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Exploring Novice Urban Elementary School Principals' Socialization into the 21st Century Principalship

Michelle Walczak-Corsi
St. John Fisher College

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First Supervisor
Jeannine Dingus-Eason

Second Supervisor
Gloria Jacobs

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By

Michelle Walczak-Corsi

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

Dr. Jeannine Dingus-Eason, Chairperson

and

Dr. Gloria Jacobs, Committee Member

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St. John Fisher College

May 2010
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Michelle L. Walczak-Corsi


Be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Education Doctorate degree.

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Gloria Jacobs, Ph.D., Committee Member

January 27, 2010
Date
me with moral support, guidance, and camaraderie during times of need. Her outstanding character and life-experience are precious resources for others.

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Also, thank you to my beautiful step-daughters, Richele and Nicole Corsi for their patience with me throughout this journey. Soon we may frolic together once again. Lastly, and with the most depth of all, thank you to Patricia (Pat) and Henry (Hank) Walczak, the most wonderful parents for which a person could ever dream, and to my eternally beloved husband and best friend, David Corsi: I love the three of you so much. You are my truest role models in life, as your integrity never fails to display Heaven’s goodness. Thank you for your infinite love, support, and friendship.
Biographical Sketch

Michelle Walczak-Corsi is a newly established leadership consultant in Rochester, NY whose initial work supported principal coaching endeavors with the Rochester Leadership Academy. Mrs. Walczak-Corsi attended New York State College at Buffalo where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre, Bachelor and Master of Science in Elementary Education, and earned a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration.

In the summer of 2007, she began her doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership at St. John Fisher College. Mrs. Walczak-Corsi pursued her dissertation research in the area of principal leadership and induction drawing upon socialization theory as a research lens. Working under the direction of Dr. Jeannine Dingus-Eason, she earned her doctoral degree in May 2010.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

A Call for Improved Induction Practices

State education departments, school districts, universities, private organizations, and professional associations across the country are striving to improve the process of inducting school principals (Villani, 2006). The success of public schools, but more importantly, the success of students is dependent on the leadership of school principals (Cotton, 2003; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marzano, Waters, McNulty, 2005; Miller, 2004; Norton, 2002). Researchers, policymakers, and practitioners agree that many principals are inadequately prepared to meet the demands of the 21st century principalship (Lashway, 2002; Levine, 2005; Miller, 2004), resulting in high attrition in the early years of the principalship (Jones, 2001). An important and urgent need exists to develop improved practices that address the training, as well as support of professional learning and personal growth of fresh aspirants to the principalship.

Historical Paradigm of the Principal Manager

Historically, principals performed managerial and supervisory tasks (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Rousmaniere, 2007) based on the educational tenets of authority and discipline (Enroch, 2008). The early principalship focused on efficiency associated with the managerial aspects of schools rather than the improvement of teaching and learning (Button, 1966; Donaldson, 2006). According to Crow (2004), industrialized modalities of American culture called for a rationalization that reduced ambiguity and complexity. The industrialized paradigm stressed the use of standard operating procedures that placed a
heavy reliance on standardized policy. Organization was emphasized and work was compartmentalized with a prioritization on isolated work groups (Berry & Beach, 2006; Crow). In effect, schools were commonly secluded from one another and organizational structures within them often endorsed teachers’ working independently from one another within self-contained classrooms (Crow). It was typical for students to be efficiently sorted into categories of professional or unskilled labor, thus, resulting in many students dropping out of high school to seek employment in unskilled jobs (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Labaree, 2005). As such, the managerial paradigm of the principalship did not hold principals accountable for ensuring that all students achieved at high levels academically, but instead, may have provided impetus for principals to encourage some students to drop out of school altogether to pursue outside job opportunities.

Complexity of the 21st Century Principalship

Understanding the landscape of the 21st century principalship is important to this current study as the dynamism and complexity of the new educational millennium provokes a need to explore the ways in which novice urban principals are affected, and must chart their own courses amidst new terrain. Today’s principalship presents new complexities and stressors that need to be understood and addressed by principals (Strong, Barrett, & Bloom, 2003). For instance, the paradigm of a 21st century principalship encompasses both managerial and instructional duties positioned under the larger appellation of leadership (Militello & Rallis, 2009; Miller, 2004; Vitaska, 2009). This is accentuated in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium’s (ISLLC) standards that serve as a resource for guiding school improvement (Pitre & Smith, 2004) and indicate that successful principals actualize a school vision for student learning.
shared by stakeholders (NASSP, 2008). The ISSLC standards stress that principals must also oversee the success of every student by ensuring management of their school organization and its operational systems (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). Contemporary principals must address the complexity of balancing the demands of centralization, or external reforms related to standards and academic proficiency, with the demands of decentralization that include site-based budgeting and a focus on leading instructionally (Lugg, Buckley, Firestone, & Garner, 2002). Due to newly defined role expectations, principals are held to demonstrate extraordinary problem-solving skills (Crow, Hausman, & Scribner, 2002) in satisfying heightened external expectations, such as state standards and accountability while working to effectively deal with the challenges that loom within the unique contexts of their school.

According to Ferrandino (2001), one of the most critical challenges that new and experienced principals may face is to provide a positive learning environment that ensures the success of a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse population of students. By the middle of the 21st century, over half of the U.S. population will be comprised of students whose families “mainly originated in Africa, Asia, or Latin America” (p. 2). He further states:

Elementary school principals must find ways to ensure that children of highly diverse racial, ethnic, and multiracial backgrounds – many of them poor and with limited proficiency in English – are accepted, supported, and educated. (p. 2)

This change in the population of schools may present unfamiliar linguistic and cultural challenges for some principals. Despite the complexity of the 21st century principalship, all principals must master the requirements associated with the new era.
Current Federal Regulations

Several decades of research indicate that principals play a major role in influencing the academic achievement of students (Cotton, 2003; Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Lezotte, 1991). As such, 21st century principals are expected to adhere to the federal regulations of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. According to NCLB, principals are held fully accountable for the academic success of all students. Moreover, by the year 2014, the NCLB mandates that principals ensure that all students, regardless of disabilities or economic disadvantages reach proficient performance levels in reading/language arts and math as measured by standardized test scores (Brewster & Klump, 2005; U.S. Department of Education, 2004, 2007).

