Changing Role of the Middle Level and High School Leader:

Learning from the Past—Preparing for the Future

National Association of Secondary School Principals

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National Association of Secondary School Principals

Reston, Virginia

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
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PREFACE

The secondary school principal's role has drastically changed over the years, and it has acquired a new and diversified set of challenges. But what conditions, circumstances, and demographic shifts precipitated the change in the role of secondary school leadership? And with so expansive a list of duties, how can school leaders be successful in a period of change and greater accountability?

NASSP, in its efforts to answer these questions with greater specificity, charged the NASSP Task Force on Principal Preparation with exploring how the principalship has changed and what further changes we can anticipate, and recommending strategies that will help principals succeed in a continually changing environment. The task force, comprising principals, assistant principals, and professors of educational administration, spent two years studying the issue, surveying principals, and discussing conclusions. This report is the result of their efforts.

In addition to assessing the change in school leadership, this report discusses specific models that have been implemented across the country that are at the forefront of the school change process. It reveals insight on trends in certification and licensure; the impact of national standards, preselection, and induction; the need for redesigning the role of the assistant principal; the importance of succession planning; the imperative of ongoing and sustained professional development; and a greater awareness of the educational policy discourse impacting upon the secondary school leader's role.

The publication will leave the reader with a true sense of the extent to which the school leader's role has, over time, become so much more demanding. At the same time, the reader will gain a renewed respect for the significant role played by those who toil in the vineyard of secondary school leadership.

Gerald N. Tirozzi
Executive Director
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Lenoar Foster, Section Editor
Section Contributors include: Lenoar Foster, Heath Morrison, and Joseph Murphy.
Special thanks to Joseph Murphy from Vanderbilt University for his contribution in this section on the changing nature of the high school principalship.

1-1 CHANGING SECONDARY SCHOOL LEADERS' ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

School districts throughout the country are facing daunting and unprecedented challenges in recruiting and retaining able and competent school administrators. A number of factors are contributing to this state of affairs, and they affect schools situated in urban, suburban and rural areas (Burdette & Schertzer, 2005). Concern about a looming administrator shortage has been well documented in recent professional literature (Barker, 1997; Donaldson, 2001; Jordan, 1994). The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that 40% of the 93,200 U.S. principals are nearing retirement and that the nation's need for additional school leaders will "increase ten to fifteen percent (10–15%) through 2005 to accommodate the growing student population" (Tracy and Weaver, 2000, p. 2). The same report indicates that over half of the nation's school districts are facing immediate administrator shortages.

Factors causing these shortages include: increasing retirement rates among veteran school leaders, small and dwindling applicant pools from which to select individuals to fill these vacancies, increasing numbers of administrators who are exiting the principalship because of job-related stresses and other labor-intensive job requirements, inadequate school funding, new and demanding curricular standards, and increasingly new role expectations for today's school leaders that demand new ways of leading and managing today's diverse schools and the constituencies they serve. All of these factors are impacting the ability of school districts to recruit and retain able, talented, and creative school leaders at a time when schools are facing new and challenging mandates for accountability, the role of the school leader is becoming ever more critical to successful and meaningful school reform, and schools are becoming more diverse (Foster, 2004; Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Ross, & Chung, 2003; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2001).

This book analyzes the context in which present and future school leaders work and will work, and the skills and dispositions they must possess to fulfill their duties and obligations to support teachers in their instructional activities, assist students in successful learning tasks, and support diverse partnerships in their local communities. It also presents some emerging changes in schools that will affect leadership and models of effective leadership practice that have emerged to deal with the increasing demands placed on school leaders. It looks at implications for preparation of new school

leaders, professional development of current administrators, succession planning, and implications for policy at the federal and state level.

1-1.1 WHAT DOES CHANGE IMPLY FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL LEADERS?

As schools have been asked to take on more and more responsibility, the expectations on the school leaders to meet these additional duties have increased. "Expectations for the principalship have steadily expanded since the reforms of the early 1980s, always adding to, and never subtracting from, the job description" (Copland, 2001, p. 4). Principals and assistant principals in today's schools are required to lead and manage differently more so than ever before. They must manage and lead differently while addressing issues and problems that are relatively new, complex in nature and scope, paradoxical and dilemma-filled, and unknown to schools. Of this context, Fullan (2001) has observed, "Leadership, then, is not mobilizing others to solve problems we already know how to solve, but to help them confront problems that have never yet been successfully addressed" (p. 3).

Perhaps no greater reality reflects the importance of the need for the quality of current school leaders and those who aspire to this role in the future than the mandates embedded in the No Child Left Behind Act. The era of reform ushered in by this legislation requires that administrators make connections between academic data and excellence and that they employ strategic thinking and innovations in developing partnerships with a variety of constituent groups. School leaders can no longer just speak to narrowing the achievement gap; they must be able to make decisions to improve teaching and learning for all students or face corrective action if their schools fail to meet mandated accountability measures. Keedy and Grandy (1999) stated, "If there were ever a time for innovative, aggressive leadership in our schools, the time is now" (p. 2).

Research and commentaries on the principalship (Bolman & Deal, 1995; Cordeiro, 1996; Foster, 1997, 2002, 2004; Fullan, 2001, 2003, 2005; Greenleaf, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Lindsey, Roberts, & CampbellJones, 2005; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1989, 2001) support the need for reinventing the principalship and call for the creation of school administrators whose roles are defined in terms of:

- **Visionary leadership** that epitomizes energy, commitment, an entrepreneurial spirit, values, and convictions that all children can and will learn at high levels of achievement, as well as inspires others with this same vision inside and outside of the school building
- **Community-based leadership** that is based in a big-picture awareness of the societal role of the school; shared leadership among educators and community interests; close relations with parents, community-based business and philanthropic interests, and community residents; and advocacy for building school capacity and greater resource development
- **Instructional leadership** that focuses on strengthening teaching and learning, bridging the achievement gap among students, fostering professional development among teachers, and employing data-driven decision making and accountability
- **Culturally proficient leadership** that respects and honors the diversity among students and views a culturally inclusive educational environment as a benefit for teaching and learning that results in academic achievement for all students.

Absent reconfiguring and reculturing the role of the school leader, it is difficult, if not impossible, to see how the school enterprise can hit the target of quality for all

youngsters. Acknowledging that there is a variety of ingredients in the stew known as "leadership for the 21st century secondary school," the three most distinct elements must be educational expertise, moral authority, and transformational (change-oriented) administration.

If there is an all-encompassing challenge for school leaders, it is to lead the transition from the bureaucratic model of schooling, with its emphasis on minimal levels of education for many, to a postindustrial, adaptive model, with the goal of educating all youngsters well. They must accept the mantle of leadership—changing from implementers to initiators, from a focus on process to a concern for outcomes, from risk avoiders and conflict managers to risk takers—but they must also adopt leadership strategies and styles that are in harmony with the central tenets of the community-anchored school organizations noted above. They must learn to lead not from the apex of the organizational pyramid but from the nexus of the web of interpersonal relationships—with people rather than through them. Their base of influence must be professional expertise and moral imperative rather than line authority. They must learn to lead by empowering rather than by controlling others. Such concepts as purposing and establishing meaning—rather than directing, controlling, and supervising—are at the core of this type of leadership. There is as much heart as head in this style of leading. It is grounded more upon teaching than upon informing, more upon learning than upon knowing, and more upon modeling and clarifying values and beliefs than upon telling people what to do.

In recasting their roles, school leaders must replace a traditional focus on stability with a focus on change. They will need to function less as classical managers and more as change agents. They will need to rely on the organizational tenets of bureaucracies and embrace those concepts associated with community (cooperation, empowerment, participation, etc.). The specific challenge, then, is to use these new principles of organization in the creation of adaptive and organic forms for schooling. These new structures need to promote the development of a professional workplace. Even more important, construction of new forms must advance from blueprints based on our best knowledge of student learning.

Throughout most of the 20th century, the principalship gravitated toward conceptions of leadership based on images of business management and social science research. There is an expanding acknowledgment of the pathology of such an approach to the principalship. At its root, the school leader in the 21st century rests on two fundamental beliefs: that the "ground" for the job must be educational expertise and that values are central to the role. As moral educators, principals and assistant principals will need to become much more heavily invested in "purpose defining" than in managing existing arrangements. This means that school leaders must be motivated by a set of deep personal values and beliefs, by a core of academic and social values that can provide a rudder. They must view their task more as a mission than a job. They must develop strong commitments to important things and model them persuasively. School leaders in a postindustrial society will need to be much more committed to education and invested in children than they have been previously. They will need to be much more knowledgeable about the core technology of education in particular: instructional and curricular leadership must be at the forefront of leadership skills.

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SECTION 2: CHANGING EXPECTATIONS OF THE POSITION

Pamela Salazar, Section Editor
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2-1 THE ROLE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEADER — THE CURRENT REALITY

Since the beginning of the principalship in U.S. education, educators have struggled with the definition of the role of the school leader. Many players inside and outside of the school have different perceptions of and influences on the role. Researchers have repeatedly scrutinized the job and its place in the larger social and educational context, urging administrators in one decade to be "bureaucratic executives" followed 10 years later by "humanistic facilitators" and then "instructional leaders" (Beck & Murphy, 1994). The result: A new description of what is expected, what is needed, and what should be done must be examined. What does the current role of the principalship look like?

The Institute for Educational Leadership (2000) suggests:

> School leaders today must serve as leaders for student learning. They must know academic content and pedagogical techniques. They must work with teachers to strengthen skills. They must collect, analyze and use data in ways that fuel excellence. They must rally students, teachers, parents, local health and family service agencies, youth development groups, local businesses and other community residents around the common goal of raising student performance. And they must have the leadership skills and knowledge to exercise the autonomy and authority to pursue these strategies. (p. 2)

Student learning is the main focus of schools. The focus on outcomes and the focus on student achievement at high levels have placed the school leader at the central focus of school reform efforts. The school leader is accountable for all the administrative and leadership duties as well as the instructional programs and is perceived by school and community stakeholders to be responsible for results for all students. As administrators work to address these heightened expectations, several key issues consistently challenge them. Discussing these key issues provides a framework to examine the changing role of today's school leader.

2-1.1 CHANGING SCHOOLS, CHANGING ROLES

Today's schools are different than they were even a decade ago. Schools are larger and class sizes are increasing, all at a time when resources are declining. More students, fewer teachers, and increased expectations challenge today's principals

and assistant principals. Doing more with fewer resources has become the modus operandi for school leaders.

Complicating the decreasing financial support are increasing infrastructure costs. Many school facilities are aging and in need of major repairs. At a time when more money is needed for instruction, money for capital outlays is also needed for major maintenance or refurbishment of more than a third of schools. Inadequate educational facilities are a barrier to optimal teaching and learning. Added to this problem is the growing resistance by taxpayers to be supportive of increasing their contributions to address the needs of the schools. Budget referenda are becoming more difficult to pass. Administrators struggle with maximizing existing facilities for an effective learning environment and directing limited resources to the classroom.

Schools are also less safe. Growing violence, chaos in classrooms, and access to drugs are regular occurrences in the school day for an increasing number of students (Babbit, 2001; Cruz, 2003; Hill, 2004). This violence disrupts learning and endangers the health, welfare, and safety of students and teachers. For example, the National Crime Survey (2004) found that, on any given day, more than 100,000 students carry guns to school. Forty-four percent of all teachers report that student misbehavior in the classroom interferes substantially with their teaching (Hill, 2004). Three out of ten students, and four out of ten high school students, report that obtaining alcohol and marijuana at school is easy (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). As one Virginia principal observed, "We have had a rise in substance and alcohol abuse both by our students and their parents—this is a critical issue that we are trying to address." School leaders seek ways to make schools violence-free, drug-free, and disciplined environments that support student learning.

2-1.2 CHANGING STUDENTS, CHANGING ROLES

Changing demographics present a new challenge to today's administrator. Not only are schools getting larger, but with increased immigration, the number of minority students entering school is on the rise. By 2025, the Hispanic population is projected to be the majority student body. This will dramatically change the make-up of the school-age population. With Hispanics being the largest ethnic majority and with a native language of Spanish, there is increased awareness of the growing numbers of English language learner students in schools (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000). School leaders have the new responsibility of ensuring that the instructional program and practices meet the needs of this diverse group of students.

Yet there is the decline in the number of teachers who understand the various ethnic or racial groups with which they work. The number of teachers who serve these ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse students is disproportionate to the changes in demographics. Nationally, according to the National Education Association (2002), the shortage of minority teachers represents a discrepancy with the student population demographics in that only 5% of teachers are minority compared to a student population that is 40% minority. Put simply by a Montana principal, "Finding qualified teachers who have experience working with minority students is next to impossible, let alone actually finding a minority teacher."

Additionally, there are achievement gaps among racial groups. Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that African American and Latino students perform significantly lower than White students in reading, writing, math, and science (Education Trust, 2003). These patterns are consistent at all three grades at which the NAEP is administered and, according to Meece and Kurtz-Costes

(2001), are present even when controlling for parent income and housing value. As a result, school leaders search for ways to ensure that minority students receive an equitable education and are prepared to compete economically in this changing world.

Compounding this issue is the increasing number of students who are living in poverty. Currently, over 75 million children under the age of 19 live in poverty and have no health insurance (Proctor & Dalaker, 2003). Poverty is a critical factor in the achievement gap among racial and ethnic groups (Barton, 2003). Added to this problem is the growing number of students who are homeless. An Urban Institute study (2000) revealed that about 1.35 million children experience homelessness in a given year. This problem requires administrators to provide additional support to increase the learning capability of these students while they are in school.

Another challenge to administrators is educating the children who face abuse and/or neglect. During the 1990s the number of recorded incidences of child abuse and/or neglect increased by 67% (Sedlak & Broadhurst, 1996). Furthermore, in 2001, 10% of children age 5 years or younger, 8% of children 6 to 11 years, and 9% of youth 12 to 17 years lived with at least one parent who abused or was dependent on alcohol or an illicit drug within that year (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003). Children of these parents have more behavioral problems and are less likely to be successful in class.

Children who experience behavioral disorders very often receive the support of special education programs. Approximately 6.6 million children with disabilities were served during the 2003-04 school year in federally supported programs (NCES, 2006). The majority of these students are classified as having a special learning disability, followed by mental retardation and an emotional disturbance. Students' likelihood of being classified as having these disabilities varies by their race or ethnicity, with Black children disproportionately represented in each of the three categories. According to a Kentucky principal, "The primary challenge today is meeting the needs of students with disabilities and improving their performance." Not only do administrators have the difficult task of designing programs that ensure all students have equal access to a quality education, but there are the additional complex compliance issues that continually plague school leaders with threats of due process and other legal actions related to serving students with disabilities. As a Georgia principal stated, "The critical challenge for me is trying to stay abreast of special education laws and making sure that we are following them. It takes up an inordinate amount of my time."

Another issue that many school leaders must deal with is student mobility. Tirozzi (2001) indicated one challenge faced by educators is the problem of transience, with 43 million Americans moving each year. This continual movement of students from school to school has an impact on student learning and graduation rates. Indeed, the conditions of the children present challenges to administrators and compound the difficulty of ensuring learning for all students.

2-1.3 CHANGING MANDATES, CHANGING ROLES

High-stakes accountability rests with the school leader. The emphasis on student learning (the outcome rather that the process of schooling), coupled with federal legislation, has placed more demands on the role of principals and assistant principals than ever before. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001) both reflects and reinforces a major shift in thinking about the roles and responsibilities of administrators.

The 2001 legislation expanded the federal role in public education by requiring schools

to hold all students to high academic standards. NCLB requires schools to be accountable for all students meeting state standards by 2014 and closing all gaps. To accomplish this, students are to be taught by highly qualified teachers, and schools are to implement programs and strategies with demonstrated effectiveness based on research. In effect, NCLB mandates data-driven decision making regarding school practices.

In today's world of standards-based reform and improvement, expectations for school leaders run well beyond managing and budgets and making sure the buses run on time. According to the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), state and federal accountability systems increasingly are placing the burden of school success—and individual student achievement—squarely on the administrator's shoulders. The school leader's job description has expanded to a point that he or she is expected to perform in the role of "chief learning officer," with ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of the organization (SREB, 2002). Agreeing with the new expectations for school leaders, an Alabama principal noted, "While I find NCLB has brought some needed attention to our most struggling students, it has resulted in a strain in teacher relationships as teachers are asked to do more with less and are in many cases unprepared to meet the new demands."

