying or intimidation – 7%
- Insolence – 8%
- Use of Profanity – 25%
- General Misconduct – 2%

- Inappropriate use of District Technology – 1%

- Minor in Possession of Alcohol or Drugs – 1%

- Incomplete homework assignments – 15%

- Other – 1% (fighting, dress code violations, vandalism).

Although Ollivander was now responsible for more students, discipline was an area, where he had some prior experience, both at the high school and as a middle school Dean of Students. When it came to his disciplinary actions, Ollivander provided the following information to the researcher (personal communications, September 2010, January 2011 and June 2011):

September 2010

- Disruptive Behavior – 37.5%

- Bullying/Intimidation – 16.67%

- Electronic Communications – misuse – 12.5%

- Academic Dishonesty – 8.33%

- Physical Aggressiveness – 8.33%

- Lack of Supplies/Unprepared for class – 4.17%

- Insubordination – 4.17%

- Persistent Misbehavior – 4.17%

- Possession/use of tobacco products – 4.16%

January 2011

- Disruptive Behavior – 50.0%

- Lack of Supplies/Unprepared for class – 10.23%

- Tardiness – 10.23%

- Insubordination –7.95%

- Academic Dishonesty –5.68%

- Physical Aggressiveness –5.68 %

- Insolence – 4.55%

- Leaving without Permission – 3.41%

- Bullying/Intimidation –1.14%

- Electronic Communications – misuse –1.14%

June 2011

- Disruptive Behavior – 54.35%

- Insubordination – 8.7%

- Physical Aggressiveness – 5.8%

- Tardiness – 4.35%

- Academic Dishonesty – 4.35%

- Insolence – 4.35%

- Electronic Communications – misuse –2.9%

- Lack of supplies/Unprepared for class – 2.17%

- Improper use of district technology – 2.17%

- Use of profanity – 2.17%

- Incomplete homework – 1.45%

- Leaving without Permission – 1.45%

- Assault – 1.45%

- Persistent misbehavior – 1.45%

- Bullying/Intimidations – 1.45%

- Physical aggressiveness – 0.72%

- Possession of a weapon – 0.72%

In total, Ollivander handled 990 specific discipline referrals over the course of the study.   In a school of nearly 1,000 students, Ollivander noted that the vast majority of his time was devoted to discipline (personal communication, April 22, 2011):

> Some of the cases are really easy – if it's being unprepared, you give the kid a quick pep talk about responsibility and outline what will happen if they don't change their behavior and off they go.   The ones that take longer are the cheating [academic dishonesty], possession [alcohol, drugs, and/or weapons], and physical [aggressiveness] issues.   With these, you have to spend time interviewing the students as well as a handful of other potential witnesses, staff members, and then try your best to figure out what the truth is.   Once you make a decision, then you have to call the parents of the student you are going to discipline and, even with a watertight case, you have to sell the discipline to the parents.   I feel more like a used car salesman some days.   These parents will fight everything so their precious kid won't get in trouble – you can show them video of a student stealing something and they will actually come up with an excuse of either why they were forced to do it or ask if you know who else is there that's not being caught on camera – maybe that person was forcing their child to steal.   It's really remarkable at times.

Likewise, one of the major issues Ignotus tackled during this study was student discipline, similar to all other participants of the study.   Oak River Middle School has a student population of approximately 950 students in grades six through eight.   As the

sole discipline officer, Ignotus dealt with a total of 967 discipline referrals during the

school year of this study.   In a unique breakdown of data, Ignotus supplied information

(personal communication, June 2011) relative to the breakdown of discipline offenses by

month and with a daily average.   At its highest point, Ignotus was addressing between

2.7 (September 2010) to 5.3 (February 2011) offenses on a daily basis.   In comparison to

the previous school year (Ignotus was not an assistant principal nor was he employed at

Oak River Middle School), the average offenses were actually higher, with a total of

1,075 discipline referrals during the year.   The breakdown of the majority of offenses

Ignotus had to deal with during the year is as follows:

- Chronic Lack of supplies – 87 students

- Disruptive Behavior – 60 students

- Physical Aggressiveness – 11 students

- Tardiness – 87 students

- Inappropriate dress/dress code violations – 76 students

- Use of profanity – 38 students

- Leaving class without teacher's permission – 21 students

Faculty and Staff Supervision

Another area that proved a challenge in many ways for the participants was in the

area of the supervision of the teaching faculty and the support staff of their schools. As

all prior teachers, none of the participants, even in their leadership positions had

supervisory authority over any other employees prior to their position as an assistant

principal, even when serving as a Dean of Students.

Reed expanded further in his end of the year reflections (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

One specific experience that surprised me this year was the need to mediate conflict between teachers-students-parents. I was surprised by the desire for teachers to "stand their ground" on issues – even on issues that I deemed unimportant. I felt that many times the relationship between teacher/child or teacher/parent was the most important element in the conflict; however, many teachers were intent on "winning the battle" or "standing their ground", when a compromise solution would have built stronger relationships and more future success. Related to this observation is that I was frequently frustrated with the lack of willingness for teachers (and others_ to say "I'm sorry" or "I made a mistake" or "my fault" in order to mediate differences, reach compromise, and/or strengthen relationships.

Reflecting on both staff supervision and building relationships with them and how it related back to student discipline, Highness voiced frustration because she began to think that teachers were specifically looking for opportunities to send students to her for discipline (personal communication, June 2011):

It was as if they [some of the teachers] were testing me to see what I would do in each situation. It was very frustrating because here I was trying to help change the culture of the school and it felt as all they wanted to do was send kids down for punishment. My dilemma was that the kids probably deserved some discipline, but I didn't have the time, literally, to educate them to help change the culture. I would have hoped that perhaps their teachers would have done that.

This led her to question the relationships teachers develop with their students and the greater impact they have on discipline from her perspective as an assistant principal. Highness spoke about a need and desire to have professional development opportunities, but her calendar was so limited that this dream remained simply a dream. One of the goals Mrs. Highness set for herself at the beginning of her tenure at East View High School was that she would visit a certain number of classes for observation on a weekly basis. As with discipline and professional development, this dream quickly became a frustration.

In speaking with Anderson regarding his experiences with the staff, a highlight that is vastly different from the other participants in this study is that he continued to teach a class during the first half of the study. As he described (personal communication, August 2011):

> One of the greatest challenges came at the beginning of the school year. We had an English teacher go out on medical leave for the remainder of the semester. While we hired a long terms sub, she did not have the background to teach one of the assigned classes, which I have taught for the last five years. Therefore, I ended up teaching two sections of this class for the remainder of the semester (we made some schedule changes for second semester so that this would not be the situation again). While the long term sub watched the class on days when they were doing class work or working in the computer lab, I still had to have lessons prepared for the direct instruction and had to be in the class those days as well as all days when speeches were given (Communications Class). Also, I did the

grading for these two sections as well. As can be imagined, this was a great deal of time taken away from my duties but it got done with not much notice being made. As a matter of fact, I think that I did not even get the proper credit for taking this on while in my first year but it was noticed by my staff and cemented their respect for me as a leader in the building.

 Ollivander spent the teaching portion of his career at all levels, from K-5 classroom work to being a middle school teacher, and to teaching and coaching at the high school level. As an administrator, Ollivander likewise had split his time; in this instance between one semester as a high school assistant principal and the past year as the assistant principal at Paul Bunyan Middle School. Ollivander shared a similar experience with Anderson in that Ollivander also spent some time as a Dean of Students, specifically at the middle school level.

During the course of this study, Ollivander noted some of his challenges came not only in the move from serving as a high school assistant principal and returning to the middle school, but in adjusting to a new school culture, as he had not previously spent any time at Paul Bunyan Middle School. In journals (personal communications, September 2010 and January 2011), Ollivander noted that this experience was proving to be amongst his greatest challenges:

> Here I am, an accomplished teacher and someone who has a certain level of experience as a dean in a middle school and as an AP [assistant principal] at the high school, and I would think the teachers would know I can handle the job. It was a testing period for some time – the teachers not openly challenging my decisions, but certainly not giving their overwhelming support either.

Now I'm nearly five months in to working with this staff and I still don't feel as though they've given me the benefit of the doubt.   I'm realizing one of the tough things is that not only am I pulled in every direction – discipline, athletics, observations, and parents, but that the staff just won't buy in to what I want to do. They are stuck in neutral – they won't move forward – or they can't – I'm not sure which one it is yet.

I am doing the work of two people.   I have discipline for almost 1,000 students, where it used to be split in half; I have oversight of all student activities and athletics, which used to be split between two people; I am responsible for two academic departments – again, this used to be split between two APs [assistant principals]; and I have a staff and principal that are all expecting me to do the yeoman's work and work double to make up the difference!

The same frustration was expressed by Ignotus during the study. As he faced the prospect of having difficult conversations with people who were, until recently, his colleagues, there were inherent challenges as to how he would handle the situations he had to address. As with Highness, this conversation typically came when he had to address staff members or was questioned by them in regards to decisions concerning student discipline. Ignotus explained (personal communication, June 2011) that there were a handful of teachers who were continually sending students to his office, even for minor offenses:

No matter what I would say to the staff, there was this group of teachers that would always write kids up. If the kid didn't come with a pencil, I would find out because they had written the kid up. It's amazing – they would take all the time

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to write the kid up as unprepared for class rather than asking him to go to his locker and get a pencil or actually giving him a pencil themselves! It boggles my mind that these are people who are supposed to be here in school to help kids and all they want to do is catch them doing something wrong and then to make sure they get the biggest punishment possible.