The NCLB Act also requires school districts to publicly report their annual academic achievement for all student subgroups categorized by race, ethnicity, English proficiency, economic status, and special needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Principals who are inadequately prepared to meet this federal protocol risk are placing their schools and careers in jeopardy. Schools that fail to meet NCLB adequate yearly progress are subject to state sanctions. One cogent ramification is manifested in the requirement of districts to replace the principals of failing schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2007, n.d.). Although federal law is highly demanding of tenured principals, NCLB may be bewildering for novice principals who are bombarded with an array of complex and unfamiliar demands in a new work environment.
Statement of the Research Problem

In today's schools, both new and experienced principals are facing significant challenges as they strive to address the increasing demands of the principalship. However, new principals often encounter greater challenges as they attempt to become acclimated to the social and cultural norms, idiosyncrasies, and politics of their schools and districts. First-time principals often enter the profession with a commitment to improve conditions and learning outcomes for children and adults within their school communities (Villani, 2006). Nevertheless, they frequently fail to do so since early career expectations are fraught with complexities and hardships (Peterson, 2001; Villani). Therefore, instead of leading instructionally as initially intended, new principals often struggle to merely survive in their careers (Brown University, 2003; Villani, 2006).

In response to the difficulties experienced by newly-appointed principals, scholars have called for improvement in the area of school leadership preparation and in leadership skill development (Mullen, Gordon, Greenlee, & Anderson, 2002; Normore, 2004). The increasing complexity of the principals' role along with hobbling factors such as the lack of support (Adams, 1999) has contributed to a shortage of qualified principals (Fiore, 2002; Lovely, 2004). The past practices of principal induction that typically consisted of unplanned or poorly sustained support (Daresh, 2004; Malone, 2001), or artificial mentoring efforts (Samier, 2000), do not suffice for newly-appointed 21st century principals. Instead, research-based best practices must be used to support today's novices as they strive to navigate the complex realities of the first three years of the principalship and meet the sharp expectations of stakeholders for dynamic, effective school leadership.
Novice Principals' Challenges

In addition to an overall struggle with meeting the expectations of the NCLB Act, novice principals face a range of heightened challenges. One challenge in particular is the ability of newly hired principals to become socialized into their new roles (Crow, 2004). In general terms, socialization is the process by which individuals learn to become members of society through internalizing its norms and values and by learning to perform a social role within it (Marshall, 1998). However, for principals, organizational socialization depicts the active process of learning a new role within a novel organizational setting (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994; Crow, 2004), and further is currently viewed as a reciprocal process of learning that occurs between the newcomer principal and organizational members (Crow & Matthews, 1998).

This socialization process may be hindered by problems that new principals experience within the internal organizations of their schools, especially as they learn to interact with faculty and staff (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1994). Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington and Weindling (1995) found that novice principals are also concerned with budgeting, time management, and the legacy of their predecessors. Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes (1992) also identified predecessors' styles, along with the challenge of actualizing a school vision, as obstacles that new principals must overcome. As a result of varied socialization challenges, novice principals often express a lack of self-confidence in their roles (Bugbee, 2006; Daresh & Male, 2000).

In addition to dithering self-confidence, new principals may experience feelings of shock (Lashway, 2003) and frustration due to the competing demands (Daresh & Playko, 1993) and loneliness that typify the role of the school principal (Daresh &
Playko, 1992; Villani, 2006). Moreover, Lashway contends that their discomfort with social isolation may be magnified by a lack of feedback from their supervisor. Despite the magnitude of challenges faced and lack of support they receive (Adams, 1999), novice principals are expected to overcome, prevail, and rapidly establish themselves as effective leaders.

21st Century Expectations of Principals as Learning Leaders

Current views of the principalship obligate novice principals and their seasoned peers to effectively lead and transform their school cultures. Specifically, they must act as organizational change agents (Elmore & Burney, 2000) by successfully creating team relationships among their staff and extended communities in order to ensure the achievement of standardized test scores (Drake & Roe, 2003). Balancing the interests of diverse stakeholders in this multi-faceted role, they must be able “to influence staff motivations, commitments, and beliefs about their working conditions” (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006, p.10) and inspire staff to improve student learning. Within the iron context of NCLB and as part of current paradigms of the principalship, all principals must demonstrate success in instructional leadership (Barton & Turnbaugh Lockwood, 2005).

Instructional leadership. Views of instructional leadership have continued to evolve over the last several decades. The past images of instructional leadership were primarily principal-centered, with the principal as the single, heroic organizational leader (Lashway, 2002; Senge, 1990). This older paradigm included a hierarchical leadership style in which the principal was regarded as the most knowledgeable individual in a school, and therefore, dictated and monitored teachers’ instructional practices (Poplin.
This individualistic view of instructional leadership is no longer applicable for meeting the needs of a society that has shifted its focus from mechanics and efficiency, to a democratic approach within a fluctuating and complex environment (Lugg et al., 2002).

Current paradigms of instructional leadership are transformational in nature (Bass & Riggio, 2006) with modern, effective principals enacting change by developing the leadership capacities of others (Leithwood & Poplin, 1992). Unlike the responsibilities of their forbearers, principals must now lead instructionally by working with others to positively promote improvements in teaching and learning (Chapman, 2005; Davis et al., 2005). The expectation for principals to be accountable for the improvement of teaching and learning (Chapman, 2005; Davis et al.; Farkas, Johnson, & Duffett, 2003) as mandated by Title II, Section 2113 (c) of Federal Regulations, calls for a modern shared leadership approach. This present framework of instructional leadership establishes professional communities comprised of collaborative cultures that continuously learn together (DuFour, 1999; Hord, 1997). According to Hord, the five components of a professional learning community include: (a) supportive and shared leadership; (b) shared vision and values; (c) collective creativity; (d) shared practice; and (e) supportive conditions. Unlike past paradigms calling for principals to represent themselves as managers of a perceived independent strength, contemporary principals may no longer act as lone leaders (Militello & Rallis, 2009).

To meet the needs of every student, principals must be equipped to steady a dynamic, ever-changing set of demands (Bloom, 1999; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005) in transforming the school organization into a learning community (Davis et al., 2005; DuFour, 1999). Therefore, a critical skill for principals is
the ability to create learning communities in environments that may have been burdened with the dysfunction of departmental silos and their politics. In creating these collaborative structures, principals must exercise loose-tight leadership that allows the teaching staff to explore strategies for advancing the school’s vision (DuFour). In particular, they must provide time for school constituents to collaborate and must insist that teaching and support team members create specific and measurable performance goals (DuFour, p. 63). In addition, DuFour claims that principals must also ensure that this vision is collectively accepted without negotiation. Therefore, training and feedback requisite to good decision-making must be afforded to support these learning communities. Although creating and developing a professional learning community is an essential aspect of a principal’s job, it is also imperative for staff development and the establishment of trusting community-based relationships to be added to the expanding list of a principal’s duties.