In an environment dominated by NCLB, improving student achievement is the overriding theme in virtually every district and every school. A study by the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality (2004) on the working conditions of teachers found that high-quality leadership was the single greatest predictor of whether or not high schools made "adequate yearly progress" as defined by NCLB—more than either school size or teacher retention. School leaders are adjusting to these new high-stakes mandates of accountability and adapting their leadership to meet these new demands. A principal from Colorado explains, "I am focused on improving learning for all students by providing professional development for teachers so that they can improve their practices. I have created the structures and the environment to create a learning community for all."

2-1.4 CHANGING TEACHING AND LEARNING, CHANGING ROLES

Today's school leaders focus time, attention, and effort on changing what students are taught, how they are taught, and what they are learning. They are counted on to be the instructional leaders of their schools: to understand effective instructional strategies, to regularly observe and coach classroom teachers, and to analyze student achievement data to make more effective instructional decisions. This has taken a new set of skills and knowledge of school and classroom practices that contribute to student achievement. According to one assistant principal from Washington, "As the assistant principal for curriculum and instruction, I model a lesson for teacher teams monthly. After I model a lesson, I allow the teachers to evaluate me on the basis of curriculum, data-based information, and standards."

This heightened focus on learning and outcomes as compared to teaching and process requires the school leader to create a collective expectation among teachers concerning student performance. Administrators help teachers clarify instructional goals and work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning to meet those goals. Terms such as "professional learning communities" arise often in discussions with principals with regard to building teacher collaboration: for example, from a Coloradan: "The creation of a professional learning community, which provides opportunities for teachers to examine student achievement data and collaborate on problems and solutions, has strengthened our ability to meet the needs of our students."

Shifting the focus for instruction from teaching to learning demands a new approach in the roles of both teachers and administrators. A focus on student learning means changes in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. School leaders ensure that assessment of student learning is aligned with both the school's curriculum and the teachers' instruction (Carr & Harris, 2001). In a high-stakes accountability environment, curriculum and assessment alignment is critical. It is important that school leaders assist teachers in aligning curriculum to state standards and the assessment to the curriculum. According to a North Carolina principal, "We started with aligning our curriculum and assessment to standards and then followed up with schoolwide curriculum mapping to ensure standards were being taught." When fully aligned and well-constructed, assessments can change the nature of teaching and learning.

Principals and assistant principals are expected to lead schools designed for higher student achievement. They work with teachers and others to fashion and implement continuous student improvement. They provide the necessary support for staff to carry out sound school curriculum and instructional practices. This requires that teachers be provided with the training, teaching tools, and support they need to help all students reach high levels of performance. As one Montana principal suggested, "It is critical that professional development be ongoing and related to teacher needs—it must build the capacity of teaching staff."

2-1.5 CHANGING PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS, CHANGING ROLES

Effective school community relations in the age of NCLB require school leaders who step forward and work diligently to ensure that meaningful parental and public engagement occurs. With NCLB now a constant in education and accountability linked specifically to standards that must be met by all students, the chances are that good schools will be thrust before the general public and labeled as failing. As a result, many school leaders will be left standing to defend their schools and explain their tainted reputation.

A key aspect of NCLB provides for a greater role for parents in their children's education programs and requires school staff members to communicate with parents on student achievement and progress. As a result, principals and assistant principals spend more time trying to explain their school's performance to stakeholders and the public because of the high profile given to the data by the local media. Moreover, administrators are specifically required by NCLB to assist parents in analyzing data and use the data to enlist the help of parents and community in order to improve student achievement. This provides principals with an opportunity to enhance the overall quality of their interaction with parents and the school community.

School leaders have long recognized the need for strong parental involvement and community engagement, and in the era of accountability the challenge is not only to communicate with the school community but to strengthen their ties by building parental support and involvement to help schools meet mandated state and national performance standards. Involvement of parents in their children's education has significant, long-lasting, and positive effects (Mowry, 1972). Today's administrators need to recognize this critical component and build active parental and community support for schools that facilitates student achievement.

2-1.6 CHANGING POLITICAL CLIMATE, CHANGING ROLES

In the wake of NCLB, a vortex of political influences now affects the way principals conduct daily business. Principals find themselves in a relentless public spotlight, as

they are held accountable for student achievement. The growing focus on accountability leaves many school leaders feeling overwhelmed or intruded upon in their work. For many principals and assistant principals, the influence of politics has been perceived as separate from the work of educating children. However, Detrich (2001) suggests that "placing student learning at the heart of the enterprise is something that must be done within the arena of politics, not despite it" (p. 23).

Today's school leaders have to understand and be able to operate within the larger context of the community and beyond, realizing that doing so affects opportunities for all students. Principals and assistant principals must respond to and influence this larger political, social, economic, and cultural context. Of vital importance is the ability to develop a continuing dialogue with economic and political decisionmakers concerning the role of schools and to build collaborative relationships that support improved social and educational opportunities for children. School leaders must now participate actively in the political and policy-making context in the service of education. According to a principal from Illinois, "A key challenge for me is keeping up with the ever-changing policies, laws, and political forces that drive the world of education today."

The challenge is to find the balance between leadership and politics. Principals and assistant principals are recognizing that they can no longer avoid addressing the politics of education head-on or continue to perceive the impact of politics as minimal. Instead they are learning to be responsive to the increasing political inputs for which they will be held accountable. Politically savvy principals are engaging in the political conversations. They are making their voice heard as a local education leader and developing a sense of political acuity to negotiate the growing presence of politics within their local school systems. They are becoming more effective political navigators on local fronts by leveraging relations and gaining important information about expectations, trends, and the political tides. Today's principals look beyond the school, bridge gaps in perspective, and communicate and translate effectively in order to meet the new demands placed on the school, while at the same time they move on to the heart of their work as education leaders: supporting student learning.

2-1.7 CHANGING ROLES, MARKETING THE SCHOOL

Marketing a school is one more duty added to the list of responsibilities for principals and assistant principals. Public schools get money to operate based on student enrollment. Historically, enrollment has remained fairly consistent and finances have changed little from year-to-year for many schools. The increase in charter schools and the advent of voucher programs, however, have changed the dynamics of school enrollment, and school leaders are increasingly finding it prudent to "market" their schools to maintain student numbers. Mark Perna (2004) explains, "Every astute administrator and educator knows that you cannot maintain or expand your school's enrollment without marketing and that you have to continue to actively market your programs if you want to survive the onslaught of education choices available today."

Like a for-profit business, a school must make decisions about which aspects—music, sports, and academic facilities—are best marketed to the public. Rotfeld (1999) explains: "The temptation is strong to misplace marketing by focusing the attention on a school's 'values' other than education, such as availability of after-school activities, the teachers' ability to control unruly children, or teachers' concerns for children's 'self-esteem.'" An administrator's best approach to marketing is to focus on providing a high-quality education. This means "aggressively

marketing [the] school, student programs, faculty and staff members" in a variety of ways (Bertram, 2004). The methods may be glossy brochures, high-quality mailings, billboards, e-mail newsletters, or the school Web site, but the goal is always to place the school at the fore of positive community interactions for the right reasons.

The concept of marketing may be new to school leaders, but distributive leadership and collaborative models can help. Alumni, parents, community leaders—all those with a stake in a school's success—are invaluable resources in eliciting connections and support to keep existing families in the district and to attract new students by leveraging the pride that so many communities feel about their schools. Marketing takes time, planning, and follow-through but is crucial to a school's future and a school leader's success.

2-1.8 CHANGING TECHNOLOGY AND EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

The effects of technology can be found everywhere. Not only must educators struggle to learn about new and more effective tools in their personal and professional lives, but those tools are changing on an almost daily basis. And the students are in many cases more technologically advanced than teachers and administrators. There is reason to be concerned. In his book, *We're Going Mobile, What's Next?,* Bard Williams (2004) argues that "computer technology hit the education field more like a flood than the slow-moving stream that is typical of educational reform" (p. 217).

However, school administrators are nothing if not adaptable. School leaders in today's school environment constantly search for ways to advance the instruction of students, communicate in a more effective manner with their constituents, and prepare their students for life in a digital world. In meeting this mandate, administrators face a number of challenges as well as numerous benefits to the use of technology in the public school setting.

Computers have provided school leaders with unprecedented communication avenues that can keep parents, students, and community well informed about what is going on in the school. Schools are taking advantage of the available technology in numerous ways. Most schools now have an official school Web page that allows parents and community members routine and convenient ways to check on school events and news. Schools that were using complicated phone systems to notify parents of upcoming events are now employing listserves. These e-mail address lists allow administrators to send out school information to hundreds of parents in seconds. This frees up both time and resources (phone lines) at the school for other activities.

Technology and the use of computers are also changing the face of standardized testing. Taking a state or federally mandated test online allows results to be returned in days, not months. This assists administrators and other staff members in creating future schedules for students that will help them achieve success. Also, there are numerous Web sites that contain practice tests for teachers to utilize in class. This allows instantaneous feedback to teachers that they can use to assess student needs. Data collected from these instruments make it easier for teachers to diagnose and remediate students. Technology has also made it easier than ever to take data and break them down into multiple reports. This allows educators to pinpoint specific areas of student weakness and address them directly.

However, technology has also changed community and parental expectations for school leaders to provide immediate responses to events and around-the-clock availability. There are drawbacks and challenges for the school leader as far as technology is concerned, not the least of which is funding. The cost of current technology can be over-

whelming, and is not a one-time purchase. Schools must constantly upgrade their hardware to keep pace with the tech world. Software costs also take a major part of the schools' technology budget. It has been estimated that only 10% of the money spent on instructional materials (textbooks, videos, etc.) is spent on digital material (Stallard & Cocker, 2001, p. 48). Smaller districts and those that are located in more rural areas have the additional disadvantage of small budgets that make it more difficult to connect with resources that assist in acquiring newer technology.

Once hardware and software are acquired, another problem presents itself to schools and school administrators, and that is the integration of this equipment into the classroom. This problem is twofold. First, administrators must work to make teachers comfortable with using the technology. Then, they must provide teachers with the training on how to use technology to assist and improve instruction. Administrators must know what good instruction using technology looks like (Stallard & Cocker, 2001, p. 54).

The aging of school facilities poses another challenge. Schools constructed more than a decade ago were not designed to be wired for technology. Internet use among Americans has risen over 1000% in the past 10 years (Williams, 2004, p. 42). As the use of the Internet soars, the demand placed on the infrastructure of schools increases accordingly. It is difficult at best to ask teachers to implement technology when the equipment being placed in schools is not up to standards.

Overall, it is the responsibility of the school administrator to prepare students for the world into which they will graduate. A large part of that world will be the use of technology. If Richie (2003) is correct, and administrative support is the most crucial variable in the integration of technology, then administrators must take the lead. They must find ways to solve the challenges of technology to gain the full benefit of student achievement using the tools available.

2-1.9 CHANGING ROLES, CHANGING LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

Changing schools and new conceptions of student learning call for a different approach to managing schools and a different approach to leadership. Schools as learning communities replace the more traditional rigid authoritarian structure (Barth, 1986; Clark, 1990; DuFour, 1998). In essence, the centralized control of schools gives way to a system of empowerment of teachers, parents, and students; shared decision making; and the development of professional learning communities.

According to Starratt (1995), "The task of fundamentally reforming the structures of schooling is perhaps the most challenging opportunity that faces school leaders" (p. 3). The specific challenge for today's principals and assistant principals is to become "organizational architects" where they replace a traditional focus on stability with a focus on change (Louis & Miles, 1990). According to Elmore (2000):

> The job of administrative leaders is primarily about enhancing the skills and knowledge of the people in the organization, creating a common culture of expectations around the use of these skills and knowledge, holding the various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to collective result. (p. 7)

Over the past several years, researchers have refocused their attention to discussions of organizational development and organizational management. Lashway (2000) suggested that educational leaders must enhance organizational capacity if they are to improve the school organization. "Leaders are account-

able for the continuous renewal of the organization" (Dupree, 1992, p. 31). The schools of yesterday and today are not the kind of schools needed for tomorrow. New strategies, new processes, and a new mindset are required if schools are to become knowledge-based educational enterprises focused on student learning (Keefe & Howard, 1997). In effect, a new paradigm of instructional leadership is required. To be effective instructional leaders, school administrators must think and act within new models. This is evidenced by a Missouri principal who said, "I am open to practically any scheme that will produce more time for students to learn and more time for teachers to improve their skills, plan, reflect, and assess students' performance as well as their own."

Stronge (1993) characterized this balanced view of educational leadership as one that "draws a rational relationship between managerial efficiency and instructionally effective schools" (p. 5). A school leader who focuses primarily on management issues may have insufficient time to provide instructional leadership, and an administrator who neglects tasks that might be characterized as managerial does not provide a well-organized learning environment for students and staff. The emphasis on efficiency can result in carrying out management and support tasks instead of focusing on the main goal of instructional improvement (Drake & Roe, 1994). This suggests that a characteristic of the effective administrator in today's school is the capacity to make decisions about and focus on doing what makes a difference in student learning, often on a daily basis.

However, for effective decision making, school leaders must continually engage in "reflective, purposeful thought" built on both a personal philosophy and a strong knowledge base (Colon, 1994). The principal uses this engagement to help students and staff develop a schoolwide vision, which "should be observable everywhere in the building and acted upon daily" (p. 87). School leaders help people think through "how to do it" as well as "what to do" (Murphy & Seashore-Louis, 1994, p. xxv). As Duttweiler and Hord (1987) state, "The research shows that in addition to being accomplished administrators who develop and implement sound policies, procedures, and practices, effective administrators are also leaders who shape the school's culture by creating and articulating a vision, winning support for it, and inspiring others to attain it" (p. 65).

Leadership requires vision. Most school improvement efforts begin with an achievable vision. In other words, according to Chance (1992), "A visionary administrator in a school is not afraid of stating, 'This is what I believe; this is what the school can accomplish; and this is where we are going to be in one year, five years, and ten years.' Vision is a powerful force that guides, cajoles, directs, and facilitates accomplishment" (p.52). It serves as a guide for the school and helps to establish the climate for the school. It is a force that provides meaning and purpose to the work of an organization.

Leaders of change are visionary leaders and vision is the basis of their work. They begin with a personal vision to forge a shared vision with all members of the organization. With a shared vision, an organization can move forward and create change. In an interview published in *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform*, Dennis Sparks contends that change in thought begins with deep understanding of important issues and the adoption of beliefs aligned with the leader's goals. Significant changes in schools begin with significant changes in what leaders think, say, and do. As someone once observed, if you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten. If leaders continue to think and speak in the same ways, they'll continue to produce results that are consistent with those they previously produced. Sparks states, "A change in beliefs requires placing ourselves in situations that produce cognitive

dissonance. One of the most powerful means is dialogue through which we make our assumptions known to others and open ourselves to being influenced by the beliefs of others" (NASSP, 2004, p. 44).

Successful principals invite and encourage others to participate in determining and developing a shared vision. Shared vision is the key to creating a learning organization that promotes learning for all (Keefe & Howard, 1997). From the effective schools' research, Hallinger and Heck (1996) found that when a school staff has a shared vision, there is a commitment to change. The visionary leader realizes that the involvement of others is the only way to guarantee the creation of a meaningful organizational vision:

> Leadership is a complex enterprise, and as recent studies assert, vision and collaboration for a shared vision are important characteristics of effective leadership. As the focus of schools changes from teacher centered to student centered, and the role of the principal changes from manager to instructional leader in a learning community, it is the key behaviors of the principal that are important to implementing successful school improvement efforts and promoting school change. (p. 6)

In today's schools, the tempo and the impact of change continually increase. School leaders find that change is the constant reality of leadership. Schools do not exist in a static environment. The mix of students served, the governance structures, and the intensity of focus on standards and accountability are all changing, sometimes rapidly (Educational Research Service, 2000). Understanding how to bring about school change is a key leadership skill (Conner, 1992). Today's leaders spur change by taking risks themselves and by encouraging people to challenge their "mental models" about how things work and what is feasible (Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999, p. 3). To be effective, school leaders adapt and encourage flexibility among staff members. School improvement is an exercise in change.

