Winter 2015 • Volume 81-2

International Journal for Professional Educators

The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin

Teacher Leadership in Nonsupervisory Roles

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The *Bulletin*, the official journal of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, promotes professional and personal growth of members through publication of their writings.

The *Bulletin* invites materials appropriate to the Society's Purposes: position papers, applied and/or data-based research, reviews of literature, program descriptions, and other articles on announced themes or other topics of interest to educators; letters to the editor; book and technology reviews; poetry; and graphic arts.

Prose manuscripts for the *Bulletin*, a refereed journal, are reviewed by the Editorial Board and the Society editorial staff. Selection is based on relevance of the topics addressed, accuracy and validity, contribution to the professional literature, originality, quality of writing, and adherence to Submission Guidelines (see page 59). Editorial Board members evaluate each submission's focus, organization, development, readability, and relevance to the general audience of *Bulletin* readers. Due to the diversity of the *Bulletin* audience, material that expresses a gender, religious, political, or patriotic bias is not suitable for publication.

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The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin (ISSN 0011-8044; USPS 715-850; IPM 0302295) is published quarterly each year by The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, 416 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1589, Austin, TX 78767-1589. Periodicals Postage paid at Austin, Texas. Subscription, U.S. $20 per year; single copies, $5 each. International dues include subscription to *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*. Views expressed do not necessarily agree with positions taken by The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*
P.O. Box 1589, Austin, TX 78767-1589

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Published by the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

Call for Submissions

Members are encouraged to submit manuscripts for consideration by the *Bulletin* Editorial Board. The Delta Kappa Gamma *Bulletin* accepts Action/Classroom Research, Qualitative Research, Quantitative Research, Reviews of Literature, Program Descriptions, Position Papers, Book/Technology Reviews, Graphic Arts, Letters to the Editor, and Poetry. Manuscripts should be focused, well organized, effectively developed, concise, and appropriate for *Bulletin* readers. The style should be direct, clear, readable, and free from gender, political, patriotic, or religious bias. For more detailed information, please refer to the Submission Guidelines on page 59 and the Submission Grid on page 60. Listed below are the suggested themes of upcoming issues. Although there is a suggested theme for each issue, manuscripts on all topics are welcome.

Policy and Practice (Online)
(deadline is March 1, 2015)

Impact of Policy • Unfunded Mandates • Impacting Policy • Sustaining Change • "Jumping Off the Bandwagon"

Educating the Whole Child (Online)
(deadline is May 15, 2015)

Social • Emotional • Civic • Career-readiness • Arts and Humanities Crisis Management • Safety/Violence • Changing Role of the Teacher • Emergent Learning

Early-Learning Environments (Online)
(deadline is October 1, 2015)

Gender • Funding • Family • Pre-K • Interventions • Community- and Family-Based Initiatives • Partnerships with Nonpublic Institutions/Entities

Submit all materials to:

***Bulletin* Editorial Staff**

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From the Editor

In a traditionally hierarchical profession, many educators are comfortable with the idea that their leaders include those who supervise or oversee their work within the context of setting direction for a department, school, district, or other educational enterprise. In fact, many who aspire to lead in education see supervisory and administrative certifications as necessary to access positions in which they can influence education. However, particularly in a time of rapid change and demand for greater achievement, the capacity to lead and to impact education is not the exclusive domain of those in supervisory roles. As authors in this issue argue and demonstrate, teacher leadership in nonsupervisory roles can manifest in many ways—through mentoring that provides unique assistance to fellow educators or to young people; through development of innovative approaches to curriculum implementation; and through research that illuminates new practices and policies.

Dr. Lyn Schmid, DKG international president 2014-2016, sets the stage for this issue as she shares her deep and informed understanding of leadership, both in the classroom and in DKG. Drawing on extensive reading and experience, Schmid explores a vision of leadership as an opportunity for any educator—and any DKG member—to collaborate with others to enable each individual to utilize his or her unique set of skills to the fullest. In their qualitative case study of three teacher leaders, Shillingstad, McGlamery, Davis, and Gilles analyze such collaboration in a comprehensive induction program of mentoring for first-year teachers. Similarly, Augustine-Shaw reports on a statewide task force to design an effective program for mentoring new building leaders, and Bohannon and Bohannon offer inspiration for developing a mentoring program for young people.

Apart from working directly in mentoring others, teacher leaders also impact education by pioneering new approaches and by researching practices and policies that impact teaching and learning. Hurt shares her implementation of passion projects to create a new enthusiasm among her high school students for researching, writing, and presenting to peers. Isbell and Szabo detail their research regarding teacher efficacy, particularly in the context of demands to implement innovations such as Response to Intervention. In the same vein, as adoption of Common Core State Standards in the United States requires innovative use of technology to instruct and assess students, Luther reports on research in one state to assess the readiness of school personnel to use Web 2.0 technology.

The issue concludes with a book review to intrigue and inform readers. In a global economy, educators are increasingly concerned with readying young people to compete. Bledsoe considers journalist Amanda Ripley's investigation of the policies and practices that allow students in several foreign countries to outperform Americans and others.

Charlotte Danielson, author of *Teacher Leadership that Strengthens Professional Practice* (ASCD, 2006), wrote, "The term teacher leadership refers to that set of skills demonstrated by teachers who continue to teach students but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere" (p. 12). Given this definition, the possibilities for teacher leadership in nonsupervisory roles are endless—and are clearly available to DKG members who, envisioned as *Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide*, embrace their mission to promote the professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

Planning for collegial magazine

At the 2014 international convention, DKG members amended the Society's *Constitution* to place the *Bulletin* journal entirely online and to add a collegial magazine. The new publications schedule will begin with Volume 82 in 2015. Unlike the journal, the collegial magazine will not have a predetermined theme. Submission categories for the magazine will be as follows:

Classroom Practice/Program	Describes a practice or initiative used in a classroom to advance educational excellence
DKG Chapter/State Organization Practice/Program	Describes a practice or initiative used by a chapter or state organization to advance the purposes of DKG
Viewpoint on Current Issue	Defines and addresses an issue related to education, women and children, or DKG
Personal Reflection or Anecdote	Shares a personal experience that provides insight to the human condition, particularly related to educators and women
Inspirational Piece	Provides transcript of speech delivered at chapter, state, regional, or international events
Bio and/or Interview	Shares the story or thoughts of a key woman educator or leader in education, women's issues, or children's issues
Book Review	Combines a summary and personal critique of a textbook, resource, or book (fiction or nonfiction) related to education or to women and children
Technology Review	Combines a summary and personal critique of an educational application, program, or piece of hardware that is useful in the classroom or that is useful in the life of a woman educator
Letter to the Editor	Responds to materials previously published in the magazine; must include author's name and chapter/state of membership
Poetry/Short Story	Expresses original thought in any brief poetic or short story format

The editorial board members are excited about the launch of this new endeavor, designed to meet the needs of more members and more fully realize the mission of the *Bulletin*: to promote the professional and personal growth of members through publication of their writings. Watch the DKG NEWS and the DKG Web site at www.dkg.org for additional information on submissions and deadlines—and thank you in advance for your support!

Judith R. Merz, EdD
Editor

The *Icon Woman* as Leader: An Interview with International President Dr. Lyn Schmid

By Judith R. Merz

This interview continues a series initiated by members of the Bulletin's *Editorial Board. The goal of the series is to feature interviews conducted with Delta Kappa Gamma members or other educational leaders on a topic related to the theme of the issue. Here,* Bulletin *editor Merz presents the results of an interview with Dr. Lyn Babb Schmid, International President 2014-2016, The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.*

Although not always referenced explicitly, the concept of leadership is deeply embedded in Delta Kappa Gamma. Certainly leadership is one of the growth areas implicit in the Society's mission statement: *The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.* In addition, the vision statement of DKG clearly identifies members as *Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide.* Not surprisingly, one of the key goals of the organization's Educational Excellence Committee is to "develop strategies that will enable chapters to encourage members to become leaders." The Leadership Management Seminar is a key event of the Golden Gift Fund, and those who apply to the Eunah Temple Holden Leadership Fund are urged to "continue the footprints Eunah Temple Holden made in leadership—step forward!" And of course, the international Leadership Development Committee provides training and support for those who accept leadership roles in the Society at all levels.

Interestingly, this implicit and explicit emphasis on leadership applies to all members—not just to those who hold leadership positions or titles per se. Members include classroom teachers, support personnel, administrators, college-level educators, and others in varied educational positions. Clearly, in the world of DKG, leadership is not limited to those in supervisory positions. Thus, in an issue devoted to *Teacher Leadership in Nonsupervisory Roles*, it seems appropriate to explore the theme of leadership with DKG's 2014-2016 international president, Dr. Lyn Babb Schmid.

Schmid received her doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. During her 35-year career, she taught secondary English and served as a secondary and elementary reading specialist, as well as a reading supervisor. She retired as an elementary principal, having represented the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary School Principals on the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education's Act 48 Leadership Liaison Committee and having mentored protégé principals for the Pennsylvania System of Higher Education Mentoring Network. In her nomination comments, Schmid noted, "Our vision statement—*Leading Women Educators Impacting*

Education Worldwide—puts Delta Kappa Gamma on the way to making a nationwide and global impact on teacher-leader development."

Dr. Schmid, how would you define leadership?

I posted something on my Facebook page recently from John C. Maxwell: "Leadership is not about titles, positions or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another." The concept that I have of leadership in DKG is this wave of energy and purpose that engages, influences, and pulls others into the work of leadership. We are all leaders engaged in fulfilling our Society Purposes and mission.

> *"[Consider] the idea of a cycle for new-style leadership, based on reciprocity in relationships, learning, and shared sense of purpose, all in the context of a community."*

We've often heard it said in DKG that every teacher is a leader. Please reflect on that point of view.

All DKG women are leaders—in their schools, churches, communities, organizations, and homes—as they influence others through their work and their caring. Leadership involves opportunities to examine perceptions and assumptions about our Society through continuing conversations; to inquire about and generate ideas together; to make sense of our work in light of shared purposes and current information; and to make decisions and create actions that grow out of these new understandings. I often wonder what our chapters would look like if all members were leading in the way I know they can lead. There would be terrific attendance at meetings, no shortage of outstanding programs, a big community impact, every generation learning together, and other women educators clamoring to be initiated!

In your career, you served as an elementary school principal. In what ways did you see teachers becoming leaders in roles that were nonsupervisory?

Susan Cain (2012), the author of *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, wrote that there is no right way to be a leader. My job as an elementary principal was to build the leadership capacity of the teachers whom I supervised. When teachers are allowed to work together, as well as on their own, to think creatively about solutions to problems, they drive schools of change. When teachers rotate the leadership of teacher teams, then school environments change.

As an administrator—i.e., one with positional leadership and authority—how did you encourage teacher leadership?

Leadership connects closely with learning. Just as we now realize that learning is about more than filling an empty vessel, so we began to realize that leadership is about more than control of people. We began to work on developing the concept of communities of learners and leaders. What we wanted to do was bring learning and leading closer together, going away from a style of leadership where someone is "in charge" and toward one marked by facilitation and teacher-leaders asking themselves questions such as "How do I contribute to the learning of others?" and "How do others contribute to my learning?" Co-learning and working collaboratively with each other are invested in these questions.

Leadership in this context is about the processes that enable participants in a community to construct meanings that lead toward a shared purpose of schooling. This is an approach more embedded in the patterns of relationships, interactions, and learning together within the school. So the ultimate question became "How do we make sense of our learning, our teaching, and our relationships together?" If we are together in community, in dialogue, and we're talking about what's important, a shared purpose continues to emerge, strengthen, and evolve, together with new concepts about who leads, how, and when.

So this changed the questions that we asked about leadership. No longer did we concern ourselves so much with what the principal was or was not. Rather we started looking for strong leadership that was characterized by teachers leading particular initiatives. Linda Lambert (1998), in her book *Building Leadership Capacity in Schools*, called this "skillful broad-based participation in this work called 'leadership'," and she caused us to think about the idea of a cycle for new-style leadership, based on reciprocity in relationships, learning, and shared sense of purpose, all in the context of a community.

What is the practical implication of the DKG vision in terms of our members and their work in schools?

LEADING WOMEN EDUCATORS is our vision to maximize the skills and sustainability of our teacher-members. It focuses on increasing their leadership capacity to drive schools of change. Nothing could be more important in schools today than learning how to build these communities of learners and leaders working together to improve school environments and promoting learning of students and aspirations of teachers.

The second part of our vision is *IMPACTING EDUCATION WORLDWIDE*. Nothing could be more personal, intimate, and local than the process in which youth come to age while learning from a gifted teacher. Our mission is to eradicate the ever-increasing financial and technological gap between more-developed and less-developed nations through education. I think that nothing less is at stake today than the survival of democracy across the globe and the role of public education in that enterprise.

In your acceptance speech, you noted, "We will look to extend our audience and reach by bringing in the new Delta Kappa Gamma Icon Women who will advance us into the next generation and evolution of our Society." What or who are DKG Icon Women?

My theme for 2014-2016 is *85 Years and Beyond: Advancing Key Women Educators for Life*. If we want to see DKG flourish for the next 85 years, it's time to begin to think carefully about whom we are going to bring into our Society to meet the challenges of the evolution to the next generation of the organization.

Several years ago I attended a speech by Tom

Lyn Babb Schmid, EdD, a member of Chi Chapter in Alpha Alpha State Organization (PA), has served as a leader at all levels of DKG, including as president of her chapter and state organization. Prior to being elected as international president (2014-2016), Schmid was Northeast Regional Director (2010-2012) and Second Vice President (2012-2014) of DKG. mschmid@supernet.com

Judith R. Merz, EdD, retired as a school superintendent after a 35-year career in New Jersey. A member of Alpha Chapter in Alpha Zeta State (NJ), she held many leadership positions, including president of the chapter and of the state organization. Merz has been on the editorial board since 1996 and began her tenure as editor in 2010. jrmerz@aol.com

Peters, the author of *In Search of Excellence* (1982). In that speech, he predicted that, in the next 10 years, the white collar world is going to undergo as big a transformation as the blue collar world did in the last 50 years. He told our large group of educational administrators that, for the past decade, we were in the midst of the era of "Information Intensification." But now we are entering the era of "Creation Intensification," and we are not prepared!

We can't move forward to improve our schools, Delta Kappa Gamma, or the culture that creates them until we inculcate the mindset for change. In Michael Fullan's (1993) book, *Change Forces*, he says, "to restructure is not to reculture, but to reculture is to restructure." So we must begin to think differently to reculture our Society.

I challenge you to go to any 10th grade history book and pull out names of those who moved the nation, moved science, or moved literature forward. They were all disrespectful, not in the sense of their personality, but in the sense that they were mavericks, risk seekers, out of the box thinkers, rebels, and humanists—all people who do not fit tidily into our current educational or organizational system.