Trust. As part of the new principal leadership paradigm and to support their socialization into the 21st century principalship, school principals now need to develop trusting relationships with constituents of their school, district, and community. The establishment of trusting relationships is critical for the development of professional learning communities focused on executing a shared vision for students’ success (Bryk & Schneider, 2004). However, the creation of a cohesive school community is limited by novice principals’ ability to establish trust and respect (Villani, 2006, p. 5). To quash suspicion and establish trust, new principal leaders must be perceived as credible (Covey, 2006). According to Covey, leaders are perceived as credible when they exhibit four essential attributes for building and maintaining trust: capability, integrity, intent, and
results. Leaders’ capabilities, or competencies, include “the talents, skills, knowledge, capacities, and abilities” (p. 91) that enables them to meet the high demands of 21st century principal leadership. Covey emphasizes that an absence or weakness in just one core area can destroy leaders’ credibility, and warns that even technically competent individuals will experience failure if trust is amiss. Therefore, it is critical for 21st century principal leaders to understand that the presence of low trust may result in resistance and weak school communities (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). This need for principals to develop trusting communities that support enhanced student achievement poses heightened expectations for many urban principals.

_Urban principal leadership_. Socialization into the contemporary urban principalship may require focused attention and a unique means of support due to the need for many principals in urban schools to address the academic achievement gap in urban schools. Statistics indicate that academic and social levels of achievement by “low-income students and students of color enrolled in urban districts are often lower than most socio-economically advantaged students in schools across the country” (DeVita, Colvin, Darling-Hammond, & Haycock, 2007, p. 18). For urban principal leaders to obliterate this gap and achieve the goal of successfully educating all students, they often need to invest time into resolving social issues that may stymie students’ academic achievement (Kochan, Jackson, & Duke, 1999; Portin, 2000). For instance, since family poverty of urban students is identified as “a risk factor for student suspension” (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002, p.321), urban principal leaders work to find ways to support students socially. Students’ communications regarding the difficulties they experience in their external environments, such as in their home and communities,
facilitate a need for principals to provide students with supplemental internal supports (Portin, 2000). According to Portin, principals can assist students by forming student support groups and by reaching out to agencies within the community.

Urban principals are left to address the societal injustices that are manifested in urban school environments (Crow et al., 2002) and often do so by seeking out additional services in support of students' social and academic development (Portin, 2000). Due to the financial challenges that often exist in urban districts (Portin), principals must work to become highly visible community leaders (Cistone & Stevenson, 2000) who collaboratively and creatively garner scarce financial resources by cultivating political relationships with community organizations (Kochan et al., 1999; Portin). As principal leaders, they must also possess adeptness in vying for resources from within their politicized districts (Kochan et al.; Portin).

To foster the success of all students, urban principal leaders may need to exhibit heightened incisiveness necessary to positively influence others. In particular, they often need to publicly reject the stigmatization assigned to urban education as related to values of failure, such as beliefs that urban students' are destined to fall short in the world of work (Haberman, 1999). By devoting time and effort to changing pessimistic views of urban education they inspire school communities to believe in students' capabilities to attain high levels of achievement (Haberman). Also, in addition to garnering supplemental human and financial resources (Cistone & Stevenson, 2002; Portin, 2000), and motivating others to believe in urban students' capabilities; urban school principals, like their suburban and rural counterparts, must hold faculty, as well as themselves, accountable for enhanced student learning (Haberman). To lead positive changes in
schools, all school principals must develop and execute a shared school vision for student success. The induction of urban novice principals may be best supported by examining both the socialization challenges that all novice principals experience, in combination with the heightened expectations of urban principals.

*The Essence of 21st Century Principal Leadership*

Today, all school principals must establish themselves as 21st century leaders. To foster the academic achievement of all students, contemporary principals must skillfully lead organizational and cultural change simultaneous to meeting the demands of school operations and administration. In their roles as 21st century principal leaders, they are accountable for leading learning that ensures the success of diverse student populations, while masterfully managing the dynamic aspects of schools (Task Force on the Principalship, 2000). They must balance the complex demands of their roles by forming entrusting and professionally collaborative relationships with faculty and staff, while continually determining individualized responses for meeting the needs of their diverse school community (Crow, 2004).

In order to create shared leadership with and among a school community, principals must find ways to flatten the hierarchical structures existing in their schools. Moreover, they must strive to accomplish this feat while functioning within the tiered structures of their district organizations. Essentially, 21st century principals are called to reinvent themselves, their roles, and their schools to survive the explosion of knowledge and the globalization of a complex post-industrial society (Crow et al., 2002).
A Need to Redefine Principal Supports

For principals to become 21st century leaders capable of reinvention to achieve the mandate of NCLB, especially in underachieving schools (Carter, 2004), copiously planned supports are needed. Many newly hired school principals enter the position ill prepared to meet the demands that accompany their appointed title (Anderson, 1988; Elsberry & Bishop, 1993). Further, the challenges associated with the principalship have left some principals abandoning the profession with others, such as teachers shying away from pursuing the principalship altogether (Hertling, 2001). New principals need help not only with their transition into, but also with supporting their continued development within their roles.

Current paradigmatic views of the principalship warrant the examination of principal induction practices, with specific attention given to factors that may support or hinder principals’ socialization into their 21st century principal leadership roles. Unlike the principal behaviors that were previously touted by an industrialized society, 21st century principal leadership calls for novice and experienced principals to receive unique supports as they strive to address daily demands and also meet short and long term objectives in environments hosting constant change. As such, the prevalence of insufficient preparation and a lack of support from systematically planned induction (Cale, 1993; Villani, 2006) must be addressed, as a fast-paced, complex, and diverse society calls for novel and distinctive induction experiences resulting in newly defined socialization outcomes.
Induction through Mentoring and Coaching

In this study, contemporary principal induction is defined as intending to support principals' learning and development through a "multiyear, multidimensional process that orients new principals to a school and school system while strengthening their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be an educational leader" (Villani, 2006, p. 19). Crow & Matthew's (1998) assert that the process of principal induction should be ongoing; whereas, Villani indicates that induction should "foster continued growth during a time of intense learning" (p. 18). Since the 21st century principalship depicts a leadership role that is not static, this study supports a definition of induction that endorses ongoing induction support (Crow & Matthews).