The research on education leadership and school change recognizes clearly the role and influence the school leader has on whether or not change will occur in school. The Learning from Leadership Project conducted a study that found that "successful leadership can play a highly significant—and frequently underestimated—role in improving student learning. Specifically, the available evidence about the size and the effects of successful leadership on student learning justifies two important claims:

- Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school
- Leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most. (Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

In addition, research on high-performing schools reveals that these schools value change as a means of realizing increased effectiveness. In their research on improving the urban high school, Louis and Miles (1990, p. 38) cite "the will and the skill" for change in a collegial professional learning community as the key to school improvement. It seems clear that transforming the school organization into a learning community is highly dependent on the leadership of the principal and on the active nurturing of the entire staff's development as a community. The principal and the staff become partners in education.

The role of principals and assistant principals is being transformed from that of a building manager to the leader of a community organization. Goodwin, Cunningham,

and Childress (2003) report in the *NASSP Bulletin* that in studies of the principalship, four major themes that describe the school leader's role emerged:

- **Role conflict**—The study revealed that principals see their most important role as being an instructional leader, but other responsibilities such as security specialist, fundraiser, political activist, and cultural expert take away time from the instructional leadership.
- **Accountability conflict**—High standards, assessment, and accountability have increased demands on principals. Principals reiterated the stress they and their faculty members experience as a result of striving to meet higher standards and more stringent measures of accountability in contrast with the responsibility for meeting the growing academic, social, emotional, physical, and moral needs of students. The special education requirements have added voluminous paperwork for the purpose of accountability. The effect of the multiplying special education regulations was strongly stated as a major factor impacting their work.
- **Autonomy conflict**—With the increased number of mandates from all levels of government, there seems to be conflict between autonomy and meeting the requirements of the mandates.
- **Responsibility conflict**—Principals need additional help in the form of an administrative team with the principal providing the leadership.

In all research, a key factor in effective school reform and school change is the role of the school leader and he or she becomes the chief agent of change in improving the school (Lashway, 2000). This is not a new factor in school change efforts but it is an essential one. Louis and Kruse (1995) found that school leaders continue to be best positioned to help guide faculty toward new forms of effective schooling. Strong actions by the administrator on behalf of organizational development are necessary to initiate school improvement, and once the initiative is underway, it is also necessary for the secondary school leader to share leadership, power, authority, and decision making with the staff in a democratically participatory way (Hord, 1997). It is only through this new leadership that schools can meet the challenges of declining budgets, changing populations, more extensive accountability mandates, and the ever-expanding list of issues.

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SECTION 3: PROMISING LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

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Heightened accountability at the national, state, and local levels has brought a change in how schools are led. Obviously, the level of accountability for the school leader is much higher now than ever in our history. Principals' and assistant principals' leadership roles are being transformed to meet the current expectations. Traditionally, school leaders have led in a hierarchical structure but now have to take on new roles that require them to lead from the middle of the organization. In response to these changing expectations, noted more fully in the previous chapter, this section outlines some changes school districts are making to traditional school structures that may impact the school leaders' role and emerging new models of effective leadership practice that are helping school leaders be effective with their changed responsibilities.

3-1 CHANGING SCHOOL STRUCTURES

While the role of school leaders is changing and new models of effective leadership practice are happening as a result, it is important to consider how the changing nature of public schooling may further impact the role of school leaders. In the following subsections are some current school patterns that bear consideration for the future direction of school leadership.

3-1.1 DIVERSITY AND PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

In *Wrestling with Diversity* (2003), Sanford Levinson wrestles with the meaning, significance, and consequences of diversity in multicultural societies. The United States of America would certainly be considered a multicultural society based on the drastic change in demographics over the past 50 years. Levinson suggests that there is great importance in "examining the various ways that we attempt to come to terms with the complex issues presented by contemporary life in a decidedly diverse, multicultural, and culturally pluralistic society" (p. 2). Schools and classrooms mirror multicultural societies that exist beyond the school doors; therefore, school leaders must address the meaning, significance, and consequences of diversity, just as Levinson proposed.

In June 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the University of Michigan affirmative action case, which supported local school boards that used race as a factor to create diversity and ensure opportunities for minority students, as long as affirmative action plans were narrowly tailored like the law school's plan, says Ann L. Bryant (2003) of the National School Boards Association. Bryant (2003) noted that minority children

still face persistent inequities in public schools, including gaps in funding and opportunities that have led to further gaps in achievement; she also stated that diversity, including racial and ethnic diversity, is a vital tool for ensuring a complete educational experience. Bryant (2003) continued to state that the playing field is far from level, and it is certainly within the proper role of public school leaders to do what they can to right these imbalances and take direct action, including considering race, ethnicity, and economics to provide opportunities to minority students. These statements provide a framework for school leaders for whom harmony among students is viewed as one strategy to increase student performance.

According to *Teaching Tolerance Magazine* ("Teaching Tolerance and Harvard study school diversity," 2004), public school enrollment at the beginning of the 21st century was more racially diverse than ever before. Current research shows that White students compose only 60% of the public school enrollment, as opposed to 80% during the Civil Rights era. African Americans and Latinos both account for roughly 15% of the enrollment. School leaders must be aware of the substantial body of research that has been produced to help schools and districts understand how to productively address the educational, social, and personal issues that occur in schools undergoing racial and ethnic transformations. Such research projects include Harvard's Civil Rights Project and Teaching Tolerance. These research projects seek to develop a series of reports from educators throughout the United States who suggest ways to create positive outcomes in interracial classrooms, schools, and districts.

Also, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense and Educational Fund and research centers of two leading universities have created a partnership to tackle racial and ethnic resegregation of U.S. schools. Again, the Civil Rights Project of Harvard University, along with the University of Virginia School of Law and the nation's oldest civil rights organization, the NAACP, have released "Looking to the Future: Voluntary K–12 School Integration," a manual to promote racial and ethnic diversity in schools. This document provides suggestions in the area of integrative student assignment strategies and the legal aspects of schools considering certain voluntary methods of achieving racial and ethnic diversity and acceptance.

Student diversity will continue to grow in the coming years and this may continue to create increasing expectations for effective leadership roles in creating positive school cultures and more culturally competent staff and faculty. There are numerous resources that school leaders can use to achieve racial and ethnic diversity, tolerance, appreciation, and acceptance in schools. However, school leaders must seek these resources out in order to achieve the overall goal of producing quality schools that develop emotionally and intellectually strong students who can be productive members of a pluralistic society. Once resources are obtained, school leaders can work with staff members, parents, students, and community members to implement strategies that best suit the short- and long-term goals of the school. Diversity must be a specific target in the schools of the 21st century and beyond, and it is the responsibility of school leaders to lead this effort.

3-1.2 VIRTUAL SCHOOLS—DISTANCE LEARNING

Technology has opened up a wealth of resources that any teacher can easily use in the classroom. The Internet is full of Web sites that classroom teachers can utilize in the classroom. All it takes is a computer lab with Internet access, a little savvy on how to use a search engine, and a little effort, and a teacher can develop lesson plans that are

both interesting and challenging for their students. With some planning, educators can use a variety of multimedia to present this information, even allowing students to become self-directed in their learning. Technology also has allowed teachers incredible access to resources both within and outside the building. Teachers can share and access lesson plans and tools from fellow teachers in their building. They can also connect with teachers across the country to dialogue and problem-solve situations they are encountering in their classroom.

Distance learning is a method of instruction that allows teacher and student access to experts in the field of study for live interactive lessons. According to a study done by Tom L. Russell of North Carolina State University, "Students in distance learning, irrespective of the delivery system, perform equally as well as students receiving traditional classroom instruction" (2001, p. 107). This instructional method is also a valuable way for administrators to stretch staffing capabilities, a valuable commodity in this day of budgetary constraints.

A virtual school is defined as an educational organization that offers K–12 courses through Internet or Web-based methods. Virtual K–12 education is a form of distance education. Distance education might be formally defined as formal education in which a majority of instruction occurs while the teacher and learner are separate. It includes delivery methods such as independent or correspondence study, as well as videoconferencing and other instructional technologies.

In a study titled "Virtual Schools: Trends and Issues," commissioned by the Distance Learning Network, Clark (2001) provided seven different models of virtual schools:

- State-sanctioned
- College and university based
- Consortium and regionally based
- Local education agency based
- Virtual charter schools
- For-profit providers of curricula, content.

If distance learning becomes a more viable alternative to regular public schooling, what role will school leaders play in this redesign and how may this impact their already burgeoning responsibilities for creating successful school environments and high student achievement?

3-1.3 MAGNET SCHOOLS

The demands of a rapidly changing society (a rise in absenteeism, dropout rates, and academic failure in traditional schools) have led to the creation of over 1,000 magnet schools in urban school districts across the country. How might this trend change the leadership role for school administrators?

Magnet schools emphasize a special curriculum or educational structure. Magnet schools often adopt cooperative learning activities. Student evaluations are frequently based on progress and effort as well as achievement, and may be written as comments rather than grades, thus diffusing competition, lessening the tendency to stereotype or create hierarchies among students, and avoiding the sense of failure those in the bottom half of traditional grading systems tend to feel. From individually guided education to back-to-basics techniques, magnets appeal to student interest across race, age, class, and achievement levels by offering challenging courses that focus on special themes, and by using approaches that match individual cognitive skills.

Magnet schools offer a unique challenge to the school administrators in that they must create personalized learning environments, develop smaller learning communities, and be proficient instructional leaders in specialized areas. These concepts are not new to the role of the school administrator today, but should magnet schools replace the traditional public school concept in the rush to improve student performance, the responsibilities and expectations of schools leaders will also change.

3-1.4 DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment, also known as "dual credit," "concurrent enrollment," or "joint enrollment," refers to the participation in college-level courses and the earning of college credits by high school students. Dual enrollment is viewed as providing high school students with benefits such as greater access to a wider range of rigorous academic and technical courses, savings in time and money on a college degree, promoting efficiency of learning, and enhancing admission to and retention in college.

By providing a pathway for students to move seamlessly between K–12 and postsecondary systems, dual enrollment is thought to promote greater support for students' college aspirations and greater collaboration between high schools and colleges (Clark, 2001). In an effort to prepare high school students for college, 38 states have enacted dual enrollment policies that support the development of programs that promote a smoother transition between high school and postsecondary education (Karp et al., 2004). If this trend continues, the duties and responsibilities of principals and assistant principals will continue to grow.

3-2 CHANGED ROLES—EMERGING MODELS OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

With the increased focus by policymakers and others on school reform and improvement to the teaching and learning process, some have argued that school administrators lack the tools to improve teaching and learning because they have little formal authority to control teachers and classrooms and thus little real power to improve student learning (Hess, 1999). However, there are some leadership structures that may assist school leaders be more effective in their jobs.

3-2.1 SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

Districts are increasingly giving principals the autonomy to make decisions about how money should be spent at the school site and more input in hiring staff, deciding what should be taught in the classrooms, and deciding how it should be taught. Administrators leading schools that have adopted school-based management techniques are demonstrating emerging new roles (Wohlstetter & Mohrman, 1996):

- *Designer/Champion of involvement structures*—Principals help to develop decision-making teams that involve various stakeholders to provide them with opportunities for conversations around school-specific topics
- *Motivator/Coach to create a supportive environment*—Principals work to communicate trust, encourage risk taking, communicate information, and facilitate participation
- *Facilitator/Manager of change*—Principals encourage staff development as an ongoing, schoolwide activity
- *Liaison to the outside world*—Principals bring into the school new ideas and research for thinking about teaching and learning.

3-2.2 COPRINCIPALS

Some school districts are experimenting with the concept of coprincipals. Long Beach, CA, has been using coprincipals for a decade. Most schools have assistant principals or vice principals, but parents, teachers, and others often want to see the principals and are not satisfied with seeing the second in command. These coprincipal programs are freeing principals to spend more time in classrooms and have greater opportunities to lead the school's instructional program. The ultimate success of this type of power sharing is often dependent on the personalities of the principals.

3-2.3 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Increasingly, questions persist as to whether the principalship is too large for one person to handle successfully. The task of transform-

ing schools is too complex to expect one person to accomplish it single-handedly. Accordingly, leadership should be distributed throughout the school rather than vested in one position. Beyond this core belief, however, advocates of distributed leadership offer divergent models. In some discussions, the term *distributed leadership* simply means giving other staff members some of the school leader's current responsibilities. A principal might hand off managerial tasks to the assistant principal; a large school could assign several "subprincipals" to different grade levels; or administrators could simply rotate cocurricular assignments so that each preserves a semblance of home life. Others go beyond simply reshuffling assignments and call for a fundamental shift in organizational thinking that redefines leadership as the responsibility of everyone in the school. In this view, the principal retains a key role, not as the "chief doer," but as the architect of organizational leadership.

School leaders are acutely aware that higher expectations for instructional leadership require a novel approach to leading. The job is clearly beyond the capabilities of one individual. Charismatic, greatly skilled leaders understand in profound ways that they must distribute leadership roles and responsibilities to teachers. Elmore (2000) lists five principles of distributed leadership in schools:

1. The purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practices and performance, regardless of the role
2. Instructional improvement requires continuous learning
3. Learning requires modeling
4. The roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution
5. The exercise of authority requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity.

Today's school leaders share leadership. The principal, faculty, staff, parents, and community work together sharing a vision of how to help all students achieve. Central to this view of the principalship is a movement from a "power over" approach to a "power to" approach (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 57). The result is a fundamental change in roles, relationships, and responsibilities. Administrators lead from the center rather than the top, and they create an environment where teachers can continually grow and learn (Leithwood & Louis, 2000; Murphy & Datnow, 2003; Sarason, 2004; Senge et al., 2001). Authority flows are less hierarchical, and independence and isolation are replaced by cooperative work.

3-2.4 SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER

A school business manger provides relief to a principal with the traditional responsibility of managing a complex school plant and budget. Overseeing the physical plant and the business functions of the school takes a huge time responsibility away from the principal and allows the principal more time with the school's instructional program.

3-2.5 DATA ANALYSIS COACHES

As school leaders have become the recognized instructional leaders of their schools, the increased collection, analysis, and use of student performance data have become an important part of their responsibilities. Skillful leaders must be able to monitor data, create interventions, and improve instructional practice in order to meet the heightened accountability demands imposed by local, state, and national scrutiny. "Citizens and policymakers alike, as part of the new accountability, expect schools to justify the value and effectiveness of their programs" (Wade, 2001). Reform movements and laws effectively require that secondary school leaders lead school improvement efforts. "The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has sweeping implications for how states collect, analyze and use data about school and system improvement" (Education Commission of the States, 2004).

At the school level, school leaders are analyzing and summarizing data, and developing actions plans for school improvement in order to meet the standards and requirements of reform. It is sound general practice for administrators to use data in assessing and planning all programs. School leaders cannot rely on gut feelings about what is or is not working (Bernhardt, 2000). They do not need to be experts in statistical analysis, but should have a comprehensive knowledge of how to collect, analyze, and interpret data. Data on student achievement captures most of the public's attention, but provisions of NCLB also mandate the reporting of data related to school climate and attendance, and might result in planning to address deficiencies in those and other areas.

Data analysis is only the beginning of an improvement effort. The successful development and implementation of plans grounded in data are critical for school improvement. School leaders accomplish reform initiatives by providing vision and leadership (Wade, 2001). If the principal has established a climate of collaboration and shared decision making at the school, the staff and community will more easily accept decisions brought about by an analysis of data (National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 2005).

3-2.6 TEACHER LEADERS: KEY PLAYERS IN SCHOOL REFORM EFFORTS

It is impossible to address the changing role of the school leader without addressing the rise of teacher leaders as key players in leading local change efforts. As accountability pressures increase, school leaders are realizing the urgent need for quality help to sustain professional development initiatives and to serve as mentors and coaches for teachers. "If schools are to be places in which students and educators are successful in their respective roles, teachers must be at the core of leadership communities" (Sparks, 2002).

Teacher leader roles are popping up all over the country with clever titles along with an essential set of skills and knowledge base. Data Coaches, Literacy Coaches, Curriculum Coordinators, Teachers on Special Assignment are just a few of the titles that appear in schools. Teacher leaders are being recruited to assume a shared responsibility for achieving essential school improvement goals. They may be asked to contribute to the school improvement planning process as chairpersons, facilitators, or committee leaders with specific content expertise. They may be called upon to make formal presentations, write curriculum, and design professional development or lead discussions with parents or community leaders. They often continue serving in traditional roles such as grade-level team leaders, department chairs, or athletic directors, but extend themselves to grow professionally. This talent pool of teacher experts has "created a new kind of professional development that integrates teachers' learning with teachers' practice, gives participants ongoing feedback, and makes these activities a whole-school, collegial endeavor" (Guiney, 2001).