He continued in this arena of frustration:

One of the frustrating things, though, was not always the teachers, but myself.   I never took the chance to confront or have a conversation with this group of teachers when I first noticed they were always writing students up for what I saw as trivial issues. The reason I didn't is I had no idea how to do that.   I didn't want to offend them, but I needed them to understand they were over the line with referrals and that I was the one getting all the phone calls from angry parents.   I was nervous and worried that they would only think I was trying to get out of my job as I had made such a big deal at our retreat that I was there to support the teachers all the time. Now, I think I've shot myself in the foot by not standing up to them and at least opening up a conversation with them. When they write a student up, I feel as though I need to do more than simply warn the student or they will get the feeling I'm not supporting them. I'm just not sure what to do any longer – I guess I just wait until next year to figure it out.

Calendar and Work Schedule

An area that, in addition to journaling and discipline referrals, completed the triangulation of data, was the compilation of work and appointment calendars from each of the participants of the study.   This showed that each of the participants had a steady

stream of appointments; while much of their day was scripted with lunchroom supervision or athletic events, a great deal of it dealt simply with meetings or student discipline, which could be unpredictable from day to day. The calendars and schedules were, to a participant, much more that what they expected in terms of an expansion over their time commitments from teaching and in terms of time away from family; this proved to be quite an adjustment for them.

Reed pointed out some of the items he experienced when it came to his calendar in speaking to me in his initial interview (personal communication, August 2010):

You know what it's like. I'm here from around six a.m. until at least six or seven at night each day and then there are the days of varsity sports, so that's more like nine at night. By the time I get home, there's nothing left of me to give for my kids. They are really raising themselves. My daughters are in high school and I feel as though I am not there for them at all the way a father should be at their age. More often than not, things turn in to an argument about what limits I am setting on them. If that's not enough, all I eat, it seems, is fast food. I used to be really in shape and now I've put on so much weight and I just literally don't have the time to work out at all. If I do, it might be on Saturday – maybe twice a month. With a forty-five minute drive to work and a minimum twelve hour day, I have ten hours, barely, left each day; that's on a good day when everything doesn't go haywire!

What about missing teaching and the early determination to get in the classroom more? That quickly fell by the wayside for Mr. Reed. His desire was still very much

there, but the reality was that he did much more with student discipline and athletics than any other aspect of his day.

From discipline and student-teacher relationships, the reader now moves to calendar analysis to continue to build the picture of a new assistant principal and the demands of this new position. Mr. Reed, as noted previously, was at South Shores High School most of every day. He arrived approximately one hour prior to the start of school and was often at the school either finishing his paperwork or supervising sporting events seven hours after the school day had ended. On those days in particular, that schedule is akin to working two full school days in a 24-hour period. From a variety of personal communications regarding his calendar, the researcher noted some common threads of Mr. Reed's regular meetings:

- Every Monday morning – Administrative Team meeting from 8:00-9:00 a.m.

- Department meetings for two curriculum departments – once a month, after school for one hour.

- Every second and fourth Mondays – observations and interactions with professional learning communities, after school for one hour.

- Lunchroom supervision – daily from 10:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

- Athletic supervision – roughly three times per week from 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

- Monthly district administrators' meeting from 3:00-5:30 p.m.

- Monthly new administrators' meeting from 8:00-9:30 a.m.

These instances were simply the recurring appointments in Reed's calendar.

These did not include the 19% of the total school discipline in which he spent anywhere from five minutes to three days dealing with students, investigations, parent meetings, talking with district administration, etc. In general terms, Reed concluded that the majority of his time was spent on the management of the athletic programs at South Shores High School (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

> Although my responsibilities are primarily that of an Assistant Principal, the demands of being the Building Athletic Coordinator were disproportionate. The public nature of athletics demands a great deal of attention – mainly to the administration of the events and to the monitoring of coaching. These demands intruded upon my desire to spend time in classes observing, evaluating, and teaching, which is where my heart truly lies. It seems that our district is moving in a direction to focus more on improved instruction, which falls in line with my desires for prioritizing my time.

> Summarizing this concept, Reed stated his calendar and athletic oversight highlighted for him "another source of stress was the desire and ultimate inability to balance the demands and responsibilities of the job."

In regard to mentoring Reed noted that he received very limited formal mentoring at South Shores High School, but did receive a fair amount from a mandated new administrators' meeting that met once monthly. In that time, Reed was able to effectively vent his frustrations, acquire some tools and strategies for addressing issues or for strengthening his beliefs, and hear similar complaints from colleagues who were experiencing like events, frustrations, and helplessness. Reed was assigned a mentor in

the district who was a veteran assistant principal, though he never met with this mentor and did not have much beyond a collegial relationship with the mentor. Reed's active mentoring, in addition to the meetings described above, came from his principal. In that mentoring, there was not a set of standards that were discussed, nor was a plan developed for how to address issues, but rather, as Reed described it (personal communications) it was a "mentoring under fire." In this, he implied that the mentoring came either after a decision had been made, as a reaction to a situation, or in the midst of a difficult time. His impression was that his principal trusted him because, in Reed's words: "he figured I was hired as an assistant principal; I had taught for so long, that I must know how to manage and handle most situations that come up in a high school."

A typical work week for Highness incorporated the following standing meetings or appointments:

- Every Wednesday morning – Administrative Team meeting from 8:00-9:30 a.m.

- Department meetings for two curriculum departments – once a month, after school for one hour.

- Every second and fourth Mondays – observations and interactions with professional learning communities, after school for one hour.

- Lunchroom supervision – daily from 10:30 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.

- Athletic supervision – two times per week from 4:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

- Bi-weekly student council meetings – 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

In addition to these weekly meetings, there were district-mandated meetings for Highness that included a monthly district administrators' meeting from 3:00-5:30 p.m.

and a monthly new administrators' meeting from 8:00-9:30 a.m. on the first Friday of each month. As much as possible, Highness shared, she attempted to stick to the following schedule each day (personal communication, January 18, 2011):

- Discipline

- Classroom visits (five hours per week)

- Website maintenance (every two weeks)

- Grade book maintenance (every two weeks)

This goal was not one that was achievable for Mrs. Highness due to her other time constraints. Highness realized this quickly and, though she never deviated from the hope of keeping this schedule and bringing it to a reality, she began to outline and establish longer-term goals (personal communication, November 14, 2010). These goals included working with the parent-teacher group at East View High School, a program designed to help struggling students, and a mentoring program for social struggling students. She noted that she wanted to focus on these things in order to focus on students specifically:

What I wanted was to ensure that kids were getting mentored, that they had the support they needed academically, and that parents were onboard. In doing so, I wanted to implement some programs in which freshmen and sophomores were supported by juniors and seniors. The hope was to not only help the students, but to use this to change discipline issues as well as the school culture.

In thinking on this further, Highness noted in her journal (personal communication, November 2010) that when it came to changing the culture "we need to buy in - talking about teaching and learning only – all the time!" She continued that "we [administrators], need to be the leaders and push and encourage and oversee and hold

accountable, "which she argued would be through "time" and "a shift in paradigm.""

Relating this to a sense of being alone and frustrated, without a mentor, Highness shared

that "we need leadership in this place; worried about developing intellectual strengths and

the ability to keep it up and going."

One of the keys Anderson would often note in his journals and during the initial

interview (personal communications, August 2011) was that the discipline portion of his

job was not one that he viewed with as much trepidation as others, having served as a

dean prior to becoming an assistant principal he stated:

The majority of his calendar duties outside of his teaching these two sections of

Communications dealt with discipline, but also included a smattering of other new

responsibilities as an assistant principal:

- Michigan Merit Exam (state-mandated test, which includes three days of testing
  and the ACT).

- Teacher observations/evaluations

- Sophomore success series

- Cafeteria duties at lunchtimes

- Professional development opportunities for staff

- Data on credit recovery for students who do not graduate

- Habitat for Humanity community service project

- Communications camp for student leadership

- Half of the athletic responsibilities

- Master schedule planning for English, Counseling, and Social Studies
  Departments

The calendar and time management issues were amongst the most complex Anderson described during the course of the study.   In numerous conversations and journals (personal conversations, August 2010, January 2011, and April 2011), he explained his frustrations:

I love working with students, but I can't stand being in the office…It's like a juggling act to make sure you get done all you need to get done…I can't believe the amount of meetings I have to attend – so many of them really don't even need me there – I'm just there to be a presence for the administration…thank goodness I don't manage custodial issues as well – I'd never get to it…It's amazing that I have to be at so many events just to have an administrator there – would people really misbehave if I wasn't there? Do I make that much of a difference?...There are days when I feel all I do is patrol hallways and the cafeteria…

Even with the amount of time spent on discipline, Ollivander still had the other responsibilities typically handled by himself and an additional assistant principal.   In analyzing his calendar (personal communications, September 2010 – June 2011), what struck the researcher most was how little Ollivander recorded his meetings.   In glancing through the months, most of the meetings listed in his were those placed as invitations by a secretary or other administrator from the central offices of his district. Periodically, Ollivander used the Microsoft Outlook calendar tool as a reminder or task list to send out thank you emails or to ensure he knew about an upcoming email he would need to send out, but it was rarely used for appointments.   In asking Ollivander about this toward the end of the study (personal communication, June 2011), he gave an explanation that "my day is so unpredictable that I know I should use something more formal, but more often

than not, I am going so quickly during the day that typing something in just is not something I have time to do.   I usually just write it on a scrap of paper and throw it away when I'm done."

Goals for the Future

In summary of his experiences, Mr. Reed (personal communication, June 24, 2011) noted:

This year was a "whirlwind" and the incredible differences between teaching and administrating were eye-opening.   The year seemed to be such a "whirlwind" primarily because I felt I was so "reactionary". Since everything was new – facilities, student code of conduct, investigating, mediating – I felt I was almost always "reactive" and rarely "proactive". I was almost always "reacting" instead of "preventing". This lack of predictability and the reactive nature of the job caused it to be highly stressful.

In looking forward to the year that began in September 2011, Reed summarized his ideas for going forward (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

1. I need to prioritize my time with more devoted to classroom instruction and student interaction.   To accomplish this, I will set goals to get into all teachers' classrooms a certain number of times per quarter and per year using the walk-through technique.