People—mavericks—are going to make way for the changes that are necessary for us to reculture. Peters described who he thinks is the person we should all be bringing into our organization to get it in shape for the next decade. He calls her *Icon Woman*.

Icon Woman is totally turned on by her work. It's all she talks about and dreams about. The work is "cool," and she is constantly in your face with her work to the point where it will drive you crazy! She is curious, laughs a lot, messes up sometimes, but isn't hard on herself. She realizes that the way you learn good judgment is to make a whole lot of bad judgments. She associates with outrageous people, sleeps and eats renewal, and is determined to make a difference.

The implications for our Society are that we need more mavericks and we need more maverick methods. This is not the era for traditional methodology—we need to encourage the creativity that will generate the new ideas that will form the next era of thinking.

Fullan quoted John Kennedy as saying, "Conformity is the enemy of growth." I think that a lot of our chapters have stayed with traditional methods because they have worked for us in the past, and it's hard to argue with success. But now we are on our way into a new age, this age of Creation Intensification, and we need to reexamine how we are going to be a viable Society for new and experienced members.

By sheer coincidence or by grand plan, we members are going to be running the ship that is Delta Kappa Gamma when the greatest change in the way the world operates is going to impact forever. So the time to begin recruiting these Icon Women is now! They will lead DKG into the generation of the evolution of our Society and keep us sustainable and viable for the next 85 years.

You also indicated that DKG must "encourage members to lead from any chair in the organization." How is that possible?

"Leading from any chair" is a practice derived from Zander and Zander's (2002) book, *The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life*. Ben Zander talks about his role of orchestra conductor as being a near-mythical maestro leader who could easily feel he is superior and suppress the voices of the very musicians on whom he must rely to deliver his vision to the audience. He makes the point that the conductor of an orchestra does not make a sound. His true power derives from his ability to make other people powerful.

So the question becomes, "What makes a group (chapter) lively and engaged?" instead of "How good a leader am I?" I believe that leadership in DKG's new evolution is more

about enabling each member to use her unique set of skills as she is capable.

Zander and Zander wrote that a monumental question for leaders in any organization to consider is "How much greatness are we willing to grant people?" The activity of leadership is not limited to chapter or state organization president. Indeed, it is the member who energizes the chapter by communicating her newfound appreciation for a program or a project, or a member who decides that her chapter must contribute to a Society purpose or goal.

Listening for a passion or a commitment, then, is the most important practice of the leader of the chapter. She can look into the eyes of the members and prepare to ask the question, "Who am I being that they are not passionate or committed to DKG?" She can invite involvement and interest. She can watch for that passion or commitment to develop in a member and be ready to hand her the baton.

Finally, the role of the member creates the circle that is "leading from any chair." Zander writes that "a leader does not need a podium; she can be sitting quietly on the edge of any chair, listening passionately and with commitment, fully prepared to take up the baton." The leader may be any one of us.

Sources cited in Dr. Schmid's remarks:

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Navigating the Roles of Leadership: Mentors' Perspectives on Teacher Leadership

By Saundra L. Shillingstad, Sheryl McGlamery, Barbara Davis, and Carol Gilles

The qualitative study described in this article began as a collaborative project among three universities offering comprehensive induction programs to first-year teachers. Fourteen teacher mentors were selected to participate in this case study of teacher leaders and leadership. Three of the 14 teacher leaders were selected to participate in a special case study of their leadership development. The researchers found the leadership qualities of these three teacher leaders to be exemplary and wanted to explore in more depth how they developed and shared their skills as leaders with their mentees and colleagues. The three participants, who represented perspectives from three varied states, discussed their perspectives on leadership, the challenges they faced in their role as mentor, how they learned to navigate school culture in the role of mentor teacher leader, and their influence on their mentees.

Background

This study was conducted by members of the Comprehensive Teacher Induction Consortium (CTIC). The CTIC, a national organization formed in 2008, includes individuals from a group of teacher-induction programs that have successfully utilized a similar model for the past 20 years. Although seven programs have been identified in the United States, the consortium currently has five researchers who collaborate across programs. Teacher educators, we represent the University of Missouri, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Texas State University-San Marcos. All three programs are based on the Albuquerque Public Schools/University of New Mexico (APS/UNM) Teacher Induction Program model, which was established in 1984.

After meeting to discuss common goals for teacher induction and mentoring, we agreed to collaborate in an effort to share ideas and research opportunities. Our comprehensive teacher-induction programs enable us to compare data across programs because we share five crucial components: (a) a full year of mentored support for first-year, already-certified teachers by full-time, experienced teachers who have been released from their classroom duties; (b) ongoing support for mentors in the form of weekly or monthly seminars; (c) coursework leading to a master's degree, which new teachers complete in 15 months; (d) a cohort group of beginning teachers; and (e) job-embedded professional development, e.g., teacher research, peer coaching, and videotaped teaching reflections

(Gilles, Davis, & McGlamery, 2009).

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the research team collected data on mentor teachers as teacher leaders. Using a common set of interview questions, we explored many aspects of teacher leadership, including the contributions of mentor teachers to the development of beginning teachers' leadership skills. In this article, we share some of our findings on mentor teachers and their leadership contributions.

Our purposes in writing this article are to highlight the contributions mentor teachers have made in the development of teacher leaders. Further, we seek to make explicit the personal challenges mentors face as teacher leaders and how their leadership has influenced the development of their mentees as teacher leaders. We present three case studies of mentors who have been recognized as outstanding teacher leaders by school districts, principals, and their teacher mentees.

Literature Review

One need not delve very deeply into the research to find that classroom teachers are stepping outside of their classrooms and becoming more involved in leadership roles within their buildings, districts, and communities (Harrison & Killion, 2007; Kurtz, 2009). Many teachers are released from their full-time teaching responsibilities to serve in the role of mentor to new teachers in their buildings or districts. Mentors assume a wide range of roles in their leadership positions. Some of the roles are formally assigned, whereas other roles are informal. Whether their roles are assigned formally or informally, mentors assist in shaping the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of their mentees and colleagues. Further, mentors assist in improving school culture and influence practice among their mentees and peers (Barth, 2001; Danielson, 2006; Kurtz, 2009).

Mentors serve their mentees, district, and P-12 students as curriculum and instructional specialists, resource providers, classroom supporters and learning facilitators, school leaders and learners, data coaches, and catalysts for change (Harrison & Killion, 2007). Teacher leaders who step into the role of mentor face significant responsibilities. Within these multifaceted roles, mentors encounter triumphs and challenges. Effective teacher leaders draw upon their extensive knowledge of curriculum, best practices, and current research and courageously share their experiences and expertise with their mentees and peers. Mentors step up and accept the responsibility for the learning of each and every student, act as role models for their colleagues and mentees, and guide and support them in the quest to improve school culture and achievement ("Teacher leadership: New roles for teacher leaders," 2013).

Methodology

This study was nested within a theoretical construct of constructivism. The theory of constructivism emphasizes that individuals actively construct their own knowledge (Smith, 1971; Woolfolk, 1998). Our goal was to capture each individual mentor's constructed understandings of teacher leadership. In order to accomplish the task, we developed a set of semistructured interview questions. For the purpose of this research, the interview questions utilized were focused, semistructured, and open-ended (Bogdan & Biklin, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the unstructured interview is the best mode to use for a naturalistic study. However, Merriam (2009) suggested that, in a qualitative study, one may also use a less structured format—the semistructured interview.

In this study, we conducted two rounds of interviews using the semistructured

interview format. Fourteen mentors in the CTIC participated in Interview I, which focused on teacher induction and the development of teacher leadership. Following analysis of data from Interview 1, we desired additional data regarding how mentors' understanding of leadership had changed, challenges mentors faced in their role as mentor, how they learned to navigate school culture, and how their mentorship influenced their mentees to be leaders. Each CTIC group chose one mentor to be interviewed a second time. Jill, Nelda, and Kate (pseudonyms) participated in Interview II and responded to additional questions designed to help us further understand the dynamics, roles, and responsibilities of those serving in mentoring roles.

Participants

Three teacher leaders were invited to participate in this study. Jill, Nelda, and Kate each served as mentors to beginning teachers in the CTIC. Jill had been an educator for more than 25 years. She had served in many roles in her career: classroom teacher, administrative assistant, reading specialist, and mentor. Over the past 12 years, she had mentored 26 teachers. Nelda, a reserved, soft-spoken Hispanic female in her mid-fifties, had been an educator for more than 20 years. For most her teaching career, she taught third and fourth grade. In 2005, Nelda began serving in the role of mentor to teachers in her district. Kate, as well, had been involved in education for 20 years and had served as a mentor at the elementary level for the last 4 years. She had also served as a mentor at a middle school for 6 years and had taught fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. Kate had fulfilled various leadership responsibilities for both her school and the district.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to consider the following questions that were the basis for Interview II: How has your understanding of leadership changed since you became a mentor? What are some challenges you have faced in your leadership role and how you have met them? How do you navigate school culture and how do you help others navigate it? How do you feel you have influenced mentees to be leaders? Give one example of a mentee that you have followed: How has that person become a leader? What influence do you think you have had on your mentee?

Findings: Perspectives on Leadership

Jill. When asked *How has your understanding of leadership changed since you became a mentor?* Jill responded: "Leaders have a vision for the future. They have the ability to help others see that vision and want to be a part of it." She continued,

> I have always understood that leaders must not be afraid to face confrontation; however, I now have more tools to be able to do that. I have attended workshops, read books, practiced with peers, and initiated some fierce conversations. Some of those conversations resulted in positive change. Some of them did not. So another understanding of leadership is that not everyone is always going to be 100% committed to the tasks that I am committed to, but I have to know that I have tried all possible avenues before I can accept that fact.

Nelda. According to Nelda, serving as a full-time mentor helped her expand in her role as a teacher leader. She defined a teacher leader as "a teacher of teachers. A teacher leader is someone effective, experienced, and knowledgeable . . . [someone who] is willing to take the responsibility of supporting and facilitating professional growth for teachers." She demonstrated this ability to help novice teachers grow professionally by helping

them develop plans for improvement in their classrooms, especially in the area of literacy instruction. Nelda pointed out, "I try to help them create a strategic plan to help their readers become better readers and their writers become better writers, especially those struggling students . . ."

A critical part of this planning process, she explained, involves analyzing student data and using this information to guide instruction. The novice teachers' instructional plans also needed to be aligned to the district and state standards. "We came up with plans on how to focus on those struggling students who were having a hard time and how to help them become more successful readers and writers," Nelda noted. Not only did she help teachers develop strategic and focused plans for improvement, she actually modeled effective instruction in their classrooms. For example, she demonstrated how to implement guided reading, book talks, the workshop approach, and reading/writing conferences. She scaffolded the teachers' learning by coming alongside, observing, and gently coaching them as they tried out these strategies on their own. This *side by side* approach to mentoring helped novice teachers practice and develop expertise under the guidance of a more knowledgeable peer. In an online interview survey, one of Nelda's mentees wrote, "Nelda's expertise was invaluable. After 7 years of teaching, I still use some of her strategies with struggling readers." Another mentioned, "Nelda was such an inspiration and so helpful to have by my side during my first year of teaching. I value how she showed me the importance of modeling for young children, especially in writing."

> *"Teacher leaders who step into the role of mentor face significant responsibilities. Within these multifaceted roles, mentors encounter triumphs and challenges."*

Kate. When asked her views on leadership, Kate maintained,

> The role itself [being a mentor] requires you to step up and be a leader—to anticipate the needs of others and be able to meet those needs in a way that is timely and respectful and allows others to see their strengths while at the same time building upon those things that they need to work on.

She suggested that the beginning teachers (mentees), the other teachers, and the principal look to the mentor for leadership in natural ways. Because Kate had a flexible schedule, she was more readily available to problem-solve with teachers and the principal, and these conversations could lead to new ideas or initiatives. As Kate maintained, "You are stepping forward to take on those roles and initiate some of those roles." Kate also believed that the Teacher Induction Program helped her develop leadership skills. She cited the monthly meetings, in which the CTIC coordinators shared information about mentoring, coaching, and classroom research, as helping her develop a stronger mentoring skill set. In addition, she suggested that the monthly meetings enabled her "to network with other mentors, to hear what they are doing, to gain ideas through them. I think that the topics that we talk about help me to … be a reflective practitioner." Kate also believed that being in classrooms as an observer put her in a slightly more analytical position in which "you are trying to figure out things so you can support the beginning teachers (mentees)." Those experiences honed her skills as a teacher.

Findings: Challenges

Jill. Jill faced challenges in her role as mentor. She noted that she had grown stronger

in her belief that teachers must develop a variety of strategies to meet the needs of all students: "one size does not fit all." She continued,

> It is a challenge when I mentor someone who is teaching a grade level or content area that is not in my "background experience." As an example, I am an elementary teacher by degree and experience. This year I have mentored a high school biology and chemistry teacher. I first had to establish myself in his mind as being an asset. I confidently described how I could help him with classroom management, lesson design, understanding assessments, differentiation, and student, parent, and peer relationships. I told him who my "lifelines" would be when I could not help him with specific curriculum content questions. After that, I made sure that I listened carefully to his questions and concerns and used my lifelines to give him the best information possible. I scheduled an opportunity for him to observe district peers teaching the same classes that he teaches, thus increasing his network of science experts.

Nelda. With her principal's encouragement, Nelda left the familiarity of her own classroom and moved into the unchartered territory of full-time mentoring. Her three mentees were placed in different grade levels and on various elementary campuses throughout the large, suburban district. "I was a little nervous, but excited to take the challenge," Nelda explained. In addition to getting to know three new teachers, various grade-level expectations, and the cultures of three different campuses, Nelda felt the pressure of making sure the new program was a success in her district. She described her feelings:

> What made me the most nervous about this job was that that the program was new to the district, so I would be the first to take on this position. I felt a big responsibility to represent our district well and to make sure the program was a success. It was challenging at first because I had to learn about the program and its expectations at the same time that I was getting to know my three mentees and the three campuses that they were assigned to in the district. I found each school to be unique and different—starting from the students that they served to the expectations and responsibilities of the teachers. Not only were the schools very different, but so were my three mentees. Each had their unique personalities, learning styles, strengths and challenges. I quickly realized that this year was going to be quite a learning experience for us all.

Kate. Kate saw leaders as having "vision, innovation, integrity, flexibility, and a kind of emotional intelligence to be able to read people." When she was a classroom teacher, she saw leaders making decisions, organizing things, and leading people. But, she maintained, "You have a very narrow view of what that looks like from inside the classroom walls." When she stepped out of the classroom and saw the building and the district as a whole, "it was just a completely different opportunity and viewpoint of what leadership truly is." Moving out of the classroom gave her insight into why the decisions were made; she had a broader perspective. Kate's challenge was seeing the issues and problems of education from the district level.