Mentoring new teachers is another way teachers are serving as leaders, allowing administrators to move away from a traditional supervisory role to the role of a coach who can counsel by asking nonjudgmental questions with even their most veteran teachers. Classroom management modeling and helping connect curriculum to schoolwide initiatives are other ways mentors support their peers.

Coaching represents the new way of sustaining professional development so that learning is promoted in job-embedded formats. Peer coaching, cognitive coaching, and instructional coaching are popular approaches for collegial work that are nonthreatening and invite feedback and support. School districts invest heavily in *train the trainer* types of professional learning so they can build leadership capacity at the

school level. This wave of the future protects the investment of staff development so that it is transferred to children in classrooms. Teachers feel more confident in taking risks when their peers provide encouragement, skill development, and ongoing learning opportunities.

Solo leaders who prefer to "go it alone" are missing opportunities to grow future leaders. Changing the leadership delivery approach requires some new skill development for principals and assistant principals. They must develop structures for formative monitoring, gathering their own data to stay in touch with teachers. Gayle Moller (1999) underscores the fact that administrative support is critical to teacher leaders' success in surmounting barriers that range from a lack of skills related to unfamiliar responsibilities to the negative reactions of peers. She identifies the interpersonal skills of the principal as making a difference in the willingness of teacher leaders to take on these roles. Moller believes that driving innovation within schools requires school leaders to work closely with their teacher leaders to listen, encourage, and advocate for their active participation.

School leaders find themselves with the predicament of looking for ways to support these teacher leaders who may have been selected on the basis of their content expertise but who often lack some of the process or interpersonal skills to be effective. Teacher leaders must learn how to persuade others to deal effectively with the honest data about student achievement so that they can apply their knowledge to the classroom where it can have the greatest impact on students. Many principal preparation courses have now been developed to include individual leadership styles, curriculum trends, communication and facilitative skills, and reflective practice.

This new relationship forged between principals and teachers leads to a shared and collegial leadership in the school, where all grow professionally and learn to view themselves as "all playing on the same team and working toward the same goal: a better school" (Hoerr, 1996, p. 381). Kleine-Kracht (1993) suggests that administrators, along with teachers, must be learners "questioning, investigating, and seeking solutions for school improvement" (p. 393). The traditional pattern that "teachers teach, students learn, and administrators manage is completely altered" (p. 393). Leithwood, Leonard, and Sharratt (1997) reinforced these ideas, finding that in learning communities, principals treat teachers with respect and as professionals, and work with them as peers and colleagues.

The school leader is the key player in creating and sustaining professional learning communities where the teachers in a school and its administrators continuously seek and share learning and act on their learning. The goal of their actions is to enhance their effectiveness as professionals for the students' benefit. In linking the school leadership role to the development of professional community, Louis and Kruse (1995) identified six issues:

- First, principals must lead from the center. This requires that the administrator positions himself or herself in the center of the staff rather than at the top and takes advantage of every opportunity to stimulate conversation about teaching and learning, to bind the faculty around issues of students and instruction.
- Second, the principal provides teachers with classroom support. It is clear that instructional leadership is a requirement of developing a community of professionals in which "increased cognitive understanding of instruction and learning and a more sophisticated repertoire of teaching skills are goals" (pp. 212–213).

- Third, leaders model the behaviors of a professional community, keeping the vision of such a workplace culture alive and visible.
- Fourth, the principal supports a culture of inquiry and the application of new knowledge as a high priority. Leaders champion the need for information and data so that staff can engage in discussions of "what is working and how do we know?" (p. 219). The principal supports and promotes action research by teachers as a means by which teachers consume and generate new knowledge.
- Fifth, effective principals manage conflict by providing a safe forum for discussion, reinforcing the values of the community, and being willing to live with the uncertainty and ambiguity as the participants work through the issues involved.
- Sixth, the principal must ensure that the learning community is inclusive by creating opportunities that pull the entire faculty together in pursuit of a common objective or goal. In essence, the school leader develops the organization, a unified educational system that is committed to continuous learning for continuous improvement. In the framework of organizational development, the school maintains a heightened capacity for solving its own problems (Schmuck & Runkle, 1985). The success of organizational development as a school improvement strategy is dependent on the ability of the school leader to facilitate collaborative working relations among all members of the learning community.

Roland Barth (2001) strongly supports the advances with teacher leaders. He says, "A powerful relationship exists between learning and leading. The teacher who is always leading and learning will generate students who are capable of both leading and learning" (p. 81–82). "The options for increasing teacher leadership and impact have increased over the years. It's critical to the profession that teachers have these options. Their colleagues, the school, and all students benefit when teachers extend themselves by serving in leadership roles." (Hirsh, 1997, p. 1).

Teacher leaders can play an important role in the leadership of a school as they use their expertise and credibility to positively impact their peers and, more important, the experience and results for students. They are integral players on a school leadership team. They lead by example, which builds trust and respect from their colleagues (Teacherleader Listserv, 2003).

3-2.7 LITERACY COACHES

Literacy coaching is a growing development in the field of U.S. education due to state testing and the annual yearly progress goals under NCLB. Like other educational innovations, from charter schools to enriched after-school programs, literacy coaching is protean, varying from venue to venue and even described by different terms in various regions of the country.

NASSP's publication *Creating a Culture of Literacy: A Guide for Middle and High School Principals* argues that as instructional leaders, school leaders play an important role in the implementation of a schoolwide literacy program. They must be visible in the school, regularly visiting classrooms to ensure that an emphasis on literacy is truly occurring. Teachers should view school leaders as role models of reflective, lifelong learning and have their respect as knowledgeable in the area of adolescent literacy. Participation in departmental and grade-level meetings allows school leaders to be actively engaged with planning and evaluating the school's literacy improvement efforts. Literacy Leadership Teams are often organized at the school level and comprise school leaders, content teachers, resource teachers, literacy coaches, and the media specialist (NASSP, 2005).

The role of the literacy coach or literacy specialist has become a valuable resource for school administrators and teaching staff. They often will hold special literacy intervention classes for struggling readers outside the regular classroom curriculum. In addition, this important individual understands literacy instruction, possesses leadership qualities, identifies assessments and analyzes results, and serves as a key figure for developing a high-quality secondary literacy initiative (Sturtevant, 2003). The International Reading Association (IRA) defines a literacy coach as one who:

- Provides assessment and specialized reading instruction
- Conducts professional development activities
- Establishes reading program goals with peers and helps peers to accomplish goals
- Defines and clarifies the literacy program to parents and community
- Exhibits appropriate reading strategies
- Shares current research and models best practices with faculty. (IRA, 1998)

The Role and Qualifications of the Reading Coach in the United States, an important statement on literacy coaching, was published in 2004 by the IRA. Cathy Roller, director of research and policy for the organization, helped develop the report with the IRA board of directors; the publication is endorsed by an array of organizations representing many learning disciplines. One of the report's recommendations is for higher standards for literacy coaches, notably a requirement of a master's degree. The report also draws attention to the marked flexibility—not necessarily a positive thing, in the authors' view—in the definition of literacy coaching.

The IRA publication notes:

> Some coaches are volunteers with no specific training in reading, while others are school district employees with master's degrees and reading specialist certification. In some schools, tutors who work with students are also called *coaches*. These individuals have a variety of levels of training, and they may work for companies (both profit and nonprofit) that supply supplemental services to students attending schools labeled by the state as "in need of improvement". . . . [T]here are no agreed upon definitions or standards for the roles. . . . In the leadership role, [coaches] design, monitor, and assess reading achievement progress; they provide professional development and coaching for teachers . . . ; they are responsible for improving reading achievement; and they may also supervise and evaluate staff. (p. 2)

Roller suggests that what distinguishes literacy coaching is teacher-to-teacher communications that occur both during class and at other times as well. She also observes that the supply of literacy coaches these days is far exceeded by the demand. Her sentiments are echoed by Susan Frost, former president of the Alliance for Excellent Education in Washington, D.C., who offers the idea that literacy coaching is an outgrowth of "high-stakes" testing—schools fail if students fail tests; improvement in test performance depends, in part, on a student's ability to read and comprehend the test material.

One model for literacy coaching, as it has been introduced into Boston classrooms and elsewhere, is called Collaborative Coaching and Learning (CCL) because a chief characteristic of the model involves active participation by teachers who collaborate with their colleagues. Coaches and teachers are carrying out CCL through practices that involve demonstration and observation, preconference meetings, lab-site activities, debriefings, and classroom follow-up.

3-2.8 PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Across the nation, from the smallest towns to the largest cities, the quality of virtually

every community is defined by the strength of its schools. Although the most important "stakeholders" in these schools are students and their parents, local employers and other community leaders have a vested interest in the success of schools as well. Challenged by budget shortfalls in the face of efforts to have all students meet high standards, school leaders are reaching out to local business leaders to work together to effect school reform by providing necessary resources for school activities.

There is a need for school leaders to understand and be able to operate within the larger context of the community and beyond, which affects opportunities for all students. School leaders must now be able to respond to and influence this larger political, social, and cultural context. Of vital importance is their ability to develop continuing dialog with business and political decisionmakers concerning the role of schools and to build collaborative relationships that support improved educational opportunities for all children (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2001).

In his testimony for the Research Subcommittee hearing on March 30, 2004, Jay T. Engeln, Resident Practitioner of School/Business Partnerships at NASSP, provides an example of the new role for school leaders in forming dynamic community partnerships:

> William J. Palmer High School is located in the middle of downtown Colorado Springs. The school was facing a multitude of problems including declining enrollment, poor image in the community, high dropout rates, a failure rate of 49% in the ninth grade, dated facilities, high numbers of discipline referrals and suspensions, and a lack programs that demonstrated a clear relationship to future career opportunities. If you purchased a home in the Palmer High School attendance area it was not uncommon for realtors to share with potential buyers information about how they could get a permit to attend a school other than Palmer. Virtually every store in the downtown area had a sign in the window stating, "No more than two Palmer students allowed in store at one time." In addition to the above challenges, the school district had not been successful in passing a bond issue in support of public schools for more than 25 years. The school district and William J. Palmer High School were facing tough financial times resulting in the elimination of programs and lack of resources to provide the best possible educational opportunities for students. During this same time period the downtown business community was also experiencing an economic slump. Business was slow and many stores were closing. People did not go downtown for shopping or dining.
>
> In light of these problems, the staff members, students, parents, alumni, and the business community (especially the downtown businesses) were committed to supporting the school and providing resources that had a positive impact on student achievement. We felt the school was a part of the downtown community and the community was also a part of the school. Working together we saw many positive changes take place in the school and in the downtown business community. In fact, there was an article in the *Denver Post* describing the truly symbiotic relationship between Palmer High School and the downtown businesses and highlighting the unique role the school played in the renaissance of the downtown area as well as the impact the business community had on the many positive changes in the school.
>
> School/business partnerships were indeed a key element of the school's transformation. As a direct result of support from the many business partners, the school was able to keep programs in place that had a positive impact on student achievement. Partnership involvement included mentor

programs, internships, guest speakers, tutors, senior volunteers, motivational/ incentive programs, and financial support for the school's programs. Textbooks, equipment, supplies, onsite professional development for staff, resources to send staff and students to conferences and workshops, support for extracurricular activities and programs for at-risk students are just a few of the benefits realized from partnership relationships.

While school/business partnerships do not guarantee success, partnerships can provide additional resources that support teachers in doing what they do best. Statistics show that successful school/business partnerships can:

- Promote improved student achievement
- Reduce self-defeating behaviors among students
- Create better school environments
- Build stronger communities
- Enhance property values.

School/business partnerships do help support programs that positively impact student achievement. Teachers feel more appreciated for their efforts and have additional resources available to them for programs that help students. The business community becoming more involved in secondary schools may foster a positive atmosphere that carries well beyond the classroom walls. Teachers are energized by the community support for their educational endeavors with students. Students likewise appreciate the business involvement. They feel that people care about them as individuals, and feeling embraced by the community may impact their behavior and their academic achievement.

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SECTION 4: IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Volumes of literature have been written over the years about the nature of school leadership. The current volume contributes to that literature by identifying the essence of leadership in contemporary times. Perhaps more significantly, the current volume considers the meaning of a variety of social and educational forces for the future of leadership at the school level. As articulated in previous sections, school-level leadership is becoming increasingly complex. Schools are changing, student populations are changing, and expectations about the role and outcomes of schooling are changing. These changes clearly have implications for the future role of secondary school leaders and assistant principals. These changes also have implications for the way leaders are selected and then prepared for practice, the professional development they receive, and for the policies that determine their eligibility to practice as well as those that guide their practice once in leadership positions.

4-1. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF NEW SCHOOL LEADERS

Great schools have great leaders. That's the compelling if obvious message from two decades of research on effective schools. Yet finding effective leaders is not easy. To recruit, attract, train, and retain the best candidates for school leadership, states, school districts, and universities must invest the time and resources that such activities warrant (Lovely, 2001). The expensive, time-consuming personnel practices of recruiting well-prepared candidates deserve careful rethinking.

4-1.1 STATE LICENSURE

In the United States, entrance into the educational leadership field as principal is primarily controlled through state licensing regulations. Most states require that prospective principals obtain a master's or doctoral degree in the field of educational leadership from an accredited college or university administrator preparation program.

The best well-known policy with regard to educational leadership is licensure policy. Currently, 47 states license school leaders. States typically establish minimal criteria and standards for practice, which enables them to ensure a supply of licensed professionals, terminate licensure if necessary, and

broker among political interests with regard to issues such as supply and demand. These are important functions. Approximately 40 states require entry-level school leaders to pass the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA), a state licensure exam given by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) which is based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. The important role that the ISLLC standards play in state licensure makes it essential that they be updated on a regular basis to ensure that they keep pace with changes in educational leadership and management. Likewise, licensure requirements across the states must be designed to support the entrance of high-quality candidates into leadership positions.

Over the past decade, many politicians and businesses have called for nontraditional approaches to dealing with predicted principal and teacher shortages. Advocates such as Frederick Hess claim that "many individuals with leadership skills acquired in other fields would be willing to tackle a school principalship if they were not barred by traditional licensure requirements" (Lashaway, 2003). This approach begins by identifying individuals with desired abilities that may translate to educational administration, providing intensive training and internships.

National certification and state licensure are equally important and should be separate and serve different objectives. National certification is granted independently by the profession on the basis of its estimation of advanced leadership skills; whereas state licensure is granted by the state government and indicates a minimal level of leadership competence making an individual fit for practice. There are other differences as well, but the point is that they are complementary in our efforts to strive for leadership excellence. States must continue to maintain the right to determine what makes sense with regard to licensure for their state; however, NASSP would urge that states work together to ensure greater portability of state licensure requirements. The two forms of certification are very compatible. More attention is needed in the coming years on the issues of both state and national certification.

NASSP certification/licensure recommendations (compiled from portions of this and other NASSP publications) are:

- School districts should establish partnerships with local universities to design practice-based licensure programs with a strong emphasis on instruction and business leadership models, internships, and continuous on-the-job mentoring
- States must design licensure requirements for secondary school leaders to support the entrance of high-quality candidates into leadership positions
- States should work together to ensure greater portability of state certification and licensure requirements
- States should develop specialized, non-overlapping school leader licensure requirements for the middle level.

4-1.2 ALTERNATIVE SELECTION ROUTES

It has only been in the past 10 years that the official entryway into the principalship has changed. Many more alternative programs have been developed and more have gained state approval, making it easier for individuals with both traditional and nontraditional educational backgrounds to move into the school leadership pipeline. What is important is the significant change in both recruitment into the profession and the expansion of the pool from which future leaders are being drawn.

As schools and society change, new ideas and innovations will be sought out to deal with old and new situations, problems, challenges, and opportunities. It can be helpful to have among our cadre of leaders

individuals who have experience leading and working within other industries, and opening the educational leadership field to "non-educators" could be quite beneficial. On the other hand, more and more research is finding strong relationships between instructional leadership skills and both teacher quality and student achievement—signaling the importance of an educational background and/or educational expertise. As we think about the future of educational leadership, we must try to move away from dichotomous thinking in this area. Instead, it would benefit us to determine how we might build a core of leaders with both strong educational expertise and broad perspectives and backgrounds.