2. I will build student relationships by sitting in on more classes as a participant and by visiting athletic practices.

3. I will suggest better use of lunch duty time – one administrator has an "off" day in order to work in office while three administrators "police" the cafeteria.

4. I will take better care of myself, scheduling exercise three days per week; such

an effort will help reduce stress, help me think more clearly, maintain a better

sense of humor, retain energy and be an overall better administrator to serve

others' needs.

Highness (personal communication, June 2011) created a list of items that she

would either "get rid of or revamp" and a separate list of "celebrate things to keep" as the

year came to a close:

Get Rid of or Revamp:

- Tardy policy

- Truancy policy – consequences

- Homework requests or check websites

- Student intervention process – revise

- Department Chair roles

- Professional learning communities – revise

- Peer mentoring program – revise

Celebrate Things to Keep:

- Academics

  o #1 breakfast (for high student achievers)

  o Academic letter assembly

  o Honor Roll certificate and promotion

  o Top 10 lunch (at the end of the year for the top ten

    academically-ranked students in the graduating class).

- Non-Academic:

- New logo/new identity on academic excellence

- Transfer students – mentoring work with them

- Major steps in many new programs

- Outdoor classroom

- Technology innovations and greater usage by staff

- Charitable donations

In creating such a list, Highness explained, she was attempting to close out her year with a look ahead. Having completed only one year at East View High School and only one year as an assistant principal, she felt she needed some self-driven focus on accomplishments, as well as a way forward as she looked ahead to her second year. She explained:

> It was really hard to actually see that I had accomplished anything during this year. I really just wanted to be done and go home for a month and not worry about this place or anything about school. I forced myself to make a list of accomplishments and was surprised at how many things I could list. More often than not, I felt I was only trying to survive during the year, but I really did accomplish things. This is something I want to have as a running list next year for those days when I just want to quit!

Upon the conclusion of the study, Anderson reflected (personal communication, June 2011) over the course of his first year as an assistant principal, describing not only the transition from teacher to administrator, but from dean to administrator:

All in all, this was a great year for being my first year. I feel I was given a great deal of responsibility and was expected to jump right in to the deep end with little

instruction.   I did this and was successful at the job.   I think that all stakeholders in the building were happy with how I handled situations with fairness.

Personal Issues

Over the course of the school year, some of that enthusiasm left and was replaced by frustration and health concerns.   In electronic communications during the course of the study and in county-wide meetings where I interacted with Mr. Reed (personal communications), he shared that he had "gained almost twenty pounds so far this year" and that he was "struggling with the kids at home quite a bit."

Highness also found it difficult to focus on the work she felt unprepared to do.   In her current graduate school studies, she was focused on a second master's degree in curriculum and training. She found that courses in educational leadership, while in theory were helpful, proved to be no help to her in a practical sense. She noted the following regarding training:

> If I just went to grad school classes and expected to be able to do my job as an assistant principal well, I would be surprised at how little I really know. When it comes to doing this job, there is really nothing that can train me or you any better than just doing it and then having people to talk to about it afterward. When I went through the district's training [a leadership academy started in her district for aspiring administrators], that was helpful. I heard 'front line' stories and how they were handled.   The administrators were open and honest about their frustrations and mistakes. That was helpful (personal communication, September 2010).

Mrs. Highness also reflected on her time in a fellowship at Columbia University when she taught at a prestigious private secondary school.   In that, she noted that it was in real-life scenarios and on the job training that one truly learns what it is to be an administrator; not in a philosophical or theoretical setting.

Early in the school year (personal communication, October 2011), Mrs. Highness noted that as people asked her how her year was going and what she thought of her new position and responsibilities, her response was:

> I share a vague response: busy, tired, good though. As I drove into work today, I realized how I am really feeling and it made me cry. The kids fuel me some. Seeing their joy and discovery makes me joyful and fuels my soul. If it weren't for the kids, I really don't think I would do this for long.

Anderson also faced health challenges, although not to the extent of the other participants.   He reflected (personal communication, June 2011) that he had "gained about seven pounds during the year" and was "sick a bit more than usual – probably because I was run down so much."

In regards to his own health and family well being, Ollivander noted (personal communication, June 2011) that his weight had "maintained right around where I like it" and that he "was no more sick than any other year, which is to say I struggled from time to time to not call in for the day." Ollivander was more focused, though, on his family life:

> This year was really tough on my family. With little ones at home, I really struggled with balancing the work of two people with a newborn and one about to start school for the first time. I never really appreciated how much my wife did

during the day [Ollivander's wife stays at home during the day], but all that she accomplishes is amazing. When I come home, I'm just beat and exhausted and the last thing I want to do is engage with others, let alone be the happy husband and dad I need to be. This year really put a strain on my family more than any other. At the high school, I was one of three APs [assistant principals] and as a dean, I didn't have even close to the number of after school responsibilities; now I change to being the one that takes care of it all – what a stress on us all throughout the year. There were times I really could have used someone to talk through this with – someone who had been there and made it through.

Directly related to mentoring and its impact on his own personal well-being, Ignotus felt he had none whatsoever. Early in the study (personal communication, November 2010), he illustrated his lack of mentoring and direction:

There are so many things I am just unsure of how and what to do. I mean, I've not had any formal training in crisis management, discipline, or parent meetings – I'm a stinking teacher – that's all. I just happened to want to be an administrator and, now that I am, no one is there to tell me what to do or how to do it. I'm just supposed to figure it out. I won't call the folks at the board office – I don't want them to think I can't handle the job. I wish my principal would help, but he's so focused on instructional stuff that he leaves everything else to me; he's made it clear that I have to figure it out – he relies on me to run the building day to day.

After a county wide meeting on some new initiatives being brought forward, Ignotus relayed the following (personal communication, December 2010):

I'm thinking seriously about just going back to the classroom. I just don't like this job. My family is suffering, I have to do all this grad school work for my certificate, I'm running the building, and I can't stand my job. All I do is clean up messes – speaking of which, don't even get me started on custodial items. I just never seem to have the time or energy to be everything to everybody all the time and that's what it feels like I'm supposed to be.

In summarizing his year, things did get somewhat better, and somewhat worse toward the end of the school year. Ignotus explained:

I can't wait until summer really starts – on July 1 when I don't have to be here for over a month. I just need to get out of here for a while and not think anything about this place. If I am honest, though, I have learned a lot and I am looking a little forward to improving some things that were so frustrating to me over this year – mind you, I'm looking forward to them philosophically only – I need to get out of here soon!

Initial Interview Responses

To begin the process of pointing out similarities and differences, answers to introductory interviews will be illustrated and discussed. The interview guide utilized in this study is adapted from Creasap (2003, pp. 214-220).

1. **How long have you been an administrator?** Include prior administrative experiences.

The major similarity between all participants is that the school year that encompassed this study (2010-2011) was the first in their present position in their current building. Only Ollivander had previously served as an assistant principal, both at the

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high school and middle school levels. Additionally, Ollivander, Anderson, and Ignotus all previously served in the capacity of Dean of Students at other schools. Though not technically an administrative position, it is a transitional step from the classroom to the administrative realm. The other main similarity between all participants is that they all came from the classroom and were trained as teachers prior to pursuing promotion to administration.

2. How long did you teach before becoming an administrator?

This was an area of some diversity amongst the participants. Reed and Anderson both taught social studies and history courses at the high school level; Highness was in charge of student activities and taught various elective courses in the fine arts at the high school level; Ignotus taught physical education at the high school level; and Ollivander taught at both the elementary and secondary levels.

A sub-question related to this addressed other professional positions held by the participants.   It was fascinating to see that all participants had experienced a line of increasingly important positions that developed their leadership skills and potential. Ollivander and Ignotus were both athletic directors at the high school level; Ollivander, Ignotus, and Anderson had all served as a Dean of Students; and Anderson, Highness, and Reed had all served as department chairs and curriculum coaches for members of their departments.

3. Describe your administrator preparation program.

Two of the participants from Lakeview Schools, Reed and Highness, took part in a specific development program for aspiring administrators from amongst the teaching staff in the district. This program took them through some professional exercises that

paired them with a practicing administrator in the school district, which opened up frank discussions as to the role of the administrator in the school. Specifically for Reed, he found this process intriguing, describing it (personal communication, August 2010) as "eye opening" and saying that he was "caught by surprise to see all that administrators really dealt with during the day – and long afterward."

Ollivander, Ignotus, and Anderson followed a path to their current role in the ranks of administration by first serving as a Dean of Students. They found that, although they spent the majority of each day as dean in the main office dealing with many of the things that assistant principals deal with on a daily basis, there were certainly differences. In his initial interview, Anderson (personal communication, August 2010) noted that now, as an assistant principal, there was

> More expected of me just based on the title; I was doing similar work, but all of a sudden, more is expected and I am that much more responsible for so many more things. It was astounding – I didn't think there would be even close to this much difference

4. **How would you define professional development?**

For all the participants, there was a certain thought they expressed that the professional development they had encountered and experienced previously had little or nothing to do with their daily duties. The following highlight some of their thoughts:

Reed (personal communication, August 2010):

> Professional development – you mean the workshops teachers go to in order to hone their teaching skills? Yes, I've gone to those, but I did it when I was

teaching. I don't find many that would be helpful to me at this point, as the vast

majority of items in the professional development catalogs focus on teachers. I

just learn on the job I guess and hope my principal teaches me what I need to

know.

Highness (personal communication, August 2010):

For me, professional development was great when I taught last year, but I'm not

quite sure what it will look like now as an assistant principal. Quite honestly, I'm

not sure when I will have the time to take advantage of it anyway. With the way

things are shaping up already – and it's only August – I'll be lucky just to get

home from time to time – PD [professional development] is furthest from my

mind.

Anderson (personal communication, August 2010):

I love professional development opportunities and can't wait to see what is new

out there from the county that would work specifically for new administrators. It

should be interesting – there's a lot of movement going on at the county and state

levels on bullying and I will need the training to make sure I am doing what needs

to be done.