Working with a principal who believed in shared decision-making and developing the piloting on co-teaching for the district also were pivotal in her changing view of leadership. Three years ago, Kate attended a professional development meeting about co-teaching. She excitedly reported to her principal that co-teaching would be perfect. Kate reflected,

> We could have easily said at that point, "That is what we are doing." There is no ownership in that.... There is a huge difference between buy-in and ownership.

> Buy-in is that you are selling, selling, selling, and finally they relent and say, and "Ok we'll do it." Whereas, ownership is where they really have a voice in making that decision.

So, Kate and her principal presented the information they had and their vision of co-teaching for her mentee, including the benefits and the potential challenges. They gave teachers time to ask questions and talk with one another, gave them space to consider and think, and finally administered an anonymous survey. Had the results of the survey not been positive, they would not have moved forward. This challenging experience and many like it convinced Kate that "a leader is someone who partners with others and helps them to make good decisions. A leader is someone who shares their leadership with others and promotes others and helps them see their strengths and successes as assets and uses them to better the school."

Findings: Navigating School Culture

Jill. Jill noted that she had the opportunity to collaborate with a variety of professionals with a variety of different viewpoints in her role as teacher, as well as in her role as mentor. Interacting with many different stakeholders caused her to look deeply at her personal beliefs to assist her in navigating school culture. She stated,

> I observe the way the administrator speaks of and to his or her staff and observe how the staff interacts with each other. I form opinions but do not share those opinions with my mentee. I ask open-ended, nonjudgmental questions, such as, "What was on the PLC [Professional Learning Community] agenda this morning?" If my mentee shares an opinion of the working of the team that matches my observations, I concur. If that opinion is positive, I talk about how powerful that is, how lucky the teachers are, and how best to take advantage of that culture. If the opinion is negative, I talk about what can be done to make it more positive, more productive, and how to not let that negativity consume them. If our opinions were not the same, I would ask guiding questions to ensure a positive and productive work environment.

Nelda. She characterized her role as a mentor to the novice teachers as "not only supporter but also a catalyst for change." She explained,

> Even though they weren't firm in their beliefs and philosophies about teaching and learning, [I was interested in] getting them to shift their thinking a little bit and being open to ideas that may be a better way, a different way.

Through this gentle nudging based on classroom data, Nelda was able to help novices transform their practice. As Moir, Barlin, Gless, and Miles (2009) suggested, she was involved in "rigorous instructional mentoring" (p. 38). They explained, "Instructional mentoring ensures that all interactions are grounded in evidence and critical dialogues about instruction" (p. 38).

This influence expanded beyond just helping her mentees navigate school culture. Frequently, when she saw an area of need, Nelda conducted an informal workshop in the classroom of one of the novice teachers or her office area and invited other teachers to attend as well.

Kate. Kate assisted all new teachers in navigating the culture of the school. Kate felt ownership in her school's culture: "To navigate the culture myself, I continually go back to the vision we created, about who do we want to be, and how do we interact, how do we want to be seen by people who walk in our building." She talked about being "very purposeful" about working with new staff to help them navigate the culture through professional

development for new teachers, weekly breakfasts to help them talk and problem-solve, reading about school culture, and discussions and even role playing with new teachers at her school. Kate considered her school culture to be child-centered, collaborative, solution-seeking, and positive.

Finally, by being in classrooms, she could see the mentees daily and watch them change and grow. She saw their unique talents and used her position to *nudge* current and especially former mentees into leadership roles. She maintained,

> They are very talented young people. So, being able to recognize what their talents are and to really kind of give them the nudge to say, "Why don't you share that with your whole team? Why don't you present at the faculty meeting? Why don't you present at that conference?" So it is kind of like being there to hear their ideas and giving them that gentle nudge.

She looked for opportunities that would launch new teachers into leadership niches in the school because they had new information to share with colleagues.

Findings: Influencing Mentees

Jill. When asked to consider how she had influenced mentees to be leaders, Jill responded, "Several of my mentees have said that they want my job! Many that I have mentored have taken on building and district responsibilities. Many welcome beginning teachers into their classrooms to observe and collaborate." When asked to provide an example of a mentee whom she has followed, how that mentee became a leader, and any influence she had on the mentee, Jill provided the following example:

> Jesse was a teacher whom I mentored 7 years ago. I maintained regular contact with her through those years. She was a teacher leader in her building, served on district-level teams and committees, and when she moved to another building, she quickly became a teacher leader there. When I needed someone to partner with me for my mentoring and district responsibilities, I encouraged her to apply. She sailed through the interview and was hired. So again, I was mentoring her as she began "my" job. It was her drive to be the best educator possible and her dispositions about what makes a good teacher good that made her a leader. My influence came when I listened and encouraged.

Nelda. In her last year as a mentor, one of Nelda's previous mentees, Becky, became a mentor for the program. Thus, Nelda's influence as a mentor expanded to "mentoring a mentor." Nelda described Becky as a confident young teacher who had the "courage to take on leadership positions" in her classroom and beyond. She elaborated,

> [Becky] quickly became a leader at her school and then for the district. She was presenting district trainings, and her classroom became a model for other teachers to observe reading/writing workshops. She was known throughout the district as a teacher leader.

Just as Nelda had supported Becky in her first year as a classroom teacher, she was there to guide and support her during her first year as a mentor. "I was excited that we would be closely working and learning together again," she wrote. This experience provided Nelda with an additional level of leadership.

Kate. At the same time that Kate was nudging current and former teacher-induction participants into leadership positions, she also had the ear of the principal. So, it was quite natural to remind the principal of the special qualities of the mentees or other new teachers as names were being discussed for committee assignments, conference attendance, and the like. Kate worked with the principal to help support new teachers in assuming these

leadership roles, and she maintained a strong relationship with them, so they could come to her if they had any struggles along the way. Thus, Kate supported leadership of new teachers by mentoring and coaching them in the classroom, helping them to learn and navigate the school culture, nudging them into new leadership ventures, and then being available with support as they took on new challenges.

Summary

Jill, Nelda, and Kate shared how they learned to navigate the roles of leadership while serving as mentors. Each had a unique leadership style. Jill was characterized by her program director as "a resilient leader." With more than 20 years of experience in elementary, middle, and high schools, Jill was willing to challenge herself each year and mentor other teachers as requested. The program director noted that without Jill's flexibility, knowledge, skills, and resilient attitude, the program would not be the same.

One administrator characterized Nelda as "a quiet leader" who had significant impact not only on the mentees but on other teachers as well. Nelda decided to retire at the end of the school year. Her plans for the future included getting "her teaching fix," as she called it, by visiting in former mentees' classrooms and volunteering in one of the district's low-income schools. Although she was retiring, her influence as a teacher leader would not end. In her own quiet way, Nelda continued to serve as a teacher of teachers.

Kate was characterized as "an innovative leader." Kate continued to serve in various leadership roles for both her school and district. In her school, she worked with all preservice and new teachers, developed curriculum, spearheaded various initiatives, and led committees. She coordinated the new-teacher induction program for her district and taught Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2010) twice a year for district teachers and administrators.

Leadership styles varied for the participants in this study. Mentors can be described as quiet, resilient, innovative, knowledgeable, skilled, and courageous. Regardless of how a mentor is characterized, his or her leadership is critical in shaping the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of mentees. Each mentor in this study fulfilled multiple roles and shared her perspectives as she engaged in the roles of curriculum and instructional

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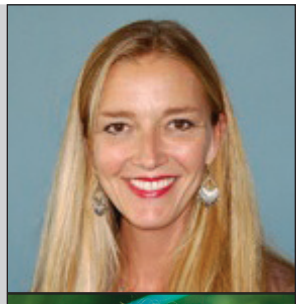

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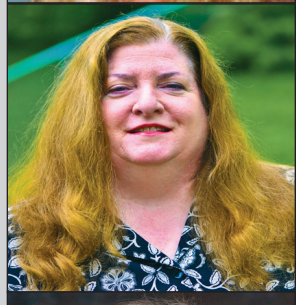

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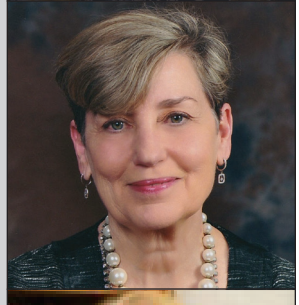

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specialist, resources provider, classroom supporter and learning facilitator, school leader and learner, data coach, and catalyst for change (Harrison & Killion, 2007).

Implications

The limitations of this study focus on the nature of the case study approach. Because the cases of leadership described in this article represent the growth and professional development of individual teacher leaders, the ability to generalize to other contexts may be limited. However, other researchers may find the stories of these exemplary mentors useful as a point of reference for future studies of teacher leadership. Thus, the discussion of teacher development in leadership may be furthered through case study approaches such as the ones described in this study and provide the following implications.

1. Mentors have to grow into leadership. Although others assume that they are leaders once they become mentors, many do not feel like leaders immediately. They try on the role and experiment. Thus, it is essential that mentors have some sort of ongoing support, either through participation in professional learning communities, involvement in school and university partnership professional development activities, or engagement in dialogue with former mentors to gain valuable insight and ideas of how to make the transition from classroom teacher to mentor.

2. Relationship-building is absolutely essential if mentors are to garner the trust of their mentees and other teachers. If they mentor outside of their expertise, they must be honest about the support they can and cannot give.

3. Mentors can nudge others into leadership roles by encouraging new teachers to consider a leadership role and by reminding principals of the gifts and merits of new teachers.

4. Different stages of mentoring exist, and developers of induction programs need to be aware of the different needs of mentors and adjust level of support accordingly—for example, by differentiating types of support for mentors who are mentoring mentors.

5. Mentor and induction programs need to include information on how to learn about school cultures, various instructional practices, formative assessment, and adult learning and novice teacher stages.

The overall implication of this research is that, when mentors and mentees are supported through professional development, professional learning communities, opportunities for dialogue, and other ways in school districts, the ultimate winners are the children. The children gain in achievement when their teachers gain in skill and efficacy.

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Leadership and Learning: Identifying an Effective Design for Mentoring New Building Leaders

By Donna Augustine-Shaw

Principals must place a high priority on instructional leadership in the midst of complex decisions and challenging routines. The impact of leadership on student achievement necessitates that principals new to the profession establish a positive learning culture to support quality teaching. The author describes a process for identifying an effective design for mentoring new building leaders through the work of a statewide task force in Kansas. Program components based on research and best practice and informed by practitioners guide critical understanding and support for new principals in establishing a shared vision for student learning.

> ***"The most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born—that there is a genetic factor to leadership. That's nonsense; in fact, the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born."***
>
> ***Warren Bennis*** (1999, p. 163)

Introduction

The principal plays a central role in the effectiveness of any school and has a significant impact on student achievement and school culture. Principals must possess strong leadership skills in the area of instruction and foster high expectations for teaching and learning within a supportive culture (Wood, Finch, & Mirecki, 2013). The Wallace Foundation (2006) highlighted the link between instructional leadership and a focused climate on shared learning, stating "behind excellent teaching and excellent schools is excellent leadership—the kind that ensures that effective teaching practices don't remain isolated and unshared in single classrooms" (p. 3). Moreover, the University Council for Educational Administration confirmed that states and other educational agencies must strive to design programs for new leaders in order to shape leadership behaviors and attitudes that support needed change in school culture and a focus on quality instruction (Browne-Ferrigno, 2014).

In a recent MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership (Markow, Macia, & Lee, 2012), three-fourths of principals who responded stated that the principalship is complex and stressful, because these leaders have great levels of responsibility for students who perform below mastery and have less resources and control over significant decisions involving budget, curriculum, and personnel. Principals who responded communicated the need for skillful use of data in bringing about improved levels

of student performance and developing quality teaching in their schools. Teachers and principals noted difficulty in achieving meaningful engagement of parents and community in developing a shared purpose to improve the quality of education for student learning.

The role of the first-year principal in initiating a shared vision for teaching and learning is important. Rapid educational change presents complexities for the new building leader and requires a commitment of time and acquired knowledge in order to impact teaching and learning positively at the school-site level. New principals must place a high priority on quality instruction and provide specific feedback to teachers and support for purposeful change. Development of these skills requires time and an understanding of how to offer guidance and support for effective results (Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010).

Beginning leadership experiences for new principals are often defining and labored by complex challenges. Therefore, providing guidance to principals in their initial year of practice through quality mentoring by experienced principal practitioners is imperative. Principal-mentoring can foster skills in instructional leadership specifically related to teacher performance, observation, and reflective feedback (James-Ward, 2013; Wallace Foundation, 2007). Furthermore, new principals receiving mentoring from experienced and knowledgeable principal-mentors report success in improving school climate and quality of instruction as indicated by increased test scores and observable instructional differentiation (Sciarappa & Mason, 2012).

Increasing student learning through effective instructional skills is a high expectation given the decisive correlation between leadership and achievement (National Education Association [NEA], 2008). The NEA (2008) affirmed the complexities encountered by building principals in creating effective and collaborative learning communities that provide a defined structure for teachers to evaluate performance, reflect on data, and collaborate about quality instructional practices that advance student learning. Killion (2012) further confirmed the influence of principals on learning for students and teachers through establishment of productive and vibrant learning environments.

Decisions related to designing a mentoring and induction program to support the complex role and responsibilities of the new principal must be built on best practice and defined by need. As a viable option to support new principal leaders in Kansas with opportunities to gain skills and knowledge from experienced principal mentors to *lead and learn*, educational leaders embarked on a journey to inform these decisions. In their process, these leaders explored research and best practice to define valued program components and identified needs of practicing principals, superintendents, and other state and agency stakeholders. This process, detailed here, informed decisions to design one model of mentoring and induction support for new building leaders in Kansas.

Overview of the Kansas Model

The Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) is a shared partnership between the state department of education; state associations for school boards, school administrators, and superintendents; and a state university. KELI's mission is *to collaborate and share resources to support professional growth of educational leaders needed in Kansas schools for the 21st Century* (KELI, 2014). In addition to KELI's focus on mentoring and induction for new superintendents and principals, an additional strand is dedicated to providing deep learning opportunities to support all Kansas leaders in the twenty-first century. KELI's work is framed around best practice and research and is supported by collaborative contributions from its partners. The KELI steering committee, comprised

of partner representatives, guides the program's mission in a 5-year plan with additional advisement from a field-based advisory council. Both governance committees place a high priority on quality mentoring and induction and ongoing opportunities for professional learning for all Kansas leaders.