Many school districts across the country are now attempting to support novice principals' with adapting to the complexity of their roles by implementing induction programs comprised of mentoring and/or coaching (Brown University, 2003). The program lengths vary, but often encompass the first one to three years of the principalship, as well as preservice years (Villani, 2006). Further, there is distinctiveness between mentoring and coaching, although no two mentoring or coaching programs are identical.

Mentoring. In this study in the context of principal socialization, mentors are defined as individuals who are typically senior members of school organizations, including principal peers (Crow & Matthews, 1998), who have track records as successful practitioners, and who may be able to effectively assist newcomers (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003). Daresh (2001) states that induction programs with formalized mentoring can help novice principals gain self-confidence, build leadership
skills, and achieve a sense of belonging. Rooney (2000) recommends that to help new principals become familiar with their district culture and avoid making socially-bound mistakes they should create their own mentors by establishing friendships with experienced principal peers. According to Rooney, "appointed mentors may or may not fill this role" (p. 78), whereas comrades will.

Coaching: More currently, the use of coaching has also been identified as a resource for principals' socialization into the principalship. Although the terms mentoring and coaching are often used synonymously in literature, as both propose to help novice principals adapt to their roles (Lashway, 2003) while supporting their professional development (Hobson, Brown, Ashby, Keys, Sharp, & Benefield, 2003), each practice carries uniqueness. One difference is that unlike mentors, coaches are professional experts located outside the institutional walls of schools (Bloom, et al., 2003). As such, they are severed from any political ties, thus supporting effective practice based on confidentiality and trusting relationships comprised of emotional support, ethics, and commitment (Bloom, Castagna, Moir, & Warren, 2005). Coaches offer new principals support with wide-ranging, professional, as well as personal issues as dependent upon principals' unique goals and needs (Bloom et al., 2003). Further, Bloom et al. found that blended coaching support is designed to use a variety of skills and strategies to foster the achievement of personal and agreed upon organizational goals. Effective coaches are able to move between providing principals with consultation and direct support by providing practical knowledge and expertise, as well as facilitative assistance focusing on the process of helping principals' to enhance their capabilities (Bloom et al.). Since the ways in which principals are socialized is relevant to this study's inquiry, it is important to
briefly provide background related to principal induction programs intended to assist novice principals’ with socialization into their principalship.

**Principal Induction Program Background**

Support for principal induction in the form of mentoring programs became evident in the United States several decades ago. However, many of these efforts were fleeting, typically because they simply “appeared” supportive (p.12), required substantial funding, or were focused on evaluating rather than supporting principals (Daresh, 2009). However, due to an emerging awareness of the critical role that principals play in influencing student achievement and turning around low-performing schools (Vitaska, 2009), the number of mentoring programs has increased and programs utilizing coaching are flourishing. The implementation of mentoring programs has become increasingly prevalent throughout America. Research indicates that “22 states enacted 39 laws to support school leader initiatives during the 2008 legislation” (Vitaska, 2009, p. 4). In addition, emphasized in these laws are preparation, professional development, mentoring and induction, and assessing leaders’ effectiveness (Vitaska).

Although formal induction programs are described by Lashway (2003) as being “too new to have generated a significant body of empirical research, there is growing literature articulating a rationale for such programs (p. 1). Lashway describes districts’ efforts to nurture new leaders and provides preliminary indications that induction efforts are well-received. Villani (2006) studied these new efforts toward improved principal induction practice.

Induction programs comprised of mentoring and/or coaching vary in type, as well as scope of models (Villani, 2006). Villani identifies five types of induction program
models in the United States: (1) district and regional models; (2) state models; (3) professional association models; (4) university models; and (5) collaborative models. These model types vary in program length (which generally fall between one and three years) and mentoring inclusion, selection, and training. Davis et al. (2005) proclaims, "there is strikingly little evidence demonstrating whether and how the kinds of learning opportunities provided by program features enable principals to become more effective in their practice" (p. 7). Therefore, in the absence of a solid empirical research base to inform program design, leadership of current induction programs search for promising practices through trial and error (Davis et al.).

Additionally, researchers have encouraged the development of district and university partnerships that create high quality mentoring programs designed to improve student achievement (Gray, Fry, Bottoms, & O'Neill, 2007). Since principals' leadership skills strongly contribute to student learning outcomes, especially in high-needs schools (Vitaska, 2006, p. 4), it is imperative that training and development begins, but does not end with pre-service education (Aiken, 2002; Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Villani, 2006). Many new principals reinforce this urgency by expressing the value they attribute to their mentoring experiences (Farkas, Johnson, & Duffet, 2001; Spiro, Mattis, & Mitgang, 2007). Novice principals reach to "empathetic, experienced colleagues who can provide coaching in technical skills, guide them through political minefields, and provide a perspective that encourages reflection" (Lashway, 2003, p. 3; Villani).

The need to redesign training and development for practicing and aspiring school leaders continues to grow (Flanary & Terehoff, 2000). Currently, practicing school principals must rely primarily on experiential knowledge to develop and refine their skills in order to meet the new demands of a global society (Flanary & Terehoff, p. 46). Newly
devised systematically planned support must be developed (Flanary & Terehoff), and continue through the novice years of the principalship and beyond (Aiken; Browne-Ferrigno et al.; Villani, 2006). Examining novice principals’ experiences with navigating socialization challenges and new expectations of the principalship may provide insights helpful for designing and/or redesigning induction practices.

Socialization as a Theoretical Framework

The degree to which new principals are able to shoulder duties and responsibilities (Davis et al., 2005) may be a function of institutional induction practice, especially regarding success in socialization (Aiken, 2002; Greenfield, 1985; Hart, 1995). According to Schein (1988), new principals’ socialization experiences can make or break their career, as productivity and commitment is determined by the speed and effectiveness of principal induction. In light of new principals’ struggles with socialization into principalship; the complexity of new principal expectations (Lugg, et al., 2002); the identified achievement gap in urban schools (DeVita et al., 2007); and the potential influence of induction practices on principals’ socialization experiences (Davis et al.); socialization theory will be used as a lens for this study. Additionally, the practice of mentoring and coaching will comprise an element of this theoretical lens, given that each may be a key component in the socialization of new principals (Capasso & Daresh, 2001; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Bloom et al., 2005) and mentoring is being implemented by school districts across the country (Villani, 2006), as well in the context of this current study. Using a theoretical lens of socialization that focuses on methods or tactics, may help to identify resources relevant for supporting principals’ successful adjustment and development within the dynamic role of the 21st century principalship.
Novice principals are required to assume a new role typically within a new organizational context through an active learning process referred to as organizational socialization (Chao et al., 1994; Crow, 2004). More currently, organizational socialization has been defined as a reciprocal process in which both the principal and the school district constituents interact within the dynamic school environment (Crow & Matthews, 1998). Organizational factors and new principals’ personal characteristics, experiences, and values contribute to this socialization process (Crow, 2004, p. 293). As part of this process, principals must learn socialization content that includes: adjusting to a specific school and district context; acquiring the skills necessary to perform their job; and internalizing the values of their organization (Crow, 2007; Crow & Matthews, 1998, p. 19; Feldman, 1976). Due to novice principals’ challenge to process both the technical and cultural practices prevailing in their school and district, it is important to be familiar with the content of socialization.

