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PREFACE
Karen Sanzo
Guest Editor

In 2002 the United States Department of Education (USDE) began funding School Leadership Program (SLP) grants that focus on school leadership preparation and development in high need school districts. A decade and over $150 million dollars in funding later, these programs designed to provide training for aspiring and current assistant principals and principals have furthered the field of leadership preparation and provided numerous lessons learned. A central tenet of these grants is a strong emphasis on partnerships between various preparation providers, which might include universities, school districts, and not-for-profit providers, among others. This issue of Educational Planning features some of the lessons that have emerged around the central issue of leadership preparation in the USDE SLP and specifically between universities and school districts.

In the first article, Gooden, Bell, Gonzales, and Lippa provide the reader a brief historical overview of the development of partnerships between universities and school districts, speaking then to the call for change in university-based leadership preparation programs. The authors outline the implementation of the University of Texas at Austin Principalship Program and share lessons learned through their planning and implementation process via their own lived experiences. Universities and districts, especially in urban locales, should be interested in reviewing this article as they progress down the paths of the creation of their own partnership preparation programs.

Sherman, in the second article, argues for planned mentoring in leadership preparation programs. Her role in the USDE SLP involved collaborating with a SLP grant to develop the mentoring component of the program. Here, she speaks to one concern revolving around informal mentoring – a practice that is still prevalent in many preparation programs throughout the United States. The concern is that informal mentoring has a propensity to be biased against women and minority aspiring leaders. She advocates for planned mentoring as a critical component of preparation programs and that it should be woven into the internship of a collaborative university-district preparation program. Kochan and Trimbles (2000) micro-view of mentoring framework is utilized and lays the groundwork for a transformative preparation program experience utilizing planned mentoring.

Myran and Clayton speak to the omnipresent issue of accountability that impacts both PK-12 schools and institutions of higher education. They assert that a formative approach to evaluation of school leadership preparation programs, using the case of a rural SLP grant in their article to provide contextual examples, is crucial to effective leadership preparation. Using Stuffelbeam and Shinkfield's (2007) lens of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation they articulate how evaluation of a program with multiple stakeholders can be conducted formatively to continually improve and enhance the partnership, program, and participant outcomes.

Finally, Mast, Scribner, and Sanzo conceptualize an authentic planning framework for collaborative partnership development. An overview of leadership preparation and the USDE School Leadership Program is provided. The framework articulated by the authors is anchored in a literature base focusing on collaborative planning, evidence-based decision making, and sense making. Mast, Scribner, and Sanzo provide concrete examples for leadership preparation providers for each of the key tenets of the three planning anchors to guide university-district partners through their planning efforts for school leadership program development and implementation.

I would like to extend my thanks to Virginia Roach for her guidance and assistance throughout this process. Educational planning plays a critical role in the success of leadership preparation and development programs and it is my hope through the sharing of these articles we all can better utilize lessons learned from the USDE SLP grants to plan and implement effective school leadership programs.

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Planning University-Urban District Partnerships: Implications for Principal Preparation Programs

Mark A. Gooden, Christian M. Bell, Richard M. Gonzales, and Amy P. Lippa

ABSTRACT

Urban school districts continue to face increased demands for improving student learning in PK-12 settings. As a result, universities are faced with increased accountability, requiring their leadership preparation programs to be more effective and proficient at monitoring and measuring the impact their graduates have on student achievement. Recent research supports creating university-district partnerships as part of a complex solution to address some of the demands by improving the effectiveness of principal preparation programs and thereby increasing the number of effective leaders prepared to work in urban schools. Findings from this work present some pitfalls to avoid and some recommendations for those interested in exploring university-district partnerships.

INTRODUCTION

School districts continue to face increased demands for improving student learning in PK-12 settings. While this increases the need to have highly effective teachers, it also highlights the need to have strong leaders. In fact, Leithwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom (2004) have found that leadership in schools influences outcomes by impacting school conditions and teachers' work. Leithwood and Mascall (2008) concluded, "school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning" (p. 27). There is a strong need to recruit and retain quality leaders in urban districts, especially at the secondary level. Added to these realities are changing expectations school leaders face once they are placed in their leadership positions. The current high demands and rapidly changing expectations for urban school leaders to improve school performance as measured primarily by achievement scores make it harder for leaders to accept positions in these settings. Leadership preparation programs then are called to prepare graduates who are instructional leaders who understand how to analyze data and manage change using a lens that is sensitive to the large and seemingly insurmountable inequities often found in urban schools.

Though it may not be as extreme as what is happening in the PK-12 setting, there is increased accountability of university leadership preparation programs to be more effective and demonstrate this by measuring the impact their graduates have on student achievement. There are also some criticisms of these conventional programs (Levine, 2005). As school districts search for ways to recruit, train, and retain effective secondary leaders, universities can be viable partners. In fact, a recent study by Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, and Orr (2007) found university-district partnerships to be an essential factor in exemplary leadership preparation programs. The purpose of this article is to briefly review the history of university-district partnerships, while also highlighting some of the challenges and opportunities of such current partnerships and how they can enhance conventional programs and positively impact leadership preparation. Another purpose of this article is to describe a new partnership and recount some of the lessons we have learned in this process. We conclude by providing some recommendations and implications for those educators courageous enough to engage in the important work of establishing university-district partnerships.

UNIVERSITY-DISTRICT PARTERSHIPS – A BRIEF HISTORY

The earliest university-district partnership dates back to the late 1800s and "the committee of ten," headed by Charles Eliot, president of Harvard, which issued recommendations in 1892, calling for:

> A conference of school and college teachers of each principal subject which enters into programs of secondary schools… to reconsider the limits of its subject, the best methods of instruction, the most desirable allocation of time for the subject, and the best methods of testing the pupils attainment therein. (Cohen, 1974)

These early efforts subsequently led to the development of the College Entrance Examination Board and the Scholastic Aptitude tests. However, Zykowski and Mitchell (1990) note that this working

relationship went beyond collaborating around course work and instructional materials. Instead, the relationship extended to college personnel prescribing what was good for schools, based on their "superior expertise" (p. 6). Not surprisingly, this type of interaction led to direct conflict with schools.

The onset of World War II also did much to enhance university-district partnerships. The conclusion of the war led to a large number of GI Bill-supported graduate students who were able to complete even more field studies and surveys than in preceding decades. In addition, the "baby boom" led to a rapid expansion of public schools, which in turn increased the need for cooperation in the preparation of teachers. Society's growing awareness of significant social problems led sociologist Kurt Lewin to coin the term "action research" which was intended to link university research with practice. The goals of action research were to contribute to theory and knowledge in the field of education and to improve practice in the schools. The elements of collaborative action research promoted the idea that each group be represented in the process and share in the planning, implementation, and analysis of the research. This fostered an awareness and appreciation that each member contributes different expertise and a unique perspective to that process (Zykowski and Mitchell,1990).

Beginning in 1987, reformers asserted that while community partnerships were difficult to create and sustain, quality teaching and learning require community collaboration (Comer, 1987). In response, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1988) urged universities and other community-based organizations to build support networks for urban schools and pledged to help finance such efforts. The 1990 bipartisan National Commission on Children established by the president and Congress resulted in key recommendations and outlined methods for stakeholders, including individuals, communities, universities, businesses, and the government to strengthen and support schools. The Pew Partnership found that throughout the decade that followed, more than 1,200 partnerships between schools and universities were formed (Goldring & Sims, 2005).

University-district partnerships focusing on developing leaders were also starting to form around this time but their history evolved somewhat differently. According to Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2009), the Danforth Foundation pioneered the concept of university-district partnerships in leadership through its creation of the Danforth Programs for the Preparation of School Principals initiative started during the late 1980s. The National Policy Board for Educational Administration and the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration were key partners with Danforth in this developmental process. The primary thrust of Danforth was to support the efforts of 22 university leadership preparation programs as they partnered with school districts to redesign their programs. During this time the programs focused on innovative design strategies such as recruitment of high-quality candidates and integration of field experiences in the content of the curriculum. There were also deliberate intentions to develop a curriculum that was more relevant to the principalship. These university-district partnerships seemed to be taking advantage of effective collaboration.

However, similar to the early university-district partnerships, recent partnerships have been noted for their difficulties. For example, researchers found that many partnerships are strained because of differences between schools and universities in terms of the pace of work, professional focus, career reward structure, and incongruent personal power and efficacy (Brookhart & Loadman, 1990, 1992). In addition, Million and Vare (1994) found collaboration shock, turf issues, and communication were typical problems associated with these partnerships. Other barriers include negative past experiences with collaboration, difficult past or present relationships among agencies, personality conflicts, lack of precedent, and fear of risk (Anderson, 1996). Research suggests that strong collaborations require a great deal of effort to start and even more effort to sustain. Other lessons learned during this era emphasized that most collaborative efforts are doomed to fail unless organizations possess the skill and will to reorganize relationships among various stakeholders (Kilbourne, Decker, & Romney, 1994). The same is true today.

Traditional leadership programs developed earlier and in greater numbers than university-district based programs. While these traditional university programs have not been strict copies of one another, most included a general format of professors delivering research-based knowledge of educational administration, coupled with an internship in the student's school with a principal or other administrator (Simmons, Grogan, Preis, Matthews, Smith-Anderson, Walls, & Jackson, 2007). While there are surely

exceptions, this model has proliferated in many university-based preparation programs. However, it has been severely criticized for providing outdated content and ineffective program delivery (Fry, Bottoms & O'Neill, 2007; Levine, 2005). The criticisms stem from the fact that during the last century professional expectations for school leaders have evolved with the changing political and social climate, while some leadership preparation programs have failed to change as a result of these new expectations. Consequently, educational leadership preparation programs have been under intense examination, oftentimes from individuals or groups that have not engaged in the thorough and careful research to adequately and fairly evaluate these programs (Levine, 2005). Despite the questionable soundness of these challenges, they have gained momentum and have led to calls, within and outside the academy, to seriously consider the effectiveness of the current university-based leadership preparation programs.

The calls for a redesign of leadership preparation programs from within the academy underscore the need for university-district partnerships as one part of a complex solution to increase the effectiveness of these programs. These partnerships not only prepare school leaders, but also can provide school districts and universities with additional resources that can be better realized when both organizations work together. Moreover, university-district partnerships are more likely to ensure that school leadership preparation is a sustained effort that in turn ensures there is a pipeline of effective school leaders (Young, 2010).

As stated earlier, a study by Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, and Orr (2007) found partnerships to be an essential factor in the effective leadership preparation programs. In each of the highly effective programs examined, they found that partnerships contributed significantly to the program's success. One of the factors that distinguished effective programs from others was a commitment of key stakeholders from the university and district to create written guidelines that helped delineate clear expectations, thus facilitating collaboration on a range of tasks and activities. This commitment went beyond mere words to include district-provided subsidies for credits, streamlined hiring, and, in some cases, collaboration in the development of university-based curriculum. On the other hand, universities provided tuition waivers, mentors, and coaches for prospective principals, as well as faculty to support district-based professional development. Darling-Hammond et al assert that such strong partnerships have the potential to prepare principals for specific district and regional contexts and can develop a stronger and more committed pool of leaders. These partnerships can also mitigate some of the challenges associated with the internship. Several of these features and an actual model are discussed below.

DEVELOPING A UNIVERSITY-DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP IN LEADERSHIP

The University of Texas at Austin Principalship Program (UTAPP) has successfully partnered with school districts surrounding Austin to train principals for over 50 years. The level of commitment of the partners has varied by district and partnerships, when formed, have not always included formal written agreements. In recent years, the students entering the program have come mostly from school districts surrounding Austin. In pursuing the goal of training principals, UTAPP, a two-year master's program with certification, has included components such as a rigorous recruitment and careful selection of participants, a cohort structure, and an emphasis on powerful authentic learning experiences (Darling-Hammond, et al, 2007; Orr, 2006). One enduring component of the program includes an initial 8-week nontraditional course generally called Foundations of Educational Administration (FEA) where students participate in problem-based learning by conducting a school study as a cohort. In addition to aiming to change incoming student's view to incorporate a building level perspective, this course introduces and emphasizes the core theory of action of the program. That is, if leaders are to be more reflective, collaborative, and focused on addressing social justice issues in education using real data to study, explore and engage in problem-based learning, then we must provide them with complex school-based problems to solve as a cohort and as individuals.