KELI is recognized by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) as an area professional-learning center. This status allows new superintendents and principals in Kansas to meet the requirements for a professional license when program completion is documented through required mentoring and induction activities. New superintendents and principals are supported by trained and experienced field mentors as they set out to embrace exciting leadership work in each local district. KELI mentors apply national leadership standards in meaningful contexts as they contribute to insightful discussions and reflective feedback at onsite visits (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). Professional-development seminars focused on leadership implications highlight the second area of emphasis in KELI's program. These seminars are designed to provide opportunities for learning and networking on current topics and on the specific needs of leaders in addressing and applying state and federal change initiatives in today's local school district settings.

> *"The invaluable support provided by onsite mentoring and networking builds leadership skills and knowledge for new principals and is catapulting leadership and learning to a new level..."*

Jacque Feist, principal of Dodge City High School in Dodge City, Kansas, has been a member on the KELI steering committee since its inception, representing the Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals through her role as a board member for USA-Kansas. Feist shared that Kansas's professional organizations have historically been committed to mentoring beginning-level principals and have supported the mission and vision of KELI as it reinforces and supports the current and future strength of all Kansas building- and district-level leaders:

> Induction and mentorship programs for beginning building-level administrators are as important as they are for beginning teachers. And this support must come from a variety of different levels—from within the district where one is beginning their administrative career, from their peers in their leagues as they tend to be organized by similar size buildings, as well as from their colleagues throughout the state and nation who can help fill the "bigger picture" gaps one may create by only viewing issues from a tunnel vision perspective. KELI provides a "formal" structure for beginning building level administrators in Kansas to capture all of these necessary supports. (J. Feist, personal communication, January 12, 2014)

Designing a System of Support

To begin the work of examining the needs of principal leaders in their first year of practice and a *learning-first* attitude as instructional leaders, KELI's steering committee authorized the formation of a statewide task force to guide and shape a program of support for mentoring new principals. The steering committee provided initial guidance and outlined concepts for the group's work. In summer 2012, the executive director of KELI

worked with staff to request names of potential participants for this important endeavor from partners and Kansas association presidents. The director received recommendations for membership from three state principals' associations, the state superintendents' association, and members representing the four KELI partners to form a *Building Leader Mentoring and Induction Task Force*. This 22-member task force provided statewide representation from districts of varying enrollments and settings, school levels, and geographic regions. During the next few months, prospective task-force members gained information about the process and goals of the group's work. Administrative conferences during summer 2012 provided an important venue to communicate the beginning of this work to principals and superintendents in Kansas.

The task force held its first meeting in September 2012. A member of the KELI staff and a director in teacher licensure at KSDE cochaired. A *charge* statement encompassing the goals and purpose of the task force served as a critical point of reference throughout the committee's year-long work. The committee's charge was to examine best practices identified in research in order to establish a shared vision for mentoring and induction of Kansas's first-year principals. In order to meet the goal, the planning committee worked to create a mentoring-and-induction program that would

- build and strengthen twenty-first-century principal leadership capacity in Kansas;
- differentiate options in response to needs of schools of various sizes and levels;
- coordinate and capitalize on district, state, and partner resources;
- incorporate feedback and input from experts and field practitioners;
- assist first-year principals in addressing district and building needs and priorities;
- provide opportunities to deepen learning for new and experienced building leaders;
- support the KELI mission and 5-year plan; and
- provide accountability in meeting district and principal licensure requirements.

In developing the mentoring-and-induction program, the planning committee would also

- reflect on best practice and research;
- seek meaningful stakeholder involvement;
- respect and honor local programs and state goals;
- be flexible to accommodate current program practices and objectives; and
- respond to changing needs.

A projected timeline developed by the cochairs and shared with the task force set the stage for timely progress in reaching a culminating recommendation to the executive director in April 2013. This recommendation, a road map, served to institute a new program of support for beginning principals with a clear focus on and shared vision of student learning. The charge statement and timeline for the initial work of the task force set the process in motion.

A major step for the task force included defining needs and identifying important factors to consider in establishing and implementing a mentoring-and-induction program for first-year principals. Through a sharp focus on outcomes and identification of needs of such principals, task-force members realized that most beginning practitioners *don't know what they don't know*. To guide the work of the task force, KSDE and KELI personnel provided relevant information (i.e., leadership and mentoring standards, requirements of the new-superintendent mentoring-and-induction program, statewide evaluation protocols, and KSDE updates) and established group working standards and norms to guide their process. At each meeting, the task-force members agreed on talking points and communication statements to share with association and partner representatives to achieve consistency and provide feedback to principals and superintendents.

Focusing the Work on Best Practice

As work progressed, task-force members assigned to three subgroups investigated the following areas: *Research on Best Practice, Professional Organization and Building Level Practitioners,* and *District Practitioners and State*. Essential questions developed by KSDE and KELI personnel steered each group's efforts and discussion. The Research on Best Practice group explored the following question: *What do we know makes an effective mentoring and induction program for first-year principals?* This group reviewed best practices from state and national research, identified quality components included in mentoring-and-induction programs, and reflected on leadership skills to guide instructional excellence and improvement. Emerging themes and effective program components identified from research provided a firm foundation to summarize best practices, critical attributes, and needs defined by principals and superintendents. Critical attributes for a first-year principal identified by the subgroup included the following tenets:

- shaping a vision of academic success for all students;
- creating a culture of learning;
- developing leadership capacity in others;
- developing positive relationships;
- creating community outreach;
- setting goals;
- managing people and processes to foster school improvement (change);
- using data effectively to make decisions; and
- providing professional development rich in leadership-development activities.

Examining current practice at the state and local-district level, as well as soliciting meaningful feedback from field practitioners, became the focal points of the other two groups. The Professional Organization and Building Level Practitioners group explored the question: *What do professional organizations do and building practitioners feel would be helpful in providing support to first-year principals?* This subgroup focused on formulation of a comprehensive list of current mentoring-and-induction practices offered to new principals in Kansas. The group designed and implemented a plan to collect perceptions of building principals at all levels about the needs and priorities to be included in a quality program.

The District Practitioners and State group investigated a similar question: *What do state leaders do and district leaders want from a mentoring-and-induction program to support first-year principals?* This subgroup targeted district and state leaders and thus focused on formulation of a comprehensive list describing programs in place at state and district levels. The group coordinated efforts with the building-level group to design and implement a plan to collect perceptions of state and district leaders about needs and priorities to be included in a quality mentoring-and-induction program for first-year principals.

All three subgroups continually reflected on the connection of their work to licensure and evaluation requirements and leadership standards and practices. In addition, the task force generated many ideas (i.e., monthly checklist, resource toolkit) from in-depth discussions and sharing of findings. As a major outcome, to acquire widespread input from field practitioners, the task force administered a statewide survey of all Kansas superintendents and principals. This survey, aligned with identified critical attributes, constituted a significant project that demanded time, skills, and effort from task-force members.

The survey provided opportunities for superintendents and principals to describe their current positions and experience levels as well as demographic information (i.e., enrollment, socioeconomic status, ethnic background, geographic location) about their schools or

districts. Principals and superintendents then responded to questions designed to provide information about the presence or absence of a mentoring-and-induction program for first-year principals. If a program existed, further inquiry gained important information about mentor assignment and support, overall program effectiveness, and the importance and effectiveness of critical attributes included in the program. Respondents also had an opportunity to provide open-ended feedback on services perceived to be beneficial to enhance current district mentoring-and-induction initiatives.

The task force developed a structured process to administer the survey utilizing KSDE listservs, which allowed electronic distribution of the survey to all 286 Kansas superintendents and 1063 principals. During 2012-2013, Kansas documented that 170 principals, or 16% of the 1063 statewide, were first-year principals. Of Kansas's 286 superintendents, 65 (23%) reported having principal-level duties. Electronic reminders encouraged superintendents and principals to complete this important survey.

A summary of the survey facts from principal and superintendent respondents highlighted the clear need for a new-principal mentoring-and-induction program. Sixty-five percent (N = 185) of Kansas superintendents completed the statewide survey, as did 46% (N = 489) of all principals and 43% (N = 73) of first-year principals. In narrative responses, superintendents clearly noted the need for formal training to develop coaching skills for mentors, as well as a need to structure time for mentor and mentee interactions. A summary of the fast facts compiled from survey results and shared with task-force members and stakeholders follows.

- Of 73 first-year principals who responded to the survey, 38 (52%) received no mentoring; 35 (48%) did receive a mentor.
- Of 185 superintendents responding, 96 (52%) reported their districts did not provide a mentor; 89 (48%) indicated mentors were provided.
- Of 170 principals responding, 83 (49%) rated their current mentoring program as a 3 or 4 on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 = *very effective* and 4 = *not effective*.
- Of 89 superintendents responding, 41 (46%) rated their current mentoring program as a 3 or 4 on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 = *very effective* and 4 = *not effective*.
- Responding principals reported these elements as last to be included in existing district mentoring and induction programs: *community outreach* and *developing leadership capacity in others*.
- Responding first-year principals reported these elements as last to be included in programs: *developing leadership capacity in others* and *community outreach*.
- Responding principals reported these elements as least effective in their current mentoring programs: *professional development rich in leadership development activities, community outreach, developing leadership capacity in others,* and *setting goals*.
- Responding superintendents reported these elements last to be included in district programs: *community outreach* and *developing leadership capacity in others*.
- Responding superintendents reported these elements as least effective in their mentoring programs: *Community outreach, professional development rich in leadership development activities*, and *shaping a vision of academic success for all students*.

A member of the task force and KELI personnel tabulated and formatted the survey results for each respective group. The task force considered needs and current practices identified by reporting groups, superintendents and principals, as well as previously identified demographic variables pertinent to discussion. The task force analyzed results for connections, considered gaps between best practice and research, and identified current

practice and needs of principals and superintendents. This analysis allowed the task force to determine necessary variables to define the *nuts and bolts* of a mentoring-and-induction program.

Achieving the Goal

Throughout the process, an additional group, *Mission Control*, comprised of the cochairs and KELI personnel, assumed responsibility for coordination and communication of the vital work of each subgroup during the year. Ensuring timely and cohesive efforts and maintaining a responsive approach to all questions and suggestions became critical elements of Mission Control. Mission Control provided prioritized tasks and timelines deemed important to the process and provided resources, discussion guides, communication strategies, and focus for the task force. Personnel organized additional services and programs offered in Kansas to support new principals. A task-force member representing large districts in Kansas canvassed several urban-area school districts to report on specific needs of larger districts in providing new-principal support. A national-program context provided several resources (program features, beliefs and goals to support new principals, model program description templates) beneficial to task-force work (Villani, 2006). In addition, presentations at state leadership conferences provided venues for communicating the important work and goals of the task force. Mission Control provided an important link in accomplishing the end result of a quality mentoring-and-induction program outline for first-year principals and a shared vision focused on learning for twenty-first-century leadership in Kansas.

A total of five face-to-face meetings provided opportunities for whole-group discussion and sharing of key evidence on qualities, priorities, and vision. Importantly, these face-to-face sessions allowed task-force members the opportunity to describe their ideal mentoring-and-induction program of support that would address both the needs of the first-year principal and a district. The task-force work culminated in April 2013 by guided critical conversations and a final recommendation to the KELI Executive Director at the conclusion of the session. The executive director worked directly with the task force during this meeting to gain a thorough understanding of the critical points offered in the recommendation. A central point of discussion revolved around determining operational structures and options for a pilot program in the areas of greatest need. These areas included (a) districts with no mentoring program for principals and districts with poor-quality mentoring programs; (b) elements least often present or effective—community outreach and building leadership capacity in others; (c) need for mentor training; and (d) enhancing the most critical topics or leadership skills. The task force also confirmed the need for a 2-year program, with Year 1 focused on survival and basic needs and Year 2 emphasizing professional growth in leadership for instructional improvement and effective change.

As they thought about pilot-year programming, task-force members considered a menu of options around the four above-mentioned areas. Option 1 included full mentoring and induction services with onsite mentoring, cohort meetings, and networking experiences for districts with no available or poor-quality programs. Options 2 and 4 focused on professional development. Option 3 focused on enhancement of mentoring and coaching skills. Brief program and completer descriptions, participant profiles, and advantages and challenges for each option provided task-force members with sufficient detail to review each option thoughtfully. Task-force members reflected on the outcomes of their work and alignment to essential guidelines and standards from their process. At the conclusion of

the discussion, task-force members acknowledged consensus on the options presented at the final meeting in April 2013.

The task force's recommendation to the executive director included four components for a pilot mentoring-and-induction program for first-year principals in Kansas. These components included (a) provision of full mentoring and induction services for districts with no or limited principal-mentoring programming; (b) addressing of critical attributes of community outreach and building leadership capacity in others; (c) provision of training for mentors; and (d) provision of leadership seminars on current issues.

After review with the dean of the state university, the KELI governance committees received the recommendation, and the steering committee approved moving forward with preparation for implementation of the pilot program. The pilot program began to take shape during summer 2013 and ultimately involved 19 new-principal mentees and 17 practicing principal-mentors representing districts from all enrollment sizes and geographic regions in the state. During the pilot year, 2013-2014, 27 Kansas districts supported a new principal's or a principal-mentor's participation in the program. Major program components included onsite mentoring with an experienced principal of similar background experiences, networking, and opportunities for self-reflection and professional learning.

Task-force Process Feedback

Following the completion of task-force work, members provided important feedback on the process and accomplished work. Members responded to four questions:

1. What did you think was the purpose of the group's work?
2. What program goals do you think are important in KELI's service to first-year principals?
3. How would you define success for the first-year principal mentoring-and-induction program? What would success look like?
4. Would you change anything regarding the process or work of the task force?

Members agreed the purpose of the task-force work involved collaborative research and the design of a quality mentoring program to serve the needs of first-year principals. They identified local and state support and professional development around leadership, providing outside perspective, resource checklists, and retaining an active pool of trained mentors as important program goals for KELI. As they shared many thoughts about how success would be defined, task-force members described success as including mentees' active participation in the program, informal and formal feedback gauging district and building goals, trusting relationships between mentor and mentee, aligned vision and improved student performance, involvement in professional activities, meeting individual needs, and self-reflection and surveys. Other measures of success would be "growth in the number of principals being mentored and depth of the dialogue between principal and mentor" and "having the person's capacity for leadership grow to the point where one feels

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comfortable being the building leader." Members believed monitoring implementation, acquisition of feedback from principals and superintendents, and sharing feedback with administrators' groups across the state were important. In addition, they expressed their overall appreciation of the work:

- [I] enjoyed my work on the task force—hope we can sustain and develop this program to include more aspiring and practicing leaders.
- The work was really important to help new principals be successful.
- [This was] truly important work to provide support for a difficult leadership position in our schools.