Ollivander (personal communication, August 2010):

Any PD [professional development] I've experienced as an administrator has come

in this way – I observe the teachers during their PD times and make sure they are

staying on task. PD, for me, is more work than anything I get out of it. I feel like a

babysitter to the teachers – not someone looking for something worthwhile I can

take away from a speaker or a meeting to improve how I do things on a daily basis.

Ignotus (personal communication, August 2010):

> Professional development? Seriously, I'm just trying to get through grad school to
> make sure I have the credits to keep my certificate current. I guess if I think about it,
> there are probably some areas I would like to learn more about, but I just don't know
> what I'm going to face exactly. I'm hopeful the position is similar to when I was a
> dean. I guess as the year goes on, I'll look at this a bit more closely.

5. **What or who influenced your decision to become an administrator**?

   For the majority of the participants, there was no one in particular who influenced
them, as they all expressed the desire on their part that administration was a specific
direction they wished to move their careers toward, and worked specifically at it. Reed
was an exception on this point, as he described in the initial interview (personal
communication, August 2010):

> For me, the person who most influenced me was my last principal. This was a man
> who took his role as the instructional leader in the building seriously and challenged
> all of us in the building to work to our best potential. He was a master at challenging
> others to leadership. I was more than fine remaining in the classroom and teaching
> history for another twenty years or so – I thoroughly enjoyed it, but this man
> challenged me so much as a department chair that I really began to think I could
> handle more leadership.   When I approached him about this, he suggested he did it
> for a reason and that he wanted me to think about becoming an administrator; he
> thought I would do well in the role. I keep in touch with him still and thank him for
> the challenge he gave me. As I get settled in to my new office and focus on the

unknown of this job, I'm sure I will think about the challenge often during this first year.

6. **List and then describe the important domains of your job. Which do you feel consumes the majority of your time? Why?**

Each of the participants noted many things in their answer to this question, though the answers were revealed in their journals as the year and study progressed. It is of interest that Anderson and Ollivander, both with some level of administrative experience, were more realistic about the realities of the day to day stamina necessary for the job.

Ollivander (personal communication, August 2010):

> The thing I am most certain of in this job is that I need to learn this staff and the culture of this school [Paul Bunyan Middle School] quickly, as it's different from where I came from previously. I understand the speed and intensity of the day – discipline, making sure the hallways are safe, fire drills, dismissal and busses, and getting ready for evening supervision of athletics – this is my restful time for the next few weeks until everything starts spinning away from me.

Anderson (personal communication, August 2010):

> Being in the same school as an assistant principal where I was Dean of Students makes this an easier transition for me. I get how quickly things get away from what I have scheduled and how I thought the day was going to be and I've learned to adapt to that. I don't plan much in advance for each day for just that reason – I know things are going to spiral out of my control.

7. ISLLC Standards for School Leadership are relatively new to the field. Are you familiar with the ISLLC standards?

Each of the participants expressed familiarity with the standards, but all seemed unconcerned with how they would interact with the standards on a daily basis. Reed (personal communication, August 2010) expressed this best:

Just looking at my schedule for the rest of August before the students even show up for the first day of classes I have appointments booked solid. My principal has me trying to figure out who turns on the lights on the football field for a game coming up and I haven't the slightest idea where to start. ISLLC Standards – bottom of my priority list.

Final Interview Responses

At the conclusion of the study, the researcher adapted a different section of the interview guide found in Creasap (2003, pp. 214-220). Most notable is the vast difference in the participants as they showed not only relief in finishing the school year, but shock in all they had experienced and in all they did not know when they began the school year and this study. With the study comprising the entirety of the school year and focusing on mentoring, the researcher utilized the questions in Creasap's interview guide that focus specifically on mentorship, and also discussed these questions with other assistant principals who had been in that position for longer than three years as a guide to ensure they were valid questions to ask assistant principals.

1. What is your understanding of a mentor's role?

For this question, most of the participants were able to provide a textbook-like description of a mentor and their role. Knowing the topic of this study, Ignotus decided to expound on the concept on his own (personal communication, June 2011):

> In my opinion, a mentor should be there; that's not something I experienced at
> all this year. My principal was great – don't get me wrong – but the focus
> was not on mentoring me at all. My job was plainly clear – figure it out and
> run the building. This isn't quite what I would want for someone I was
> mentoring – I'd like to teach them the job and then give them more and more
> responsibilities on an ongoing basis and allow them to speak openly about
> their experiences. That would have been so helpful for me – I know it was
> when I first started teaching, so I don't know why it didn't occur in this new
> role.

2. **Research suggests direct mentor/protégé matching enhances such
   relationships. What factors might be important to consider in making such
   matching decisions?**

All participants suggested that a proper mentor for them would be another assistant principal who had more experience than they did. Highness pointed this out specifically (personal communication, June 2010):

> It's great to work with other APs [assistant principals] who know what they're
> doing and that I can talk to, but to have someone else – someone not at my school
> – would be ideal – someone I can vent to about my principal or the other APs.
> This would be so key – to have a mentor where I am not couching everything I
> say so I don't throw someone under the bus or potentially get in trouble myself.

For Ignotus, a similar conversation developed (personal communication, June 2010):

> This was a very frustrating area of my year. Even after serving as a dean, I really
>
> didn't know what to expect from my new role as an AP [assistant principal] and
>
> this year only proved that.   I was frustrated and angry at times because I didn't
>
> feel anyone was doing anything to help guide or mentor me. When I was
>
> teaching, the first four years I had a mentor that made sure I understood all the
>
> policies and rules – he got me to tenure. Now, I know I technically have a mentor
>
> in another middle school, but I don't have the time, and I bet he doesn't either, to
>
> meet at all. I've had a few calls and emails, but nothing like what I had when I
>
> was teaching. It would have been so helpful. Actually, I would still like it for
>
> next year!

3. **Recall a conversation you had with your mentor that was particularly helpful or noteworthy.**

This proved to be a tricky question at first, as a couple of the participants did not

actually have a dedicated mentor assigned to them.   Several continued to work on

their own, but Reed actually sought out his former principal and interacted with him

in a mentor/protégé relationship. He shared (personal communication, June 2011)

how helpful this was:

> Being able to talk with someone on a regular basis that has moved on to
>
> another position in a different district in a different area of the state was so
>
> helpful.   I don't know how I would have gotten through so much of what I
>
> did with discipline and staff relationships without an impartial person there for

me. The added bonus was that he knew a lot of the staff I was working with

and could provide not only objective but subjective advice that was invaluable

to me throughout the year.

4. **Take me through a day in the life of an entry year/mentor principal at.....**

    a.   Highs

Reed (personal communication, June 2011):

Highs include going home, spending a limited amount of time with my family

and breaks from school. Actually, there were highs at times – seeing some

movement in a few of my initiatives – working on better collaboration within

the teaching staff and a few of the students I disciplined that actually turned a

positive corner by year's end.

Highness (personal communication, June 2011):

The rush of the excitement of the beginning of the school year is a definite high

for a new assistant principal. Trying to learn as many names for teachers, parents,

and students in a new school – it was so exciting. Then, the end of the year was

crazy exciting! Trying to slow everyone down, including myself, to make sure

we were all going to finish strong and to get the seniors to graduation.

Anderson (personal communication, June 2011):

A high was to be able to be back in the same school but in a different role. I

thought I knew this school, the staff, parents, and students well enough at this

point that I could really start to make more of a difference than in the past. The

highs were watching the sports teams as well – to see the students in a different

light is always great.

Ollivander (personal communication, June 2011):

> Learning new faces and new ways of doing things in a new school was a great
> high for me at the beginning of the year. Another high was going through the
> process of hiring a new principal, as my current boss retires in a few weeks. It
> was interesting to see all the things people were looking for that I started to think I
> could do that job some day.

Ignotus (personal communication, June 2011):

> Starting, finally, as an AP [assistant principal] was a high! I had worked for this
> for quite a while and it was nice to finally see myself in the job and in my office.
> That was the biggest high for the year.

      b. Lows

Reed (personal communication, June 2011):

> The daily grind and trying to figure the job out as I did it with little direction other
> than simply 'figure it out'.   That was a constant low through the whole year.
> Also, discipline was a huge low – seeing kids make the same mistakes over and
> over again; wanting to help them, but having to kick them out – that was tough.

Highness (personal communication, June 2011):

> Discipline, discipline, discipline – that was a huge low all year. I can't have
> imagined what it was like for APs [assistant principals] when I was in the
> classroom.   Seeing the same kid over and over again was just frustrating – what
> didn't they get?

Anderson (personal communication, June 2011):

Seeing people that I had known for years suddenly change and be different around me simply because I was no longer on the teacher contract but was an administrator. That was a low, as I felt they had lost some trust in me because I had moved forward in my career.

Ollivander (personal communication, June 2011):

The low for me was discipline. I knew it took a lot of my time, but just the silly things that students would do when they knew they would get caught and then suspended. I just didn't get it. More frustrating, and low, than that, though, was dealing with parents who wouldn't believe you and you had to sell the consequences to for their child. I mean, when I was growing up, if the discipline guy from my middle school called, it didn't matter if I took a lie detector test, I was grounded just because of the call; now I have to sell it to these parents that their kid actually did something wrong and will get a consequence for doing it – very sad.

Ignotus (personal communication, June 2011):

Absolutely 100% - the low for me was student discipline. With teachers writing kids up for ridiculous things such as not having a pencil for class one time, it was the one thing I could not get a handle on and that I did not know how to approach with the teachers. It created such a waste of my time this year.

    c. Supports

Most of the participants related that their families and close friends became their strongest supports during their transitional time as a new assistant principal. Reed in particular, who suffered some personal tragedy in his family during the course of the

study, expressed this concept (personal communication, June 2011): "Without my family, I wouldn't have made it. My children became the rock in my life – they were 'normal' compared to the abnormal way of the rest of the day."