UTAPP carried these program components and our developing changes forward to create The University of Texas Collaborative Urban Leadership Project (UTCULP), an extension of UTAPP's efforts to increase academic achievement in PK-12 schools by developing 120 effective urban secondary school leaders prepared to meet the unique needs of respective district partners. Because UTAPP typically only admitted 15-20 leaders per cohort per year, achieving this goal would require the help

and identification of new school district partners beyond the Austin area. UTAPP officially partnered with three high-need LEAs – Dallas Independent School District (DISD), Houston Independent School District (HISD), and Harlandale Independent School District.

To provide better insight into our planning, we outline below how UTAPP developed a relationship with our first UTCULP partner, Dallas ISD. We included several successful carryover features including a highly selective admissions process, year-long internship, cohesive curriculum, and tenure-track faculty in ratios consistent with the Austin program. However, there was a need to make the program more customized to fit the needs of the districts and to make this part of an authentic partnership. A genuine partnership includes at a minimum agreed upon goals and objectives, clear roles and responsibilities, and a monitoring and feedback process. Adding to these a nurturing relationship can lead to sharing of resources and commitment. To fulfill as many of these as possible, we engaged with our Dallas partners on a number of key tasks in the co-designing of a principalship program. For example, we conducted a needs assessment, reviewed the results and disseminated them to our partner, held curriculum-planning meetings, co-conducted a candidate assessment center and launched our first cohort. Details of this model and the planning are provided below. We also benefited when we depended on our partners in the strengthening of the internship and mentoring components of the program.

SETTING GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

The development of current University of Texas partnerships was informed by the work of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB, 2008), which encourages cooperatively designing and implementing all aspects of a principal preparation program. To discuss expectations, develop understandings of the tasks ahead and to strengthen trust with our first partner, the Dallas Independent School District (DISD), we held several face-to-face meetings in Dallas. We formalized this process and our work to establish specific goals of the partnership and to identify expectations with our Dallas partners early through the development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) (SREB, 2008).

One shared understanding reflected in the MOU was that the curriculum would be collaboratively developed, mapped, and monitored and that candidate screening and assessment would be a joint process between the district and university leaders. In order to do this work, we held several meetings involving practicing DISD principals, executive principals, and central office leaders and all tenure-track professors who teach in The University of Texas at Austin Principalship Program. In March 2010, leaders from Dallas, including the Chief Administrative Officer, worked with all tenure-track principalship program professors to conduct an assessment center to screen candidates for admission into the Dallas Cohort of the principalship program.

Monitoring Progress

Early in the process we presented our partners with a scoring guide developed by SREB, which described core conditions of partnerships, and we invited them to rate the partnership and we did the same (SREB, 2008). This fulfilled the monitoring and feedback requirement described above. However, it also provided feedback on what we did well and what need to be improved. We currently maintain records of these ratings as they can allow us to assess each other in the partnership at key points in the process. Both partners invested much time and persevered to overcome most of common challenges of university-district partnerships that have already been mentioned. One tangible result of the hard collaborative work was the first Dallas cohort of 15 outstanding aspiring principals which started in June 2010. Incidentally, that cohort of students will graduate in May 2012 and three have already been hired in leadership positions. Notably, admission of the Dallas cohort immediately increased the racial and ethnic diversity of our program, which was a significant bonus.

In sum, we were able to meet the goal and objectives by clearly defining roles and expectations and these were formalized in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which we could revisit if necessary. The MOU should be detailed enough to outline clear expectations but open enough to allow flexibility where it might be necessary as in specific semester-hour requirements of the program and design details. Lastly, we keep the progress monitoring ratings on file and plan to continue to revisit as them and calibrate as needed. They serve a clear, agreed upon method to assess our progress during the

partnership.

CO-DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM

Collaborative curriculum design merges theory and research about principal preparation programs with the practical application, or the "realness" of the job. While organizational management and related leadership theories are important components of principal preparation programs, the practical knowledge of the job is equally important. One study found that over 95% of principals reported that on-the-job experiences or guidance from colleagues was more helpful in preparing them for their current position than their graduate school studies (Hess & Kelly, 2007). The purpose of the UTCULP grant expressly states that the needs of urban, secondary schools are diverse and require a different approach. Our partners add that this includes preparing leaders that are instructionally effective, data savvy, and capable of managing change. Therefore, it follows that development of this curriculum would demand reflective and responsive collaborative planning that includes the research combined with a district's recommended best practices.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The first step toward curriculum development was to perform a needs assessment by conducting an online survey. The primary purpose of the survey was to determine the overall needs of secondary school leaders in the urban school district. The online survey was delivered using Survey Monkey and included both multiple choice and open-ended questions. There was a need to collect data from interviews to get richer data. We decided that focus groups should be used because their purpose is to determine how people with similar attributes feel or think about an issue, product, service or idea (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The purpose of the focus group sessions was to delve deeper into the thoughts principals have related to the work they do in urban, secondary schools. Specifically, we expected the focus groups to render useful data about the following three topics related to the work of a principal: a) the knowledge, skills and attributes of a highly effective secondary principal; b) the ideal components of a principal preparation program; and c) the perceived ways that the central office facilitates or impedes principal effectiveness. Following the completion of the needs assessment, UTCULP synthesized the results and disseminated the findings to the district for review. UTCULP and district officials then collaborated to co-develop curriculum congruent with the needs of the urban district as guided by the needs assessment. As with all university-district partnerships, lessons were learned along the way.

First Partnership

In the first partnership, UTCULP leadership collaborated with Dallas Independent School District. Though the process essentially was the same with both partners, we were less effective in our execution with Dallas ISD and found that we needed to improve in a number of areas. For example, technical glitches and nuances of online survey software all contributed to a lower than expected response rate for our first administration of the survey. Additionally, we were naïve about how much time it takes to prepare for the entire process of planning, developing, and implementing a co-developed leadership preparation program. Planning and coordination are key components of the process but it also requires building relationships. The work from SREB (2008) and their university-district training workshop facilitator recommended a minimum of a year to build relationships. Though we started early, we simply did not have the luxury of this kind of time before starting work with our first partner.

However, during the process, UTCULP focused on developing relationships. This was important given that Dallas ISD had experienced personnel changes. For example, the position of Director of Leadership Development, a key position for our work, was vacated and remained vacant several months at the start of this partnership. Large districts experience personnel changes and it was important for the university to expect them and positively respond to them. The learning experiences of the first year directly contributed to the success of the curriculum-planning meeting with the second district partnership.

Second Partnership

In the second partnership, our team of UTCULP researchers conducted a comprehensive needs assessment that included the inclusion of multiple sources of data from the Houston ISD secondary principals. This time the quantitative and qualitative sources of data were included as part of the survey. We used two focus group sessions to collect data. Through careful planning, improving research questions and techniques, and modifying the time of the year the survey was administered, we were able to improve the response rate for the survey for Houston ISD. There were 77 respondents and all were principals, which was just above an 80 % response rate. Though the focus of the grant is for secondary principals, both elementary and secondary school principals responded to the survey.

The research team also conducted two focus groups at the Houston ISD central office and included 12 secondary principals across both sessions. The principals represented wide diversity in personal and social identities such as race/ethnicity, gender and age. For example, the average number of years of experience as a principal was eight years. All participants in the focus groups were secondary school principals representing schools with accountability ratings ranging from Exemplary (highly successful) to Academically Unacceptable (struggling) schools as described by the Texas Accountability System. District central office personnel selected the participants. Each focus group session lasted approximately two hours.

Based on the results of the survey and focus groups, a comprehensive report was prepared for the district. The UTCULP research team used triangulation as the primary method of analysis, which included synthesizing findings from the quantitative and qualitative sections of the survey, as well as from the findings from the focus group (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Findings from the three data sources (quantitative section of survey, qualitative section of survey, and focus group findings) were explained in detail. Six overall key findings were revealed to serve as major discussion points for the curriculum meeting.

We used the report findings to inform and influence the development of a district-specific curriculum in a process described below. A second purpose of the needs assessment was to identify district policies and practices that either assist or impede secondary school leaders in their efforts to improve schooling for students on their campuses. We presented the report to district leaders and principalship program professors to peruse prior to the curriculum-planning meeting. This provided participants an opportunity to review the findings from the needs assessment and come prepared to work through the data.

CURRICULUM PLANNING MEETINGS

We specifically designed the curriculum-planning sessions to provide the practitioners and researchers with focused opportunities to develop a common vision around shared beliefs of what should be taught in the customized master's program. At the curriculum meeting, district and university team members gathered to discuss the findings from the needs assessment report and develop powerful learning experiences, which would serve as building blocks, or guides for curriculum work. District personnel included principals, middle range central office personnel, and upper level administrators. University team members included UTCULP staff, faculty from the University of Texas principalship program (UTAPP), other university professors, and graduate students who had served in leadership roles in the PK-12 settings. Creating synergy around the curriculum-planning phase in many ways was contingent upon the congruency of beliefs about principal preparation programs for urban secondary educational settings. While oftentimes much is made of the chasm between researchers and practitioners, we found there was certainly enough common ground to move this conversation forward in our two-day meeting.

According to the findings of Coburn, Soung and Turner (2008), in the absence of shared beliefs about the direction of the work, those in status positions, in this case university professors, will likely face difficulties if they promote approaches incongruent with the approaches valued by authority figures in the district. Those with authority have a greater range of tools for negotiation and thus have greater influence. Essentially, we found in practice that this process was going to be more successful if we focused more on the purpose of the work and the goals rather than personal egos and agendas.

The major findings of the needs assessment set the framework for discussion amongst the collaborators about the most important aspects of a principal preparation program for the district-specific context. We also drew upon the research and used the infusion of ELCC standards. After the whole group reached consensus about the central learning components of the preparation program, we broke

into teams that included members from both sides of the university-district partnership. For example, a university member and two district officials made up each of the breakout teams. The purpose of the breakout groups was to create the actual powerful learning experiences (PLE), which would be used as a foundation for creating course content for the program. Members of the teams were also asked to align the PLEs with key findings from the needs assessment, the ELCC standards, and supply examples of assessments. This work would support the creation of the course content for the principal preparation program. The co-developed learning objectives, taken directly from the discussion of the findings from the needs assessment, directly influence the curriculum through the construction of the powerful learning experiences.

LESSONS LEARNED

One of the lessons learned when disseminating the survey to Dallas ISD was the importance of understanding of the relationships within the district and how to navigate its vast organizational structure. Dallas experienced personnel changes and understood the importance of having a bridge person. They worked very hard to get this individual hired and onboard. In large urban districts, it is extremely important to have an inside person who can focus on the partnership exclusively. Having the large amount of dedication enabled us to get the program up and running despite the district seeking to hire this person. The second survey distribution with Houston had a greater response rate partly because we were able to improve upon the complete process the second time. We also capitalized on lessons learned about the importance of a bridge person and starting early, and having clearly defined goals. Consequently, the survey was disseminated from the appropriate authority within the organization, or school district. Differences in status between researchers and practitioners can lead to conflict (Bickel & Hattrup, 1995; Freedman & Salmon, 2001; Goodlad & Sirotnik, 1988). Unclear roles and relationships on both sides can create uncertainty and misunderstanding (Freedman & Salmon, 2001; Goldring & Sims, 2005). Planning well and working with two willing partners have enabled us to avoid such conflicts. However, we must emphasize that this requires spending time to manage the relationship throughout the process of developing partnerships. There is no substitute that we have learned about here so time requirement is necessary.

Coburn, Soung and Turner (2008) suggest that the development of clear authority relations actually enables productive working relationships. Shared understanding of appropriate roles and relationships provides guidance for interaction and decision-making. In the Houston curriculum meeting, seamless negotiations between those with status and those with authority happened due to the construction of knowledge between and among university professors, researchers, and district administrators about what makes a quality principal preparation program

In the end, the collaborative process for co-development of curriculum was a success. The shared beliefs about relevant curriculum for urban secondary schools resulted in the development of a principal preparation program plan that reflected a theoretical and practical approach to learning. This process is part of an ongoing conversation. We continue to discuss curricular issues with both partners and anticipate the need to have more meetings in the future as we revisit content.