Conclusion

New principals are faced with significant role-and-responsibility transitions and high expectations for performance by many stakeholder groups. Supporting this transition and building confidence in the multifaceted decisions encountered by first-year principals must be a primary goal of mentoring-and-induction programs. Preparing new leaders to be courageous, to take risks in putting learning first, and to challenge tradition or opinion is necessary in an era of accountability. The transformational vision required of a first-year principal is an expectation that is not always easy to fulfill. Through valued experience, keen insight, and understanding of the complex role of building-level leadership, principal-mentors are able to listen, ask reflective questions, and understand local-context issues through onsite visits and ongoing dialogue in a confidential and safe relationship. Practicing principals possess critical skills in prioritizing tasks and problem-solving that can assist new principals in finding opportunities to maximize their role as instructional leaders. A Wallace Foundation (2007) report challenged,

> In the end…an expanded vision of mentoring that goes beyond a buddy system involves providing new school leaders with an experienced guide who has both the training and the disposition to press new leaders to put learning first—whatever that takes, whatever the obstacles or opposition. (p. 21)

Building a shared vision and collective purpose to work towards excellence in teaching and a focus on student learning is a non-negotiable priority for every new leader. The work of the Kansas Building Leader Mentoring and Induction Task Force exemplified commitment to serving principals and the betterment of the profession by providing a stronghold for moving this priority and goal forward for every new principal participating in quality mentoring and induction and professional learning in the state. Next steps include assessing the effectiveness of the research-based and practice-oriented pilot-program design influenced by task-force practitioners and moving to higher levels of statewide implementation. The invaluable support provided by onsite mentoring and networking builds leadership skills and knowledge for new principals and is catapulting leadership and learning to a new level—making an eminent difference for students, teachers, and school communities in Kansas.

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Mentoring: A Decade of Effort and Personal Impact

By R. Larry Bohannon and Sheila M. Bohannon

The authors describe a mentoring program that began more than 10 years ago in a midsized rural community in the southeastern United States. They share the goals and development of the program and offer recommendations for others interested in mentoring. Feedback from a student who was involved in the original project provides insight into the kind of personal impact that mentoring may produce.

Although not a new phenomenon, mentoring is a key topic in education today. As a partnership between two people (mentor and mentee) who share similar experiences based upon mutual trust and respect, mentoring is used "to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise (sic) their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be" (Parsloe, 2008, p. 1). Mentoring is an "effective way of helping people to progress in their careers and is becoming increasingly popular as its potential is realised (sic)" (MentorSET, 2008, para. 1). Evidence suggests that both community-based and school-based mentoring programs contribute to a range of positive outcomes for youth participants (Pryce & Keller, 2012).

The role of the mentor is to guide and help mentees to choose the right direction and develop solutions to issues they might face. A mentor should initiate questions and dialogue that challenge the mentee, while providing guidance and encouragement. Often, mentors rely upon having had similar experiences to gain an empathy with the mentees and an understanding of their issues. As a result, mentoring provides the mentee with an opportunity to think about ways to handle situations before being confronted with dilemmas and making impulsive decisions. Mentoring provides the mentee with a safe situation to explore new ideas with confidence. It allows mentees to take a closer look at themselves, examine issues affecting them, and find solutions that are available. Ultimately, for the mentee, mentoring is about "becoming more self-aware, taking responsibility for your life and directing your life in the direction you decide, rather than leaving it to chance" (MentorSET, 2008, para. 3).

Studies of the impact of mentoring abound and impacted the design of the mentoring program developed in a midsized rural Missouri community and described here. Jackson and Mathews (1999) evaluated a program developed collaboratively by personnel at Auburn University's Office of Minority Advancement and Auburn Junior High School to assist at-risk African-American male students at the latter site. A summer program component emphasized age-appropriate sports instruction and skills development as well as instruction in alcohol and drug abuse prevention, nutrition, personal health, career opportunities, and job opportunities. Results indicated that the program was able to help retain at-risk African-American males in the public school. The program, which mentors

reported was planned and implemented in an organized way, made a positive impact on mentees' lives.

Ryan, Whittaker, and Pinckney (2002) stated that "relationships that yield the greatest benefits for youth facing challenging environments are those in which the mentor and mentee are able to develop long-term emotional bonds" (p. 134). Ryan et al. (2002) stated, "Traditionally, mentoring programs have been located in the community, but more recently many programs are choosing to be site-based, particularly in schools" (p.134). Such site-based programs found in schools are more likely to be successful because they provide a consistent place and time to meet rather than expecting mentors to negotiate a location and schedule on their own (Ryan et al., 2002).

"The CARE program is simple in design, matching a caring adult with a child. Human contact and support are its basic tenets, and it can be easily replicated to meet the needs of any targeted group."

More recently, Gordon, Downey, and Bangert (2013) examined the impact of participation in a school-based mentoring program on behavioral and social outcomes for students in Grades 6 through 10. Analysis revealed that, compared to students in the control group, the School-Based Mentoring Program (SBMP) participants had significantly fewer unexcused absences and discipline referrals and reported significantly higher scores on four measures of connectedness. The data from this study suggested that school-based mentoring support may be most important for students in Grades 6 and 7, as these two groups showed the greatest increases as compared to the control group.

Program Development

The Collaborative Action Research in Equity (CARE) mentoring program was developed in Sikeston School District located in southeastern Missouri. The total enrollment of the district today, as listed in the 2014 Annual Report Card (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2014), is 3,436 students, with 33.5% Black and 57.5% White. These demographics are similar to those that existed in 2003, when CARE was developed. School district data from 2003 showed that minority students were progressing academically until they entered the middle school years. Academic achievement declined for many students during this time, but a disproportionally higher number of minority students began to lose academic ground. Brainstorming and research on effective student-support programs led district personnel to establish a focus group to pilot a mentoring program.

After several meetings with teachers and parents, the focus group named the pilot program Collaborative Action Research in Equity, using the acronym CARE to reflect the vision of the teachers and parents involved. The CARE pilot study group researched various designs and chose the Ryan et al. (2002) 10 steps for establishing a mentoring program:

Step 1. Identify Program Goals. CARE's primary goal was to help high-achieving minority students in Grade 5 keep performing well as they transitioned to the middle school.

Step 2. Designate a Program Coordinator. The assistant superintendent in charge of

professional development was selected to serve as program coordinator for the 2-year pilot study. The plan and intention was that program coordination would be transferred to a volunteer thereafter.

Step 3. Select Students to be Mentees. Minority students in Grade 5 who had scored in the top two levels (Proficient or Advanced) on the Grade 3 communication arts or Grade 4 mathematics Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests were selected for the program.

Step 4. Recruit and Select Mentors. Members of the district's Professional Development Committee volunteered to be mentors for the 2-year pilot study. Recruitment after the pilot study was opened to all teachers in the district as well as retired teachers. Although background checks were not required in the district at that time, all mentors had to have such checks in order to be approved as mentors.

Step 5. Match Mentees and Mentors. The organizers of the pilot study did not use a formal tool to match mentees and mentors. Teachers had the choice of selecting a male or female mentee. Parents were given the name of their child's mentor and asked if there were any conflicts regarding the match.

Step 6. Gain Parent Permission. Parents signed a permission form that detailed the program's goals and the commitment required from mentees.

Step 7. Provide Education for Mentors. Initially, program organizers gave mentors research pieces that guided the initiation of the program, suggested where the mentoring should take place, and emphasized the utmost importance of confidentiality. Based on recommendations from mentors who suggested that they should meet on a scheduled basis to share ideas about working with the mentees, the program developers incorporated more formal training at the beginning of the second year. Formal training was needed to be proactive rather than reactive to problems encountered. Workshops included the use of case studies to train mentors regarding how to work with students of various cultures. Specifically, that training provided mentors with ideas on how to build trust and offered solutions to problems that might occur, as well as the opportunity to collaborate on issues that arose.

Step 8. Provide Space and Resources for Mentoring. All mentoring for the CARE program was done before, during, and after school on-site at the middle school campus. Only school supplies were offered as resources to the mentors to use with the mentees. Mentors were allowed to use their own money for items they wished to give.

Step 9. Promote Communication among Participants. Communication with the mentors and parents included notification of organizational meetings by letter or by phone calls the first year. Other communication between the program coordinator and mentors was by e-mail as needed. Communication between mentees and mentors was face-to-face or via weekly handwritten notes.

Step 10. Monitor Effectiveness of Program. Developers used a Likert-scaled survey to assess the perceptions of parents, mentees, and mentors regarding the program. Attendance records, grades, and classroom participation notes provided additional information.

The Program in Action

Twenty minority students qualified for the CARE program based on scores from the Grade 3 MAP communication arts test or Grade 4 MAP mathematics test. Only four parents opted not to involve their children in the program the first year, citing that their children were doing well and did not need mentoring. However, two of the four asked to have their children in the program in the second year.

During the 2-year pilot study, data from school records and teacher surveys indicated that students in the CARE program maintained high grades, participated more frequently in class, and attended school with few, if any, absences. All 18 students in the program had a B average or better on their report cards each semester. Fourteen of the students were on the honor roll during the entire pilot study. Class participation was monitored by comparing data from surveys administered to teachers at the beginning and end of the second school year. Fifteen of the 18 students improved in class participation; 3 students showed no significant improvement but had already scored high in participation. Attendance was above average, with a 99% attendance rate overall. The mentees also maintained their top levels on the Grade 7 MAP communication arts test. One mentee increased performance from proficient to advanced. One of the two students who never joined the CARE program did drop from Advanced to Proficient on the Grade 7 communication arts test. The other student who was not in the program maintained proficient status. Data from ensuing years of the program indicated similar positive results for students involved in CARE.

A Mentee's Insights

Hard data provide only one way of considering the impact of a program. Many of the students who were in the program in 2003 are now high school graduates. We attempted to locate all the participants in the pilot study but only had the opportunity to meet with one of the former mentees, 20-year-old Dominique W., to ask her about the program, its strengths and weaknesses. She noted,

> I used to be ok in elementary school because I was the smartest in class most of the time, so the teacher saw that I was learning, but when I got to middle school, there were many smart kids in each of my classes, so I had to speak up. The mentoring program helped me build my confidence.

She said she had always been shy, and the CARE program helped her gain confidence in herself and her abilities.

Dominique's mother, Lisa, was present during the interview and added that Dominique did not speak up when she was in elementary school, but that shyness changed during the middle-school grades. She praised the mentoring program for helping her daughter learn to participate more during class discussions. Lisa also said that school had always been important in their home but that peer pressure had started to play a role in Dominique's

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Sheila Bohannon, EdS, is a retired middle school art teacher who now enjoys creating metal sculptures and spending time with her first grandson. A member of Beta Gamma Chapter in Delta State Organization (MO), she has served as past president, vice president, and on various committees at the chapter level and as member and chair of the state scholarship committee. Bohannon received a President Scholarship from the Delta State Organization and an International Scholarship from The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. She also received the Wal-Mart and Phi Delta Kappa "Teacher of the Year" awards. bohannonsheila@yahoo.com

decision-making as she moved through the middle-school years. Dominique confirmed that her grades had slipped early in her freshman year due to peer pressure but explained that she soon raised her scores when she learned from her mentor that a GPA began with freshman grades and was important if she had aspirations to attend college. When asked if she would have liked the program to follow her more closely through the rest of her high school years, Dominique quickly agreed.

Reflecting on suggestions for the mentoring program, Dominique indicated that her mentor had visited her when she was in elementary school to introduce herself and to help with the transition to middle school. This introduction caused Dominique to believe she had someone who would help her with any problems she might encounter in the new building, and she thus stressed that all program developers should consider incorporating such early introductions. She also suggested that mentor programs should include multiple opportunities for mentees to meet together so they could get acquainted with each other and could share how they dealt with situations that arose. This suggestion for increased interaction among mentees paralleled that of her mentor, who had suggested increased collaboration among mentors.

After graduating from high school, Dominique attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, IL, for one semester. Homesick, she then enrolled in classes at a local community college and was recently accepted into the Navy ROTC program at Southern University in Baton Rouge for the fall semester 2014. Her present interests are in the fields of pharmacy and psychology.

As we interviewed her, we had no doubt Dominque will achieve her goals because she has grown to be a remarkable young lady. It was apparent she always had support from home, but the mentoring program offered her something extra that made her feel special. She said it would be wonderful if all students could be matched with a mentor to build a relationship.

Conclusion

As early as 1997, The National Education Goals Panel challenged schools to promote partnerships that would increase parental involvement and participation in supporting social, emotional, and academic development of children. The CARE program was founded on the belief that "supportive, non-parental adults" (Clarke, 2009, p. ii) can potentially help adolescents fare better than they would if they had not had a mentor in their lives.

Personnel involved in the pilot and ongoing program offered the following suggestions for replication:

1. Begin small with a pilot group in which all parties have "buy-in." This group needs to include administrators, teachers, and parents.
2. Decide on the students who will be the focus of the program.
3. Decide on a name to make the program unique to the particular institution.
4. Begin writing goals. Goals should be brief but written for the long term, giving the program a minimum of 2 years to assess success.
5. Conduct training for the mentors.

6. Mentors and mentees need monthly meetings to keep the momentum going. The meetings also allow mentors to share ideas, challenges, and successes.

7. Monitor the effectiveness of the program and make necessary changes.

Those involved in the CARE mentoring program attribute its success to the dedication of the mentors, mentees, and parents. The CARE program is simple in design, matching a caring adult with a child. Human contact and support are its basic tenets, and it can be easily replicated to meet the needs of any targeted group. The participants believed in the mission, goals, and objectives set for the program and worked hard to make it successful. It was inspiring to meet with one of the mentees 11 years later and hear her assessment of the program. Her comments motivated us to write about CARE so others may develop and improve their programs based on CARE's framework.

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Utilizing Students' Passions and Interests to Create a More Meaningful Research Experience

By Joyce F. Hurt

The author describes her implementation of Richard M. Cash's (2011) passion projects as detailed in his text Advancing Differentiation: Thinking and Learning for the 21st Century. *Discussing her high school class of 45 Governor's School dual-enrollment juniors from seven rural counties in Southside Virginia, the author describes how incorporating students' interests and choices into the regular research process created a new enthusiasm for researching, writing, and presenting to peers.*

Background

In August 2012, a very interesting student named Rubin enrolled in my junior English class. All of the new faces on the first day of school are very overwhelming, and as I am in my 25th year of teaching, the names take a bit longer to learn than they once did; however, this particular student caught my attention and interest immediately because he was wearing a home-made t-shirt that featured a picture of a Great White shark and the phrase, "Sharks are Misunderstood." I came of age in the JAWS (Universal, 2000) era and have always been fascinated with sharks as a result, so I immediately connected with Rubin. As the year proceeded, Rubin's passion for sharks proved evident in everything he did, from his informal presentations to his cupcakes that featured shark fins on the top. He quickly achieved the rank of resident expert in all things related to sharks.