New Leaders for New Schools, for example, aggressively recruits individuals who have demonstrated leadership experience from schools, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and financial companies. In contrast, university programs sometime attract individuals with nontraditional backgrounds, but they do not actively recruit such individuals. Perhaps it is time that universities also begin to attract the best and the brightest, not just from within the field of education, but more broadly. If licensure rules change to allow such individuals to practice, then university programs should make certain that their programs, like alternative programs, are accessible to a variety of high-quality applicants.

Although some leaders both within and outside the education field are optimistic about this trend, others are more skeptical. Having novice school leaders with little educational experience at a time of a teacher shortage, changing student populations, and rising academic expectations fueled by NCLB is not seen as a desirable approach to a dilemma in educational leadership. It is essential that, regardless of background, all educational leaders enter their positions with strong educational knowledge and skills, enabling them to support quality teaching and learning in their schools. It is also important that, if we begin to build a cadre of high-quality leaders with diverse professional backgrounds, we make use of the variety of perspectives and expertise that they bring with them. Currently, we have not successfully tapped the brain trust within and outside the field.

As states (e.g., Wisconsin, Florida) consider alternative routes to licensing educated administrators, NASSP strongly advocates that critical conversations take place concerning leadership expectations, experience, preparation, and screening. NASSP supports the creation of alternative pathways for future leaders to become administrators, but such pathways must ensure that candidates have the appropriate preservice professional development and mentoring components. Alternative pathways must produce school leader candidates who are prepared to be effective managers and instructional leaders.

4-1.3 TAPPING AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

If strong leadership is a characteristic of an effective school, then *sustaining* strong leadership should be sought with vigor in our newest quests for improvement in today's schools. A truly successful school is effective because of its performance over time and effective leadership over many years and probably several principals. Successful leaders are able to institutionalize high performance because they have created a culture in which success is nurtured. However, such effective leadership practice does not exist in a vacuum; it must be stimulated in others, thus setting the stage for effective transition in leadership from the hands of one player to another. Success of school leaders should be measured by the legacies they leave behind rather than the isolated victories generated over short periods of time, including test scores that slide up and down, showing no consistency in improved student achievement.

Although ebbs and flows in the pool of qualified leaders have been reported for half a century, in recent years increased attention has been given to identifying and tapping future leaders. In a study of schools in the United States and Canada, Andy Hargreaves and Dean Fink found that most school districts create temporary pathways for change in leadership, but fail in the test of long-term sustainability (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). Indeed many school districts employ one of three strategies: First, they do nothing and follow the dogma that things will take care of themselves. These districts take the attitude that leaders have always been found and they will emerge. Some districts exacerbate succession problems with policies that require school leaders to move within a set number of years, usually five to seven. When leaders fail to emerge, districts then tend to rely on the strategy employed by the police departments—they begin advertising and soliciting on a nationwide scale. This is expensive and time consuming and the results are often disappointing. When the candidates do emerge, they are often not inculcated in the culture of the new district and, once hired, they are not supported in their new position. The result: within a few years, the district is again looking for a suitable leader. This pattern creates discord within the school district, which then negatively affects student achievement, teacher morale, and district reputation.

In an era where the trend toward national searches for local school administrators and a total disregard for homegrown talents seems to prevail, little attention is given to succession planning for planned continuity. Succession planning forces school districts to consider those attributes needing to be sustained and ways to build capacity for sustaining those accomplishments. Andrew Hargreaves and his colleagues investigated leadership succession in eight high schools in the United States and Canada and found that one of the most significant factors influencing sustained school improvement is leadership succession. Researchers warn against doing nothing, or leaving succession to chance, haphazard employment decisions, and high turnover in succession events; instead, they encourage careful and deliberate planning and preserving leadership over reassignments imposed by management (Hargreaves, 2005).

Selection processes have come a long way in recent years. On the basis of their research on the attributes of outstanding school leaders, the Gallup Organization has developed Principal Insights, an assessment tool to measure the qualities needed for success in the principalship. Gallup believes that the school district's investment is protected because assessment prior to appointment makes for more reliable choices in school leadership selections (Gordon, 2006).

NASSP is also training personnel in school districts to conduct skills assessments to determine the predictability for success for principals and assistant principals. Skills assessment centers utilize research-based assessment approaches including simulated problem-solving exercises and panel interviews with scoring rubrics (Quinn, 2002). Schools may wish to solicit outside skills assessment packages to assist in screening candidates with the greatest potential for success.

Succession planning for the principalship may be viewed from at least two perspectives: First, and perhaps most urgent, is that it provides a systematic approach for school districts to address the threat of leadership shortages. As the evidence that the availability of qualified school leaders is nearing crisis proportion continues to grow (Barker, 1997; Fink & Brayman, 2006; Lovely, 2001; Quinn, 2002), succession planning satisfies the broader goal of school districts to establish a pool of candidates who have been identified, developed, and supported in refining their professional abilities in preparation for school administration. Second,

succession planning provides an effective strategy for protecting those treasured school improvement accomplishments often lost in the turmoil of leadership turnover so frequently experienced in our most challenged schools today.

Succession planning is a systematic process employed by a district for identifying, training, and placement of individuals into leadership positions based on demonstrated potential for success (Gordon, 2006). Research guidance on effective succession planning is virtually nonexistent. Michael Fullan (2002) views this issue as the most neglected topic in research, policy, and practice, thereby ensuring little investment in the study of long-term results in our schools. The goal of effective succession planning is that leadership would be defined by how successful school administrators are able to build capacity for success so that their successors may carry on a legacy of effectiveness.

As schools respond to the continuous surge of principal retirements of this decade (Quinn, 2002), principal vacancies created by increasing enrollments of students (Barker, 1997), and the inevitable rise in turnovers in the principalship due to the NCLB mandates (Hargreaves, 2005), a systemic focus on leadership succession planning is overdue. School districts can no longer ignore the eventual chaos we face in leaving the assignment of prepared school leaders, particularly at the secondary level, to chance. The need is further implicated in the trend experienced by some school districts toward smaller applicant pools (Lovely, 2001; Pierce, 2000) and the declining number of viable candidates enrolled in administrative internships in our university leadership preparation programs (Barker, 1997; Pounder & Crow, 2005).

To recruit, attract, train, and retain the best candidates for school leadership, school districts must invest the time and resources that the succession planning process warrants (Lovely, 2001). The expensive, time-consuming personnel practices of recruiting hard-to-find candidates from outside the district who have no long-term vested commitment to the community and no proven track record of success in the area of the positions sought is, at best, a gamble on the lives of the students in those districts. Many school districts have realized that the best promise lies in tapping into their own local leadership talent (Pounder & Crow, 2005).

Succession planning to prepare for district vacancies in the principalship is a broad and complex undertaking that must be approached from multiple perspectives. The deeply rooted problem speaks to negligence from all sides of the professional polygon with more blame to spare.

The following are some options for tailoring effective succession planning to local/national needs and resources:

Leadership Academies

Leadership academics within school districts, which are structured to provide a strategic process for identifying individuals with demonstrated high potential for success in school leadership, pave the way for successful planning for principal succession. School districts must have formal leadership succession plans if they are to be prepared for the escalating demand for leadership. Effective leadership academies provide definitive processes for:

- Recruiting/selecting potential candidates
- Assessing skills of, and selecting, leadership candidates
- Providing ongoing professional development for aspiring school leaders identified through the academy (Quinn, 2002).

Leadership academies may wish to solicit outside skills assessment packages to assist in screening candidates with the greatest potential for success. NASSP has developed

several skills assessment tools to measure the qualities needed for success in the principalship. The Individual Professional Skills Assessment is a new online assessment that provides aspiring and current school leaders with a relatively quick and convenient way to analyze their own professional skills and identify their strengths in order to construct a professional growth plan. Skill areas assessed include educational leadership (setting instructional direction, teamwork, and sensitivity), resolving complex problems (judgment, results orientation, and organizational ability), communication skills (oral and written), and developing self and others (including understanding one's own strengths and weaknesses).

Cohort groups led by a facilitator can benefit from participation in diagnostic activities and in-basket simulations, and can interact with one another to engage in guided peer review, peer feedback, and 360-degree feedback. NASSP encourages the use of this type of online assessment because it may make for more reliable choices in leadership selections and a greater investment in an administrator's ongoing professional growth.

Districts choosing to organize their own screening processes to establish school leader candidate pools may require an extensive series of assessment tasks designed to evaluate the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions of aspiring school leaders. The Capistrano (California) Unified School District has constructed an organized effort to address principal succession by tapping into the rich talents within its own district. Capistrano's unique model offers an administrative career ladder built around four leadership scaffolds:

1. The *Teaching Assistant Principal* is identified by site administrators on the basis of a proven track record of performing leadership responsibilities and is provided a broad scope of leadership opportunities along with teaching duties
2. The *Assistant Principal Training Program* is geared toward preparing participants to assume principal positions and includes development of full knowledge of districtwide goals, operations, policies, and procedures in addition to full responsibility for site-based duties
3. The *Principal Support Network* is designed to build in success for new principals by organizing an array of exchange activities and relevant training sessions to safeguard the valuable investment in quality leadership that has been made by the district
4. The *STAR Program* focuses on the instructional leadership role of principals and is offered by the Capistrano District to all site administrators following a consistent professional development format (Lovely, 2001).

Collaborative Networks with University and Professional Organization Partners

Another approach in succession planning to build leadership capacity lies in the use of partnership relationships with universities and professional organizations. School districts may partner with local higher education institutions in support of the demand for qualified school leader candidates. In exchange for the school district's patronage, universities can design graduate study programs that support the prioritized goals of the district, provide off-campus information sessions and registration and meeting sites, grant flexible class schedules and reduced tuition, and offer an in-house administrative credentialing program through the university (Lovely, 2001). Cooperative partnership arrangements between representatives of the larger education community might further benefit the schools by providing professional development for principals, assistant principals, and emerging leaders; and making mentors, coaches, and support groups available to novice and aspiring school leaders (Pounder & Crow, 2005).

Redesigning the Role of Assistant Principals

Upgrading the quality of assistant principals in a school district is another important factor in supporting the changing role of the school leader, and it is a natural first step in the development of a succession plan for school leadership. Although most assistant principals move on to become principals, deliberate care is not generally taken in the selection of those who serve as assistants. Nor do we assign roles and responsibilities to assistant principals with intent to prepare them with the broad set of needed experiences to assume the leadership position at the top. According to a survey conducted by Weller and Weller, 77% of assistant principals polled listed discipline and attendance counting as their primary duties, 98% listed student supervision as a primary duty, and 92% listed routine paper work as a major priority in their job. Conversely, only 7% report being involved in the school budget process and 57% report involvement in developing their school's master schedule (Weller, 2002).

We must be aware of the importance of these administrators and the role they play. Their duties are essential to the smooth operation of any school building. The duties for an assistant principal vary from school to school, but there is one common thread in each situation: An assistant principal's day is full-speed ahead with very few (if any) breaks. Many assistant principals report the following items for which they are responsible: lunch duty, bus duty, supervision of hallways, attendance at after-school athletic and cocurricular functions, textbook inventory, management of keys, staff development, community relations, intramurals and athletics, and discipline. Each assignment is essential to the operation of any school building, yet few relate to instructional leadership.

The circumstances most likely to promote planned continuity in principal succession occur when a team effort has been used over a period of time sufficient to solidify a culture of sustained improvement and assistant principals are groomed to continue in their leaders' footsteps (Hargreaves, 2004). With principal succession viewed as a permanent planning feature, schools are encouraged to organize leadership teams utilizing a shared leadership approach. Keeping in mind that selecting outstanding principals begins with appointing outstanding assistant principals (Gordon, 2006), succession planners are advised to redesign the assistant principalship to become a more comprehensive training ground for aspiring principals. This then begs the question: How can we better prepare our assistant principals to make the leap to the principalship?

At this time, there are almost no principal preparation programs aimed specifically at preparing an assistant principal to become a principal. Most college-level programs focus on administration in general, and the assistant principalship in particular. This has led some school districts to devise their own preparation processes. Such training also affords the district an easier transitional phase for its principals when the potential leaders understand the mission and objectives of the district. Although this may prove to be the best model for training assistant principals, it might benefit the field to explore the possibilities that a district-university partnership might create for the development and cultivation of assistant principals.

NASSP succession recommendations (compiled from portions of this and other NASSP publications) are:

- School districts need to focus on succession planning … rather than national searches for local school administrators, encouraging careful and deliberate planning and preserving

SUCCESSION PLANNING:

How One School District Approached the Problem

In an effort to improve tapping and succession planning, the Wallace Foundation provided funding to a number of LEAD (Learning, Empowering, Assessing, and Developing) school districts for, among other things, identifying and implementing strategies to attract and place a broader, more able pool of candidates for the principalship and superintendency; strengthening the ability of leaders to improve learning; and creating more supportive conditions for leaders to succeed. One LEAD district in Fairfax County, Virginia, which, like many districts, faces challenges like high leadership turnover and increasing cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity, has created a way to attract and develop a pool of education leaders who possess the knowledge, skills, and expectations to lead within a diverse setting.

Toward the goal of developing its own school leaders, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) began in late 1999 with a group of administrators from the human resources committee to discuss staffing needs for the coming school year. Fairfax County, the 12th largest school system in the United States and located outside Washington, D.C., had a long history of growth and, like many large suburban systems, was experiencing growing diversity in the student body. It was no longer a homogeneous Caucasian county composed of professionals largely working for the federal government. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Fairfax County experienced explosive growth, building classrooms at the rate of one per day for several years. During that boom period, employment of teachers and administrators grew exponentially, and so, by 1999, many of those hired during the explosive growth were nearing retirement. Andy Coles, director of employment for Fairfax County, posed a lightening rod question to school system leadership: "Do you know that in the next five years, you will replace 60% of your principals?"

While the disbelief was clearing from the heads of those gathered, the need for an action plan quickly became apparent. Fairfax officials desperately wanted to sustain a culture of excellence and leadership and they knew that replacing talented and knowledgeable principals would be no simple task. To sustain the system, Fairfax leaders began with an assessment of where they were and what they wanted to ensure for the future. As they began assessing the vulnerabilities of the system, they looked at both immediate needs and long-term implications.

In the short term, elementary schools were those where the vacancies would most be felt. With 136 elementary schools in the system, sheer numbers of principal openings were projected to overwhelm the system. The high schools were projected to be hit last, but would experience the most rapid turnover once the retirements began. Historically, high school principals were expected to serve 8 to 10 years, but because of the hiring patterns of the late 1960s and 1970s, high school assistant principals were older when they moved to the building principalship; hence, some could be expected to be within 3 years of retirement when they advanced, making

for more rapid turnover at the high school level. Officials began by asking three salient questions:

- What schools will be hardest hit?
- Are all schools equal when considering hiring and replacement of school leaders?
- How can the district focus on developing school leaders?

It was clear that succession planning was going to be a priority for the school system and it was clear that professional development had to be an integral part of that plan. With help from a grant through the Wallace Foundation, Fairfax County developed a leadership succession development program called LEAD Fairfax. LEAD Fairfax reached out to established school leaders and challenged them to help the system develop school leaders and sustain itself. As LEAD Fairfax was born, its stated mission was to implement an education leadership program and processes to attract, develop, and support education leaders able to impact student achievement. The goal of the grant and the program was to demonstrate that improved education leadership would have a positive effect on student achievement, especially that of economically disadvantaged students.

Building principals were selected to be LEAD Fairfax mentors for assistant principals, and assistants were designated as mentors for teacher leaders. A key component of the program centered on an administrative intern program. The Wallace grant allowed for 26 teachers per year to be placed in high-impact, significantly diverse schools for one year of leadership training.