5. Least useful part. What would you change?

Reed (personal communication, June 2011):

> I would insist that all new administrators be required to have a dedicated mentor assigned to them that they had to meet with monthly. This person could be retired or would have to be from another school district so you could openly complain to them. I think this mentor should lead you through their experiences and share how they were shaped by them and how they learned from the tough times the new person is going through then.

Highness (personal communication, June 2011):

> Everyone should have someone they can talk through their problems with and get advice. Even with three APs [assistant principals] who are not cutthroat and out for themselves, there's some natural competition. I guess to have someone to vent to would be great as well. To be measured against standards for what an assistant principal should be would be fantastic – it would give me something specific and tangible to aim for.

Anderson (personal communication, June 2011):

> I would think all new administrators should not be allowed to be in the same building where they taught. That was a tough transition for me, though it did make mentoring easier, at least on paper. I was able to talk with my principal because I already had a relationship with him when I was one of the teachers in

his building. Being in a different school would probably have been better for me, though, to learn a new or different leadership style and to, hopefully, be able to preserve some of the friendships I think I've lost in this move.

Ollivander (personal communication, June 2011):

Most of the potential mentors I would have were people who only had maybe one more year of experience than I did, so I'm not quite sure what they would have to offer. Of course, after they year I've had, anyone would have been a bonus. Here I had a principal retiring, so there was little impetus there and I won't meet the new principal until August, so there goes the year as the new principal will be moving in to their office and just figuring out the phone system – won't have time to specifically mentor me toward my goal of having my own building. So, what would I change? I would ensure everyone has a mentor outside their own school that they can meet with and guide them on their goals.

Ignotus (personal communication, June 2011):

Every new administrator should go through what every new teacher in this state goes through. They must have a mentor that they meet with, fill out the forms to prove they meet, and get something akin to tenure after a few years. Take the ISLLC Standards and use them as an evaluation tool to ensure you are meeting about something rather than just complaining the whole time, but administrators should have to do this – not a choice, but a requirement. If Michigan is bringing back administrator certifications, this should absolutely be part of it.

All of the participants faced similar issues and frustrations throughout the course of the study and the school year. How they handled each situation varied, based on personality, experience, and the school culture in which they worked. Certain items stand out as exceptional similarities and include the amount of time and energy spent on discipline and a general sense of being unprepared for many aspects of the position.

From the perspective of focusing on student discipline, a common theme that developed over the course of the study involved the speed at which events occurred, as well as the feeling of being overwhelmed by dealing with discipline – whether from the perspective of students or of staff.

Reed (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

> This year was a "whirlwind" and the incredible differences between teaching and administrating were eye-opening. The year seemed to be such a "whirlwind" primarily because I felt I was so "reactionary". Since everything was new – facilities, student code of conduct, investigating, mediating – I felt I was almost always "reactive" and rarely "proactive". I was almost always "reacting" instead of "preventing". This lack of predictability and the reactive nature of the job caused it to be highly stressful.

Highness (personal communication, June 2011):

> My dilemma was that the kids probably deserved some discipline, but I didn't have the time, literally, to educate them to help change the culture. I would have hoped that perhaps their teachers would have done that.

Ollivander (personal communication, September 2010):

Here I am, an accomplished teacher and someone who has a certain level of experience as a dean in a middle school and as an AP [assistant principal] at the high school, and I would think the teachers would know I can handle the job. It was a testing period for some time – the teachers not openly challenging my decisions, but certainly not giving their overwhelming support either.

In analyzing the concept of being unprepared for the new role as an assistant principal, there were some immediate differences that became apparent to the researcher.

From the beginning, there was a sense, specifically from Anderson, that he felt more prepared for this role than the other participants did.

Anderson (personal communication, August 2010):

Dealing with discipline seems second nature to me with my experiences here in the past as well as other administrative positions I have had in other educational fields. I found that dealing with my students as individuals and approaching each referral as not just punitive but a learning experience was important. It seems that students responded to me positively most of the year and those who were negative came back later to apologize, realizing I was just doing my job.

To a limited extent, the experiences Ollivander had as a previous assistant principal at the middle and high school levels, as well as dean at the middle school level, suggested he possessed more confidence in his abilities from the start of the study.

Ollivander (personal communication, April 22, 2011):

Some of the cases are really easy – if it's being unprepared, you give the kid a quick pep talk about responsibility and outline what will happen if they don't change their behavior and off they go. The ones that take longer are the cheating

[academic dishonesty], possession [alcohol, drugs, and/or weapons], and physical

[aggressiveness] issues.   With these, you have to spend time interviewing the

students as well as a handful of other potential witnesses, staff members, and then

try your best to figure out what the truth is.

From the point of school culture, there were some similarities that made

themselves apparent.

On the opposite end of the preparedness spectrum, Highness, Reed, and Ignotus

quickly found themselves unprepared for what this new role as an assistant principal

offered and challenged in them.

Highness (personal communication, August 27, 2010):

If I just went to grad school classes and expected to be able to do my job as an

assistant principal well, I would be surprised at how little I really know. When it

comes to doing this job, there is really nothing that can train me or you any better

than just doing it and then having people to talk to about it afterward. When I

went through the district's training [a leadership academy started in her district for

aspiring administrators], that was helpful.   I heard 'front line' stories and how

they were handled.   The administrators were open and honest about their

frustrations and mistakes.   That was helpful.

The role of school culture quickly became obvious during the study. All but

Anderson were new to the school in which they now served as an assistant principal and

all had to learn to adapt themselves to a new school culture that was different from their

former roles and former schools.

Ollivander (personal communication, August 2010):

The thing I am most certain of in this job is that I need to learn this staff and the culture of this school [Paul Bunyan Middle School] quickly, as it's different from where I came from previously. I understand the speed and intensity of the day – discipline, making sure the hallways are safe, fire drills, dismissal and busses, and getting ready for evening supervision of athletics – this is my restful time for the next few weeks until everything starts spinning away from me.

Anderson (personal communication, August 2010):

Being in the same school as an assistant principal where I was Dean of Students makes this an easier transition for me. I get how quickly things get away from what I have scheduled and how I thought the day was going to be and I've learned to adapt to that. I don't plan much in advance for each day for just that reason – I know things are going to spiral out of my control.

Ignotus (personal communication, June 2011):

No matter what I would say to the staff, there was this group of teachers that would always write kids up. If the kid didn't come with a pencil, I would find out because they had written the kid up. It's amazing – they would take all the time to write the kid up as unprepared for class rather than asking him to go to his locker and get a pencil or actually giving him a pencil themselves! It boggles my mind that these are people who are supposed to be here in school to help kids and all they want to do is catch them doing something wrong and then to make sure they get the biggest punishment possible

Reed (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

This year was a "whirlwind" and the incredible differences between teaching and administrating were eye-opening. The year seemed to be such a "whirlwind" primarily because I felt I was so "reactionary". Since everything was new – facilities, student code of conduct, investigating, mediating – I felt I was almost always "reactive" and rarely "proactive". I was almost always "reacting" instead of "preventing". This lack of predictability and the reactive nature of the job caused it to be highly stressful

Highness (personal communication, June 2010):

It was as if they [some of the teachers] were testing me to see what I would do in each situation. It was very frustrating because here I was trying to help change the culture of the school and it felt as all they wanted to do was send kids down for punishment. My dilemma was that the kids probably deserved some discipline, but I didn't have the time, literally, to educate them to help change the culture. I would have hoped that perhaps their teachers would have done that.

Reed (personal communication, June 24, 2011):

This year was a "whirlwind" and the incredible differences between teaching and administrating were eye-opening. The year seemed to be such a "whirlwind" primarily because I felt I was so "reactionary". Since everything was new – facilities, student code of conduct, investigating, mediating – I felt I was almost always "reactive" and rarely "proactive". I was almost always "reacting" instead of "preventing". This lack of predictability and the reactive nature of the job caused it to be highly stressful.

Ignotus (personal communication, November 2010):

> There are so many things I am just unsure of how and what to do. I mean, I've not had any formal training in crisis management, discipline, or parent meetings – I'm a stinking teacher – that's all. I just happened to want to be an administrator and, now that I am, no one is there to tell me what to do or how to do it. I'm just supposed to figure it out. I won't call the folks at the board office – I don't want them to think I can't handle the job. I wish my principal would help, but he's so focused on instructional stuff that he leaves everything else to me; he's made it clear that I have to figure it out – he relies on me to run the building day to day.

Summary

The work and comments of the participants painted a picture that is unique to them personally, but there were some key similarities, most importantly in their frustrations, in relation to the way they spent their professional time, and in their overall hope for someone to mentor them in very specific ways. Reed, (personal communication, June 2011) who reflected at the end the study, best summarized the frustrations felt, when he wrote about his possible focus areas for improvement:

- Can assistant principal duties be performed and/or divided more efficiently? Is it inefficient and/or ineffective for so much of the day to be devoted to such a small percentage of behavior related issues?

- Can we minimize/eliminate 'double work' and ineffectiveness of many of the office routines?

- Can administrators and teachers collaborate on strategies to build

   relationships with students which will improve learning and minimize the

   teacher/student conflicts which dominate the behavior related incidents?

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine the mentoring needs of new secondary assistant principals in the target districts and the areas they viewed as the most critical areas they would suggest for a mentoring program by comparing the attitudes and perceptions of these new administrators. This was accomplished by examining the shared experiences of these participants.

It was the intent of this study to investigate the phenomenon of new assistant principals and to examine effective solutions that may increase stability and confidence in these new administrators. The goal was analyze the experiences of new secondary school administrators.   From a beginning point, one must look at the standards created by the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC).   These standards "provide a clear organized set of curriculum content and performance standards that [can] be used to drive the preparation, professional development and licensure of principals" (Jackson & Kelley, 2002, p. 1). Creasap (2003) noted a Midwestern state that created a mentoring and licensure program based on the ISLLC standards and had the following five goals:

> to nurture reflective leadership and learning practices, to support the continuous
>
> development of leadership skills for beginning administrators by pairing them
>
> with veteran principals, to introduce principals to the state's new Administrator
>
> Competencies (derived from the ISLLC standards), to discover more meaningful
>
> ways of assessing leadership performance and development, and to create a more
>
> collaborative leadership development network among the department of

education, universities, professional development centers, professional associations, local school districts, and various communities of practice (pp. 16-17).