According to Crow and Matthews (1998), socialization is often fraught with tension and anxiety due to principals’ need to form positive relationships with superiors, peers, and faculty, while balancing personal values and learning the values of a new school community (p. 19). Crow (2004, 2007) also notes another vivid challenge of principal socialization, grounded in the tension that exists between professional and organizational socialization. Professional socialization is the learning process that occurs before an individual becomes a principal, such as during the preparatory phase of college in which focus is primarily on the theories of future reform and innovation (Crow). According to Crow, organizational socialization typically highlights maintenance and stability within an organization. Therefore, he contends that conflict occurs as the content
of professional and organizational socialization emphasizes different values and role conceptions.

Typically, professional socialization focuses on reform and innovation, and includes a call for aspiring principals to become transformational leaders, capable of creating dynamic learning communities. Contrarily, organizational socialization occurs with principals entering a new school and often experiencing a situation of succession (Hart, 1993) and commonly results in maintenance and stability within an organization (Crow, 2004, 2007; Schein, 1988; Tuttle, 2002). The conflict that generally occurs between professional and organizational socialization for novice principals is a critical consideration for this study, as novice principals in the 21st century are called on to lead change and innovation essential for meeting new principal leadership expectations.

Organizational socialization offers other aspects for consideration when seeking to understand novice principals’ induction experiences. For instance, novice principals’ socialization into their roles is often affected by the constituents of a school and district (Crow, 2004). Additionally, socialization into the principalship includes various methods of learning (Crow & Matthews, 1998). According to Crow and Matthews, there are numerous socialization methods, shaped uniquely by the prevailing organizational culture. These socialization methods fall on a continuum and consist of a variety of categories including: collective versus individual, serial versus disjunctive, and investiture versus divestiture (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

Collective methods of socialization promote learning via a group format, while individual methods display socialization as a solitary experience for a novice principal (Crow, 2004; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Further, serial socialization uses
experienced principals to groom newcomers and often includes drawing on veteran principals as mentors (Crow & Matthews, 1998). An investiture mode of socialization recognizes and values individuals’ past experiences, values, and expertise while a divestiture mode encourages leaders to develop new learning, usually at the cost of discarding their past experiences (Crow, p. 304; Crow & Matthews, p. 25). Therefore, an investiture mode would consider principals’ professional socialization as critical for planning principal induction. In addition, each method of socializing novice principals produces different outcomes. The outcomes of socialization methods are critical for considering the supports novices may need to meet the new expectations and complex demands of a 21st century principalship.

Since principals are now held accountable for producing outcomes associated with new Federal expectations, and different socialization methods typically lead to distinctive socialization outcomes, the outcomes of socialization also warrant consideration. Outcomes of socialization can fall on a continuum between custodial or innovative (Crow, 2007). A custodial outcome supports the status quo in which new principals continue to carry out the previous mission and behaviors of the principals’ role, as well as its content and processes (Crow, 2004). Oppositely, an innovative outcome reflects change (Crow, 2004). Content innovation outcomes, in particular, include changes in the way the principals’ role is carried out. Role innovation outcomes result in even more change by including an alteration in the conception of the role, its processes and content well as in its content and processes (Crow, 2004).

Today’s changing society is reflected in the dynamic and complex contexts of schools, and emphasizes a need for innovative outcomes of socialization. Therefore,
professional socialization and investiture methods of socialization must not be overlooked, as professional theory and principals’ values and experiences may be helpful for managing complexity and leading paradigmatic change. Due to the contextual dynamism of schools and the state of flux associated with organizational leadership in the 21st century, simplifying socialization methods and outcomes to static foci may be detrimental to novice principals.

Finally, socialization theory also identifies developmental stages through which principals may progress, such as those noted in the framework of the Professional Socialization Hierarchy (PSH) created by Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes (1992). According to Parkay et al. (1992), principals may progress through five hierarchical stages of socialization over time: 1) survival, 2) control, 3) stability, 4) educational leadership, and 5) professional actualization. The first four stages are said to represent principals’ reliance on positional power, similar to that depicted in previous eras of the principalship.

According to Parkay et al. (1992), principals in the first stage (survival), often experience shock and display heightened reactions to the challenges they encounter in their new role. In stage two (control), principals strive to gain control in their role by relying upon their positional power. In the third stage (stability), principals become more familiar with handling frustrations and managerial tasks comprising their role. The fourth and fifth stages are described as transformational in which principals become focused on curriculum and instruction. Principals in the fourth stage (educational leadership) begin to concentrate on curriculum and instruction, although their behaviors are still guided by a reliance on positional power. However, in the last stage of self-actualization, a confirmation of self is evidenced through principals’ authenticity which corresponds with
the faculty's belief that "they have been truly empowered and work collegially and harmoniously to improve the school" (p. 88). Therefore, 21st century principal leaders possess a capability to inspire others to create a shared vision for student learning.

An awareness of Parkay et al.'s (1992) PSH framework of socialization is important when considering the need for principals to create a professional learning community dedicated to supporting student success (Villani, 2006). However, since this study explores the methods of principal socialization by inquiring what resources principals' draw upon to navigate the first three years of the principalship, these stages are considered peripherally in regards to principals' challenges and resources. Additionally, in an era of complexity and continuous change (Crow, 2007), the socialization framework of the PSH is viewed critically, as socialization into the 21st century principalship does not project a view of socialization resembling a hierarchical structure supporting an upward, linear progression toward a static endpoint of self-actualization. In a challenging environment requiring ongoing development, it is likely that principals will shift unpredictably on the PSH, oscillating among multiple and shared developmental stages or levels of the PSH as dictated by their personal needs and the needs and expectations of a dynamic era (Parkay et al.).