On a practical level, the interns functioned as assistant principals and learned through "on-the-job training" about instructional leadership, teacher evaluation, and school management. At the end of the year, the interns were given priority in the hiring process to become assistant principals

Teacher leaders applied to be administrative interns. To be eligible to be selected as LEAD interns, prospective candidates had to complete a significant vetting process. The application process required that candidates submit a portfolio of their work and write about why they desired a leadership position. Finally, they participated in an interview process. Principal mentors submitted a priority order for the interns they felt would most likely fit within their schools. One intern was placed in each LEAD Fairfax school for a full school year. To be able to participate in the program, participants were required to be current employees of FCPS, having a minimum of five years' teaching experience—three of those with FCPS. Additionally, they had to be within 12 credit hours of completing an endorsement in educational administration. Mentor principals formed the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities for their interns, being careful to divide between "duties" and school leadership. They were cautioned against considering the intern as merely an extra pair of hands, and principals were asked to ensure that interns experienced instructional growth during their year. During the year of the internship, both principals and interns received significant leadership training with principals, assistant principals, and interns functioning in cohort groups. The LEAD Intern cohort focused to enable interns to learn and experi-

ence both the art and the science of being a school administrator. All cohorts participated in sequenced and layered professional development and team-building activities. Cohorts were divided into job-alike groups—those reaching for the building principalship and those entering administration as assistant principals. Each cohort followed a specifically structured curriculum strand (Leading People and/or Leading Learning) of professional development sessions. Each strand was customized to the needs of the particular horizontal cohort. This year-long internship was designed to provide a broad overview of school-based administration through a variety of leadership experiences. Leadership topics included: Developing Professionally; Leading People; Leading, Planning, and Assessing Instruction; Managing the Business of Education; and Building Community Relations.

During the first three years of the grant-reporting period, LEAD delivered more than 400 professional development sessions. LEAD Fairfax's core team conducted over 100 site visits to LEAD schools and more than 80 leadership development sessions at LEAD schools. The cohort sessions, school visits, and school sessions resulted in LEAD working directly with approximately 2,500 school personnel in FCPS. In the first two years of the LEAD Fairfax program, 100% of the participants advanced to be named administrators. The forecast of a loss of 60% of sitting principals within five years proved to be an accurate estimate. Since its inception, 16 LEAD principalships have changed. Issues concerning the very nature of the job further complicated the challenge of replacing the most experienced principals. Workload expectancy issues dominated discussions of aspiring, emerging, and experienced instructional leaders as the job of the principal proved to be increasingly complex while financial incentives decreased. A core staff of five implemented LEAD's training and development. LEAD's work received further support from the district's Office of Employee Performance and Development (OEPD) in human resources. In addition to other sections within OEPD, the career development section lent significant assistance to LEAD Fairfax. The human and financial resources from career development better positioned the district to sustain LEAD Fairfax's work after the grant cycle.

Because of LEAD Fairfax the school district has been able to meet its continuing need for school leaders. The district, when faced with the challenge of many administrative vacancies and a dwindling pool of applicants, decided to take a proactive step to sustain student growth and learning. With the help of the Wallace Foundation, the intern model met a compelling need, and future plans are to grow and sustain the program in the face of an ever-changing student population.

While the baby boomers continue to flow into retirement, their children are being challenged to grow and sustain their excellence. FCPS is able to recruit teachers and allow those teachers to become their leaders. The national campaigns for school personnel focus on college campuses with quality graduates who long for a career in helping students succeed in life. Veteran principals take pride in developing their staff members for leadership. As one principal was leaving for a central office job, she took delight in knowing that no less than seven sitting principals were former teachers and assistant principals in her building. By guiding talented and promising educators toward leadership, FCPS hopes to sustain itself well into the 21st century.

leaders over reassignments imposed by management

- Succession planning should include leadership academies, collaborative networks with university and professional organizations, redesign of the assistant principalship, and investment in the role of the principal.

4-2 CHANGING ROLE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF NEW SCHOOL LEADERS

Over the past two decades, many individuals, associations, consortiums, and commissions have distributed countless reports urging change in educational leadership preparation programs. These reports challenged programs and professors to move quickly to implement reform and, fortunately, many both within and outside the field of education have responded to the call for rethinking and redesign. Some of the most notable responses have included the development of national leadership standards, the development of accreditation review for university preparation programs, the redesign of many university programs, and the development of innovative programs outside the university setting.

4-2.1 NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PREPARATION

Since the late 1990s the educational leadership field has been fortunate to have a set of national leadership standards to guide both preparation and practice. The ISLLC standards, which guide state licensure in over 40 states, are based on research on effective practice and, as noted earlier, are used by states to determine whether or not an individual should receive a license to lead.

The ISLLC standards have been adapted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), a group of 10 associations allied together to promote the improvement of preparation programs at colleges and universities. Using the ISLLC standards as a base, they have developed national program standards used in many states and by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)—to evaluate the quality of leadership preparation programs at colleges and universities.

NASSP participates in a consortium called the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) which uses the NPBEA national program standards to conduct NCATE accreditation reviews of educational leadership programs at higher education institutions. To meet accreditation requirements, administrator preparation programs must ensure that their graduates have the knowledge and skill necessary to provide quality leadership for schools and districts and to ensure that candidates in their programs receive an integrated internship experience within schools and districts. The national standards for accreditation administered by the ELCC places a strong emphasis on preparing secondary school leaders who are, first and foremost, concerned with improving teaching and learning in their schools as well as increasing academic achievement for all students.

Out of an estimated 500 colleges and universities that offer programs in educational administration, 315 of these institutions participate in the NCATE accreditation process. Of these institutions, approximately 160 colleges and universities offering educational leadership programs have received *national program recognition* from the ELCC for one or more of their preparation programs. This means that a team of ELCC reviewers has found these programs to be in substantial compliance with the NPBEA performance standards. This number does not include those institutions that are reviewed by state departments of education who have adopted the NPBEA national program standards for review of colleges and universities. Although the NCATE leadership programs are using

the NPBEA standards to develop performance assessments for measuring their candidates' knowledge and skills, it is unclear just how many other programs are using these standards, particularly programs that do not come under state educational mandates.

In current efforts to revise the ISLLC standards, research on effective school leadership is being consulted. NASSP has taken the lead with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the NPBEA to conduct a Wallace-grant project to update the ISLLC and NPBEA program standards. Currently, the ISLLC standards are used or adapted by approximately 40 states in their licensure of entry-level school leaders and are used in the SLLA and the *School Leadership Series* licensure/certification exams given by the Educational Testing Service. A nationally recognized research panel has been created to represent national scholars in the field of educational administration. It will have the task of specifically focusing on the research base for updating the ISLLC standards and articulating the research base for users of the updated standards. Members of the research panel include: Ken Leithwood, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education; Rosemary Papa, California State University, Sacramento; John Hoyle, Texas A&M University; Joseph Murphy, Vanderbilt University; David Monk, Pennsylvania State University; Len Foster, Washington State University; Nelda Cambron-McCabe, Miami University; Mary Gunter, Arkansas Tech University; Nancy Sanders, Interstate Consortium on School Leadership–CCSSO; Timothy Waters, Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (MCREL); Col. Arthur Athens, U.S. Naval Academy; and Beryl Levinger, Global Learning Group, Educational Development Center. They will consider research in the field of educational leadership related to the standards, review recommendations from practitioners and other stakeholders in educational leadership, recommend research-based changes, and articulate the research base. They hope to identify areas where the standards do not address the changes in responsibilities and duties of current school leaders and to assist in closing the gap between preparation and practice.

Perhaps most significant in the effort to improve standards is a meta-analysis of research on effective school leadership, conducted by MCREL in 2003. Their report identified a set of 21 behaviors that makes up what they refer to as "Balanced Leadership." The research provides additional compelling evidence that the principal of a school has a significant impact on the achievement of students in school (Walters, Marzano, and McNulty, 2003). Although some of the behaviors identified in the MCREL analysis mapped easily onto the ISLLC standards, others did not—hence the importance of revising standards for quality school leadership on a regular basis. It is essential that our expectations align well with what truly is best practice in educational leadership.

More and more, the ISLLC and NPBEA program standards are being used in the development of principal preparation curricula, state licensure exams, practicum and internship experiences, selection criteria, evaluation components, and other activities relevant to school leaders. There are also other significant changes being made in university-based educational leadership preparation programs:

- The development and use of a clear vision to create focus and coherence around leadership for learning democracy, and social justice
- The pursuit of these visions in program structure, design, content, and delivery
- The maximization of opportunities for more coherent focus on student learning and effective leadership development through multidistrict and university collaborations
- A commitment to research and evalua-

tion to inform preparation, leadership practice, and student learning.

4-2.2 INNOVATIONS IN PREPARATION OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Dating back to the first half of the 20th century, school leader preparation programs have historically sought to restructure their approaches to training for improved results. Trends have swayed from influence by the business management ideology to an infusion of content from the social sciences (Murphy, 2001). Today, the focal point of training new school leaders is grounded in the true prioritized goals of education itself—teaching and learning. Although preparation programs cannot fully prepare school leaders for all aspects of the job or even predict how pervasive the dynamics will be from one school culture to the next, many steps can be taken by university planners to improve the preservice process.

Much of the innovative work in the past 10–15 years has been within and among all aspects of leadership preparation programs, through a wide variety of institutions. Many of the new developments in the field involve more practice-focused and transformative learning experiences. Drawing from new developments in adult learning theory and principles, some programs are using experiential learning, reflective practice, structured dialogue, problem-based learning, and learning communities to support transformative and frame-changing learning. Moreover, problem-based and case-based teaching methods are increasingly the primary mode of teaching. These strategies offer situated learning and the means to try out multiple perspectives in problem solving.

Similarly, innovative work is also occurring outside the academy. To illustrate, through a multiyear leadership preparation reform initiative, the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) in cooperation with 12 universities and their partner school districts developed a 14-module leadership preparation curriculum on what secondary school leaders need to know and do to improve their schools' instructional program and raise student achievement. The modules address knowledge and skill development through real-school-problem solving activities. The modules have been adopted by several universities, professional development organizations, and alternative programs in the southern region and elsewhere (SREB, 2004).

The knowledge and skills necessary to lead tomorrow's schools are complex, contextual, and dynamic. As indicated above, the majority of leadership preparation programs, both within and outside the university, are aligned with the ISLLC or NPBEA program standards. This bodes well for the basic needs of future leaders. However, in this standards-based educational environment, the content, context, and process components of leadership preparation need to do more than align with a set of national standards. They must ensure that the content and experiences provide leaders with the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need. Four areas are and will continue to be particularly critical: instruction, data and technology use, organizational development, and strong internships.

Modeling professional standards for the field of educational leadership must begin with preparation programs. Whether these are in publicly or privately funded universities or in alternative settings, the standards should be high. Moreover, standards should be developed not only for program content or outcomes, but also for the selection of people who are invited to participate in the program, those that participate in preparation, and those involved in internship and mentoring experiences.

It is important that the standards used for preparation programs consider both program input and output factors and that they are based on current empirical research. Thus, the frequent updating of standards for both preparation and practice is essential. These standards should be uncommonly rigorous, because preparation programs perform functions that are central to the effectiveness of schools and thus civil life in general. If effective leadership shapes the character of schools, then leadership preparation and professional development must be both scrutinized and supported.

NASSP preparation recommendations (compiled from portions of this and other NASSP publications) are:

- Principal preparation programs in school leadership should be strengthened
- Universities should be encouraged to partner with school personnel in developing principal preparation programs
- School districts should design and implement local academies to train and develop or supplement their cadre of school leaders
- Principal preparation programs aimed specifically at preparing an assistant principal to become a principal should be created
- School districts should establish partnerships with local universities to design a practice-based licensure program with a strong emphasis on instruction and business leadership models, internships, and continuous on-the-job mentoring
- School leaders and university personnel should work closely to revamp principal training programs
- Principal preparation programs and state-level legislation should promote unique descriptions of a principal's role, including the concept of "coprincipalship"—two leaders with equal responsibility and compensation but with different strengths to oversee different facets of the secondary school leader role.

As national accrediting groups and state education agencies work to improve the quality of preparation programs, improvements to the ISLLC and NPBEA program standards must take place. We must try to make a closer alignment between the preparation of school leaders and the current reality of the changed role of principals and assistant principals. This includes closing the gap between preparation and practice. Our new school leaders deserve the type of training that will adequately prepare them to meet the changed roles and expectations outlined in previous chapters of this volume. We recommend consideration of the following areas in any future national standards development.

Instruction

To effectively lead efforts to improve school- and teacher-level factors that impact student achievement, school leaders need to possess a solid knowledge base about teaching and learning. Faced with the challenges of recruiting, hiring, and supporting new teachers, principals say they need to be able to assess an applicant's technical competence and to help probationary teachers strengthen their teaching skills. For veteran teachers, principals say that evaluation systems increasingly call upon them to be able to coach and provide specific feedback not only on classroom management, but also on such aspects of classroom practice as the teacher's use of classroom assessments, teaching strategies such as differentiated instruction, and cultural competency in designing curriculum and instruction. Furthermore, principals envision a future in which distance learning will become increasingly common, thus necessitating their ability to lead and influence their teachers to become skilled in using distance learning methods.

Aspiring principals need opportunities to study and reflect on actual practice as well as on future distance learning technologies. They require skills in how to gather classroom data and provide feedback to teachers as well as new outcome-based teacher evaluation systems and how to facilitate collaborative goal setting and teacher learning communities.

Data and Instructional Technologies

Another imperative for principals and assistant principals is the need to be knowledgeable and skilled in using data and instructional technologies. Instructional leadership and decision making require that an administrator be skilled in using data, and in assisting others in using data, to inform decisions about curriculum, instruction, and school structures that impact curriculum and instruction. Related to this is the need to be able to use technology to facilitate assessment, retrieval, analysis, and use of student achievement and other data related to school improvement. Implications of the standards environment for the professional growth of school leaders include the need to provide opportunities for school leaders to become skilled in using data and related technology and skilled in influencing teachers' use of technology and data.

Organizational Development

High expectations for continuous improvement with regard to student achievement are another professional growth need for principals and assistant principals. They must become the lead learner in order to model consistently the importance of continuous learning for student and teachers. In addition, they must create professional learning communities to encourage collaboration and reflective practice. The skills required to develop and to lead learning communities are decidedly different from those required of the administrator as manager. As delineated by Stoll and Bolam (2005), these skills call upon the leader to have a repertoire of culture-building strategies, along with an ability to sustain collective focus on inquiry-based practice. Specifically, according to the National Staff Development Council (Sparks & Hirsh, 2000):

> Today's instructional leaders must be able to coach, teach, and develop the teachers in their schools. They must be steeped in curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to supervise a continuous improvement process that measures progress in raising student performance. (p. 1)

Internship/Mentorship Programs

Professional literature and research in the field of educational leadership emphasize the critical importance of internship and mentoring programs. The school-site experience is viewed as the bridge that separates theoretical knowledge from practical understanding. For some time, scholars and practitioners have argued for the implementation of a *leadership practice field* in our preparation programs. The conceptual notion at work here is that of creating a bridge between the *performance field* (working in the system) and a *practice field* (working on the system). This model is based on the work of Daniel Kim, a colleague of Peter Senge (*The Fifth Discipline*) and cofounder of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Organizational Learning Center. The central idea is that a *leadership practice field* provides an environment in which a prospective principal (with the guidance of a seasoned school leader) can experiment with alternative strategies and policies, test assumptions, and *practice* working through the complex issues of school administration in a constructive and productive manner.

School leadership internships coexist with another job and responsibilities, usually a classroom teaching position. Unless the candidate is a practicing administrator (which is very rare) such as a temporary assistant principal, he or she is required to hold down a regular classroom teaching position while *practicing* the role and responsibilities of a

school leader. This situation usually results in one or two scenarios: (1) much of the internship takes place after hours—before or after the regular school day—usually in an environment devoid of students and other faculty and/or (2) assigned duties and experiences are generally related to tasks distant from improving teaching and learning (e.g., attendance, discipline, or program evaluations). These scenarios place our aspiring leaders in an environment absent of any opportunity to practice and learn: they are nearly always on the *performance field.*

Wilmore (2002) writes that the ideal situation for an internship is a "full-time, year-long, paid internship conducted under a trained mentor with joint supervision from school district and university personnel" (p. 105). Presently, leadership preparation programs can be grouped in three categories based on the nature of the practicum component offered to aspiring school leaders:

- *Type I*—Intense, full-time internship, usually over a complete school year
- *Type II*—Part-time internship typically conducted alongside regular classroom responsibilities, in after-school programs or during summer sessions
- *Type III*—No school-based internship experience provided.