Whereas one new assistant principal might find discipline matters with students something that takes him away from what he thought he would enjoy focusing on – student achievement, professional development for the staff, keeping up on current educational research, etc… - another new assistant principal might take the position that the discipline matters are his strength and the other portions of the position would take him away from what he would otherwise enjoy in this new role.

The central research question was: *What does it mean to be an assistant principal?*

The issue sub questions included:

1. *What are the specific roles the new assistant principal plays in the school?*

2. *What is difficult or easy about being an assistant principal?*

There were likewise three procedural sub-questions:

1. *What are the structural meanings of administration or administrative work?*

2. *What are the underlying responsibilities of a secondary school assistant principal?*

3. *What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about administrators?*

These questions allowed for an analysis to determine the strength of mentoring that was taking place, as well as the potential need for further mentoring or a more structured approach to mentoring.

This study highlighted the importance of the experiences of the five participants and the varied struggles, emotions, frustrations, and high points of their individual lives during the 2010-2011 school year. From the highlights of three of the participants (Reed, Highness, and Ignotus) realizing their upward movement from teaching in the classroom to working as an assistant principal, to all five participants moving to new schools and experiencing new school cultures, this study has allowed the participants to give a voice to their experiences.

Whether it was excitement at starting the year as a new assistant principal or the frustrations each faced with the sense they were unsure about their role or how to carry it out, the phenomenological methodology utilized in this study allowed for participants to guide the study itself through their voices. Whether in the objective analysis of disciplinary reporting and participants' calendar appointments, or the more personally subjective journals and interviews, the researcher provided a platform for the participants themselves to speak and be heard on the variety of issues they faced – many of which they did not know about prior to their new position. In all of these items, the constant question of mentoring, or lack thereof, was clearly evident. Though some of the participants (Reed and Anderson) had unofficial mentors they could rely on with some level of ease, the others had no formal mentoring during the length of the study.

All participants noted the lack of time and the need to continue to learn their job, which prevented them from seeking out a mentor by themselves. In this, all expressed a desire that a mentor should have been provided to them with distinct meeting and agenda requirements, similar to what they had all experienced when undergoing the tenure track process at the beginning of their teaching careers. With the thought that they now would

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have full knowledge of so many policies, procedures, and complex topics, all of the participants experienced frustration that the new title they held somehow raised their knowledge base in all these areas. Most felt unprepared in certain areas of the new position as an assistant principal, notably in discipline, athletic management, time management, and staff relations.

Discussion

The five participants in this study each held differing views on their abilities as they entered the new realm of administration. Some (Ollivander, Ignotus, and Anderson) had previous experience as assistant principals or as deans, while the remainder (Highness and Reed) had very little experience outside the classroom in many of the areas an assistant principal is responsible for on a daily basis.

As the study and school year progressed, each participant experienced many of the following issues in specific areas.

Frustration

- The amount of discipline actions they were dealing with on a regular basis.
- The prospect of not feeling supported, either by former colleagues, by their principal, and by parents in the community.
- Weight gain, medical issues, and family struggles.
- Exhaustion at adjusting to the new schedule and increased time commitment.
- A need for someone to talk issues through and to be able to vent to during the tough times.

Challenges

The participants were able to easily identify and express very freely the challenges and frustrations they faced during this study, specifically when it came to preparation and lack of mentoring.   All of the participants agreed that graduate courses and other formal training and preparation they engaged in prior to assuming a position as an assistant principal had not fully prepared them for the responsibilities and myriad roles they currently performed.

The limited time available to the participants to meet with someone they would regard as a mentor was a challenge throughout the study and the school year for each participant.   Even Reed, who corresponded with a former principal as an informal mentor, found the time valuable, but exceptionally limited. For the most part, participants noted that any time spent with a mentor would have been either time taken away from their busy schedules or could potentially be used against them if the mentor was a reporting senior administrator or another official in their school or school district.

Recommendations for Future Studies

The amount of literature and research devoted to the concept of new secondary school assistant principals and their mentoring is minimal. The researcher hopes this study will inspire further study of the transitional process from teacher in the classroom to secondary school assistant principal.   To the assistant principal falls so many of the difficult daily tasks of the secondary school: discipline, athletic management, student activities, parent communications, staff relations, and building management. In the vast majority of these areas, new assistant principals are untrained and find themselves

needing to learn on the job on their own. Even with the added bonus of administrator

certification and graduate courses and degree programs focused on educational

leadership, the focus is most often on leadership in a philosophical sense of the term.

Though that is a key concept that administrators should have and continue to experience,

the practical and daily grind is what occupies the vast majority of time and energy for the

assistant principal, such as dealing with student discipline and the emergencies that come

about on any given school day. It is the surprise parent meeting regarding special

education services or the classroom where the heat is not working properly that the

assistant principal deals with each day – not the value of leadership and how to handle a

new curriculum mandate from state government.

Although no specific program exists for an assistant principal at the graduate

school level, it is, rather, through the mentoring relationship that a clearer picture of the

responsibilities of the position that can be developed for a new assistant principal. Being

able to talk to, vent to, discuss with, and have someone to listen to the stories of the job is

of exceptional importance, as this study has shown. The mentor needs to be someone

who has gone through, is battle tested, and understands the challenges faced by the new

assistant principal. They should be someone that is not in an administrative evaluative

role of the new assistant principal and someone with whom the new administrator can

develop a sense of trust in order to assuage any fear of reporting to their seniors their self-

perceived inability to do their jobs.

Additionally, these mentors should be guided by standards, such as those devised

by ISLLC as an evaluation process for new assistant principals; this should be done in a

critical, though non-punitive way. The process should ultimately mirror that which new

teachers undergo in their initial assignments prior to gaining tenure status. In so doing, new assistant principals are protected, guided, and molded through the work of a mentor who has gone through many of the concepts, struggles, and frustrations that the new administrator is experiencing. I would suggest this mentoring period encompass the first three to four years of employment as an administrator, similar to the length of time most states require for teachers to attain tenure status.

Furthermore, I suggest a long-term study of entry-level assistant principals that would encompass the entire process of mentorship that a local school district or state system might adopt. In so doing, the research would grow and add to the body of knowledge and, most importantly, would, in the opinion of the researcher, allow for future assistant principals to have the support they most certainly need and deserve in this exceptionally difficult transition from the classroom.

An additional topic for further study would be a phenomenological study of new elementary principals with the same or similar framework to this study. The argument in advance would be that these areas of focus for secondary school assistant principals are certainly similar, and in many instances most likely the exact same, as would be faced by a new elementary school building principal. In this case, most elementary school principals come directly out of the classroom and do not face the proving ground of the assistant principal's realm as their counterparts do at the secondary level. A similar study to this one of new elementary school principals would be illuminating as to the similarities and differences experienced by participants in such a study to the experiences of the participants highlighted in this study of new secondary school assistant principals.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include that it was limited to the 2010-2011 school year and to five new secondary school assistant principals. Though the participants represented two local school districts in the State of Michigan, there is a limitation to similar experiences due to state mandates, county policies, and similar socioeconomic characteristics of the local school districts represented by the participants in the study. None of the schools represented by the participants is a Title I school, although one of the middle schools now features a federally-mandated breakfast program, as 20% of its students are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Further limitations include the amount of data recorded by each participant over the course of the study and reported to the researcher. Though the amount of information was vast, one of the participants (Ollivander) did not use his electronic calendar with nearly the regularity of the other participants, although he could readily recall meetings with ease.

Participants were informed of their complete confidentiality and were told only the general topic of the study so as not to lead them in one direction or another during the course of the school year.

Implications

Implications persist that either a voluntary or mandated mentorship program should be instituted either by local school districts or as a portion of administrator licensure at the state system level. The voices of the participants in this study argue for the need to speak to and be guided by a veteran of the office of an assistant principal.

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The lack of formal training for many of the aspects of the typical role of the assistant principal imply the need for further training that allows new administrators the ability to learn their job prior to making the formal transition from classroom to administration. If nothing else, a beginning administrators' "boot camp" would be a helpful concept to touch on the various areas and concepts they will face in their new role, including: student discipline, custodial/building management, athletic policies, transportation policies and rules, staff relationships, parental communication, and various local district and state policies and legal practices. If tackling only these concepts, a new assistant principal would be far advanced than the average new administrator who moves from the classroom directly to the office.

If given the carte blanche to make a recommendation as to easing the transition from the role of a teacher to that of an administrator, and specifically that of a secondary school assistant principal, my goals would encompass the following objectives:

- Monthly meetings, preferably with veteran administrators who are outside of the new administrators' reporting chain, perhaps even from a neighboring district.
  - The concept here is that notably assistant principals may feel limited in their ability to share openly some of their frustrations or to vent in their new roles if they aspire to a principalship someday knowing the person to whom they are venting may be their superior that may be interviewing them.
- These monthly meetings should be face to face; not on email or video chat and should, preferably, be in a location away from the schools to avoid the chance of being distracted from the business that needs to be done at school.

- These mentoring sessions should have a set agenda by the veteran administrator, but should include a "venting session" for the novice administrator and should also include a portion where the veteran shares some stories of their struggles so the novice understands he is not alone in his struggles. This goes back to the phenomenological concept of this study and highlights what the participants in this study noted they desired in many ways.

- They mentoring sessions should, above all else, be neutral and non-judgmental and not tied to an evaluative process, but should be geared to guiding a new administrator in their initial time in the transitional phase of their career.