According to research related to effective university-district partnerships, in order for the school administration to support the efforts of outside grants, they need to be cognizant of the goals the grant is trying to achieve, what has already been accomplished, and exactly what type of training will be required (Cook-Hirai & Garza, 2008). District officials and administrators are inundated with many demands on their time and fulfilling the goals of a grant may not always be a top priority, unless there is an atmosphere of ongoing and continual shared collaboration. At the start of our partnership, Dallas ISD was a district serving over 157, 000 students and divided into eight Learning Communities (areas) each led by as many Executive Directors. Houston ISD had over 200,000 students and 298 schools. Districts this large have a great deal of complexity and competing demands on central office and building level leaders. As these are the people we need to engage for work on this project, this reality re-emphasizes the importance of having clear goals and objectives, clear roles and responsibilities, and a clear monitoring and feedback process. In the process of forging relationships with partner districts to begin training aspiring administrators for secondary urban settings, UTCULP developed a process to promote a collaborative approach to designing curriculum and we worked with our bridge people to gain access to key players in

the development of secondary leaders. As we continue these partnerships, we realize that there is always a need to pay close attention to the complexities of these processes and we continue to put the work in because of the added benefits of partnerships. One important benefit is the planning is the internship. We now turn to explore how partnerships with districts can support this important component of principal preparation programs.

INTERNSHIPS

Particular concern has been expressed about the quality and effectiveness of principal internships. Internships emerged as a common practice in the 1980s as part of the educational reform movement to raise educator certification standards, which are thought to be a critical link between theory and practice (Cordeiro & Smith-Sloan, 1995) and an essential socialization process for capacity building and identity transformation (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; 2004) for aspiring principals. But concerns about the inadequacy in traditional principal preparation include:

- Preparing school reform leaders is not a priority;
- Leadership departments and school districts not working together to provide authentic on-the-job opportunities;
- Principal preparation is out of sync with accountability demands; and
- Many interns are under-supported by mentor principals (SREB, 2005).

Emerging consensus holds that principal preparation programs should be more innovative (USDE, 2004) and emphasize relevant, authentic learning experiences (Williamson and Hudson, 2001; Williams, Matthews, & Baugh, 2004; Elmore, 2006; Cunningham and Sherman, 2008) that allow principal interns to progressively assume leadership responsibility by observing, participating then facilitating tasks (SREB, 2005). Rather than focusing narrowly on management skills, principal internships also should develop aspiring principals' instructional leadership, school improvement and student achievement capacities (Catano and Stronge, 2006; Cunningham and Sherman, 2008) to better align to today's school leadership demands.

Improved collaboration between universities and school districts is essential to reforming principal preparation (Young, Peterson & Short, 2002) and creating internships guided by university faculty and experienced practitioners (Cunningham and Sherman, 2008). Through scholarship, graduate faculty challenge future leaders to think critically about teaching and learning, the needs of students and families, current achievement trends, and schooling. In the field, seasoned practitioners model administrative best practice and the art of effective leadership (Williams, Matthews, & Baugh, 2004).

In sum, guidance on developing successful principal internships described in the literature (Browne-Ferrigno and Muth, 2001; Williamson and Hudson, 2001; Smith 2003; SREB, 2005; Cunningham, 2007) recommends that collaboration between universities and school districts:

- Align experience to ISLLC standards;
- Connect theory and practice in realistic way;
- Ensure programs are feasible and sustainable;
- Place interns in diverse settings;
- Provide interns constructive feedback;
- Ensure activities prepare interns to assume administrative roles with competence and confidence; and
- Evaluate effectiveness on interns' mastery and performance.

COGNITIVE COACHING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL FIELD-BASED MENTORING

Traditionally, securing an internship and mentor has been the responsibility of the aspiring administrator (Earley, 2009). Because internships have typically occurred while the aspiring administrator is teaching full time, most interns have completed their internships in the same school where they taught under the mentorship of their principal (Earley, 2009). This arrangement has resulted in interns typically having a limited amount of meaningful opportunities to observe or participate in activities designed to promote decision-making, problem-solving or exercise professional judgment, essential skills for school

leadership (McKerrow, 1998; Lave &Wenger, 1991). Moreover, in traditional internships, aspiring principals have sometimes been used primarily to complete routine administrative tasks "in order to keep labor costs low and volume production up" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 76). Consequently, field-based experiences have been found to not always be (1) context-sensitive, (2) purposeful and articulated, (3) participatory and collaborative, (4) knowledge based, (5) ongoing, (6) developmental and (7) analytic and reflective (Williams, Matthews & Baugh, 2004). Thus, it comes as no surprise that traditional internships have been argued to be the weakest portion of preparation programs (Geismar, Morris, & Lieberman, 2000; Milstein, Bobroff, & Restine, 1991).

As noted earlier, however, current research supports that clinical internships structured and implemented collaboratively between university faculty and experienced practitioners can provide the professional training and socialization Brown-Ferrigno and Muth (2004) describe as essential to the transformational process of becoming a principal. Effective internships provide aspiring principals the authentic learning opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge in field-based situations under the supervision of a mentor (Milstein, Bobroff, & Restine, 1991) and opportunities to reflect on and discuss those experiences with peers and mentors (Muth, 2002). Holistically, this experience can lead to the capacity development to meet the demands of school leadership (Lane, 1984; Mullen, Gordon, Greenlee, & Anderson, 2002; Ortiz, 1982: Wenger, 1998) and the socialization of aspiring principals into the leadership community of practice (Crow & Matthews, 1998; Matthews & Crow, 2003).

An alternative to the unstructured, traditional model of mentoring is Costa and Garmston's Cognitive Coaching (2002) model for clinical supervision, a mentoring approach which employs four support services essential to supporting instruction: evaluation, collaboration, consultation and cognitive coaching. While each function can play a crucial role in improving an aspiring principal's performance, Costa and Garmston emphasize that collaboration, consultation and coaching directly support practice, whereas evaluation serves an assessment and accountability function. Further, they assert that collaboration and consultation serve practitioners most during their early stages of development, while coaching remains important to continuous improvement over time.

Cognitive Coaching operates from the fundamental assumption that perception affects behavior; and thus, that perception change is necessary for behavior change to improve effectiveness. Grounded in cognitive and humanist psychological theories, cognitive coaching views intellectual struggle and social interaction as the means to producing personal growth. In essence, cognitive coaching aims to develop practitioners' decision-making and self-directed learning ability through self-management, self-monitoring and self-modification practices.

Instead of acting as the expert who imparts wisdom, mentors acting as cognitive coaches, strategically engage aspiring principals in goal-oriented conversations to plan, reflect and solve problems. Through the process of mental mapping, or the navigation of various paths to achieve a desired outcome, mentors acting as cognitive coaches ask mediating questions that require the aspiring principal to focus on their thoughts, perceptions, beliefs and assumptions as they engage in management and leadership activities in authentic contexts. Through this metacognitive process, aspiring principals develop the skill set essential to managing a school effectively and the habits of mind critical to becoming self-directed leaders with the cognitive capacity to build and sustain a professional learning culture in their school (Costa and Garmston, 2002).

The use of researched-based cognitive coaching model has the potential to enhance our principalship programs. We attempted to improve upon the conventional model by paying mentors to work with our principalship students while they went through the internship but met with uneven success and waning interest on the part of the mentor principals. We have improved this model by paying for the mentors to be trained as Cognitive Coaches so they now have an incentive and a set of skills to use to more effectively mentor the students so that they can build their self-directed learning ability through self-management, self-monitoring and self-modification practices (Costa & Garmston, 2002). Cognitive coaches can be principals or assistant principals from partner districts. Our district partners assist us in selecting the best people and we pay for their training that includes eight-days spread over several months in order to give participants a chance to practice their coaching. This adds another level of support in addition to the building principal who can still mentor the interns but in a different way and with less pressure on

the student. The university professor who visits the students on-site as they go through their internship is also available to support their growth. Thus we have improved upon the traditional model by creating three levels of support for all of our students. Additionally, we offer our current students the opportunity to get trained as cognitive coaches.

CONCLUSION

University-district partnerships have been promoted as a way to bridge theory and practice and address the criticism that university preparation programs are removed from the reality of the principal-ship (Grogan, Bredeson, Sherman, Preis, & Beaty, 2009). Such partnerships can present opportunities for districts and universities to collaborate and maximize resources to address the need to prepare leaders for PK-12 schools. As we have outlined, there are clear benefits to engaging in this work. Still, scholars have noted that there are challenges to forming these partnerships, as the organizational structures may often be incompatible (Goldring & Sims, 2005; Myran, Crum, & Clayton, 2010).

While we agree with this assessment, the work of UTCULP suggests that careful planning and attending to some issues explained here can really increase the likelihood of starting and sustaining effective partnerships. First, it is absolutely necessary for partners to be clear about expectations as de-scribed through a memorandum of understanding or similar type of agreement. These documents clearly state the expectations, shared understandings, common beliefs, and responsible parties. Moreover, they should list goals and how resources will be shared. In tough times in the partnership, these really help as they give the respective partners something to refer to if there is a need to amicably resolve any issues. Second, there should be some way for partners to assess how the partnership is going. There should be flexibility to make reasonable changes to aspects of the agreement when necessary. Despite having an MOU, the UTCULP partnership has required that those involved be flexible and patient, and committed to the process. Third, there is no substitute for lost time or the amount of time it takes to do this work. However, working deliberately and carefully on relationships can really help build comfort levels as partners undertake this important work. The UTCULP partnership has been based on increasing the number of trained principals prepared to work in urban secondary schools. This remains the key thrust of our work as partners. It is crucial that universities and school district consider the steps of a conducting needs assessment, drafting an MOU, and implementing a system for monitoring and assessing progress when planning for effective partnerships. If these steps are seriously considered, partners an increase the likelihood of creating a viable university-district partnership with the promising potential of preparing effective urban leaders.

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Planning for Successful Mentoring
Whitney Sherman Newcomb

ABSTRACT

Collaborative approaches to leadership through district/university partnerships and through mentoring relationships have the potential for developing collaborative leaders. One way to facilitate experiences and relationships with practicing school leaders is through focused and planned mentoring processes. The purpose of this essay is to provide a conceptual rationale for the importance of mentoring as a part of leadership development and to propose a planned process of mentoring for leadership programs.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORING

Substantive change in leadership practice requires collaboration between universities and school districts seeking to grow their own leaders (Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002). This requires a focus on the practice of educational leadership. Since no one leadership reality is universally accepted, the contextualization of learning experiences becomes essential (English, 2006). Furthermore, if we are to shift paradigms, then the study of leadership should require the struggle with new ideas and the rejection of assumptions (Greene, 1988). According to Wenglinsky (2004),

> Aspiring leaders must leave their preparation programs armed not only with a new set of behavioral attributes, but as masters of their own minds – reflective, inquiry-based, and full of the cultural capital they need to transcend the challenging circumstances of being a school leader. (p. 33)

And, if we desire for future leaders to understand the world critically, then the preparers of these leaders must help them view the world as a reality in process (Freire 1970).

Mentoring is a proposed strategy for supporting and developing leaders (Crow & Matthews, 1998) who can respond to problems of practice through a culture of reflective and reciprocal learning. Collaborative approaches to leadership through district/university partnerships and through mentoring relationships have the potential for developing collaborative leaders. Developing the intellectual (what we know) and the professional (what we can do) (Grogan & Andrews, 2002) requires an approach to leadership development that is highly personal and contextualized. Connecting inspiration to engagement (Goldring & Sims, 2005) can be facilitated through an approach to leadership preparation that situates theory in the demonstration and enactment of practice. The process of mentoring is key to the marriage of theory and practice. The purpose of this essay is twofold: to provide a conceptual rationale for the importance of mentoring as a part of leadership development and to propose a planned process of mentoring for leadership programs.