According to a Public Agenda report, 78% of principals said that "the requirements for

THE NEW PRINCIPAL: "KEEPER OF THE DREAM"

From KIPP to High Tech to our own Big Picture model, small schools are becoming increasingly specialized, each with its own unique approach. As a result, principals no longer play the same generic role across the board. For example, a Big Picture principal must focus on personalizing every student's learning through advisory and internship. To keep a school faithful to its design, a leader must have a strong understanding of its unique philosophy, which informs everything from hiring, staff management and school culture to the nuances of grading policies and parent engagement. This calls for a paradigm shift in the way we train people to lead great schools. First, we must produce principals who are each masters of his/her own school's design, whether they are KIPP or Big Picture. Second, we must create principals who lead with passion and courage and have the skills necessary to translate their vision for the school into reality.

So how do we select and train principals to be both managers and keepers of the philosophy?

We have collected feedback throughout the years from colleagues who became principals. They told stories about how they truly learned the art of the principalship; it was not from their courses, although they gleaned important tidbits of legal knowledge and historical perspective. Their practice, they said, had been influenced by working with great mentors, watching them, and reflecting on why they were doing certain things. They talked about how the most crucial learning—how to be strong, not to back down, to persist in doing what is right for kids—could not be taught through textbooks. It had come from hands-on experience and observation.

licensing administrators should be changed to include a lot more focus on practical, hands-on experience" (Farkas et al., 2003, p. 40). Similarly, a study conducted by Schen and Littky (1999) shows that principals rank formal coursework last in relation to impact on their practice. This reinforces the principle that you do not learn to be a great leader by reading textbooks or by simply attending lectures.

Professional fields, other than education, provide their prospective members an opportunity to *practice*: in a different kind of space where one can practice and learn. The medical profession has a practice field; the legal field has a practice field; musicians and dancers have a practice field; pilots and astronauts have a practice field; school administration does not. The internship as we know it fails to provide authentic leadership opportunities, with little time for practice and reflection. In a recent study of principal internship programs by SREB (2001), it was reported that only a small number of programs offer an internship that is based on a developmental continuum of practice that (1) begins with the intern observing, (2) then participating in, and (3) then leading important school reform work. Much fewer include analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of real-life problems at each of the three levels (p. 15).

From these conversations and our own experience evolved the core of our program, an on-site apprenticeship. The residency gives aspiring principals the chance to observe and question experienced and successful principals as they actually do their jobs. In addition to teaching the day-to-day work, the mentor models how to create an environment which reflects the organization's principles. At The Met this implies a culture of mutual staff/student respect in a shared pursuit of learning. Our emphasis on constantly rethinking and improving our design translates into importance on professional development. Met principals are constantly analyzing data on students and looking for trends (everything from attendance and graduation rates to college-going numbers). At another school, the atmosphere and subsequent mentorship may vary dramatically. Thus it is important to note that training is built around the philosophy of the school and that aspiring principals are matched accordingly.

The residency is where aspiring principals learn the craft of leadership. However, learning from experience is not inevitable; it requires deliberation, self-awareness, and constant feedback. Aspiring principals are trained to be reflective practitioners, who derive insight from their experiences and know how to modify their practice accordingly. Journal writing and regular, in-depth discussions with the mentor principal are critical to this process. One must be ready to look at one's own behaviors and ask, "What did I have to do to become more effective at leading?" "Am I coming on to strong?" "Not forceful enough?" "Am I using the right words to get across my message?" "Am I inspiring people or intimidating them?"

—Dennis Littky & Sarah Staveley-O'Carroll

In an earlier report on the internship, the SREB recommends that professional leadership associations can become voices for best practices in preparing and developing new school leaders by doing two things:

1. Advocating for quality internship experiences in school leader preparation, using their journals, conferences, workshops, and publications such as this book *to underscore the importance of quality internships* for aspiring principals and to showcase the essential ingredients for purposeful field experiences.
2. Supporting quality leadership preparation in the political arena by using their access to education decisionmakers to make the case for quality internships that give aspiring leaders opportunities to become proficient *before* they take the helm of a school. And professional organizations can support *requests for resources to build effective partnerships* between local districts and universities around quality internship programs. (SREB, 2001, p. 10)

Since the NPBEA program standards require college and university preparation to provide a minimum six-month, full-time internship experience for all students with substantial, capstone experiences, this drives the reform efforts for preparation programs at universities and colleges and underscores the vital importance of quality experiences in real school settings. Professional literature and research in the field of educational leadership also emphasize the critical importance of the internship. The school-site experience is viewed as the bridge that separates theoretical knowledge from practical understanding. In a study conducted by the North Central Regional Laboratory (2003) 2,600 principals reported on the practicum component of their preparation programs prior to becoming school administrators. The following table represents the breakdown on practicum experiences (by type) gained through university training programs for aspiring school leaders.

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

TYPE	% OF PRINCIPALS
Extensive (full-time)	22
Traditional (part-time)	51
No Practicum	27

Though there has been recent emphasis from professional leadership associations to extend the internship experience over more time (e.g., one year) and weave the internship throughout preparation coursework, the internship still remains a weak experience with a minimal amount of *practice* opportunity. Part of the problem is that most leadership preparation programs at colleges and universities have students that work full-time. These students do not have the financial capacity to give up their jobs to pursue a lengthy internship experience. This is not the case in all states, however. Some innovations have been made in school districts such as Fairfax County, Virginia, and state departments such as North Carolina to provide financial incentives for students to gain longer internship/mentor experiences. Unfortunately, the innovations that do exist concerning the internship usually involve collaborative relationships between school districts and universities, and these innovations are few and far between.

Several educators have suggested that we need to view leadership more as a performing art than as a specific set of skills, compe-

tencies, and knowledge (Sarason, 1993). When practicing a symphony, the orchestra has the opportunity to slow the tempo in order to practice certain sections. A medical student in residence has the opportunity to slow down and practice certain medical diagnoses and procedures. Sports teams spend most of their time in a *practice field*, slowing the tempo, and practicing certain moves, strategies, and assumptions. All these practice fields provide opportunities for making mistakes, under the direction of an experienced coach, in a protected space to enhance learning. Where and when during the traditional part-time school leader internship does the prospective administrator get a chance to slow down and practice certain moves or aspects of their job in schools?

Hallinger and Bridges (1997) describe higher education and K–12 schools as having different cultures. University professors are usually research centered and steeped in their discrete academic disciplines, whereas school leaders are consumed with practical solutions to problems that are multidisciplinary in nature (Lashway, 1999).

Nevertheless, several successful linkages between schools and universities have

EXEMPLARY INTERNSHIP MODEL

The North Carolina Principals Fellows Program (PFP) is an exemplary model of change from the traditional compliance-driven program to a results-driven approach to leadership preparation.

The program is also proof that collaboration between university preparation programs and state policymakers (in this case, the North Carolina legislature) can result in high-quality principal internship experiences. The program, which is funded by the North Carolina General Assembly, was established to ensure that highly qualified educators are able to earn the Master of School Administration (MSA) degree in two years on a full-time basis and to provide a cadre of well-trained administrative candidates to all North Carolina public school systems. Currently, there are 11 North Carolina Universities participating in PFP.

Principal Fellows are enrolled full-time in the MSA program at a university participating as an approved PFP site, complete a full-time internship in a public school during the second year of the program, and participate in professional development activities (*leadership practice field*) provided by the PFP. Fellows receive a scholarship loan of $20,000 per year of full-time study for a total of $40,000 over two years. While serving as interns, Principal Fellows receive a stipend in addition to the scholarship loan.

helped to strengthen the preparation of leaders and the linkages for the flow of resources between universities and schools. Examples include the University of Buffalo's work with area school districts to recruit and select the best candidates for its leadership program, the collaboration between New York City school districts and Baruch College of The City University of New York to develop a creative approach to leadership development that integrates craft knowledge from practitioners and research conducted by college professors (Stein & Gewirtzman, 2003), and the Leadership Academy: An Urban Network for Chicago combined with Northwestern University to offer leadership courses to principal trainees by education and management faculty and full-time internship experiences in Chicago schools for one full semester (Lewis, 1998).

The aspiring principal internship experience must be redesigned to include opportunities for prospective school principals to *practice* the components of the complex leadership roles of the principalship. Our traditional preparation programs certainly address what a candidate *might do* in a certain situation, but leadership practice fields (full-time internships) begin to focus on the issue of what the candidate *will actually do* in a real-life situation. If we desire to narrow or close the existing gap between what happens in the traditional part-time principal internship experience and what actually happens in a full-time internship in a school setting, we must provide more opportunities for prospective school principals to *practice* their skills where they can slow down and work on certain sections.

The internship should be viewed as a probationary period of actual practice and used as professional development. In this phase of practice, mentoring, support, and a system of feedback should be available to all new leadership candidates. Additionally, districts must ensure that time is provided for relevant leadership evaluation and professional development based on those evaluations. Finally, research has demonstrated that mentoring for new leaders not only improves their practice but facilitates retention as well. Policymakers must be informed about how best to use state and local resources to ensure high-quality internship experiences.

NASSP internship recommendations (compiled from portions of this and other NASSP publications) are:

- School districts should make improvements to principal internships
- School districts should work with universities to design graduate study programs that support the prioritized goals of the district; provide off-campus information sessions and registration and meeting sites; grant flexible class schedules and reduced tuition; and offer an in-house administrative credentialing program through the university
- States and/or the federal government should provide money to enable candidates to be paid while serving internships.

Grow Your Own

Another recent innovation in preparation is what many are calling "grow your own" programs. In an era of unprecedented accountability, school districts are participating more and more in the identification and preparation of future leaders. City systems such as Jefferson County Public School District (Kentucky), Huron Valley School District (Michigan), and Fort Wayne School (Indiana) are examples of "locally designed 'grow your own' principal candidate programs" (Educational Research Service, 2000, p. 50). "Grow your own" programs are often characterized as "hands-on and experiential" and provide a school system with a great way to gather information about future secondary school leader candidates. Creating their own distinct programs allows school districts to

personalize their programs in ways that colleges and universities cannot. However, research indicates that the most effective leadership preparation programs are those that are organized in "ways in which universities and school districts work collaboratively and as partners.

Daresh & Capasso (2003) have suggested that the internship should give program candidates opportunities to work on meaningful projects that will help the sponsoring school district develop and deliver better services to its students (p. 25). School districts, in cooperation with universities, can design graduate study programs that support the prioritized goals of the district, provide off-campus information sessions and registration and meeting sites, grant flexible class schedules and reduced tuition, and offer an in-house administrative credentialing program through the university (Lovely, 2001). Cooperative partnership arrangements between representatives of the larger education community might further benefit the schools by providing professional development for secondary school leaders, assistant principals, and emerging leaders and by making mentors, coaches, and support groups available to novice and aspiring school leaders (Pounder & Crow, 2005).

4-3 CHANGING ROLE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Lashway (2003) writes that "Leadership development is no longer just a 'front end,' one-time experience, but a lifelong process." Likewise, Jacob Adams and Michael Copeland (2005) make a distinction between a principal's entry-level skills and his or her expertise. A principal's entry-level skills do not indicate that a principal is able to "tackle the occupation's thorniest problems" (p. 2). The hardest and most consequential tasks require expertise beyond entry-level skills and a concerted effort to develop it.

Principals and assistant principals require and deserve continuous professional development if they are to meet the expectations of their role. This is true for all principals and assistant principals, whether they are recent graduates of preparation programs or veterans. The knowledge base required of tomorrow's principal is anchored in school improvement. As noted above, the standards environment and the press for accountability demand principals who are knowledgeable and skilled in instruction, organizational development, and change management. Thus, to effectively develop leadership capacity and assist school leaders in their changed roles, we must focus on professional development activities that concentrate on teaching, learning, assessment, and the processes of facilitating school improvement. Continuous, job-embedded professional development should address all of these factors.

The demand for new leaders with extensive knowledge and experience in curriculum and instruction provides a compelling rationale for the need to support new school leaders. All leaders are most vulnerable in the first few months in a new position because they lack detailed knowledge of the challenges they will face and what it will take to succeed in meeting them. They have also not yet developed a network of relationships. School districts need to think proactively, using key strategies for supporting new principals and assistant principals. Pairing a new principal with a veteran as a coach can provide effective support for a novice. In large districts, learning communities might be formed, grouping novices with veterans who can assist in developing skills for building school capacity.

NASSP professional development recommendations (compiled from portions of this and other NASSP publications) are:

- Professional development must be a standard benefit of principal contracts so that leaders grow in the areas of instructional leadership, management/

handling of crises, finance, school law, and time management

- Principals must be accountable for sustained student improvement, outcomes, and meaningful professional development for teachers and parents.

4-3.1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR RURAL SCHOOL LEADERS

Isolation and scarce resources affect many rural leaders as they try to strengthen their skills and guide their schools. Professional development delivery systems will need to address and overcome the problem of assisting isolated leaders. Existing exemplary programs may serve as models for collaborative professional development.

University collaborations with school districts are one type of successful model. In New Mexico, for example, LeadNM is a federally funded program that provides quality professional development for rural and multicultural secondary school leaders. The program uses "circuit riders"—retired principals who visit rural principals to provide coaching and support, along with Web-assisted and online training (*Principal Leadership in New Mexico*, n.d.). Circuit riders are also used in Maine's School Leadership Network (Donaldson, Bowe, Mackenzie, & Marnik, 2004). A similar program in Oregon, called Rural Education and Administrative Leadership, provides continuing professional development to decrease the effects of isolation.

Technology provides another means of delivering professional development to leaders of small and rural districts. In South Dakota, for example, technology has been a key to the success of the Midwest Alliance for Professional Learning and Leading, originating in Rapid City, South Dakota. Notebook computer technology used in the simulation gives a realistic picture of what administrators are experiencing in the field. Notebook computers, digital cameras, omni directional mikes, data sticks, and printers are used to support directors and assessors in providing meaningful and timely feedback. With the assistance of federal funds, the creative use of distance technologies, and the commitment of veteran principals willing to assist their isolated colleagues, schools in rural areas of the country are beginning to receive quality professional development support.

4-3.2 TIME FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The single most consistently expressed concern among principals is the lack of time for addressing the multiple expectations of their jobs, including time for their own professional growth. This challenge has far-reaching implications for professional growth. Principals and assistant principals are frequently discouraged from leaving their buildings and many are reluctant to do so. Yet the structures needed for deep learning that transfers into practice are long term, regular, and sustained. Full-day multiple-session meetings over an entire year should be allocated for every principal and assistant principal. Embedding professional development into the normal workday is also essential. For example, collaboration and classroom visitations can bring principals in a school district or within a rural region together to learn together without leaving many schools unsupervised. For superintendents and school boards, this may mean reprioritizing responsibilities, roles, and expectations.

Cross-school visitations and sharing of best practices by groups of administrators create true job-embedded professional development opportunities. Formation of cohorts of three to four principals or assistant principals is part of a strong movement in education to implement professional development programs that encourage administrative collaboration and improve student achievement within professional learning commu-

nities. A group facilitator can take responsibility for initiating, maintaining, monitoring, and concluding the group time. Members of the group initially present their area of focus or priorities for school improvement, outline their initiatives, and describe implementation plans. Using a collaborative framework, leaders soon learn how valuable the diverse opinions and experiences of their group's members can be by asking questions, making thoughtful suggestions, or sharing similar stories of successes or challenges.

Professional development contexts within schools should include individual and peer-group walk-throughs. Regular practice of classroom walk-throughs provides school leaders with one of the best resources for collecting data and monitoring implementation of best practices. Administrators will likely be expected to make this a regular part of their routine. Larger schools with administrative teams can also use this tool to stay in touch with actual practice, identify instructional patterns and trends, and identify areas for future professional development.

4-3.3 DELIVERY SYSTEMS

Acquiring and continually developing knowledge and skills cannot be accomplished in annual one-day retreats or workshops. Continual, job-embedded models of professional development will be essential to meet the needs of school leaders. Because models that actively engage them and provide collegial interaction are most likely to result in the transfer of skill into practice, practices that enable school leaders to learn with and from each other through learning communities, apprenticeships and mentoring are essential. An Educational Research Service (1999) publication says effective staff development for administrators is long term and planned, focused on student achievement, job-embedded, supportive of reflective practice, and provides opportunities to work, discuss, and problem solve with peers. The types of professional development activities that incorporate these principles include journal keeping, peer study groups, support networks, administrative portfolios, team training for school improvement, and personal professional development plans.