I soon began to ponder how I could possibly allow Rubin to incorporate this deep love of and interest in Great Whites into my English class. I remembered long ago when I was an undergraduate in college and my music professor allowed me to share my passion for the singer Stevie Nicks and how I, who at the time would rather have died than speak to a crowd, was elated to be able to share my passion with my classmates. My dilemma was finally solved when I found myself on a long flight to Greece to present a paper at a conference, and I grew tired of watching movies and decided to read the year's book for professional development, Richard M. Cash's (2011) delightful text entitled *Advancing Differentiation: Thinking and Learning for the 21st Century*. I read the entire text, but one chapter in particular provided the missing piece to my puzzle. Cash's description and guidelines for creating *passion projects* not only proved to be the answer I was seeking, but it also resulted in one of the most meaningful class projects of my entire career.

Implementing the Concept

Cash (2011) stressed that passion projects would allow students to share interests that lie outside of the classroom and give students who "may not get the opportunity to share much about themselves a chance to shine" (p. 53). He stressed that we may already have experts in our classrooms and that these projects can give these *experts* a chance to share their passions. He even provided specific guidelines, detailed handouts, and well-developed rubrics for designing and grading the project.

Using Cash's (2011) suggestions, the guidelines I created for my class project required each student to explain clearly his or her passion and why other students would want to learn about the topic. Each student and I completed a contract that included the meeting date, the unit to be replaced by the project, and the due date for the project. Students were required to determine the most effective way to present their projects, and, although PowerPoint presentations proved to be popular and viable options, students also opted for posters, speeches, videotaped lessons, scrapbooks, and role-playing activities. In addition, students were graded on a scale of one to four (with four being the top score in each category) on preparation, enthusiasm, content, resources, and interdisciplinary connections to the content.

> *"This project … provided me with a fresh perspective on how students learn and what they study when they have a choice."*

In a similar vein, Powell (2013), in her discussion of the student-centered classroom, reminded educators that if they want learning to be meaningful to their students, they need to respect the students' interests and passions. I decided to implement this idea because of Rubin, who calls himself the "shark master"; because of Tyler, who has spoken fluent French since middle school and who writes all of his creative writing stories in French; because of Holly, who is fluent in sign language and is passionate about helping the deaf; and because of all of the other young people who possessed passions yet to be discovered. I also thought a new approach would make researching, writing, and presenting more exciting for the students and for me; we needed to take the research process to the next level.

Specifically, I added the Modern Language Association (MLA) research paper requirement to fulfill the English 112 course goal that required students to conduct research and write a formal research paper, and, as an added incentive, I substituted the project or paper for the semester-exam grade. Students were required to produce a formal, documented research paper of seven to ten pages to accompany their presentations. Because this particular class was large (45 students), presentations were limited to 15 minutes per student. However, 20 to 30 minutes would have been more beneficial because the students were very enthusiastic and frequently exceeded their time limits. Also, I worked individually with students and was flexible on the length of papers when the nature of the topics so required.

As an icebreaker for the project, I spoke of my own passions for the British Victorian novelist Charles Dickens, for the singer Stevie Nicks, and for the variety of farm animals that make up my world. Soon the students were volunteering their own ideas. In addition to completing the guidelines provided by Cash (2011) as detailed in the previous paragraph, they were required to share ideas with the class on Blackboard discussion threads, the Internet component of my class. These online discussion threads allowed me to monitor their ideas and progress, and they allowed the students to view and provide feedback for

their classmates' ideas. Students were also required to meet with me individually in person or via e-mail as needed throughout the semester. We scheduled a block of dates for the presentations, and the students signed up for the dates of their choices. When scheduling conflicts arose, the students resolved them, hence establishing accountability for meeting deadlines. The excitement built with each approaching presentation, and Cash's (2011) comment—"When students are emotionally engaged, they are more likely to pay attention to learning tasks" (p. 49)—rang true throughout the entire process. My students remained engaged throughout the semester, and they learned a great deal about themselves and each other.

The experience also reinforced the thinking of Larmer and Mergendoller (2010), who stressed that a meaningful project gives students "opportunities to build such 21st-century skills as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and the use of technology, which will serve them well in the workplace and life" (p. 3). The various stages of this project, including the students' final deliveries, incorporated and honed these twenty-first-century skills. For example, two students collaborated on their projects because they both dealt with foreign language and travel; all of the projects included various forms of technology; and many students researched areas in which they planned to pursue a career. More importantly, Cash (2011) noted that students must be able to move from the *recalling, comprehension,* and *application* stages of learning into the *analysis, evaluation,* and *creation* stages if they wish to compete in the twenty-first century. He accordingly stressed the "integration of multiple disciplines," "in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within an area of study," "developing research skills and methods," and the development of "independent or self-directed study skills" (p. 33). This research project supported skill development in all of these areas—particularly emphasizing self-directed study skills because students were in control of their learning from the initial phases of the project to the final presentation.

Some of the initial project topics included *Nazi Germany and Jehovah's Witnesses; Polynesian Tattoos; The Illuminati; Athena; Pat Summit; The Potential of Detroit; Nicholas Sparks; Sign Language; Polyglots; Scuba Diving; Pirates and Outlaws in the Media; Stephen Hawking; Leonardo da Vinci; Comanche of the Little Big Horn; Dream Interpretation; Middle Eastern Countries; Ice Hockey; Human Trafficking; Grace and Main Ministries; Boston Red Sox Fans; Sylvia Plath; Sustainability and Renewable Technologies;* and *Snow Leopards*. Recent projects included *Criminal Profiling; Special Olympics; Soccer; Engineering; Super Heroes;* and *Slam Poetry*. The projects have been as diverse as the students themselves, and the majority have dealt with the young people's outside interests.

Student Responses

This project afforded me a new opportunity to meet the goals of teaching research, writing, and presentation skills to my junior English students, and it provided me with a fresh perspective on how students learn and what they study when they have a choice. A year later, these students, my current seniors, are still excited about their projects, and several of

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them readily volunteered to present their projects to this year's group of students as part of my introduction to the unit. Rubin, the catalyst for this assignment, plans to pursue a career in marine biology and to determine, among other things, if sharks hold the cure for cancer. Other students benefited as well. For example, Kinsey, whose passion project involved a history of all things Walt Disney, noted, "My passion project was one of the most enjoyable things I've ever done. It was the first time I was actually excited to put in work and effort. I learned so much. I was sorry when it was over!" Another student, Robert, said, "This was the easiest assignment I've worked on all year, not because I didn't put forth effort, but because I could tailor the project to my exact interests" (Hurt & Humphrey, 2013, slide 17).

Students also learned a great deal about their classmates. Elizabeth commented, "Emily's project showed me a completely different side of the Middle East and the varying cultures. Her project intrigued me" (Hurt & Humphrey, 2013, slide 19). Jacia added, "Robert's project presented a completely different side of Detroit. I have always thought of it as an undesirable place. However, he really demonstrated how wonderful Detroit can be" (Hurt & Humphrey, 2013, slide 19). Finally, Cal, a current junior who recently presented his project on golf and incorporated a free golf lesson for the class, said, "Before this project, I was a little shy and pretty quiet in front of everyone, but afterwards, it's been a lot easier to talk in front of people" (C. W., personal communication, March 10, 2014). Cal rarely spoke in my classes until he presented this project to his peers; now he is an animated young man who exudes confidence.

Conclusion

I am deeply indebted to Richard Cash (2011) and his text *Advancing Differentiation: Thinking and Learning for the 21st Century* for sharing his research and project ideas and providing explicit guidelines on how to implement them. I am also grateful to my students for enthusiastically embracing and implementing the projects and to them and their parents for allowing me to use the young people's comments in this article. My students are gifted and motivated, and Cash's predictions of the benefits of allowing them to pursue interests outside of the classroom proved true. But I also believe the projects would work in any high school classroom. The key is to identify what the students care about and what genuinely interests them and then to find a method to incorporate the interests and passions into the classroom. The projects definitely instilled a much-needed wealth of excitement into the research process, presentation, and paper, and the entire process rekindled my interest in teaching research. Finally, not only did my students learn a great deal about each other, but I also learned a great deal about each of them. The projects fostered mutual admiration and respect in the classroom.

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Assessment: Teacher Efficacy and Response to Intervention

By Laura Isbell and Susan Szabo

The authors report on research in which they examined teacher quality, teacher efficacy, and various instruments used in previous teacher-efficacy studies to determine which instrument would best be used while implementing Response to Intervention (RTI). The instruments reviewed revealed similar patterns for measuring teacher efficacy. However, because teacher efficacy is content-specific, the authors found only one instrument that could be used to measure general teacher efficacy while change in instruction was occurring due to mandated RTI changes.

Purpose

The purpose for this research was multifaceted. First, we considered legislation that mandated the inclusion of children with learning disabilities into the general classroom. Second, we examined teacher quality issues, because teacher knowledge and skills impact teacher efficacy. Third, we examined teacher efficacy as mandated change does impact teacher effectiveness. Next, we examined instruments used in previous studies of teacher efficacy. Finally, we completed a comparison of the self-efficacy instruments to determine which teacher-efficacy instrument was the best to determine teacher efficacy as teachers work to implement instructional change due to mandated legislation.

Legislation and Response-to-Intervention

The passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 2004) signed by President George W. Bush changed how students with specific learning disabilities (SLD) are identified, as well as how these students are to receive education (Marston, 2005). This law shifted the responsibility for SLD students who were receiving special education services to the general education classroom, where they should receive the general education curriculum (IDEA, 2004; McCook, 2006).

IDEA (2004) implementation outlined how educators should evaluate students with SLD but failed to list which instruments were effective in determining if teachers were implementing Response to Intervention (RTI) successfully. Court cases, moreover, have established that the school's obligation to evaluate a student is triggered when a school district has reason to suspect both (a) that the student has a disability, and (b) that the student has a resulting need for special education services (El Paso v. R.R., 2008). The reauthorization of the IDEA focused national attention on a growing practice in the general education classroom—using RTI as a tool for assessing and providing high quality instruction to all struggling learners and to students at risk for academic failure (McCook, 2006).

RTI is the practice of "providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched

to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al., 2006, p. 3). In order to meet all students' needs effectively, teachers need to acquire additional assessment skills, problem-solving skills, strategy skills, and data-collection skills, particularly to meet the needs of SLD students (Knotek, 2005). Thus, the teacher's perceptions about his or her ability to work with these students and to learn these new skills can impact his or her level of efficacy. In turn, one's sense of efficacy can impact her or his ability to benefit from job-embedded professional development and to implement RTI effectively.

Teacher Quality

One of the purposes of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB; 2002) was to improve teacher quality. The first definition of highly qualified involved passing state-mandated certification tests. However, teacher quality is dependent not just on knowledge but also on the skillful act of teaching (Szabo, 2009). When the art of teaching is combined with the science of teaching, teachers have a stronger influence on student achievement than social economic factors, language, and minority status (Darling-Hammond, 1997, 2000).

> *"Teacher efficacy is a teacher's belief in her or his ability to impact outcome expectancy of student performance."*

Teacher quality is enhanced by job-embedded professional development (JEPD) that takes place in the classroom and allows teachers to mentor each other as they critically examine classroom instruction and student learning (Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). JEPD involves teams of teachers engaging in "interactive, integrative, practical, and results-oriented" work (Fogarty & Pete, 2009, p. 32). In addition, JEPD requires teachers to follow up with reflection. This reflective evaluation of teaching assures that both teacher quality and the improvement of teachers' skills occur (Ballard & Bates, 2008). Teaching is complicated, and, to do it well, one needs "extensive knowledge of learners and learning, teaching and techniques, behavior management and the content itself" (Croft et al., 2010, p. 13). This is especially true with the increased responsibilities general education teachers have been given with the implementation of RTI into the general education classroom. A teacher's ability to develop the necessary knowledge and skills needed to be a quality teacher is influenced by his or her teacher efficacy beliefs (Nunn & Jantz, 2009), and these beliefs in turn influence how teachers implement RTI as they work to provide a positive learning environment for all students.

Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy has its roots in a number of theories: social learning theory, behaviorism, locus-of-control theory, and social-cognitive theory. All of these theories explain behavior that can lead to self-evaluation and either high or low self-efficacy.

Skinner (1948) implemented and employed behaviorist ideas relative to the classroom in an attempt to show that students could be successful if positive reinforcements were used appropriately. This approach promoted external control of the student so he or she could be successful in the classroom. Rotter (1954) believed that one's behavior was dependent on personal belief, which led to the development of his locus-of-control theory,

which refers to the "extent to which individuals believe that they can control events that affect them" (para. 1). Rotter believed locus-of-control was one of four dimensions of self-evaluation, which leads to the development of either high or low self-esteem or self-efficacy (Henson, Kogan, & Vacha-Haase, 2001).

Bandura (1977) expanded on Rotter's locus-of-control and introduced the term *self-efficacy*. According to Bandura (1977), "self-efficacy is a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Self-efficacy relies on two factors: (a) self-efficacy helps individuals decide if they can perform the required task; and (b) outcome efficacy helps the individual determine if the task has been accomplished to a desired level (Tschanne-Moran et al., 1998).

Similar to the term self-efficacy, *teacher efficacy* is defined as teachers' confidence in their abilities to promote students' learning. The concept of teachers' sense of efficacy—teachers' judgments about their abilities to promote students' learning—was identified almost 30 years ago as one of the few teacher characteristics related to student achievement in a study by the Rand Corporation (Armor et al., 1976). In addition, Berman and McLaughlin (1977) found that teachers' sense of efficacy was positively related to percentages of project goals achieved, amount of teacher change, and extent to which student performances were improved.

Teacher Efficacy Assessment

Using Rotter's (1966) locus-of-control theory research, the Rand Corporation developed the very first teacher-efficacy assessment. It contained two items that were based on identifying the teacher's locus-of-control orientation: (a) "[w]hen it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment," and (b) "[i]f I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students" (Armor et al., 1976, p. 73). These items were given to 100 inservice teachers to gauge reliability and to determine if teachers believed their actions determined how they taught and how students learned in their classrooms (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977).