MENTORING AS A PART OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2004) assert that becoming a principal is transformational and, thus, skill development is required through an active learning process that immerses aspiring leaders in real world settings and engages them in socially constructed activities. Browne-Ferrigno's (2003, 2004) earlier work found that a vital socialization experience for students aspiring to become leaders was working with administrators in real settings because it allowed them role socialization. According to Ryan (2003), practicing school leaders are key to revisioning leadership because they can influence practice in ways that individuals in academic institutions cannot. One way to facilitate experiences and relationships with practicing school leaders is through focused and planned mentoring processes.

It has long been established that mentoring provides benefits to aspiring leaders (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Daresh, 2003, 2004; Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004; Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000; Hubbard & Robinson, 1998; Mertz, 2004; Sherman, 2005; Sherman & Grogan, forthcoming). According to Grogan (2000, 2002), the benefits of mentoring include access to the unwritten rules, the power of knowing a veteran leader of influence, the support of having someone speak on your behalf, the gaining of self confidence, and the opportunity to establish a greater network of

support. Opportunities for feedback, reflection, encouragement, sharing, and professional development have been highlighted in the literature as well (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). "Career mentoring is most strongly associated with the practices and support individuals receive as they move into leadership positions in K-12 education" (Sherman & Grogan, forthcoming). Mentoring is the opportunity for leaders and schools to build capacity through a process of reciprocal sharing (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004). It is, in part, the process of socialization.

According to Zhao and Reed (2003), mentoring is based on a personal relationship that many of us have experienced in some aspect of our lives. Kochan (2002) asserts that mentors are the people who help us move toward our goals and toward fulfilling our potential. In school settings, mentoring has, for the most part, existed as a top-down, dualistic relationship. However, more recent accounts describe it as a network of support to help a protégé achieve career success (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007). Mentoring is an active rather than passive process with descriptors including teaching, coaching, advising, promoting, directing, protecting, and guiding (Gardiner, Enomoto & Grogan, 2000; Grogan, 1996; Brunner, 2000; Kochan 2002; Shakeshaft, 1989). Quality mentoring is an intentional relationship based on mutual understanding between at least two individuals to serve the needs of the protégé and, in turn, the organization (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000, p. 52). In schools, the mentoring relationship is typically between a veteran principal and an aspiring or novice assistant principal or principal.

A mentor is a veteran leader who actively engages with a protégée by teaching, coaching, protecting, sponsoring, guiding, and leading (Grogan, 1996; Brunner, 2000; Kochan 2002; Shakeshaft, 1989). "Mentors provide their expertise to less experienced individuals in order to help the novices advance their careers, enhance their education, and build their networks" (Sherman, Munoz, & Pankake, 2008, p. 244). Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) added that mentorship, therefore, involves more than guiding protégés through learning standards and skill sets and extends to providing strong and continuous emotional support (p.53).

Mentoring as leadership development requires that protégés learn ways in which veteran leaders think, make decisions, and solve problems to facilitate cognitive and social development (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992). The mentoring relationship should be centered around the mentee's desires and goals (Grogan, 2000, 2002) to support the development of sense of self. According to Daresh (2004), protégés become more confident through mentoring as they learn to apply theory to practice while developing a sense of community and acculturation. Mentors benefit from the relationship as well as it gives them a chance for reflection and professional development (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). Roadblocks to successful mentoring relationships have been identified as lack of sufficient time between the mentor and mentee, mismatches between mentor and mentees, and professional and/or personal incompatibilities (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent). Additional challenges to creating formalized mentoring programs include district (and university) support, mentor training, selection of participants, and program evaluation (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent).

Traditional, informal mentoring is typically based on interest where the relationship is established by a mentor selecting a mentee or the relationship just naturally develops in a working environment between a veteran and a novice (Sherman, 2002). However, one problem with relying on informal mentoring only is that women, minorities, and nontraditional leaders are rarely chosen as mentees. In contrast, formal mentoring relationships are established through planned programs and, rather than promoting only a dual relationship between a mentor and mentee, they also promote an expanded form of mentoring through networking (Sherman). The planned program for mentoring outlined here has components of both informal and formal mentoring.

PLANNED MENTORING

While identified phases of mentoring relationships abound in the literature, the purpose for this essay is to put forth one process for planned mentoring that is built around Kochan and Trimble's (2000) micro view of mentoring that includes: laying the groundwork (assessment of strengths and weaknesses, identification of goals); warming up (developing the relationship, establishing norms); getting to work (leadership learning through practice, problem solving, and contextual experiences); and relating over the long term (change in relationship to co-mentoring or mutual friendship). I utilize the general premise

for their four phases of the mentoring relationship, but rename and expand upon their phases while also adding a fifth phase (see Table 1). Though the phases outlined here are taken from the literature on informal mentoring, the mentoring relationship itself is instigated in a planned and formal way by weaving it into internship experiences of a district/university leadership preparation partnership. The outline here focuses on the mentoring piece of the larger internship experience (see Sherman & Crum, 2009, for an expanded internship design) where aspiring leaders are immersed in contextualized, real-world learning with veteran leaders in the district.

Getting to Know Self

If mentoring is to promote cognitive development (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992) and facilitate transformation (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004), understanding and getting to know self is vital. Decision making is based on personal values, culture, and experiences. Reflecting on personal experiences and beliefs helps one gain an understanding of leadership practice. Thus, before any mentor/mentee matching occurs between aspiring and veteran leaders, both should engage in activities that promote self awareness. Self-awareness activities might include the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI) and the *Learning Connections Inventory* (LCI). The MBTI, based on Jung's psychological types work, is a self-development tool that helps individuals understand how they perceive the world, make decisions, and interact with others. The *Learning Connections Inventory* (Johnston, 1998) helps those who take it understand themselves as learners and how this impacts their leadership practice. According to Stemhagen, Sherman, Hermann, Shakeshaft, Magill, and Clark (2011), results of the LCI help students understand themselves as learners and the varying learning styles of others – and the implications of extending this knowledge to school stakeholders. Once mentors and mentees gain an understanding of themselves and how they learn, each can create a profile summary that lists strengths and weaknesses. From this profile, mentees can determine goals for the mentoring relationship because, according to Grogan (2000, 2002), the mentoring relationship should be centered around the mentee's desires and goals. As mentees work on establishing and clarifying goals, mentors should be engaged in meaningful mentor training. Knowledge and skills developed during this phase include: self assessment; self knowledge; understanding strengths and weaknesses; insight into mentoring; personal responsibility; data-based goal selection/decision-making; ability to articulate goals; and insight into others' leadership and learning styles.

Relationship Selection

Because mentoring is an active rather than passive process, mentees should be proactive in approaching and seeking a mentor. District/university partnership programs would be wise to facilitate formal gatherings of mentees and mentors so that they can get to know one another through the profiles and goals that they create and to establish personal contact as well. Mentees should choose mentors based on the information that is gained through the self-assessment activities and mentors should accept mentees whose profiles are compatible. It is best that mentees not choose mentors who are their supervisors as this might be detrimental to trust-building. Knowledge and skills developed during this phase include: networking; promoting self; insight in how to create relationships; sensitivity and judgment; and communication.

Development of the Relationship

Gaining self awareness and making a good mentee/mentor match are preliminary, but vital, strategies for establishing a successful mentoring relationship. Once these tasks are accomplished, the intricate work of getting to know one another and establishing parameters for the mentoring relationship begins. Mentees should be proactive in clarifying (or reclarifying) their goals for the mentoring experience as well as sharing values and beliefs that significantly impact them as future leaders. Priorities, timelines, and norms should be discussed and established jointly between mentors and mentees (i.e. weekly face-to-face meetings, bi-weekly telephone conversations, etc.). Mentors and mentees should set aside time to get to know one another and establish trust, while also establishing formal times to discuss current trends in leadership. Knowledge and skills developed during this phase include: ability to clarify values

and goals; trust building; consistency; organization and planning; ability to collaborate; priority setting; listening; and sharing.

Growing the Relationship

Once a relationship has been established, the work of leadership learning must begin. Mentees and mentors should work together to plan and implement task assignments related to mentee goals and to facilitate the practice of skills. Mentees should be proactive in asking questions and should keep and share a log of their successes and failures with their mentors. Mentors should provide modeling and scaffolding when needed, give feedback, brainstorm solutions to problems, and share leadership stories. Time should be built into regular meetings for reflection, discussion, and the evaluation of the relationship. Knowledge and skills developed during this phase include: risk taking; judgment; modeling; empathy; listening; critical problem solving; reflection; assessment; collaboration; and flexibility.

Consolidating and Transforming the Relationship

The final phase of the mentoring relationship can lead in several different directions. An authentic relationship that is built on trust and reciprocity is one that is unnatural to discontinue once the formal need for the pairing in connection to the internship is completed. Thus, mentees and mentors can choose to reassess their needs, evaluate the relationship and make changes, or nurture and continue the relationship. Mentors should actively promote their mentees for positions and leadership opportunities and mentees should seek to transition the relationship to one where co-mentoring can occur as they become more experienced and can offer advice and support to their mentors. Knowledge and skills developed during this final phase include: reflection; data-based decision making; evaluation; networking and promoting; communication and discussion; adaptability; and transitioning.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this essay was to provide a rationale for the importance of mentoring as a part of leadership development and to propose a planned process of mentoring for leadership programs. Transformation in leadership practice requires change in leadership development. Collaborative district/ university partnerships offer opportunities for aspiring leaders to contextualize their learning, connect theory to practice, and engage in real world learning through internship experiences. Mentoring is a vital aspect of leadership development and internship experiences. The planned mentoring process outlined here expands upon Kochan and Trimble's (2000) micro view of mentoring and includes five phases: getting to know self; relationship selection; development of the relationship; growing the relationship; and consolidating and transforming the relationship. The phases are fluid and work to promote the type of relationship that can support and develop future school leaders.

The expansion of the mentoring process to include the fifth phase of transformation is crucial to the refocusing on empowerment and rejection of the promotion of the status quo. As the mentoring relationship advances and mentees gain skill and confidence, they become capable of paying it forward not only to other future leaders, but to their actual mentors as well through a cyclical process of active and non-stop mentoring. It is unnatural for mentoring relationships that are authentic to abruptly discontinue simply because mentees gain leadership positions - particularly for women because their socialization has, historically, been focused not only on building relationships, but also maintaining them (Gilligan, 1982). Furthermore, traditional gender socialization encourages women to seek out horizontal connections rather than vertical connections with others (Gilligan). If, as the mentoring relationship progresses, it can be re-centered from a didactic foundation to a networking foundation where mentors and mentee pairs connect with other mentors and mentee pairs, a webbing effect becomes possible that has far more potential to transform leadership practice. It also stands to reason that the greater the number of successful leaders mentoring, networking, and collaborating with one another, the greater the chance for impact and lasting change on the field of education.