4-4 CHANGING ROLE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Policy can inform, compel, or inspire; it can be compulsory or voluntary in nature. One thing is clear: Many entities including educational institutions, private foundations, lawmakers, and administrators seek to influence federal, state, and local policy that affects the principalship. Further, policy influences many aspects of the principalship from who can be a school leader, to how that person is educated, to compensation, accreditation of graduate-level programs, and ways a secondary school leader continues training while on the job. To improve the system of preparing and developing principals, governors, and other state policymakers should focus on the following areas of influence in their states: licensure, preparation, and professional development.

4-4.1 A NEW LANDSCAPE—NCLB AND SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM

Perhaps the greatest recent change to the educational landscape has been generated by NCLB. NCLB's strong focus on educational accountability, which hinges on leveraging state policy changes, has significantly impacted schools and school leader responsibilities.

The basic tenets of the law appear reasonable and important: "It is an idea that seems so right you wonder how any decent-minded legislator could oppose it" (Raspberry, 2005). The law, however, is very complex, and the media tends to convey basic tenets that have wide appeal, without thorough examination of the intricacies of implemen-

tation. Educators, who have to ensure compliance with NCLB's provisions or face sanctions, know the difficulties of meeting the requirements.

Principals are directly responsible for schools meeting the requirements of NCLB and are on the "firing lines" both figuratively and literally. NCLB's requirements under accountability and highly qualified teachers combined with underfunding cause principals to spend hours attempting to meet challenges that seem unreachable, and dealing with public relations issues that result.

Accountability under NCLB is measured as adequate yearly progress (AYP). Under this system, schools are expected to show continuous improvement on mandated state tests by comparing student test results from different cohort groups each year. A school can be judged as needing improvement and be subject to sanctions because of one subgroup's failure to meet standards, yet that subgroup might have made substantial gains and is being compared to the scores of last year's subgroup, thus making the gain seem insignificant.

Meghan Doyle (2006), a member of NASSP's NCLB Task Force, explains: "For example, we compare this year's seventh grade scores to last year's seventh grade students (or this year's eighth grade students). [NCLB] does not take into account the differences in the groups of students, and it does not tell us whether we really made any improvement in our instruction or in the outcomes for students" (p. 5). The school leader needs to somehow work with and motivate teachers to address the requirements of the law to meet goals that many see as unattainable. One positive sign is that the federal government might be starting to address this problem: "In late November 2005, U.S Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced a program to pilot the use of growth models for AYP in 10 states" (Doyle, 2006, p. 10). NASSP advocates that AYP for each student subgroup be based on state-developed growth formulas that calculate growth in individual student achievement from year to year.

The "highly qualified" requirements of NCLB mandate that teachers meet specific certification requirements in order to teach. While the "highly qualified" provisions are supported by NASSP, enough flexibility should be provided to states and localities to ensure that schools have access to qualified candidates. Additionally, the "highly qualified" requirements only ensure that teachers are competent with respect to subject knowledge. To be truly highly qualified, a teacher must also be able to effectively communicate that knowledge to students.

"Highly qualified" provisions of the law have resulted in additional work for school leaders with respect to faculties and staffs to guide and assist them through the complicated maze of regulations and to help steer them on the right course to attain highly qualified status. To someone not familiar with the secondary school leader's role, this might seem like a task that can be accomplished with a meeting or two, but the complexities of individual situations and the emotional expense and worry that accompany such issues can exact a heavy toll on a principal's time and leave teachers and administrators anxious and worried.

Nelly Ward (2005) explains, "The lack of funding for NCLB is one of the most widely invoked criticisms of the act" (p. 2). The failure of the federal government to fully fund the act and still require compliance with all provisions has pushed financial responsibilities onto economically strapped states and local governments. Principals working with already meager resources and struggling to balance budgets and fund priorities find the requirements of NCLB to be another in a series of unfunded mandates.

The public relations ramifications of NCLB can also be substantial. Principals are sometimes left to explain to parents how and why their children are being taught by a teacher who is not highly qualified yet meets the licensing requirements of the state. AYP is a difficult concept to explain to parents, the public, and school boards, who often only know the "basics" (our school did not meet AYP) but don't understand the complexities. William Raspberry (2005) comments on this dilemma when he writes: "The problem is that there are 37 criteria that have to be met for 'adequate yearly progress.'...If a school meets 36 of 37, it's deemed as much of a failure as the school that got zero of the 37" (p. 2). While there are legitimate reasons to criticize the law, principals have to weigh carefully their public statements so as not to appear defensive or as though they are simply making excuses. School leaders also deal with confusion that results when state and federal reform mandates and testing results become blurred in the public's mind. NASSP is working to retain the effective portions of NCLB and improve, or "fix," the problems with the law.

The NASSP Task Force on NCLB has offered 21 recommendations that focus on often-criticized areas of NCLB: (1) assessments and adequate yearly progress; (2) teacher provisions; and (3) funding provisions. Additional issues including funding matters are also being addressed by the Association. NASSP's NCLB task force drew on the expertise of administrators from middle and high schools across the country to ensure a diversity of experience and perspective (Ward, 2005). The mission of the NCLB Task Force has been to study the effects of the law and regulations on school leaders and the nation's diverse educational structure, to identify specific challenges and problems related to NCLB that inhibit improved student achievement and the identification of low-performing schools, and to develop proposals and formal recommendations for Congress to improve NCLB and its regulations. NASSP's hope is to "make NCLB a more consistent, fair, and flexible law that builds schools' capacity to address academic needs of their students" (NASSP, 2005b).

For recommendations and information related to NCLB, visit www.principals.org/nclb.

4-4.2 SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM

The focus on school performance, often talked about in tandem with NCLB, has led to greater discussion of the purpose and success of the nation's middle and high schools. The concept of "High School and Middle School Reform" takes on many meanings and has many forms, but has typically involved: (1) restructuring the school day, (2) improving delivery systems by including technology, (3) increasing student academic expectations, (4) increasing the graduation rate, (5) preparing students for postsecondary education and/or the workplace, and (6) improving school administrative leadership by hiring and training personnel who are capable of envisioning a unique definition of school for the 21st century student.

Gerald Tirozzi, Executive Director of NASSP states, "For far too long middle and high schools have been the stepchild of education reform, but that may be changing. There are a number of policymakers, groups, and organizations at the state and federal levels—including NASSP—that are engaged in the discourse and efforts to improve the nation's secondary schools."

NASSP has led the nation's secondary school leaders in their mission to reform both high schools and middle schools and has published two highly successful books: *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform* and *Breaking Ranks in the Middle: Strategies for Leading Middle Level*

Reform. These publications provide tools and strategies to guide school administrative teams (at both the middle and high school levels) through a process of questioning, analyzing data, assessing teacher effectiveness, listening to student voices, planning, and taking action for effective school reform. NASSP offers two- and three-day Breaking Ranks training sessions that aim to build additional leadership capacity in school leaders and their teams who take on the challenge of school transformation. The training offers participants the tools and strategies to address and deal with the unique challenges facing school leadership including personalization, advisories, teaming, use of data, and other critical topics. The training program's design includes an interactive format for small- and large-group discussions, problem-solving assignments, as well as analysis and reflections necessary for meaningful comprehension and learning. The three-day train-the-trainer session provides a cadre of Breaking Ranks Trainers to facilitate this training program within their own schools, districts, and/or their state. The ultimate goal of NASSP is that this training program will be implemented on a statewide basis, reaching various educational audiences for the improvement of student learning and the development of successful schools. NASSP believes that true school reform comes through effective leadership.

In addition to The NCLB Task Force Legislative Recommendations, NASSP has produced a comprehensive set of legislative recommendations that support the tenets of the Breaking Ranks guides. Those recommendations are based on the following priority areas:

- Academic rigor and support
- Adolescent literacy
- Personalized learning
- Assessment
- Low-performing students
- Schools identified as "in need of improvement"
- High-quality school leadership
- Highly qualified teachers. (NASSP, 2005a)

For recommendations and information related to high school reform, visit www.principals.org/hsreform.

4-4.3 TAKING A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO POLICY REFORM

Although multiple stakeholders are involved in setting and implementing policy that impacts the future role of educational leadership, rarely do these stakeholders work together. However, through a partnership with the Wallace Foundation, the Council of Chief State School Officers is working with the Educational Commission of the States, the National Governors Association, and state education policymakers to implement sound policy and practice in the area of education leadership. The State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) has had mixed success, but it is an important step in the direction of collaboration.

The focus of SAELP is to not only develop and support effective leaders in an educational system but to change the conditions of leadership at all levels of the state system to improve student achievement. It is anticipated that this systematic approach to advance education leadership will result in the improvement of student achievement throughout a state and produce important lessons learned for application across the nation.

The states participating in SAELP are committed to reforming their state policies so that they are more supportive of leadership and learning. Within a select

number of states, the Wallace Foundation's LEAD districts work with the state to form a learning network focused on examining the effects of leadership on learning, analyze existing obstacles, and exploring strategic interventions that can, over time, produce new policies and practices that support greater student achievement. Specifically, LEAD districts are:

- Working with states to implement policies affecting leadership, from selection and certification to professional learning and governance
- Working with school boards to define policies in such areas as recruitment, retention, evaluation, incentives, and contracts
- Working with universities to influence the training and selection of aspiring leaders, as well as with local business leaders, community-based organizations, and parents
- Analyzing performance data and assessing academic programs and the quality of classroom/school practice
- Allocating human, financial, and intellectual resources in line with leadership and learning goals
- Defining student learning as the district's primary priority
- Creating systems so leaders can review student performance against standards.

SAELP and its national partners has been able to focus on a critical mass of states where there is political leverage and legal responsibility for improving public education policy and an interest in developing sound leadership policy and practice. Currently, 24 states are active in this project: Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

These SAELP states receive targeted technical assistance from a national consortium comprising the Council, the Education Commission of the States, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the National Governors Association. Since the national consortium member organizations are individually and collectively linked to a diverse set of state policymakers, decisionmakers, and educational researchers across the United States, they are able to help states mobilize key stakeholders to implement effective strategies and conditions for leadership excellence in their communities and states. More attention should be given to efforts such as SAELP to bring together relevant stakeholders in collaborative conversations, policy planning, and implementation.

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SECTION 5: CHANGED ROLE—PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

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The image of the principalship has shifted over the last decade from a position of pride and respect to an undesirable role to be avoided. It is observed that teachers and counselors who sought the principalship in the past are not pursuing the position today. Instead, they consider the incredibly long hours, unreasonable workload, unfair accountability, and undue pressures from all angles and choose to avoid the once-admired seat of authority (Pierce, 2000). The role of the school leader has swelled in recent years to include a staggering array of responsibilities. School leaders are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, and guardians of various legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives.

Globalization, increasing diversity, accountability, economic shifts, and constant change—these are forces that shape leadership today and will increasingly do so as we move into the future. Americans are aware of the globalization of business and the continued revolution in telecommunications. This globalization effects changes to the U.S. educational system. U.S. businesses once sent graduates of American schools to foreign soil to direct and guide subsidiaries and branch offices. Now, U.S. business finds itself hiring a growing number of foreign individuals or moving entire business operations to international locations. U.S. students from rural, suburban, and urban environments are stepping into a worldwide market. Along with global changes, the U.S. educational system is experiencing a growth in student population and a growing diversity in the population.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, public school enrollments in the upper grades rose from 11.3 million in 1990 to 14.3 million in 2003, with a projected enrollment of 14.8 million for 2005. Overall, school enrollment is projected to set new records every year from 2006 until at least 2014 and trends are expected to reach an all-time high of 50 million students. (U.S. Department of Education, 2006) This growth trend anticipates an ever increasing student diversity ratio. Since 2004, 57% of the students were White; 19% Hispanic; 16% Black; and 4% Asian, Pacific Islander, and other. However, immigration will continue to be a significant factor for increasing school diversity that will in turn affect school culture which will impact school leader's responsibilities. Twenty-two percent of students today have at least one foreign-born parent and five percent are foreign-born themselves (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2005).

School leaders today, and in years to come,

must be prepared to adjust to this changing school environment and develop new skills to effectively improve schools and educate every student. The educational community continues to be critical of the performance of school leaders and to look to effective school leadership as the link to improved student achievement in today's era of high-stakes accountability. There is little defense for the exasperating attacks on the principalship, acclaimed as being the pivotal position in our quest for sustainable school improvement. Yet, most school leaders are tossed into new leadership assignments with inadequate preparation, mentoring, and supports orchestrated by their school jurisdictions, and given a limited time to accomplish the school performance targets set for them by their system heads. NCLB has established a reporting mechanism that takes the school report card from the family house to the state house. The pressures that secondary school leaders face to ensure that their schools meet yearly adequate yearly progress requirements are enormous with no apparent relief in sight. In a decentralized system where the level of accountability is not commensurate with the level of authority, and where resources are not equitable, the secondary school leader's role is made even more difficult. School leaders are often the last to come and the first to go, particularly in troubled urban school districts. It is no wonder that educators increasingly view the role of the school administrator as more challenging than the job is worth.

These new circumstances create unusual demands as well as opportunities for school leaders. The increasing accountability has created a new paradigm under which schools function, calling for new missions, structures, and relationships. As the call for school improvement moves to the forefront of education priority, the job of the school leader is becoming more complex. It requires new roles and new forms of leadership carried out under careful public scrutiny while simultaneously trying to keep day-to-day management on an even keel (Dunklee, 2000). Although not a new expectation, school leaders have to be learning leaders in their schools. While this shift has been in practice for some years, many practicing principals trained to be effective managers are stretching their capacity to make the transition to leaders of learning.

Although current trends indicate that pressure to change and improve schools will continue to rest upon the shoulders of secondary school leaders, NASSP's school leaders have told us over and over again that, as much as they want to provide leadership for school improvement, managerial expectations have taken precedence. Disciplining students, dealing with parents and community issues, scrambling for teachers and other resources for their under-resourced schools, and supervising student activities have sapped the time they long for to work with teachers on curriculum and instruction. If we are going to continue to expect leadership for learning from school leaders then many things within our field must change. Colleges and universities must continue to strive to make their educational administrative programs more relevant by incorporating more performance-based requirements for candidates. At the same time, more work is needed in preparation evaluation, which would enable the field to understand more clearly the aspects of preparation that are most important as well as where improvements are needed.

Similarly, the changing role of the principalship has implications for professional development. As principals assume major responsibility for school accountability, they will need substantial and sustained support if they are to become expert instructional leaders. A model professional development program may produce knowledgeable and skilled principals, but those leaders will not be able to make a difference as long as traditional priorities for school leaders prevail. There is no greater way for a school system to show that it values its leaders than to invest in the ongoing professional development of principals and assistant principals and establish clear career paths for advancement. Policymakers, school boards, superintendents, and communities who invest in the professional development of school leaders will need to find ways of structuring the role to increase the probability that their investment will pay dividends in terms of school capacity and student achievement.

It is the collective responsibility of the education community at-large to build a network of support for the principalship through thoughtful succession planning. School districts can do a lot to restore the negative, failure-prone image of the school administrator to one that is respected, appreciated, and protected. To ensure the success of our school leaders in their complex roles is to ensure the success of the schools they operate and the students they serve. Although traditional succession planning involves hiring talent from within the district, regional service centers, particularly those with leadership centers or academies, can also serve as a center for identifying individuals with strong leadership skills, both from within and outside the profession.

The role of the principalship has undoubtedly changed. This report has presented some emerging models of effective practice, models of succession planning, designs for exemplary professional development practices, and suggestions for closing the gap between preparation and practice. We have presented some systemic support structures to help school leaders avoid some of the pitfalls of the job and initiate corrective actions when they run into problems. Principals and assistant principals must be provided more such support structures—at all levels. This may provide a powerful influence to encourage school leaders to stick with the job and contribute to capacity building for future leadership succession.

It is time to abandon the warped psychology of the education community that buys into the notion that secondary school leaders continue to fail, but the systems that should be there to undergird them are exempt from accountability. We can make the role of the principalship more attractive when goals and expectations are well articulated, accountability is balanced with authority, a sense of support from the superintendent is demonstrated, there is protection from political interference, and there is greater control over the assignment of teachers (Pierce, 2000). As respect for the school leader's position is regained and emanates resoundingly throughout the school community, firm commitments to attracting and retaining the best candidates for the principalship and extending support to new and veteran principals will be forthcoming.

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