However, the two-item survey drew much criticism, and many other efficacy instruments were slowly developed. In developing his teacher self-efficacy scale, Bandura (1997) considered how teachers conceptualize efficacy. He realized that teachers could

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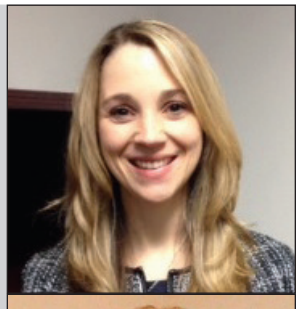

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have different levels of efficacy as they completed the many different tasks teachers must perform throughout the day in addition to teaching different subject disciplines. Various researchers incorporated these varied teacher tasks into their general teacher-efficacy scales (Bandura, 1977; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Krushner, 1993; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In addition, as self-efficacy is often content-specific, researchers have developed various scales to determine teacher efficacy in content areas: Mathematics Teaching Efficacy Beliefs Instrument (MTEBI; Enochs, Smith, & Huniker, 2000); Science Teaching Efficacy Believe Instrument (STEBI; Enochs & Riggs, 1990); Writing Teaching Efficacy Beliefs Instrument (WTEBI; Hughey, 2010); and Reading Teaching Efficacy Beliefs Instrument (RTEBI; Szabo & Mokhtari, 2004).

All these self-efficacy instruments measure two factors: teacher efficacy and outcome expectancy. Teacher efficacy is a teacher's belief in her or his ability to impact outcome expectancy of student performance. Studies conducted by Bandura (1977), Gibson and Dembo (1984), Krushner (1993), and Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), as well as others, suggested that teacher preparation and professional development impacted teacher efficacy positively and that teachers with high self-efficacy exhibited greater enthusiasm for teaching, had greater commitment for teaching, were more open to new ideas and more willing to adopt innovation, and were more likely to be more attentive to low-ability students (Bandura, 1977; Brouwers & Tomic, 2003; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Henson et al., 2001; Krushner, 1993; Ross & Bruce, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Our examination of the instruments found they produced reliable results measuring teacher efficacy; however, these scales did not assess how well or how often teachers implemented the RTI intervention effectively. Therefore, we examined the Teacher Efficacy and Behavior Scale (TEBBS; Nunn & Jantz, 2009) to gain further information about teacher efficacy as it relates to RTI, as TEBBS measures both how well teachers implement RTI interventions and teacher efficacy, while other instruments discussed thus far only measure teacher efficacy.

Teacher Efficacy Beliefs and Behavior Scale

The TEBBS survey was developed to examine the relationship between teachers' efficacy beliefs and their instructional behaviors in the classroom as they implement various interventions (Nunn & Jantz, 2009). TEBBS is a 23-item survey that measures how teachers, support staff, administrators, and parents generally view the influence of (a) Intervention Skills Efficacy (ISE; items 1-10 and 12); (b) Motivational Skills Efficacy (MSE; items 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 19, and 21); and (c) External Control Efficacy (ECE; items 11, 14-18, 20, 22, and 23) that impact school success (Nunn & Jantz, 2009). Participants are asked to respond to a 6-point scale (6 = *strongly agree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 1 = *strongly disagree*). Internal consistency coefficients of .82, .73, and .81 were computed for these subscales (Nunn & Jantz, 2009).

TEBBS measures how often teachers attempt different ways to teach students and if they have the skills to use various innovative instructional approaches. It also examines how often professional development is offered to model and provide scaffolding to teachers to help them effectively integrate innovative instruction. Professional development is important to measure, as teachers who have high efficacy experiment with various instructional approaches, which enhances both their teaching and the students' learning and provides the best possible educational experience for all students (Nunn, 1998).

Comparison of Teacher Efficacy Instruments

As noted, efficacy instruments all showed reliable results. However, according to our research, none of the instruments was used during RTI implementation except for the TEBBS. After reviewing, analyzing, and critiquing different tools to measure teacher efficacy in context of RTI, we found that TEBBS was supported by current empirical studies that measured teachers' perceptions of their impact on student achievement while trying to implement instructional changes due to RTI and their self-efficacy relative to making the changes.

Instructional change can be difficult and can impact a teacher's self-efficacy. We recommend that professional developers use TEBBS while teachers are implementing RTI, not only to determine teachers' progression or regression in teacher efficacy, but also to determine how the teachers perceive the implementation is working (Nunn, Jantz, & Butikofer, 2009). Use of data from TEBBS will help those who support teachers to provide scaffolding of learning for teachers who are having a difficult time with instructional change.

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Preparing for CCSS Implementation: Determining the State of Web 2.0 Technology

By Frances D. Luther

Adoption of Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the United States places technological demands on educational personnel to have the infrastructure to implement CCSS digital assessments and to meet the CCSS goal of college and career preparedness for school students. Leaders in one state undertook a research project to investigate the preparedness of school-library personnel in local districts to offer Web 2.0 technology for instructional use by students and educators. The author provides a discussion of CCSS and technology, as well as the rationale, methodology, findings, and recommendations of the Web 2.0 research. This research has professional-growth implications for teacher-librarians and classroom teachers who are digital immigrants.

Introduction

In order to prepare for Common Core State Standards (CCSS), McShane (2014) advised that personnel in educational jurisdictions "…determine their existing technological capacity" and "…accurately determine new technology needs" (p. 29). The Maryland State Department of Education, therefore, undertook a research project to investigate the preparedness of school-library personnel in local districts to offer Web 2.0 technology for instructional use by students and educators.

Rationale for the Research

Many issues are in play for integrating new instructional technologies into educational experiences, such as the adoption of the national CCSS in the United States and the expressed need for students to learn technological skills to compete in the twenty-first century. In fact, the CCSS that are being adopted by many of the educational jurisdictions in the United States (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2014) create a major impetus for implementing Web 2.0 technologies. Panda (2014) confirmed that technology has been emphasized in the implementation of CCSS. Foltos (2014) contended that technology can boost learning in the implementation of CCSS. Clearly, implementation of instructional technology is a major component of the CCSS, culminating in many students completing the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments online (PARCC, 2014). Not all states will use PARCC assessments that require online testing. However, because many may develop their own statewide online assessments (McShane, 2014), both educators and students must be proficient in use of digital tools for such assessments (Levin & Fletcher, 2014). Use of technological tools for CCSS assessment can make results of testing available faster (Levin & Fletcher, 2014).

A second major impetus for implementing Web 2.0 technologies is the realization, emerging over the past decade, that all students need the technological skills necessary to compete in the twenty-first-century workplace. Dickens and Churches (2012) contended, "It is no longer enough that we educate only to the standards of the traditional literacies. To be competent and capable in the 21st century requires a completely different set of skills—the 21st-century fluencies" (p. vi). Some experts see "…the new literacies of online reading and communicating" (Drew, 2012, p. 334) as critical to the CCSS goal of having students college- and career-ready (Holzweiss, 2014; Rust, 2012). Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21; 2014), Mardis (2008), and American Association of School Libraries (AASL; 2007) concurred that K-12 students need skills to make them fit for employment in the twenty-first century

Definition of Terms

The following terms used in this article may need definition:

- ***Blog.*** A blog is "an online journal comprised of links and postings in reverse chronological order. Alternatively called web logs or weblogs (derived from web + log)" (Maryland State Department of Education [MSDE], 2007, p. 25).
- ***Digital curation.*** Digital curation is defined as encompassing "…all aspects of the lifecycle of digital objects" (Gracy & Kahn, 2012, p. 32). The archival function of digital curation "…enhances the long-term value of existing data by making it available for further high quality research" (Digital Curation Centre, 2014, Home, para. 3).
- ***Digital immigrant.*** One who moves from little technology expertise to incorporating technology into his or her teaching (Hammonds, Matherson, Wilson, & Wright, 2013) is a digital immigrant.
- ***MSDE School Library Media (SLM) Advisory Committee.*** MSDE has in place a School Library Media Advisory Committee comprised of 38 people, with at least one representative from each local public school district and one or more representatives from each Maryland postsecondary institution that has an AASL-accredited, graduate-level school library media program. Two other school jurisdictions are represented: a separate country school and one for children who are incarcerated. The mandate of the committee is to give feedback on relevant educational issues to the state department of education. The advisory committee meets face-to-face at least twice a year and meets virtually other times during the year for special subject discussions. An e-mail listserv allows advisory committee members to disseminate questions, concerns, announcements, and so forth to other members of the advisory committee. The committee uses Web 2.0 technology in the form of a wiki to post documents and have the members come to a consensus on reports to government officials and so forth.

> *"[A]doption of CCSS in the United States can place significant technological demands on educational personnel, and state leaders must be ready to meet the resulting challenges for training and ongoing support."*

- ***Open source tools.*** Instructional technology tools that do not have a fee for educational use are called open source.
- ***Social or collaboration sites.*** "Social software, a major component of Web 2.0,

enables people to unite or collaborate through computer-mediated communication and to form online communities. [Social software grew] out of earlier technologies such as listservs…" (Howland, Jonassen, & Marra, 2012, p. 132).

- ***Podcast or vodcast.*** "Podcasting enables anyone to become an independent producer and distributor of audio and/or video [vodcast] content that can be offered worldwide through the Internet. As with blogs, there is great latitude for all kinds of publishing with podcasts" (Howland et al., 2012, p. 118).
- ***Web 2.0 technology.*** "Web 2.0 is not a piece of software or anything physical; rather, it describes a fundamental shift in the nature of this second generation of the web" (Howland et al., 2012, p. 132). Communication among users in an attempt to create new knowledge is a goal of this technology.

Common Core State Standards

Both positive and negative views of the CCSS exist. On the positive side, CCSS constitute a set of standards developed to make students in the United States more competitive in the global market when they graduate from high school (Change the Equation, 2014). One major area addressed in the standards is reading complex texts, a skill that can be fundamental for future college and work success (Morris, 2012). The CCSS were developed at the national level, but individual states have the option of implementing them. Professional development materials have been developed and made available to help states adopt the CCSS (Achieve, 2014; Student Achievement Partners, 2014). Nevertheless, not all states have adopted the CCSS (CCSS Initiative, 2014) and, according to O'Donnell (2014), 13 of the states that had adopted CCSS have repealed or delayed implementation.

On the negative side, implementation of the CCSS is controversial (Bowie, 2013), especially because it is a national rather than local initiative and has standardized testing for assessment. Many parents believe that their students will be in classes that teach to the test. For example, groups such as United Opt Out National are "…opposed to the Common Core and instruct parents on how to remove their children from testing" (Bowie, 2013, p. 1).

Instructional Technology and CCSS

Instructional technologies such as those using Web 2.0 may be useful in preparing students for the future as outlined in the goals of CCSS (CCSS Initiative, 2014), including reading of complex texts (Jeger, 2012). Some experts, however, caution that certain strategies must be employed when embarking on the use of Web 2.0 for educational purposes (Tucker, 2014). In order to make Web 2.0 technologies useful for instruction and assessment, King (2012) asserted that it is important to set goals in implementing Web 2.0 tools. Solomon and Schrum (2014) advised that, because of their collaborative nature, the Web 2.0 tools are not as predictable for teachers as more static approaches, but the educational experiences with these new tools add incredible, intrinsic rewards for the teachers as they do things they could not do before employing these capabilities. Schmidt and Cohen (2014) warned that there will be many new surprises in technology in the upcoming decades. For example, they tell the story of school girls in international sites using geographical locator applications to find their way around war hazards to walk safely to school (C-SPAN2, 2014). These new surprises in technology require educators to pursue professional growth consistently to keep pace with possible innovative applications to education (Cochrane, 2014).

Research Questions

As part of the implementation of CCSS, the MSDE undertook research to investigate the use of Web 2.0 technologies in local school districts. MSDE sought to find what filters were being implemented by users, what Web 2.0 categories of tools were being used or supported by teachers, and what open source tools educators would be interested in implementing if tutorials were available for professional growth. Comments from participants were also solicited.

Population

All 24 local school districts served by the MSDE (see http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/schoolsystems/System_Links_County.htm?) were invited to participate in this study. District school-library media supervisors on the MSDE SLM Advisory Committee completed the survey. Eighteen individuals representing the school districts (78%) responded to the survey. Great diversity in geography and socioeconomic levels exists among these school districts in the state (MSDE, 2012), which has adopted CCSS.

Methodology

MSDE staff used the listserv of the MSDE SLM Advisory Committee to disseminate both an announcement of the research and the link to an online survey regarding the adoption of Web 2.0 technology in each school district. The first question was "Does your system filter for users (for example by grade level, student, teacher, or administrator, etc.)?" (MSDE, 2013). Respondents could indicate no filtering or acknowledge filtering by broad role, by broad grade level (elementary, middle, high school), or by both role and grade level. They also had the option of listing other filtering methodology.

The second question asked respondents to check broad categories of Web 2.0 tools that teachers used or supported the use of "when working with students on units of instruction":

- social collaboration sites such as Twitter or Facebook;
- user-created networking sites such as Edmodo or Ning;
- social curation and collaboration sites such as Tumblr, ScoopIt!, or Pinterest;
- wikis;
- blogs;
- video streaming resources such as YouTube, TeacherTube, or SchoolTube;
- podcasting or vodcasting tools;
- creative design tools such as Wordle, Make Beliefs Comix!, or Tagxedo. (MSDE, 2013)

Respondents could also check "other" and add comments to explain.

The third question was completely open-ended: "Are there any open source Web 2.0 tools your district would be interested in implementing if educators were provided benefits and instructional strategies for classroom use through the delivery of tutorials?" (MSDE, 2013). Responses were limited to 250 characters or fewer.

The online survey software recorded responses and allowed researchers to compile simple count data from the choice responses. Comments were analyzed, coded, and grouped into themes by the author.

Limitations of the Research

The online survey format and the small population sample size created limitations to the research. Researchers' use of the online survey format limited the number of words

allowed in comment sections (e.g., 250 characters). Use of the online survey format also limited the investigation because researchers were unable to prompt for further information and clarification from the respondents. The online format also allowed only a category for reporting filtering at a general level, rather than the specific levels intended (see findings for Research Question 1). The small population sample (N = 18) limited the study because the findings cannot be applied to the general population.

Findings for Research Question #1. *Do school systems filter for users?*

Of 16 responders to this question, 66.67% indicated that the school districts filtered at some level. The majority of filtering was done by role (62.5%), such as student, teacher, or principal. A small number filtered by role and grade (18.75%). No filtering was reported by grade level (0%). Figure 1 displays an overview of the data.

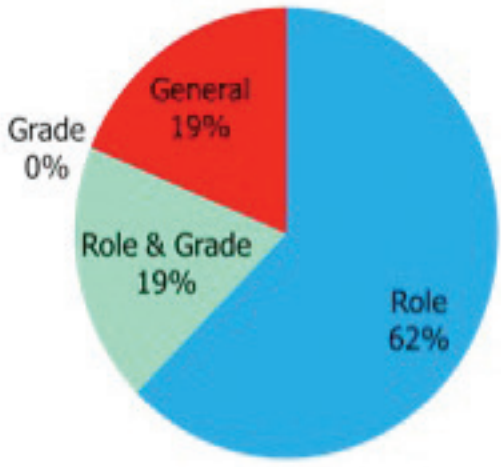

Figure 1. Results for question regarding filtering for users.