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Table 1. Planned Process of Mentoring, (based on Kochan & Trimble, 2000)

PHASE	MENTEE ACTIONS	MENTOR ACTIONS	KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS DEVELOPED
Getting to Know Self	Assess Needs and Strengths: • Myers-Briggs • LCI Create a Profile Determine Goals	Assess Strengths: • Myers-Briggs • LCI Create a Profile Mentor Training	Self Assessment Self Knowledge Understanding Strengths and Weaknesses Insight into Mentoring Personal Responsibility Data Based Goal Selection Ability to Articulate Goals Insight into Others' Styles
Relationship Selection	Actively Approach and Select Mentor	Acceptance of Mentee	Networking Promoting Self Insight in How to Create Relationships Sensitivity and Judgment Communication
Development of Relationship	Clarify Goals Share Values Establish Priorities Establish Timeline Establish Norms Engage in Discussion	 Share Values Establish Priorities Establish Timeline Establish Norms Engage in Discussion	Ability to Clarify Values and Goals Trust Building Consistency Organization and Planning Ability to Collaborate Priority Setting Listening Sharing

Growing the Relationship	Plan and Implement Task Assignments	Assign Tasks and Learning Opportunities	Risk Taking Judgment
	Practice Skills	Provide Modeling and Scaffolding	Modeling Empathy
	Ask Questions	Give Feedback	Listening
	Keep (and share) a Log of Successes and Failures	Brainstorm Solutions to Problems and Share Stories	Critical Problem Solving Reflection
	Reflect and Discuss	Reflect and Discuss	Assessment
	Assess Relationship	Assess Relationship	Collaboration Flexibility
Consolidating and Transforming the Relationship	Nurture and Continue Relationship	Nurture and Continue Relationship	Reflection Data-Based Decision Making
	Reassess Needs	Actively Promote Mentee	Evaluation Networking and Promoting Communication and Discussion Adaptability Transitioning Future Planning

The Tension between Accountability and Formatively: Implications for Educational Planning

Steve Myran and Jennifer K. Clayton

ABSTRACT

Today, educators find themselves at the nexus of accountability and improvement (Earl & Fullan, 2003), contending with competing pressures to chase accountability measures and obtain short term gains, while at the same time embracing the principles of formatively (Erickson, 2007) that can promote sustained growth. While the pressures of accountability are often experienced as a push to meet standards without consideration for investments in the instructional core, the use of formative tools such as data-based decision making and formative program evaluation are geared toward iterative growth informed by ongoing data collection, analysis, and action. In our experience, working on both sides of these questions, we have found that the academy and the public schools lack much of the institutional knowledge needed to overcome these tensions. We assert that if these competing pressures are allowed to go unresolved, they will undermine educators' ability to focus on deep, substantive learning and to use assessment information to formatively point the way to program improvements. In order to better understand the sources of these tensions, we provide a synopsis of the history of program evaluation and data-based decision making in education as well as a review of our own experience with these pressures in our work with the US Doe School Leadership Program grant. Lastly, we draw a number of conclusions about the importance of these issues for educational planners and the need to understand and carefully consider these competing pressures in order to avoid potential unintended consequences.

Today, educators find themselves at the nexus of accountability and improvement (Earl & Fullan, 2003), contending with competing pressures to chase accountability measures and obtain short term gains, while at the same time embracing the principles of formativity (Erickson, 2007) present in data-based and evidence-based school improvement efforts. In this environment, dominated by the pressures of accountability and testing, both educators and program evaluators can find themselves bending to these pressures in ways that often undermine the intent of school and program improvement efforts. Curricular alignment, teaching to the test, and what some have called "black box evaluation" (Lipsey, 1987; Rossi, Freeman, & Lipsey, 1999) can undermine improvement efforts by focusing too narrowly on complying with outcome measures and overlooking what goes on inside the program itself.

Without understanding what actually is going on inside a school improvement effort, there is no way of making adjustments and refinements. In this way, the black box approach to understanding school improvement, where the system is only viewed in terms of its inputs and outputs, fails to make improvements based on information and feedback collected along the way. As Erickson (2007) points out, one of the reasons for this disconnect between accountability and the principles of formativity is that these two activities take place "on radically differing time scales" (p. 186). Accountability information is almost entirely summative and cannot inform practice in timely and responsive ways, while short-term formative information can point the way to improvements and refinements while an effort is still underway. Formative program improvement efforts do not need to wait until the final output measures are collected to understand where improvements can be made and respond in proactive and purposeful ways.

As Black and William (2005) point out, the use of summative assessments dominates the educational landscape and further highlight that interim and large-scale assessments are notable obstacles that can undermine the use of formative assessment tools. Reacting to a tendency for assessments to be used in largely summative ways, scholars and practitioners have pioneered the development and use of formative assessment strategies, which are designed to provide all stakeholders with feedback that can be used to make ongoing improvements. In the public school setting, these efforts fall under two broad categories; formative assessment, or assessment for learning (Stiggins, 1999) and data-based decision making. In the program evaluation realm, a number of formative evaluation models have been proposed going back to Scriven's (1967) original distinction between summative and formative assessment. These include *Utilization Focused Evaluation* (Patton, 1978), and the Context, Input, Process, and Product model

(Stufflebeam, 1971). Many accreditation agencies, including NCATE, have begun to more rigorously fold these formative principles into their reporting requirements focusing more heavily on evidence of continuous improvement than on compliance and outcome measures.

PURPOSE

With the above in mind, we assert that these are competing pressures, one to chase the measure to obtain short term gains on largely summative assessment instruments, and the other to embrace the principles of formativity. If these tensions at the nexus of accountability and improvement go unresolved, it will undermine educators' ability to better understand the impact of instruction utilized in schools and classrooms. Furthermore, it will undermine our ability to use these insights to better facilitate deep, substantive, and lasting learning opportunities for our students. In this paper, we provide a brief summary of the history and theories behind program evaluation and formative assessment with an eye towards what we describe as the principles of formativity. We go on to briefly describe our ongoing work on a program evaluation and assess these efforts in relationship to the principles of formativity. Lastly, we use the discussion of our own work in this area as a tool to address the theory to practice implications that educational planners should carefully consider in order to avoid the many potential unintended consequences of a failure to balance the tensions between accountability and school improvement.

THE TENSION BETWEEN ACCOUNTABILITY AND FORMATIVITY

History of Program Evaluation

The notion of program evaluation for educational systems and improvement projects is one with a long history of transformation and development. Program evaluations were originally intended to provide a mechanism for documentation and comparison and were used widely in government programs prior to their emergence in the field of education. Since that time, program evaluations have gone through several iterations and have often been tied to a compliance and accreditation process. Earlier evaluation efforts, which began in earnest in Great Britain in the 1800s, were designed as a mechanism for measuring student performance and then drawing comparisons between schools or systems of education (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004). This appealed to political officials and educational theorists and during the 1950s and 1960s, schools became increasingly invested in improving and expanding the use of standardized testing as a mechanism for connecting objectives to learning outcomes. During the 1960s and 1970s, theorists such as Alkin, Stufflebeam, and Scriven advocated for more systemic models that could provide a methodical and rigorous process and be usable by educators. Stufflebeam (1971) promoted the CIPP model which examined the context, input, process, and product as a model for program effectiveness and later Guba and Lincoln (1981) expanded that work to examine naturalistic evaluation as a method of program evaluation. These models provided new frameworks that helped program evaluators begin to escape the confines of the "black box evaluation."

Traditionally, program evaluation has been shaped by an "expert" model and limited to the technical activities of data collection and analysis. Typically, under such a model, evaluators are brought in and take direction from the principal investigators, conduct the study, and report their findings to the PI's who in turn take action as they see fit and/or to the degree that the grantors require. This "black box evaluation" (Lipsey, 1987; Rossi, Freeman, & Lipsey, 1999, p. 154) and "technical activities evaluation" are problematic in that they focus on what goes into and what comes out of a program without considering what goes on inside a program, or "focus on the overall relationship between the inputs and outputs of a program without concern for the transformation process in the middle" (Chen, 1990, p. 18), neglecting that stakeholders may benefit more from what happens in the middle than the inputs and outputs of a more conventional program evaluation.

At a fairly coarse grain, Scriven (1967) distinguishes between formative and summative evaluation, while at a finer grain, others have distinguished between internal and external evaluations (Shulha & Cousins 1997; Wadsworth 2001), rational approaches (Tyler, 1942, 1966; Provus 1971; Steinmetz 1983) and constructivist approaches (Dryzek 1993; Fischer & Forester 1993; Guba & Lincoln,1989; Majone, 1989; van der Knaap,1995). Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007) identified twenty-six evaluation

approaches grouped into five categories: 1) pseudoevaluations, 2) questions and methods-oriented evaluation approaches, 3) improvement and accountability-oriented evaluation approaches, 4) social agenda and advocacy approaches, and 5) eclectic evaluation approaches (p. 137).

A Shift in Views of Program Evaluation

An important part of this history is the tension between the summative and formative aspects of program evaluation. There has been an increasing shift towards more iterative and formative means of collecting and reporting data on a program's implementation and progress. The U.S. Department of Education in 2004 indicated a "significant shift" in the process and use of program evaluation in department and department-funded projects. The new policy statement indicated, "We propose a significant shift in program evaluation, away from a compliance model and towards a system of research and evaluation focused on results and the effectiveness of specific educational interventions" (US DOE, 2004). Prior to that statement, there was a movement toward this new research approach from researchers such as Rossi, Freeman, and Lipsey (1999) who defined program evaluation as the use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs. It draws on the techniques and concepts of social science disciplines and is intended to be useful for improving programs and informing social action. (p. 35)

A practical reality of program evaluation is that there are challenges and limitations to using the data in the most effective manner. Identifying these challenges often comes from understanding the experiences of stakeholders, project directors, and program evaluators in the field and navigating the issues. By making such a change to the overall structure and purpose of program evaluation, educators engaged in projects that require formal performance reports continue to struggle to combine compliance and reporting requirements with a need to embed such requirements into ongoing formative evaluation and improvement efforts.

Inclusion, Dialogue, and Deliberation: A Conceptual Framework

According to Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), "inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation are considered relevant at all stages of an evaluation: inception, design, implementation, analysis, synthesis, write-up, presentation, and discussion" (p.222). Inclusion involves evaluators taking into consideration the interests, values, and views of major stakeholders involved in the program or policy under review (House & Howe, 2000). Dialogue, the second of the three principles emphasizes the importance of extensive dialogue with stakeholder groups being cautious not to organize merely symbolic interactions, but to promote honest dialogue. Lastly, deliberation should provide opportunities to involve stakeholders in weighing evidence and drawing sound conclusions. The evaluator is responsible for structuring the deliberation thereby helping to draw out valid conclusions (House & Howe, 2000). In this way, effective program evaluation can be considered that which combines the issues of context, varied data sources and analysis techniques, and extensive uses of qualitative data along with the careful consideration of communication with stakeholders groups as outlined by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007).

FRAMING THIS TENSION IN CONTEXT: THE FUTURES PROGRAM EVALUATION

Background of the School/University Partnership

The authors' involvement in school/university partnership efforts provided an ideal test bed to examine the tensions between accountability and formativity and better understand the challenges in practical terms and how program evaluation can better promote school improvement. Designed to build the leadership capacity within the context of the school culture being served, the Futures Program (pseudonym) is a partnership between a small rural public school district and a large regional urban university. This program was intended to stabilize and strengthen the retention of school leaders who can successfully guide and direct instruction in this high-need LEA, ensuring a leadership pipeline of those who possess the institutional knowledge of the school division, balanced with the contemporary models of school leadership. The Futures Program was built around an integrated effort that focuses on holistic approaches to leadership preparation, developing relationships, coordinating meaningful professional development,

realism in design and experiences, and introspection as ways for participants to build stronger bridges between theory and practice (Sanzo, Myran, & Clayton, 2011).

This program was required by the funder to provide annual progress reports that focused primarily on outcomes. For example, the report was primarily a quantitative assessment of numbers of graduates, numbers of hires, and division student growth. This reporting requirement largely drove the program evaluation efforts in the early years of the project. In later years, the project directors and program evaluator made a conscious decision to focus on the formative program evaluation feedback mechanisms, making the annual report a smaller facet of the overall evaluation model. This transition provides an opportunity to examine this program evaluation as one that struggled with the tension between accountability and formativity.

Through the Lens of Inclusion, Dialogue, and Deliberation

The integration of holistic approaches to leadership preparation, developing relationships, and coordinating meaningful professional development were important aspects of the Futures Program and were developed and refined as a result of the continuous fine-tuning of the formative aspects of the evaluation model (Sanzo, Myran, & Clayton, 2011). The relationships between the diverse partners involved in the Futures Program were complex and the potential for inequitable distributions of power (real or perceived) had the capacity to trigger oversights and lead to mistakes in planning, implementation, and evaluation (Miller & Hafner, 2008). We found that the evaluation principles of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation were essential components of developing an approach for working with future school leaders that built stronger bridges between theory and practice. These three features, inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation, we assert, represent a critical lens for how program evaluation is planned and implemented.

Through the Lens of Inclusion

When we assessed our experience with the Futures Program evaluation through the lens of inclusion, we found that including all stakeholders in the early stages of planning is extremely difficult and is not generally built into the organizational and institutional norms of the cooperating schools, nor the university. Typically, grants and projects are developed by key decision makers with the practitioners brought in at the stage of implementation. While student learning or other outcomes are always considered goals of the grant or program, students are not, however, considered as stakeholders.