Conclusion

I directed this study for the express purpose of understanding the phenomena that colleagues experienced in the transition from the classroom and teaching to the rigors and stressors of the role of secondary school assistant principal. As I made the transition myself over the course of the past year and a half, I was encouraged by the voice of the participants in this study, that I was not alone in the need for an administrator who had gone before me and experienced the frustrations, the pains, the health concerns, the lack of time with my family, and the myriad other lows during the length of the study.

This study has confirmed that the phenomenological method was the best method to use to bring forth the voice of the participants and the overarching need for formal mentorship to be developed by local school districts or by state public school systems. The ability for the participants to be free to discuss in their journals any topic allowed for the researcher to identify the similarities between all participants. In so doing,

participants did not know each other or generalized ideas of whom else of their

colleagues may or may not have been included in the study; their guaranteed anonymity

and confidentiality and allowed for a complete freedom for them to express their

opinions, frustrations, and praises throughout the course of the study.

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APPENDIX A

Program Evaluation (Maine Principals' Association)

Program Evaluation:

Reflective practices that assure frequent evaluation of program and relationship effectiveness are necessary for the long-term viability of a mentoring program. Such assessments are always about the program and never about the individual. An effective evaluation must address certain questions and may solicit the data in a variety of ways, including personal interviews with any number of stakeholders, questionnaires, reflective writings and other feedback protocols. John Daresh (pp. 98-103), in Leaders Helping Leaders, identifies essential questions that should be addressed in evaluating a mentoring program. These questions must be addressed in the MPA's evaluation protocols.

a. Was the program effective? This question asks whether the program appeared to meet the stated goals and objectives.

b. How expensive was the program? What costs were incurred as a result of implementing mentoring program?

c. Did the program meet the stated needs of all participants? It is important to try to determine how those who were mentored and those who served as mentors perceived their experiences.

d. Did the mentoring program meet the needs of the school system? A good mentoring program has the capability to add something to the school district in which the administrator serves.

e. Did the program really help the protégé? Were the perceived benefits actualized?

f. Have we addressed program weaknesses as well as program strengths?

g. Were the participants in the program provided with an opportunity to work together as a way to grow professionally? Again, we desire to reduce the sense of isolation that is traditionally experienced by administrators through a mentoring program.

h. Did we allow ample opportunity for program participants to provide input into the overall assessment of the program? Have we listened to those on the firing lines?

i. How well prepared were the mentors?

APPENDIX B

ISLLC Standards

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.

Standard 2: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning 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, operations, 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 families 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.

APPENDIX C

ISLLC Portfolio Licensure Assessment

Prepared by Educational Testing Service – August 1999

COMPONENT C1 – SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND

DEVELOPMENT

1. SETTING GOALS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the collaborative process that led to the establishment of two goals for a specific

Staff member in your school or district.

2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Explain how the overall approach to professional development for this staff member

focused on student learning. Describe one specific professional development activity that

this staff member engaged in. Why was this activity chosen? Explain how this particular

professional development activity focused on student learning.

3. MONITORING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

To what extent did this professional development plan impact the staff member's

performance and student learning?

4. DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

SKILLS

Focus on the entire teaching staff or a significant subgroup, such as teachers at a grade level, a subject matter department, or an interdisciplinary team. For the group you have selected, describe one specific instance that shows how you developed effective communication and collaboration regarding teaching and learning issues.

5. REFLECTION

What have you learned from your experiences working with the individual staff member and with the larger group of staff that will help you in the future promote staff professional growth and to create a positive learning environment so that student learning is enhanced?

APPENDIX D

Administrative Leadership Academy

Protégé/Mentor Interview Guide

Introductory Statements:

This guide is adapted from Creasap (2003), pp. 214-220.

Background

1. How long have you been an administrator? Include prior administrative

   experiences.

2. How long did you teach before becoming an administrator?

   a. Grade level?

   b. Content area?

   c. In addition to or instead of teaching, tell me about other professional

      positions you have held.

3. Describe your administrator preparation program.

   a. Probe: What do you believe to be its strengths and weaknesses?

4. How would you define professional development?

   a. Describe your own professional development experiences.

   b. Tell me about one that was particularly helpful.

    c. To what degree have these past experiences: coincided with the real

       challenges confronting your school, emphasized teaching and learning,

       been continuous?

5. What or who influenced your decision to become an administrator?

    a. Probe: Particular person, experience, former job responsibilities?

6. List and then describe the important domains of your job. Which do you feel

   consumes the majority of your time? Why?

7. ISLLC Standards for School Leadership are relatively new to the field. Are you

   familiar with the ISLLC standards? (Please elaborate)

Practice : *These next questions involve your own practice as a school leader.*

1. Tell me about the mission of your school.

    a. When developed?

    b. By whom?

    c. Through what process?

    d. What vision of education (or values) does the mission of your school reflect?

    e. How is it communicated to school community and beyond?

2. What is your understanding of reflective practice?

   a. Probes: Thinking, questioning, seeking information, deliberating, pondering,

     assessing, recreating, rehearsing, evaluating, touch basing, consulting.

   b. Tell me a time when you reflected about a school problem or a need.

   c. If I had been with you, what would I have observed?

   d. Did you reflect with another person, other people?

   e. What was the outcome?

3. To what degree you value such reflection?

4. Name some tools you might apply as you reflect.

5. Can you tell me about a time reflection helped you as a leader?

6. What do you believe about staff development?

   a. What is its purpose?

   b. What is its relationship to student learning?

7. What particular ethical principles/values do you employ when engaged in decision

  making?

8. What mechanisms are in place to evaluate school programs, policies and procedures?

9. (i.e.) advisory groups, leadership teams)

10. What tangible results can you name?

11. Tell me about some of the specific ways you use this information.

12. In what ways do you engage the community in decision making?

13. In what ways do you perceive of yourself as a role model and for whom?

14. Talk for a bit about what you perceive to be your role as instructional leader of the

    school.

    a. Define instructional leader.

    b. What would be your level of involvement?

    c. How do you define the principles of effective instruction?

    d. What is the impact of diversity on educational programs?

    e. What are your thoughts on evaluation and assessment?

    f. How might you go about ensuring the success of all student learners?

    g. What about the other learners within your school community?

    h. Given the capacity, what role do you see for technology in promoting student

       learning?

16. School administrators are both leaders and managers of their school organizations.

As such, principals are charged with managing the organization, its operations and resources so as to ensure a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment. What experience or knowledge base do you think you have that will help you in your role as manager?

      a. What other knowledge would increase your effectiveness as manager?

      b. What factors currently in place help ensure a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?

      c. What, if any, barriers exist to your work as an effective manager?

      d. Talk about what you will do to improve the management of your school operations.

Mentorship : *These next questions refer to your mentoring experiences.*

6. What is your understanding of a mentor's role?

      a. What are the qualifications of a good mentor?

      b. What makes a good mentor?

      c. What are the responsibilities of a mentor?

7. Research suggests direct mentor/protégé matching enhances such relationships. What factors might be important to consider in making such matching decisions?

8. Recall a conversation you had with your mentor/protégé that was particularly helpful or noteworthy.

9. What sorts of activities do you and your mentor/protégé engage in together?

    a. How often have you met?

    b. Was the usual duration of these meetings?

    c. Talk to me about your sense of the adequacy of this sort of schedule.

10. Describe a specific strategy you have gained or improved upon as a result of your work with your mentor, within your mentor/protégé group, as a mentor?

11. Take me through a day in the life of an entry year/mentor principal at.....

    a. Highs

    b. Lows

    c. Supports

12. Describe the most useful part of your mentoring experiences thus far.

13. Least useful part. What would you change?

Discipline Charts from Participants

Reed - Discipline Chart

- Academic Dishonesty - 18%
- Insubordination - 18%
- Disruptive Behavior or Conduct - 16%
- Leaving Class without Teachers' Permission - 13%
- Bullying or Intimidation - 13%
- Insolence - 7%
- Use of Profanity - 4%
- General Misconduct - 4%
- Inapporpriate use of District Technology - 3%
- Minor in Possession of Alcohol or Drugs - 3%
- Incomplete homework assignments - 3%'
- Other (fighting, dress code violations, vandalism) - 2%

Highness - Discipline Chart

- Academic Dishonesty - 7%
- Insubordination - 10%
- Disruptive Behavior or Conduct - 14%
- Leaving Class without Teacher's Permission - 9%
- Bullying or Intimidation - 7%
- Insolence - 8%
- Use of Profanity - 23%
- General Misconduct - 2%
- Inappropriate use of District Technology - 1%
- Minor in Possession of Alcohol or Drugs - 1%
- Incomplete homework assignments - 17%
- Other (fighting, dress code violations, vandalism) - 1%

Anderson - Discipline Chart

- Academic Dishonesty - 2%
- Insubordination - 15%
- Disruptive Behavior or Conduct - 12%
- Leaving class without Teacher's Permission - 11%
- Bullying or Intimidation - 7%
- Insolence - 8%
- Use of Profanity - 25%
- General Misconduct - 2%
- Inappropriate Use of District Technology - 1%
- Minior in Possession of Alcohol or Drugs - 1%
- Incomplete homework assignments - 15%
- Other (fighting, dress code violations, vandalism) - 1%