Appropriate and ongoing research designed to support principals' socialization into a 21st century leadership role must recognize a vacillating pendulum of a new principal paradigm. Since the ways in which new principals experience socialization affect their career success (Schein, 1988), and in turn, the success of students (Cotton, 2003), socialization theory is a relevant lens for this study. Specific research inquiries
exploring novice elementary principals' socialization into the urban principalship are called for and will be used to guide this study.

**Research Questions**

In light of the complexities of the 21st century principalship, further examination of urban elementary school principals’ socialization into the principalship is needed. This research study uses a primary research question to explore what resources novice urban elementary school principals draw upon to navigate the first three years of the principalship. A subquestion is also needed to examine the factors related to novice principals’ socialization experiences; specifically, what influences their socialization into the first three years of the principalship. This research question and research subquestion will guide the exploration of urban elementary school principals’ experiences in navigating a new principalship.

**Summary**

The current research literature emphasizes the need for novice principals to receive support that can adequately help them navigate the 21st century principalship (Aiken, 2002; Crow, 2004; Levine, 2005). New principals often arrive unprepared to meet the complex and competing demands of their roles (Daresh & Capasso, 2001; Levine, 2005). A brief background of complexities, challenges, and 21st century principalship expectations were described in this chapter. In addition, this opening chapter also introduced a theoretical overview of socialization, including insights into the practices of mentoring and coaching, as these lenses will be used to explore the research question and the research subquestion which seek to examine the resources that urban elementary principals draw upon in their new principalship and the influences on
socialization in the first three years of their role. Also included at the end of Chapter One is a glossary of key terms pertinent to this research study.

The remainder of this study is organized into four chapters. Chapter Two reviews the literature related to principals’ socialization experiences, including novice principals’ struggles with becoming socialized into the principalship. Chapter Two also explores the methods and influences on novice principals’ socialization. Although minimal current empirical research related to mentoring and mentoring programs exist, mentors are used by school districts and leadership academies to support novice principals with socialization into their organizations (Crow & Matthews, 1998). The research literature surrounding mentoring and mentoring programs is also presented along with principal coaching. The empirical research on principal coaching is also scarce; however, this practice is emerging as an effective method for supporting novice principals. Therefore, two principal coaching programs that include empirical findings are also reviewed.

Chapter Three provides a description of the research design methodology employed in this research study. It reveals the qualitative research perspective that was used, as well as the context and participants of this study. Further, it includes the processes that were used for data collection and analysis. The key findings of this research analysis are then illuminated in Chapter Four. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the overall research study and presents the implications of these findings in regards to professional practice and policy. This final chapter concludes with recommendations for future research, including the limitations of this study.
Glossary of Key Terms

Coaches – committed, ethical, and trusted professional experts located outside the institutional walls of schools and severed from any political ties who offer principals confidentiality and support with wide-ranging professional, as well as personal issues (Bloom et al., 2003). Coaches use a variety of skills and strategies to foster the clarification and achievement of goals, including agreed upon organizational goals (Bloom et al.).

Induction - a time period when an individual is in a new position with a newly defined role. It is a multiyear, multidimensional process orienting “new principals to a school and school system while strengthening their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be an educational leader” (Villani, 2006, p. 19). Oftentimes induction programs include mentoring as a vital aspect for assisting principals into their new role (Anderson, 1988; Daresh & Playko, 1994).

Mentors - typically senior members of organizations, including peers (Crow & Matthews, 1998) who have track records as successful practitioners, and may assist new principals by offering advice and information regarding district matters (Bloom et al., 2003).

Mentoring and Coaching Induction programs - formalized programs designed to help principals navigate their beginning years in the principalship. Mentoring programs, coaching programs, and induction programs are terms that have been used interchangeably. However, no two programs are identical, and instead, vary in their design aspects (Villani, 2006), such as using outside professionals as coaches and inside principals as mentors.
**Novice principal** - non-tenured principals in this study serving in their first through third year of the principalship. The term *novice* used synonymously with: *beginning* and *new*.

**Organizational socialization** - the active process of learning a new role in an organizational setting (Chao et al., 1994; Crow, 2004). It is an active, reciprocal process encompassing the organization’s methods and influences in combination with an individual’s values, experiences, and characteristics (Crow, 2004, p. 293; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Hart, 1993).

**Professional socialization** - the learning process that occurs before an individual becomes a principal, in which focus is primarily on the theories of future reform and innovation (Crow, 2004, 2007).

**Socialization** - the process by which individuals learn to become members of society through internalizing its norms and values and by learning to perform a social role within it (Marshall, 1998).

**21st Century Principal Leaders** - learning leaders accountable for transforming a school’s organizational culture by creating and sustaining professional learning communities (Hord, 1997) that are based on trusting relationships (Bryk & Schneider, 2004) and focused on ensuring the success of diverse student populations. They must traverse territory previously unexplored by their predecessors (Daresh, 2009) to achieve extraordinary outcomes supportive of an organization’s goal while concurrently striving to develop their personal leadership capacity (Bass & Riggio, 2006).
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the relevant literature surrounding the dynamic aspects of socialization into the principalship. Principals of the 21st century, especially novice urban principals face complex challenges and expectations, and limited resources from which they can draw upon to navigate their roles. As such, challenges and resources of support, including personal mechanisms, as well as informal and formal mentoring and coaching are presented. The chapter concludes by identifying the common findings among these studies and their implications.

Overview of Principal Socialization

Organizational socialization is the active process of learning a new role in an organization (Chao et al., 1994; Crow, 2004). For principals, this process encompasses an organization's methods and influences in combination with principals' personal values, experiences, and characteristics (Crow, 2004, p. 293; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Hart, 1993). The literature examining novice principals' experiences with navigating the principalship and its socialization challenges, as well as resources for support provides insight into improving practices for new principals' induction.
Challenges to Principal Socialization

Insight into factors that may contribute to the maturation of novice principals may be illuminated by studying the challenges to principal socialization. Hurley (1992) explored the organizational socialization experiences of rural high school-level principals. The research participants in this study consisted of twelve, first-time principals in the second year of their principalship. The use of three semi-structured interviews with each of the principal participants, explored the instructional leadership messages they received from teachers and how these messages influenced their instructional leadership behaviors (Hurley). Superintendents and key teachers, depicted as either formal or informal leaders within the faculty, were also interviewed.