We determined that the program evaluation in the first two years of the grant failed to include the voice of the various stakeholders within the district and university. While not intentional, this oversight narrowed the scope of the program evaluation to only include the perspective of the project directors and participants, while not including the input of university administration, district administration, teachers, parents, and students. One formative change made to the program evaluation model in year three is an ongoing effort to develop instruments and build trust with these groups to initiate their involvement in providing data to the evaluative piece.

Through the Lens of Dialogue

Regarding the principle of dialogue, we found that communication among the various stakeholders, including that of the evaluators and the program directors is critical. However, inclusion was a prerequisite to dialogue. Without the various stakeholders' authentic inclusion in the various aspects of the program, there limited content for meaningful and productive dialogue. This may go without saying, but it highlights the interrelated nature of inclusion and dialogue. Specifically, the mutual understanding about the nature and purpose of the program and the evaluation, as well as clear communication about roles and responsibilities was found to be crucial. We found that in the first two years of the project, the lack of clarity on these issues limited the evaluator-project directors' interaction as well as the evaluator, stakeholder interactions creating a kind of role-limitation thereby impoverishing the quality and accuracy of the evaluation and program itself.

In contrast to these earlier failures of inclusion and dialogue, in our third year of the project with a new evaluation, we found that building mutual trust and understanding about the nature of evalua-

tion, particularly the formative purposes of evaluation, resulted in refinement and implementation of the evaluation. We also found that when stakeholder feedback was included, power imbalances often associated with stakeholder disentrancement were mitigated. For example, when teachers are asked for feedback, but do not see their concerns addressed or represented in program activities, their motivation can be undermined causing a decrease in participation.

Through the Lens of Deliberation

Not surprisingly, we found deliberation to be the critical kingpin of the minimizing the tensions between accountability and formativity. In the same way that inclusion was found to be a prerequisite of dialogue, we found that without inclusion and dialogue, there would be little substance about which to deliberate. In years one and two of the Futures Program evaluation, there was limited inclusion and associated dialogue, hence, there was far less substantive program information to deliberate and make formative improvements from. While there were data being collected that met the technical requirements of the funder, these data did not represent robust patterns of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation. Instead, we found that we were meeting the basic criteria of the funded proposal, but lacked the more authentic, iterative, and meaningful formative data that would have promoted ongoing understanding of the program's strengths and weaknesses pointing the way to program improvements.

We also found that the format of deliberation needs to vary in response to the nature of the issues being addressed. For example, in the assessment of the increases of cohort members' leadership disposition, deliberation needed to be done carefully as not to expose them to a threatening environment or to make them feel vulnerable. The climate created to encourage deliberation must be consistent with a safe space to openly dialogue.

Implications for Educational Planning

The shift from evaluation models that emphasized compliance to outcome measures to those that capitalize on formative feedback loops about improvement is one that needs to be well understood by educational planners. While there has been a lack of agreement among scholars about just what educational planning it is, Farrell (1997) does outline a broad definition, drawn from Anderson, Brady & Bullock's (1978) "policy cycle", that is useful for considering the implications of the nexus of accountability and improvement for educational planning. This definition has six components:
    1. Identification of a social phenomenon as a policy problem,
    2. Placement of the problem high on political agendas,
    3. Identification and evaluation of a range of possible "solutions,"
    4. Selection of one solution (the policy),
    5. Implementation, and
    6. Evaluation, feeding back into the cycle wherever appropriate (p. 280).
The Farrell model captures a broad definition of education planning which includes policy, process, administration, and management and provides a framework for considering the relationships between educational planning and the tensions between formativity and accountability.

In many respects, this definition of educational planning is formative in nature, emphasizing the identification of goals and needs, implementation and forward feedback cycles about program improvement. We can see the parallels of the Farrell definition to formative assessment concepts as outlined by Chappuis and Chappuis (2008). Here, formative assessment can be understood as addressing questions about strengths relative to a goal, observations of improvements, identification of weaknesses, areas of effective performance, and how one might build on these strengths and what might be done differently or better in the next iteration of learning or improvement and how one might prepare for that improvement. Because educational planning, as broadly outlined by Farrell (1997), has important formative elements, the current shifts from compliance to formatively oriented evaluation and assessment are well supported by and aligned with aspects of planning. Moreover, because of this natural alignment, educational planning is a natural ally and supporter of the principles of formativity.

Similarly, the key elements of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation as outlined by Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007), provide an additional way of thinking about the implications for educational planning.

Using the Farrell (1997) definition of educational planning, we can better frame our own observations about the tensions between accountability and the principles of formativity. In the section that follows, we use this framework to link our experiences working within the tension between accountability and program improvement to the field of educational planning.

Given the centrality of accountability in today's educational climate, it is not hard to see accountability and the pressures there within, as a social phenomenon and policy problem. If policy problems are essentially a social phenomenon, they need to be understood through the perspectives of stakeholders that the effort will impact the most, as well as those who will influence the process. Along these lines, we found that including all stakeholders in the early stages of planning is extremely difficult and is not generally built into the organizational and institutional norms of the cooperating schools, nor the university. The initial oversight to include the voice of the various stakeholders within the district and university narrowed the scope of the first two years of the program evaluation to only include the perspective of the project directors and participants.

By analyzing the challenges we faced at the nexus of accountability and school improvement as a social phenomenon and policy problem, we identified a notable barrier to growth. That is the lack of organizational and institutional capacity to effectively include all stakeholders in dialogue and deliberation in the planning, implementation, and formative program improvements. We have increasingly recognized that the communications and coordination issues between public schools and universities is immensely complex and multidimensional and as such, there is a great need for better understanding of how these very different organizations can effectively plan, implement, and sustain more effective school improvement efforts.

We know from the literature the promise of better planning and implementation among school and university partnerships (Essex, 2001; Goodlad, 1991), as well as the importance of clearly defined purpose and direction, supported both with active participation and adequate resources by top leaders, trust among partners, open communication, mutual respect among partners, mechanisms to assess progress and measure outcomes, true collaboration, and school-wide representation at the beginning of an effort (Essex, 2001; Peel, Peel & Baker, 2002; Rakow & Robinson, 1997). What we found in our collaborations was consistent with Teitel's (2003) observation that, many times, there is a communication issue between entities, the university and the schools. We also found that the K-12 partners were sometimes burdened with the presumption that the university was there to "fix" public schools (LePage, Bordreau, Maier, Robinson, & Cox, 2001), and consistent with Clarken's (1999) research, that this was created across the two entities and this presumption was found to be hard to correct.

Similarly, the failure to adequately include stakeholder voice in the improvement effort could also significantly impact the placement of the problem high on political agendas given the dominant position of accountability in today's educational climate. Moreover the appropriate identification and evaluation of a range of possible "solutions" represents a key principle of formativity; the identification of strengths relative to a goal, diagnoses of possible areas of instructional weaknesses, and associated instructional improvements. Lastly the selection of one solution (the policy), implementation and evaluation, feeding back into the cycle of improvements represent the most compelling aspect of educational planning as it relates to the principles of formativity.

As we discussed, in the first two years of the project, the lack of clarity on communication limited the interactions among the different project personnel and limited roles which impoverished the quality and accuracy of both evaluation and the program itself. The lack of clarity on communication disregarded the principles of formativity and in turn emphasized compliance, oriented assessment. Overcoming this issue and building mutual trust helped us to refine the program evaluation. Similarly, including stakeholder feedback helped to improve power imbalances that had led to disenfranchising certain stakeholder groups. Lastly, we highlighted that the format of deliberation needs to vary in response to the nature of the issues being addressed in order to not expose stakeholders to a threatening environment or to make them feel vulnerable and thereby risk direct and honest feedback about the improvement effort.

Historically, educational programs have often failed to use program evaluation formatively. Hence the iterative improvements that could be obtained through the formative use of evaluation feedback are not fully utilized. There are a number of reasons for this failure to capitalize on the potential for forma-

tive program evaluation, which includes a lack of clear purpose of program evaluation, communication issues, and sometimes competing goals. Moreover, an imbalanced notion of evaluation with a primary or even exclusive focus on summative assessment is a significant danger to school improvement and student learning. Working harder within the confines of the older notions about program evaluation quickly bumps into the functional and organizational limitations of a narrow or imbalanced notion of assessment and accountability. In the climate of high stakes tests and state-mandated standards, there is an increase of federal, state, and local demand for educators at all levels to be effective at meeting these accountability standards. Educators can help mitigate pressures to only look at inputs and outputs by fully embracing the principles of formativity so clearly present in the field of educational planning that promote more deliberative assessments of what happens inside the black box.

CONCLUSION

Because educators today find themselves at the nexus of accountability and improvement (Earl and Fullan, 2003), educational planners, as we have defined broadly, need to strongly consider the principles of formativity and the role of program evaluation. The notable pressures of accountability and testing can influence both educators and program evaluators to bend to these pressures in ways that can undermine school and program improvement efforts. Specifically related to program evaluation, what has been referred to as the "black box evaluation" can lead to narrowly complying with outcome measures and overlooking the program features that need to be strengthened or eliminated in real time. Without such an understanding, there is no way of making adjustments and refinements, and school programs risk simply replicating the same patterns of weak planning and implementation. Responding to these concerns, many accreditation agencies have updated their data collection and reporting protocols to reflect formative principles.

We maintain that the competing pressures to chase the measure to obtain short term gains while at the same time embracing the principles of formativity has created an untenable situation for educators, and if it goes unresolved, will undermine our ability to facilitate deep, substantive, and lasting learning opportunities for our students. The 2004 shift by the U.S. Department of Education in the process and use of program evaluation marks an important indicator of where the future of program evaluation is going, and one we argue educational planners should be well aware of.

We argued in this article that the Stufflebeam and Shinkfield's (2007) model of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation provides a valuable conceptual framework for better understanding the challenges discussed above. We used our own experiences with the Futures Program to illustrate these issues and found that including all stakeholders in the early stages of planning was important, but difficult; the lack of communication networks that are built into the organizational and institutional norms of schools and universities. We also found that inclusion was a prerequisite to communication among stakeholders. Lastly, we found that low stakes deliberation was the kingpin to promoting formative reflection and action and required inclusion and dialogue as critical starting points.

Finally, we drew from Farrell's (1997) definition of educational planning to outline the links between planning, program evaluation and the principals of formativity. We discussed how the pressures of the accountability movement can be seen as a social phenomenon and policy problem and as such need to be better understood through the perspectives of stakeholders and how this is a needed component for placement of the problem high on political agendas. We also argued that the appropriate identification and evaluation of possible "solutions"; the selection of a solution, implementation, and evaluation that all feed back into the cycle of improvements all represent key principles of formativity. Here we argued that Farrell definition is formative in nature and as such helps to frame educational planning as a key ally in helping to foster the needed current shifts from compliance to formatively oriented evaluation.

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Authentic Planning for Leadership Preparation and Development

Jennifer Mast, Jay Scribner, and Karen Sanzo

ABSTRACT

There has been a call for change in leadership preparation programs. The current revisioning of the landscape of leadership preparation is due in part to the rising accountability demands and the focus on the quality and purpose of preparation programs. One manifestation of this recognition is the funding of the School Leadership Program (SLP) beginning in 2002 by the United States Department of Education (USDE). The SLP grants are partnership efforts between school districts and other preparation organizations, which include institutes of higher education and not-for-profit providers. This paper presents a framework for partnership development from a planning perspective that looks at collaborative planning, the use of evidence-based decision making, and sense-making in developing future grants around the School Leadership Program effort. A brief overview of leadership preparation is presented followed by a review of salient planning literature that provides the framework for planning an effective leadership preparation program involving a variety of partners.

School leadership preparation programs have undergone numerous changes over the past 10-15 years, resulting in part from criticisms of universities who are out of touch with their PK-12 counterparts (Levine, 2005; Murphy, 2005; Walker & Qian, 2006; Young, Petersen, & Short, 2002). While historically only universities prepared aspiring leaders (McCarthy & Forsyth, 2009), new approaches to training paradigms include alternative leadership preparation programs by districts and not-for-profit agencies, as well as partnerships between universities and school districts (Sanzo, Myran, & Clayton, 2011). The call for change in leadership preparation programs and the current revisioning of the landscape of leadership preparation are due in part to the "rising demands for accountability at all academic levels" and "has brought the immediacy of the situation to the forefront of discussions surrounding the quality, purpose, intent, focus, and outcomes of educational leadership preparation programs" (Myran, Sanzo, & Clayton, 2011).