Ollivander - Discipline Chart - September 2010

- Disruptive Behavior - 37.5%
- Insubordination - 4.17%
- Physical Aggressiveness - 8.33%
- Tardiness - 1.2%
- Academic Dishonesty - 8.33%
- Poseession of tobacco products - 4.16%
- Electronic Communications - misuse - 12.5%
- Lack of supplies/Unprepared for Class - 4.17%
- Persistent misbehavior - 4.17%
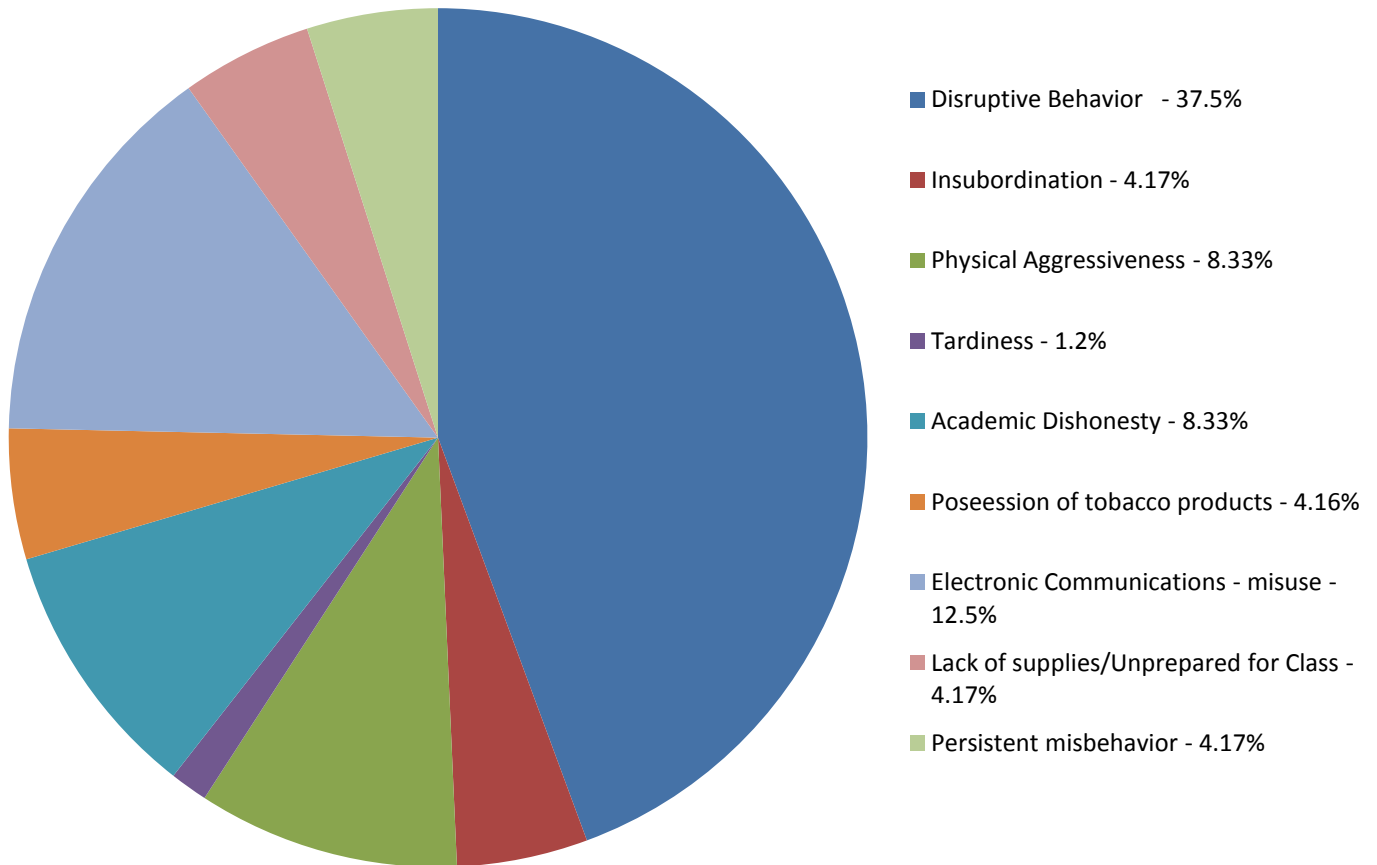
Ollivander - Discipline Chart - January 2011

- ■ Disruptive Behavior - 50%
- ■ Insubordination - 7.95%
- ■ Physical Aggressiveness - 5.68%
- ■ Tardiness =- 10.23%
- ■ Academic Dishonesty - 5.68%
- ■ Insolence - 4.55%
- ■ Electronic Communications - misuse - 1.14%
- ■ Lack of supplies/Unprepared for Class - 10.23%
- ■ Leaving without Permission - 3.41%
- ■ Bullying/Intimidation - 1.14%
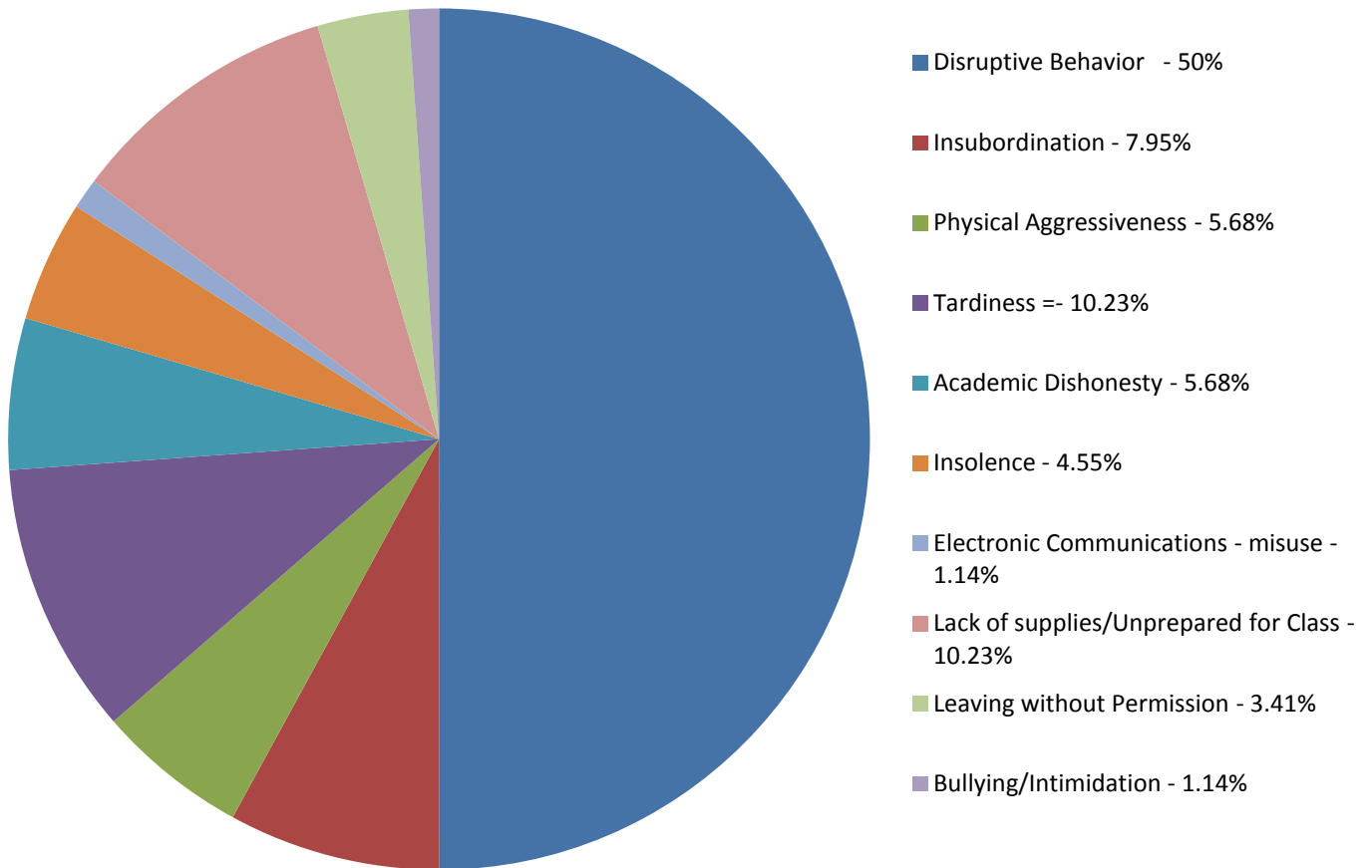
Ollivander - Discipline Chart - June 2011

- Disruptive Behavior - 54.35%
- Insubordination - 8.7%
- Physical Aggressiveness - 5.8%
- Tardiness - 4.35%
- Academic Dishonesty - 4.35%
- Insolence - 4.55%
- Electronic Communications - misuse - 2.9%
- Lack of supplies/Unprepared for Class - 2.17%
- Inapporpriate use of District Technology - 2.17%
- Use of Profanity - 2.17%
- Incomplete homework assignments - 1.45%
- Leaving without Permission - 1.45%
- Assault - 1.45%
- Persistent misbehavior - 1.45%
- Bullying/Intimidation - 1.45%
- Physical Aggressiveness - 0.72%
- Possession of a weapon - 0.72%

Ignotus - Discipline Chart

- Chronic Lack of Supplies - 87 students
- Disruptive Behavior - 60 students
- Physical Aggressiveness - 11 students
- Tardiness - 87 students
- Innappropriate Dress/dress code violations - 76 students
- Use of profanity - 38 students
- Leaving class without teacher's permission - 21 students

APPENDIX F

Calendar Charts from Participants

Reed - Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Administrative Meeting (8-9 a.m.)		Second Wednesday of every month – Math Department Meeting – 2:30-3:30	Third Thursday of every month – Social Studies Department Meeting – 2:30-3:30	Monthly new Administrators' Meeting – 8:00-9:30
Second and Fourth Mondays – PLC meetings – 1:30-2:30				
Lunchroom – 10:30-12:15	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:15	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:15	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:15	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:15
		Athletics – 4:00-9:00	Athletics – 4:00-9:00	Athletics – 4:00-9:00
		Monthly District Administrators' Meeting – 3:00-5:30		

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	First Tuesday of every month – Social Studies Department Meeting – 2:45-3:45	Administrative Meeting (8-9 a.m.)	First Thursday of every month – Art Department Meeting – 2:45-3:45	
Second and Fourth Mondays – PLC meetings – 1:30-2:30				
Lunchroom – 10:30-12:40	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:40	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:40	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:40	Lunchroom – 10:30-12:40
	Student Council – 2:30-3:30		Athletics – 4:00-8:30	Athletics – 4:00-8:30