Findings revealed that teachers held major expectations for principals to discipline students; be problem-solvers; and engage in ceremonial recognition of student achievement. Additionally, a commonly held faculty expectation was for principals to supervise instruction as a mere formality. Many principals felt that teachers strongly resisted their involvement in classroom supervision, instruction, and curriculum development. Numerous messages sent to principals by teachers were covert. Principals could identify ways in which teachers' messages influenced their behaviors, and socialization, but could only provide minimal detail about how they learned of teachers' expectations.

This study suggests that school cultures may reflect an industrialized notion of the principalship and the organizational structure of schools. This educational view challenged principals' efforts to build collaborative relationships necessary for actualizing a shared vision of instructional leadership. Findings revealed that teachers'
expectations for principals to engage in service-oriented tasks far outweighed their expectations for principals' to lead instructionally.

Hurley (1992) suggested that ambiguity exists between the conflicting roles of principals and the roles that the teachers expect them to assume, thus, illustrating the unlikelihood that principals will exhibit the instructional leadership necessary for school improvement (p. 28). Findings imply that for principals to meet 21st century principal leadership expectations, novice principals will require apt resources to assist them with leading transformational change aligned with enhanced learning and a culture of shared leadership.

The challenges affecting principals' socialization and a need for apposite socialization support was further reiterated in a study conducted by Davis (1998). This researcher used written questionnaires exploring the experiences and perceptions of 99 superintendents to determine why some principals lose their jobs, or experience involuntary departure. Although this study sought the perceptions of superintendents, versus principals, findings from this study may be relevant to understanding the challenges that principals encounter and the types of supports that can assist them with socialization into their new roles.

Similar to Hurley (1992), Davis (1998) found that faculty and staff influenced the socialization of principals. Socialization was a critical aspect affecting the success of principals, indicating that most principals who experienced involuntary resignation did not suffer a lack of technical skills, but an inability to get along with people. Data denoted that superintendents' decisions to remove principals were more strongly related to principals' failures with interpersonal and political relationships, compared to
administrative competencies, including the ability to promote student achievement; lead change efforts; ensure a safe and orderly environment; or effectively manage cultural diversity (p. 59). Findings suggest that principals who left involuntarily may have struggled with adapting their personality and leadership styles to complement the culture of their schools or failed to advance the values and beliefs held by school constituents.

Although this study was not limited to new principals, findings indicate that all principals, both novice and seasoned, may warrant enhanced resources to support their success with the dynamic process of socialization. Findings further illuminated that at the elementary school level failure to communicate and build positive relationships were important factors in the removal of new principals. Additionally, in large districts, failure to establish trust and confidence among the school community and an inability to build a strong base of support among teachers, parents and/or community agencies were the top reasons for principals’ involuntary resignations. Data secondarily revealed principals’ inability to thoroughly comprehend school issues and the importance of applying such understandings to yield good decisions.

Davis (1998) recommended a need for further research to explore situational forces that may influence, neutralize, or modify the onset of leadership behaviors that may lead to principals’ involuntary departures. According to Davis, schools are subject to “increasingly complex and challenging social forces, internal pressures for shared decision-making and external demands for accountability and student productivity” (p. 60). Hence, to retain their positions and to lead their schools successfully, new principals must find and cultivate socialization support.
Challenges to principal socialization indicate a need for principals to rely on the resource of personal mechanisms. Specifically, principals must possess strategic knowledge related to leading change and strong interpersonal skills. As noted in Davis’ (1998) study, a weakness or gap in the resource of personal mechanisms, such as with interpersonal skills, may be detrimental to a principals’ career. Moreover, principals who experience involuntary departures may cause upset and mistrust in school culture detrimental to actualizing a shared vision for student success.

Professional socialization hierarchy. Other challenges that principals commonly encounter, are depicted in a professional socialization hierarchy [PSH] developed by Parkay et al. (1992). Aspects of principals’ professional socialization were investigated through a longitudinal, multiple-case study. The study participants consisted of 12 high school principals from rural, suburban, and urban settings. Each entered their position with varying degrees of experience that included backgrounds as assistant principals, acting principals, and teachers. Parkay et al. examined the perceptions, experiences, and concerns of these participants over three years to discover patterns of change over time. Data included artifacts, field notes, and interviews with principals, teachers, staff, district personnel, and community members. Findings from this study supported the development of a conceptual framework for socialization in the form of a five-stage PSH.

These five PSH stages were identified as: 1) survival; 2) control; 3) stability, 4) educational leadership, and 5) professional actualization. Data from this study demonstrated that not all principals progressed through each of these stages at the same rate or with the same level of ease. The socialization development of the participants fell
at various levels on the PSH, with some principals never moving beyond certain stages, including the first stage.

The principals who remained at Stage One, the survival stage for this three year study, expressed feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy (Parkay et al., 1992, p. 54). Their struggles at this stage included feelings of shock, managing by crisis, and heightened reactions. These principals described their experiences as traumatic and difficult in terms of dealing with political agendas and the network of the “good old boys” (p. 63). Findings further revealed first year experiences with socialization were a strong indicator of a principal’s future success. This finding presents urgency for providing first-year principals varied, relevant resources that will meet their individual needs. It also beckons systematic, research-based supports that are assessed in an ongoing manner. Formative assessments are critical, as problematic findings from a summative program assessment may come too late to make a positive difference in principals’ success and the end goal of ensuring students’ success.

Two principals illustrated behaviors aligned with the second stage, the control stage, in which they looked for resources, worked to establish routines, and searched for a clearer understanding of the organization. According to Parkay et al. (1992), Stage Two principals were also concerned with the perceptions of teachers and superiors, feared a loss of control, and relied primarily on positional power rather than individual expertise. This finding calls for an examination of induction practices, as well. In particular, supports from inside organizations will warrant heightened focus, as principals depicting Stage Two struggle with understanding the organizational aspects of their district and schools, such as the technical and political gradations.
One principal in this study displayed characteristics of Stage Three, the stability stage, during the third year. This principal was viewed as compromising with faculty and staff and expressed an increased feeling of comfort and acceptance. Principals who ultimately reached stage three showed less ambition to attempt to create change. Also, situations that were previously perceived as challenging and frustrating became less heightened, allowing them to become automatic in their responses. Principals in this stage are said to perform their jobs in a custodial, versus an innovate manner that reflects continuous growth and development (Greenfield, 1985); however, this began to evolve as principals made the transition to the fourth stage of socialization. The characteristics of principals in the stability stage, as per Parkay et al. (1998), bears particular concern in regards to their need to meet new 21st century expectations that include accountability for the success of all students.