Undoubtedly the educational accountability movement, including No Child Left Behind (NCLB), has been a driving force in shifting leadership training. Principals are an integral component in the success of students and impacting their achievement in schools. Policy makers are recognizing the need to focus on "educational leadership preparation and development as a strategy for improving schools and student achievement" (Orr and Orphanos, 2011, p. 19). One manifestation of this recognition is the funding of the School Leadership Program (SLP) beginning in 2002 by the United States Department of Education (USDE). The SLP is a competitive grant designed "to support the development, enhancement, or expansion of innovative programs to recruit, train, and mentor principals (including assistant principals) for high-need LEAs" (United States Department of Education, n.d.). To date, $158,836,360 has been appropriated for 90 funded programs since 2002.

The SLP grants are partnership efforts between school districts and other preparation organizations, which include institutes of higher education and not-for-profit providers. Effective leadership grants demand a high level of planning to ensure a competitive proposal is developed and one in which can be implemented with fidelity. The innovative preparation programs are expected to influence school leaders in a way that enables them to positively impact student achievement and the schools they serve.

This paper presents a framework for partnership development from a planning perspective that looks at collaborative planning, the use of evidence-based decision making, and sense-making in developing future grants around the School Leadership Program effort. A brief overview of leadership preparation is presented followed by a review of salient planning literature that provides the framework for planning an effective leadership preparation program involving a variety of partners.

LEADERSHIP PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Contemporary innovative leadership preparation programs have emerged, in part, as the outcome of an on-going debate criticizing university-based educational leadership preparation programs (Levine, 2005; Murphy, 2005; Walker & Qian, 2006). "The lack of a clear understanding about what educational leadership preparation programs should be and what content, instructional methods, and structures should frame them is at the heart of this tension" (LaMagdeleine, Maxcy, Pounder, & Reed, 2009, p. 130). The debate has been long-lived (Hackmann & Wanat, 2007; Preis, Grogan, Sherman, & Beaty, 2007) and one of the major arguments of critics has been the claim that university programs are unable to bridge theory and practice (LaMagdeleine, Maxcy, Pounder, & Reed, 2009; Levine, 2005; Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003).

Critics assert that on-the-job training is required to connect the theory to practice and many of the university-based leadership preparation programs do not have an authentic version of this is component (Clayton, Sanzo, and Myran, 2012) and that graduates, at times, feel "short-changed" by their programs (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003). Changes in leadership preparation programs have resulted, in some cases, in complete program metamorphosis. Examples of this can be seen at a state-wide level in Kentucky and Alabama where programs have sunset and have required a complete over-haul and redesign of their aspiring leadership preparation program. A major overarching component of these changes to leadership preparation programs is the incorporation of the district voice in program redesign and participant selection program requiring a focused, concerted planning effort.

Organizations preparing school leaders range from universities, to alternative preparation provider such as the New York City Leadership Academy and New Leaders for New Schools, to school districts themselves. According to Crow (2006) "evidence regarding the quality of university preparation programs is scant, and most arguments resort to anecdotal evidence or have questionable methodologies" (p. 312). Thus, alternate preparation programs have flourished (Grogan, Bredeson, Sherman, Preis, & Beaty, 2009).

The increase in alternative leadership programs has also seen an increase in district partnerships with universities and other leadership preparation providers. These partnerships require a high level of planning and decision making to ensure programs are developed to meet district need, the requirements of the state and leadership provider, along with the students. One of the concerns with partnerships around leadership preparation is about "flawed planning, implementation, and evaluation processes" (Miller and Hafner, 2008, p. 69), as well as unequal distributions of power between the stakeholders that can impact partnership relations. According to Munoz, Winter, and Ricciardi (2006) there are "relatively few examples of successful partnerships" to serve as models (p.13).

At the federal level, funding for leadership preparation partnership programs began in 2002. The United States Department of Education (USDE), under authorization by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [as amended, Title II, Part A, Subpart 5 – National Activities; 20 U.S.C. 2151(b) and 6651(b)], started the School Leadership Preparation Program in 2002. This partnership program between school districts and leadership preparation programs require in-depth planning to develop and sustain programs focused on preparing assistant principals and principals to meet the needs of students in diverse learning environments.

The SLP grant began, in part, as a result of the call for change in leadership preparation. Initially $10,000,000 in grants was awarded to 20 three-year projects to support the development and implementation of leadership preparation and development programs. "This program provides grants to support the development, enhancement, or expansion of innovative programs to recruit, train, and mentor principals (including assistant principals) for high-need LEAs" (United States Department of Education, n.d.). Since the inception of the grant program in 2002, a total of 90 grant awards have been provided, representing $145,020,528 in appropriated federal funds. This study explores the planning efforts that are evident in the proposals using a theoretical framework on planning as outlined in the following section. Effective planning using a rational decision making process is critical to the success of educational efforts.

PLANNING

Planning as a discipline is often thought of as a rational, step-by-step process using protocols and relevant information to lead planners to logical products. In the same way, the concept of decision making conceives of evidence as a pointer in the correct direction. Collaborative planning models and research in evidence-based decision making illuminate much messier processes and murkier decision making rules that may or may not link solidly to evidence. Each area is governed by highly social, cultural, and political realities situated in unique and fluctuating contexts. To make sense of the place and use of evidence within these frameworks is also complex.

Collaborative Planning

In this manuscript two bodies of literature inform the concept of planning: urban planning and educational planning. The conceptual portion from educational planning used for this study is described within the context of adult and continuing education.

Classical planning theories espouse planning as a rational process, or what Sork (1996) called a technical-rational lens for planning. Tyler's (1949) principles of curriculum and instructional planning were a prescriptive, linear set of guidelines. These approaches ignore the influences of context, politics, and power in planning. Collaborative planning utilizes inclusive dialogue that gives shape to the social arena (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007). Collaborative planning, also called communicative planning, is a theory for planning that seeks to have representation from all viewpoints within decision making while negotiating the power relationships and political landscape within. Brand and Gaffikin (2007) used the lenses of ontology, epistemology, ideology, and methodology to set the stage for case study research conducted in Northern Ireland. Those lenses will be used to describe collaborative planning and highlight connections to inclusive planning models in education.

Ontology of Collaborative Planning

Collaborative planning operates from a view of reality that is relational and constructed. Space and time are situated within contexts that create alternative experiences for seemingly similar or equal physical and other phenomena. A mile in one direction yields a different experiential length as a mile in another direction (Graham & Healey, 1999). Ten minutes of experience in a park setting is different than ten minutes of experience at a landfill. "Accordingly, the object of any planning endeavor must not be treated as a blank slate but as a unique component of an incredibly complex larger system" (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007, p. 285). Recognizing the contextual factors and the influence of experiences brought by individuals to the planning process situates the process and product of planning within a greater narrative.

The ontological view underlying collaborative planning models with regard to humans and human interactions is also contextual. Human beings are the products of social interactions (Barber, 1984) and political beings (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007). Collaborative planning adheres to the idea of complex adaptive systems, characterized by "fragmentation, uncertainty, and complexity" (Innes & Booher, 2003, p. 10). Instead the rational view of a predictable, robotic system, collaborative planning sees the nature of the world as more like an organism (Brand & Gaffikin ; Innes & Booher, 1999; Jacobs, 1961).

Epistemology of Collaborative Planning

The epistemological view supporting collaborative planning is that knowledge is socially constructed. Healey (2004) urged an awareness of not only what is seemingly obvious, but to "step back and think more about the underlying strategic patterns that derive from the system in which the more immediate patterns are defined" (p. 6). Brand and Gaffikin (2007) bring together the work of many authors on collaborative planning: "In a similar context, Sandercock (1998) reminds us that we need to 'make the invisible visible' and Innes and Booher (1999) encourage us to generate 'emancipatory knowledge [which] transcends the blinders created by our conditions and institutions' (p. 418). Only then will we appreciate how 'power is exercised through taken-for-granted norms and practices' (Coaffee & Healey, 2003)" (p.287). Power as a concept of planning models and decision making will be discussed through-

out the remainder of this literature review.

Knowledge creation, as understood through collaborative planning, is a co-construction among many. This implies a negotiated knowledge that can "arbitrate among diverse claims and priorities" (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007, p. 287). In the same way, Cervero and Wilson (1994) used a "planning-as-negotiation-of-interests" (Sork, 1996, p.83) metaphor for program planning in adult education. Bringing stakeholders to the table, paying attention to the planning actors, and keeping power interests in the foreground, planning can be more transparent and inclusive, generating a more representative outcome (Sork).

Brand and Gaffikin (2007) pointed to another part of the epistemological claim behind collaborative planning. All types of knowledge must be taken into account, "implying an acknowledgement of tacit knowledge as a major factor driving human decisions and actions, even if it cannot be articulated, let alone measured" (p. 287). The inclusion of tacit knowledge and the co-constructed nature of knowledge is consistent with Coburn & Talbert's (2006) discussion of sense making and Kennedy's (1982) definition of working knowledge, which will be discussed in later sections.

Ideology of Collaborative Planning

Collaborative planning models reject traditionalist value-free planning processes, instead encouraging open discussion about values during planning. Value-driven planning seeks to expose the power relationships present with the intention "not to dissolve relations of power in a utopia of transparent communication but to play games with a minimum of domination" (Flyvberg, 1996, p. 391; Brand & Gaffikin, 2007, p. 289). This stance gives focus to a democratic process that gives "voice to the voiceless" (Sarkissian, 2005).

Methodology of Collaborative Planning

In practice, collaborative planning seeks to discourage compartmentalization. Following from the epistemological view, the model calls to "harness the heterogeneity of knowledge" (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007, p. 290). Forester (1999) encouraged broadening the knowledge base for planning. By bringing many viewpoints to the table, pulling back the veil on power relationships, and engaging in inclusive, open dialogue, planning decisions emerge from the co-construction of knowledge among the voices included. This demands a shift away from representational toward participatory forms of decision making with real-time, face-to-face deliberation (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Friedmann, 1993 Graham & Healey, 1999).

These democratic ideals drive practice in collaborative planning toward consensus decision rules and away from less participatory models like top-down expertise and majority-rule (Graham & Healey, 1999). The theory allows for planners to be facilitators instead of regulatory, managerial, or controlling actors in the process (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Forester, 1996; Healey, 1997; Wissink, 1995). Cervero and Wilson (1994; 2006) focused on the concepts of power, interests, negotiation, and an ethical commitment to democratic principles. Consensus decision making rules are important, but it is just as important to be attentive to who is included at the table and the power relationships among those involved in the process.

Collaborative planning models do not seek to equalize the power inequities among planning groups, but merely to expose them and provide awareness from which to work. Critics have argued collaborative models may be over-ambitious (Hillier, 2003) in that "antagonism and conflict are intrinsic to human relations, and this 'us' and 'them' are particularly manifest in the diversities of contemporary society (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007, p. 292). Innes (2003) responded with the value of the complexity of collaborative relationships. The second order consequences of the messiness of the planning process - new partnerships, seeing situations in a new context, and new institutional forms – have value even within antagonism. The political realities both creating and inherent in power disparities can bring about productive conflict (Brand & Gaffikin). Mouffe (2000) noted:

an important difference with the model of "deliberative democracy", is that for "agonistic pluralism", the prime task of democratic politics is not to eliminate passions from the sphere of the public, in order to render a rational consensus possible, but to mobilize those passions

towards democratic designs (p. 15).

Viewing planning within the realm of planning theory and the context of adult education program planning, specifically with an emphasis on collaborative or communicative planning models shed light on decision making processes consistent with the ontological, epistemological, ideological, and methodological underpinnings of collaborative planning. This view of planning theory sets the stage for looking at how decisions are made in participatory structures. The use of evidence and the ways decision actors make sense of evidence will be examined in the next section.