Findings for Research Question #2. *What Web 2.0 tools do teachers use, or support the use of, when working with students on units of instruction?*

The greatest use of Web 2.0 tools reported by participants in this study involved video streaming resources (94%). More than three quarters of the participants used either wikis, blogs, or podcasting/vodcasting (88.9%). Although more than half (61.1%) of participants reported employing user-created network sites, only 16.7% reported use of social or collaborative sites, and 11.1% used social curation or collaboration sites. Figure 2 displays a summation of the data.

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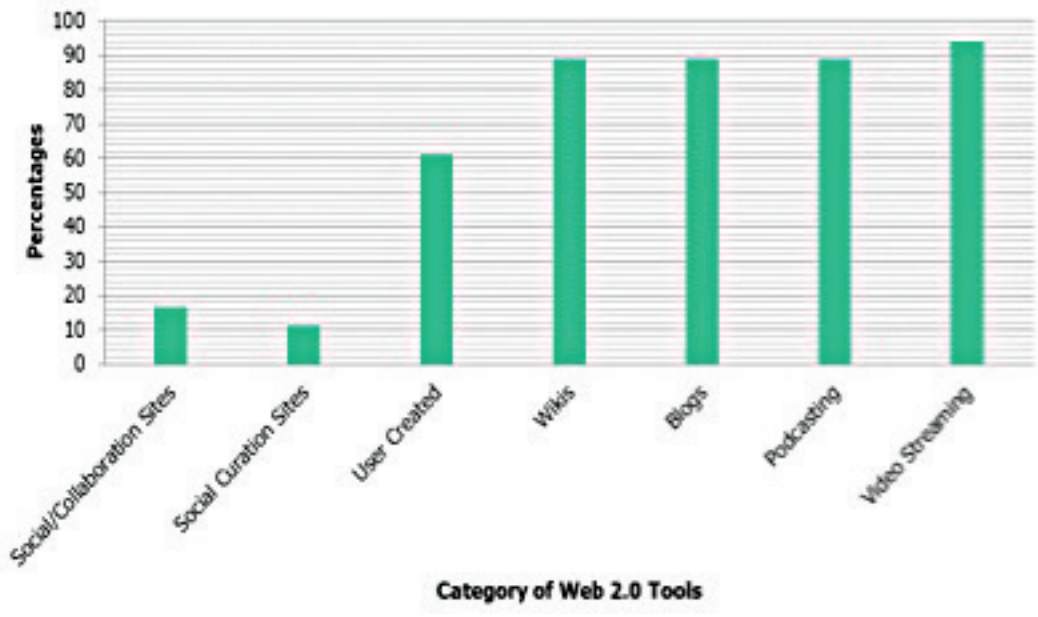

Figure 2. Percentage of reported use or support of categories of tools within participating school districts.

No discernible patterns emerged in reported use, and no obvious or consistent combination of Web 2.0 tools was evident. Use of particular Web 2.0 tools did not seem to be either cumulative or sequential.

Additional comments in response to this research question reflected the themes of *amount of use, policy implications, access to or restrictions for use of Web 2.0 technologies,* and *use of specific other Web 2.0 technologies not listed on the survey*. The participants stated that school district policies and the blocking of technologies were barriers to Web 2.0 technology usage in their schools.

Amount of use. The researchers recorded a wide variety of extra responses on use of Web 2.0 tools. These ranged from two districts reporting minimal use to two districts who reported widespread use and cited "too many tools used to list."

Policy implications on usage. Three school districts commented on the need to have policies in place that address the use of Web 2.0 technologies and to ensure that these policies are followed. Comments were as follows:

- We are currently working to expand the use of Web 2.0 tools in the classroom but have moved very carefully to ensure that we are approving tools only after all of the Terms of Use have been examined, and [after we] have explained clearly to teachers the rules.
- We support most appropriate Web 2.0 titles that have curricular connections provided local school district policies are followed regarding student privacy and online safety.
- It is difficult to find a transparent policy on the use of these tools, and they are implemented on a case-by-case, school-by-school basis in many instances.

Access to or restrictions on use of Web 2.0 technologies. Participants gave a variety of responses regarding restricted access for using Web 2.0 technologies, including using Web 2.0 technology in the form of a wiki to distribute access to other Web 2.0 technologies. Some participants expressed that sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and You Tube were overtly blocked. Another participant reported that professional growth opportunities were required before the educators could employ the tools. Responses were as follows:

- [Use is] open to most items [but] obviously not facebook/myspace [sic] and those types of sites.
- YouTube is blocked.
- [In order to use] blogs and wikis—participants must take a 3-hour courselette.
- Some of the Web 2.0 tools are accessible on our wiki.

Other specific Web 2.0 technologies used. Specific Web 2.0 tools reported as being used in local school districts, but not mentioned in the survey instrument, included podcasting and several proprietary software titles. These titles are listed in Appendix A.

Findings for Research Question #3. *Are there any open source Web 2.0 tools districts would be interested in implementing if educators were provided with benefits and instructional strategies for classroom use through the delivery of tutorials?*

The participants stated that professional development would be a facilitator for Web 2.0 technology use and application in their schools. Specific open source tools mentioned are listed in Appendix B. Respondents requested cost-effective pricing for educational versions of fee-based software listed in Appendix C.

Recommendations

Recommendations for leaders of local school districts relate to professional development and policy issues. Local school district leaders should provide professional development for teachers who may not be comfortable using new instructional technologies. As Hammonds et al. (2013) asserted, "Having grown up immersed in technology, the students of today are digital natives, but many of their teachers are often playing catch-up because they are digital immigrants" (p. 36). Local school district leaders should also develop and implement policies that will keep students safe when using Web 2.0 tools.

Personnel at state departments of education should also develop professional development tools for teachers to learn to use new instructional technologies. These tools should be free to practicing teachers within their jurisdictions. These tools could include face-to-face workshops, online tutorials, and trouble-shooting experts available by phone or e-mail.

Summary

In order to prepare for the implementation of CCSS, the MSDE undertook a research project to investigate the preparedness of school-library personnel in local districts to offer Web 2.0 technology for instructional use by students and educators. Data revealed concerns about policy and professional development issues as educators worked to implement a range of Web 2.0 technologies. Research into and support for instructional applications of Web 2.0 technologies must expand at all levels. In particular, such research and support must target the needs of teacher-librarians and classroom teachers who are digital immigrants. A cumulative summary of various investigations into the technology preparedness of schools in the State of Maryland to implement CCSS indicated

> that it would cost more than $100 million to get the state up to speed—with technology for students to take the test, and even with upgrades, on testing days teachers and students might have to refrain from using e-mail or computers for elective courses to preserve bandwidth. (McShane, 2014, p. 28)

In summary, the adoption of CCSS in the United States can place significant technological demands on educational personnel, and state leaders must be ready to meet the resulting challenges for training and ongoing support.

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Appendix A: Specific Other Web 2.0 Technologies Used

- My Big Campus (http://www.mybigcampus.com/)
- Glogster (Edu.Glogster.com)
- Livescribe Pencast (http:www.livescribe.com/pencasts)
- Wordle (http://www.wordle.net)
- Museum Box (http://museumbox.e2bn.org/)
- Voice Thread (http://voicethread.com/)
- Animoto (www.animoto.com/)
- Google Docs (https://docs.google.com/)
- Moodle (https://moodle.org.com/)
- Blabberize (http://blabberize.com/)
- Voki (http://www.voki.com/)

Appendix B: Open Source Tools

- Animoto (www.animoto.com/)
- Live Binders (http://www.livebinders.com/)
- Voice Thread (http://voicethread.com/)
- Edmodo (https://www.edmodo.com/)
- Titter (https://www.titter.com/)
- Pinterest (https://www.pinterest.com/)

Appendix C: Fee-Based Educational Versions

- Xtranormal (http://xtranormal.com)
- Glogster (Edu.Glogster.com)

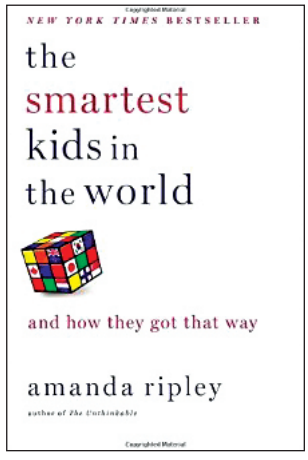
The Best Education: A Review of Ripley's *The Smartest Kids in the World*

By Christie Bledsoe

Ripley, A. (2013). *The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way*. New York City, NY: Simon & Schuster. 320 pages. ISBN 978-1-4516-5442-4

The author reviews Amanda Ripley's intriguing study of education in three countries that have experienced transformations in student achievement. Following three American exchange students in Finland, South Korea, and Poland and exploring the educational systems in those countries herself, journalist Ripley dissects the forces at work that allow the foreign young people to surpass American students, particularly in critical thinking.

In a globally competitive society, the academic success of students is perceived as an indicator of a country's economic future. High school students in Finland and South Korea outperformed students in other countries in the important area of critical thinking according to scores on the 2010 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Students in Poland have similarly shown drastic improvements in recent decades. The population demographics in Finland mirrored neighboring countries, yet Finnish students had significantly higher scores. Poverty in Poland is similar to that in the United States, but only Poland has experienced a drastic increase in scores. In a quest to explore such discrepant educational outcomes in these regions, Amanda Ripley, a reporter for *Time* magazine, followed three American teenagers as exchange students to each of these countries. Additionally, she visited schools to observe and interview administrators and teachers. In *The Smartest Kids in the World,* Ripley presents the strengths and weaknesses of the American education system in comparison to three countries where students outperform American children academically. Her book is engaging and easy to read; in fact, it is difficult to put down.



Teacher Quality

Ripley notes that people in the countries with superior academic achievement demonstrate high regard for education and educators. Teachers have higher salaries, are revered, are treated professionally with autonomy to design and implement curriculum, and often interact collaboratively. Entrance requirements for teacher-education programs include high test scores, and preparation is rigorous. Ripley believes low standards for

teacher-education and a devaluing of the teaching profession are the beginning indicators of a cyclical problem in the United States. She is quite critical of teacher-education programs that have low admission and completion standards. Because institutions are certifying many more teachers than are needed to staff schools, administrators and other school leaders should be highly selective in hiring the best teachers; yet, teacher quality has not improved. Her critique of quality, however, is absent a discussion about teacher shortages in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects and about teachers who teach outside their fields in American schools. She also fails to address the numbers of teachers certified through alternative programs and the impact of that practice on quality.

Other Differences

The schools in Finland, Poland, and South Korea have much less technology than American schools, but the presence of technology does not necessarily result in educators' integrating technology effectively for curriculum and instruction. I agree with Ripley that critical thinking skills are more important than technology skills in terms of producing graduates for the workplace. Nevertheless, using technology is an important twenty-first-century skill for today's students.

High-performing students abroad also attend schools with little or no emphasis on sports. Spending per student is less, but additional funds are directed to students and schools with the greatest needs (as should be the practice). Because Ripley only addresses secondary education, the smaller class size in American elementary schools could be a benefit of U.S. education that she does not acknowledge.

Exchange students' experiences. In the Finnish school, Kim, an American exchange student, experienced more autonomy in choosing academic tasks and in using free time after school. The school day included more time for physical fitness, play, and the arts. Many students participated in competitive sports but did not do so through the educational system.

Parental involvement and student independence were other differences Kim noted. In America, parental support includes nonacademic involvement, such as volunteering for fundraisers or attending sporting events. The most successful students—in any country—have parents who read to or with them and discuss important events. However, Kim believed American students have more structured schedules and make fewer decisions independently. From an American perspective, I must admit my own children are quite protected, and real-world learning and consequences are important elements that are missing in the lives of many young people.

In Ripley's visits to South Korea and Poland, the dreary buildings presented a negative picture. Even the South Korean principal she interviewed suggested studying the educational systems in other countries as models. Eric, the American student in South Korea, observed lackadaisical teachers and unmotivated students sleeping in classes. After further investigation, Ripley uncovered the secret to the academic success of pupils in this

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seemingly dreary system: students spent many hours after school with private tutors to prepare for exams. Ironically, these entrepreneurial, private tutors can earn millions and have full autonomy in curriculum and instruction. Public reporting of students' scores for examinations and potential ridicule for failures create a high-pressure environment in which students focus on test preparation with tutors rather than on the learning environment in school. South Korean students become apathetic toward education when they do not perform well, because their fate then includes not being accepted to prestigious universities, which in turn limits occupational opportunities.

In Poland, improvement in academic achievement stemmed from intense educational reform. Exchange student Tom found the school environment quite miserable, particularly after a government official implemented accountability measures with standardized testing. Ripley compares Poland to Texas, where accountability and testing have led to improvement, but notes that the framework in Poland may not be sustainable because of limited financial resources and transitional leadership. As an educator in Texas, I agree that accountability is necessary, but overemphasizing testing leads to narrowed curriculum and burnout for both teachers and students.

Concluding Thoughts

Even as she explores the accomplishments of other educational systems, Ripley portrays the diversity of students as a challenge in American schools. The exchange students noticed that the higher academic standards for education abroad came with little or no emphasis on competitive sports. The students pointed out the flawed thinking of many American parents and educators who focus on self-esteem and prevent disappointment in failure of efforts. In fact, overprotective American parents may be sheltering children from reality or consequences, which in turn results in negative outcomes. Based on Ripley's report, one can ultimately infer that high-stakes testing may lead to favorable scores, but high expectations and autonomy for educators and students lead to better educational outcomes by fostering an environment that promotes learning and ultimately success in a global economy.

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- References should refer only to materials cited within the text. Nonretrievable material, such as papers, reports of limited circulation, unpublished works, and personal communications, should be restricted to works absolutely essential to the manuscript.
- Abbreviations should be explained at their first appearance in the text. Educational jargon (e.g., preservice, K–10, etc.) should be defined as it occurs in the text.
- Place tables and figures on separate pages at the end of the manuscript. Use Arabic numerals and indicate approximate placement in the text.
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Position Paper/Viewpoint: Defines an issue; asserts clear and unequivocal position on that issue, provides data and references that inform that position, and argues directly in its favor.	1,000-1,500	Abstract	Required
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Book/Technology Review: Combines summary and personal critique of a book, Web site, or app on an educational topic or with educational relevance.	400-700	Introduction	Required
Letter to the Editor: Responds to materials previously published in the *Bulletin*; must include author's name and chapter/state of membership.	200-300	NA	Not required
Poetry/Graphic Arts: Original expressions in any brief poetic format or through drawings, sketches, etchings, woodcuts, photographs, cartoons.	NA	NA	Not required

NOTE: More detailed explanations of each category may be found on the *Bulletin* page in the Library at www.dkg.org.

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