Evidence-Based Decision Making

Kennedy (1982) offered a combined definition for decision and evidence: "In its simplest form, a decision is a choice among two or more options and evidence is the stuff that informs the choice" (p. 59). Taken at face value, this definition implies decision making as a linear, rational process where evidence is used to instruct the decision makers to the right answer. Kennedy (1984) calls this approach the instrumental model for evidence. Decision making rarely, if ever happens in this way and an alternative model, though much less clean and neat, characterizes evidence not as an instruction to a decision, but as an influence on the user as a human information processor. Evidence causes an individual or a group to think and use working knowledge to help make sense of the information on the path to decisions. This is called the conceptual model and is more consistent with collaborative planning models and consensus decision rules.

The concept of decision making can be viewed as its own entity, but for the purposes of this study the definition put forth by Kennedy (1982), tying evidence and decision, will be used to identify evidence-based decision making its own concept. The definition, however, will not be used to base conceptual understanding of evidence-based decision making. In contrast to the rational implications of the instrumental model, the conceptual model for evidence-based decision making is more consistent with the participatory processes described in collaborative planning theories.

Evidence and Policy

Over the course of the last thirty years, education in the United States has seen a movement toward standards-based reform initiatives. Standards-based education identifies a set of standards for student learning. Learning is measured, usually through standardized tests, to determine whether students are achieving the standards or not. Federal and state policies and mandates, most notably, the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), require schools and school districts to use evidence, or data, to drive decisions on school improvement initiatives. Policy on using evidence in decision making is written in a way that implies "evidence shines a clear unambiguous light on how to strengthen school performance or at least where districts should direct their efforts" (Honig & Coburn, 2007, p. 582). Proponents of this view argue the use of evidence takes politics and ideology out of the decision making process. This rational conception of decision making does not hold in practice (Honig & Coburn; Kennedy, 1982, 1984; Marsh 2006; Spillane 1998, 2000). This view ignores the complexities of schools and school districts, resorting instead to a simplistic set of expectations with no real instructions or explanations for implementation (Coburn & Talbert, 2006; Honig & Coburn).

Language and expectations in federal policy rarely differentiates between the words "evidence", "data", and "research", often using them indiscriminately, interchangeably, and without definition. Additionally, policy gives little to no guidance in the processes of evidence use. "The Reading First and Early Reading First programs (Title I, Part B, Subparts 1 and 2 of NCLB), for example, require that school districts use funds for 'selecting and implementing a learning system or program of reading instruction based on scientifically based research' (NCLB, Title I, Part B, Subpart 1, SEC 1202, d, 4, A)" (Honig & Coburn, 2007, p.580). Similar examples of ambiguous language and less than helpful process guidance can be found in mandates on using social science research, formative and summative program evaluation data, student and school performance data, and school improvement plans (Honig & Coburn, 2007).

Evidence Use

Beyond the formal types identified in federal and state mandates are the informal kinds of evidence informing decision making. Information gained by experience is one of the most widely used forms (Honig & Coburn, 2007). This type of evidence influences a range of decisions, including decisions on curriculum and school reform models (Datnow, Hubbard, & Mehan, 2002). Another form of informal evidence is input from parents and community members. Marsh (2003, 2006) conducted a study of two mid-sized school districts in California that used community-wide planning groups to look at student achievement data and suggest improvement designs. The central office members used this feedback to help form decisions, and the findings showed the process helped build community and support for the schools through improvement initiatives. Knowledge of other local issues and the opinions of those within schools and the community contribute to decision making as well (Honig & Coburn).

Two questions follow: In what way is evidence used? And, for what purpose(s) is evidence used? To address the first question, the concept of sensemaking will be addressed later. The second question has been addressed in research regarding evidence use in school districts. As has been stated, the temptation to make evidence use prescriptive leads to a linear view of evidence-based decision making, much like the language in policy would imply. The purposes for such evidence use would be to inform a decision through a bounded process yielding a product (decision) for implementation. Actual decision making and evidence use is complex. The steps in decision making--or even describing the decision making process as having steps--differs for each situation.

Political motivations have often been found to motivate the use of evidence. Evidence is used for building political support (Corcoran et al., 2001; Marsh, 2006) and to "stabilize" and promote "buy in" within a school district (Boeckx, 1994, p .24). Corcoran et al. found the use of this type of evidence included a selective use of research in order to provide the strongest case. Experts were even used on occasion to justify an approach, new program, or other type of decision. Some researchers have gone so far as to say evidence is not used to inform decisions directly at all (Kennedy, 1982). Instead, "evidence influences public opinion and public opinion directly impacts decision making" (Honig & Coburn, 2007, p. 589).

In situations where evidence was used for decision making, Kennedy (1982) found in a study looking at central office decision making in 16 school districts that rarely did school district administrators seek research evidence to help make specific decisions or solve problems. Instead, they "looked for and incorporated evidence into their decision making when that evidence promised to address their interests" (Honig & Coburn, 2007, p. 590).

Regardless whether evidence is used directly or indirectly, for political reasons or other, the ways evidence influences decisions is a complex and highly social endeavor (Coburn & Talbot, 2006; Honig & Coburn, 2007; Kennedy 1982). The next section will discuss what research says about this process and describe the concept of sensemaking.

Sensemaking

Situational and organizational contexts influence the conception of evidence by individuals (Coburn & Talbert, 2006). Groups, both as a collection of individuals and as an entity of itself use prior experience and knowledge situated within context to incorporate new evidence into decision making (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Coburn & Talbert, 2006; Honig & Coburn, 2007; Kennedy, 1982, 1984). The process of making the decision is a complex interaction among what each individual brings to the table and the social interactions among a group of humans, who are political beings negotiating within existing and ever-changing power structures (Brand & Gaffikin, Cervero & Wilson, 1994, 2006; Coburn & Talber, 2006; Healey, 1997; Honig & Coburn; Innes & Booher, 1999).

Sensemaking theorists look at how individuals or groups make meaning of new information (Coburn & Talbert, 2006; Vaughan, 1996; Weick, 1995). Much of sensemaking is shaped by the complex processes of group dynamics. Researchers have found "over time, individuals who work with one another in subunits, work groups, or task forces develop shared ways of thinking (Coburn & Talbert, p. 471). It follows that social interaction within groups will influence individual beliefs within the mix of

political factors and new and changing information. The bottom line is consistent with what the authors have noted: evidence alone does not make decisions but rather the interaction of all the "stuff" of individual beliefs and knowledge and group processes and political negotiations.

Once evidence has been accessed, it must be used--or not. The process of incorporation or not incorporating is where sensemaking occurs (Honig & Coburn, 2007). Though some argue the value of evidence is or can be known, this rational view is inconsistent with practice. The views of sensemaking theorists and collaborative planning theories are in agreement on the socially constructed nature of knowledge (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007; Cervero & Wilson, 1996; Healey, 1997). "Information becomes meaningful and prompts action when decision makers socially construct it – when they grapple with the meaning of the evidenced and its implications" (Honig & Coburn, p. 592). When new information comes in, it joins preexisting cognitive and cultural frameworks (Honig & Coburn, 2007). Kennedy (1982) referred to these frameworks as working knowledge:

> the organized body of knowledge that administrators and policy makers spontaneously and routinely use in the context of their work. It includes the entire array of beliefs assumptions, and experiences that influence the behavior of individuals at work. It also includes social science knowledge (pp. 1-2).

The degree to which new information has an impact is situational, though Kennedy never found an instance in which new evidence directly informed a decision. The evidence was instead incorporated into the working knowledge of the individuals and collective working knowledge of the group. Spillane and others (Spillane, 1998, 2000; Spillane & Callahan, 2000; Spillane & Thompson, 1997) conducted a series of studies over several years to investigate the processes and contextual influences on the implementation of research-based standards in math, reading, and science. They found decision makers gravitated toward approaches matching their prior practice and preexisting conceptions of curriculum and instruction.

Incorporation is a "profoundly social process – often highly interactive and involving many people in and across a series of meetings and informal conversations over time" (Honig & Coburn, 2007, p. 593). Kennedy (1982) found these social processes created shared beliefs and understandings within the individuals in a group. Consensus was achieved by the development in a common way of framing problems and how to manage different demands within the context of the situation. These findings are in concert with those of collaborative planning theorist who also found socially constructed knowledge and attitudes influenced a shared way of reaching agreements (Brand & Gaffikin, 2007).

Making sense of the melding of preexisting information and new information with social, political, and structural contexts is the heart of decision making. This complex and often jumbled process defies the conception of a logical and prescriptive use of evidence to inform decisions. Grasping all the pieces making up the puzzle of making of any one decision or plan requires viewing each situation through a lens allowing all the contextual factors to be considered. The unique way all factors are related and influenced form meaning within each case and help in understanding the process of decision making.

Authentic Planning for School Leadership Programs

The presentation of the aforementioned literature on planning highlights the need for any planning effort to focus on collaborative planning, the use of evidence-based decision making, and ultimately sense-making from those efforts (see Figure 1). One of the concerns articulated from multiple grantees, as well as non-funded grant personnel, surrounding the development of competitive grants for the School Leadership Program revolves around the creation of an authentic partnership that weighs the needs of all parties. In order to do this, we suggest that those at the forefront of the program initiative utilize a well-articulated planning process. Keep in mind that well-articulated does not mean linear. The process may be cyclical in nature, involving different stakeholders at different times, acknowledging differences in power, as well as weighing multiple types of evidence that is gathered throughout the program development process.

Figure 1

These planning efforts diverge from the traditional model of planning with only a few stakeholders planning out the initiative. The planning process for the SLP grant initiative needs to bring to the table multiple perspectives representing a diverse group of stakeholders who have a vested interest in the development of high quality school leaders (Cervero & Wilson, 2006). The following chart provides suggestions, based upon the authentic partnership planning framework, to help steer the program planning process. It can also assist grantees in retrospectively evaluating their grant development process looking at their partnerships.

Examples in the Authentic Leadership Program

Collaborative planning	Development Process
Multiple perspectives are brought to the planning table	Stakeholders who are a part of the planning process include the superintendent, central office leadership personnel, building level school leaders, community members, district students, leadership program development personnel, and mentors and/or coaches.
The process is values driven	A value identification process takes place early into the planning of the proposal. All values are taken into account and considered during the process, including those of marginalized voices in the district community, community based personnel, and educational stakeholders.
The planning process for the program development discourages compartmentalization of program efforts	All stakeholders are a part of the collaborative planning process throughout the planning effort, rather than being a part of only certain components of the planning effort. Stakeholders have multiple opportunities to contribute.
There is a focus on consensus making	Rules are developed for the group to come to consensus. Majority-rule decisions are not made in this process.

There is an acknowledgement of the difference(s) in power	Stakeholders acknowledge the amount of time and effort required by the different members of the planning process. This effort is not diminished or emphasized, but an awareness is made to all stakeholders about this. It should be understood that not all participants in the grant and leadership preparation effort can put equal time and energy into the program and that there are some, inherent, differences in effort.

Examples in the Authentic Leadership Program

Evidence-based decision making	Development Process
There is a focus on how the evidence is used and the purpose of the evidence that is being used	The decision making process takes into account a variety of relevant evidence to inform the program development process. This evidence could be feedback from current program participants, district school leaders and aspiring school leaders, national level research about leadership preparation, and the needs of the community the school leaders are serving. The program developers need to pay careful attention to the language being used in the request for proposals and address the types of evidence required in the request.

Examples in the Authentic Leadership Program

Sense making	Development Process
Questions are asked about how the evidence used within the context of the group and purpose of the grant	The evidence used to make decisions about the development of the program are used in balance with the needs of the stakeholders and the needs for the development of the program. The situational and organizational contexts is taken into consideration. The facilitator of the planning process can use these contexts to build consensus on the program proposal.

     While it is advantageous for future leadership development and preparation grant applicants to utilize this framework when working to establish their grant teams and subsequent applications, it is not limited only to these groups. Other leadership preparation providers, regardless of interest in grants, should also consider using this framework when creating authentic leadership preparation programs. Throughout the development of any proposal or program the facilitator of the process needs to understand the planning process and utilize best practice principles.

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