In the third year, five principals exhibited behaviors resembling Stage Four, the stage of educational leadership. Although frustrations still existed in this stage, the stability from the previous stage ceased, change strategies were incorporated, and signs of career advancement were evidenced. At this stage, principals exhibited a strong vision for their schools and focused on leading long-term improvements. They were able to facilitate some change and felt periodic satisfaction. Lastly, in the stage of professional actualization, principals no longer needed to promote their own goals and beliefs, but motivated, inspired, and led faculty and staff to create a collaborative environment focused on school improvement. Contemporary principals are expected to exhibit characteristics of self-actualization regardless of the challenges they face, as ongoing
learning that occurs during this stage is synonymous with current principal leadership expectations.

The first four stages of the socialization hierarchy depicted behaviors defined by positional power, and principals’ behaviors appeared restrictive and defensive. The challenges experienced by the principals identified within the first four stages of the PSH substantiate a need for meditative supports. These support mechanisms must be differentiated to meet the unique developmental needs of all principals, who in turn, must support the distinctive needs of all students.

In stage five, principals’ behaviors displayed self-efficacy. These principals were facilitative and exuded the leadership attributes necessary to lead learning through collaboration, thus, affecting the school culture and its environment. During the final two stages of socialization, principals displayed less concern with organizational socialization, or how to function within the organization, and focused on aspects associated with the educational profession and their roles. The principals who progressed to PSH’s highest level effectively encouraged, empowered, and built relationships with faculty and staff. They maintained the priority of instructional improvement, exhibited a strong sense of self, and were effective with socializing their staff. Principals in the 21st century are expected to create a shared vision for school improvements that support all students’ learning. Further, the ever-changing and increasing demands of the principalship will likely require principals to shift within and among stages of the hierarchy, thereby portraying a contemporary version of this theoretical model in a more cyclical and interactive manner that will require principals’ access to an array of varied resources or socialization supports.
Principals’ Exclusive Use of Informal Socialization Resources

Socialization into the principalship presents an important dimension of the rite of principal induction; therefore, it is critical to examine the resources principals use to support this challenging process. This section specifically explores principals’ exclusive use of informal resources, opposed to those that lack a formal structure, such as with formalized mentoring programs.

Aiken (2002) studied ways in which new principals successfully transitioned into the cultures and contexts of their principalship or became an endorsed member of a new social group within an organization, and sustained in their careers. Study participants included twelve principals from elementary, middle, and high school levels. Superintendents, colleagues, and university faculty identified these participants on the basis of their success with leading change and improvement. They believed these principals had successfully navigated the cultural and social transitions into the principalship (p. 34) during the first three years of tenure. Each of the principals in Aiken’s study participated in a semi-structured interview, as well as a school tour.

Findings revealed how principals experienced socialization within their roles and how the cultures of their schools influenced their acclimation to the principalship. The study participants described how over time they developed self-confidence as leaders of change. These principals identified reliance upon personal mechanisms, such as individual courage and strategic knowledge to join the dissonant beliefs of adult constituents to create a community of learners committed to a shared vision.

The principals in this study formed networks and alliances that aided their progression from custodial positions to the role of innovative leaders. They recognized
the supports that evolved from internal and external community members, such as from secretaries, teacher groups, and Board members, and used personal mechanisms in the form of skills related to negotiation and social interactions to lead change. Participants noted their engagement in common behaviors such as establishing a shared vision; walking about their schools and greeting others; and expressing pride in faculty, staff, and students. Other personal mechanisms upon which principals used as resources were their understandings of their personal core values and authentic identities. These principals found their own voices by listening to others and by committing to their own values and beliefs.

Principals who were considered as successful in their transition understood the value of balancing conflicting expectations by gaining support from constituents and superiors before implementing changes. They also prioritized the human needs of their faculty and staff and moved deliberately to implement their school vision. Aiken posited that the success of principals was determined by their personal guideposts for navigating the complexities inherent to urban school leadership. Aiken's study is of particular importance in light of 21st century principal leadership expectations. Findings illuminated a need for further focus on personal development designed to foster principals' leadership abilities.

Informal resources and degrees of principal success with socialization into the principalship were also examined by Tackes (2002). A qualitative case study was used to investigate the induction and socialization challenges and supports of two, first-year elementary school principals employed in two different schools. The study comprised
monthly one-on-one interviews, observations of school events, a job shadow day, a focus group, and document collection.

Findings revealed variance in principals' experiences when becoming socialized into the principalship. Both study participants drew upon informal mentoring resources and personal mechanisms that included social interaction skills, to navigate a new cultural environment. However, each principal's experiences utilizing socialization within their principalship displayed uniqueness, as did their school contexts and detailed aspects of the resources from which they drew.

For instance, the first principal experienced obstacles that impeded the process of socialization. Although this principal received an assigned mentor, she had difficulty trusting this mentor due to his political connections in the district. She further believed that this resource did not offer support relevant to her needs. Therefore, she solicited advice mainly from her spouse and another novice principal. Despite these supports and her reliance upon personal mechanisms, she struggled in her social interactions resulting in a lack of trust in her relationships with the school's faculty and staff. Her faculty exuded silence, negative communication, and resistance to change. The expectations for 21st century principal leaders to lead cultural change will require that principals possess strengthened personal mechanisms and adequate support systems both inside and outside of the school context.

Principal number two was adept with social interactions and showed an ability to advance her school's culture. She had no assigned mentor, but solicited an array of informal mentors who had practical knowledge regarding the district and schools within it. These informal mentors included her superintendent, secretary, and other principal
colleagues. The resources of informal mentors and personal mechanisms, such as this principal’s social interaction skills and strategic knowledge of the change process, assisted her socialization into the principalship. She displayed optimism, walked throughout the building each day, and interacted positively with her staff. The faculty and staff perceived her as caring and endorsed her as a leader. As a result, she continued to move forward with leading innovatively, as evidenced by her work with study groups and committees.

Tackes (2002) study displayed congruency to Aiken’s (2002), revealing that principals’ strength in personal mechanisms assisted their navigation of challenges in the principalship. Additionally, the pursuit and utilization of various informal, inside mentors assisted with leading change. Findings from Tackes’ study particularly suggests the importance of determining appropriate ways to match assigned mentors to new principals and of ensuring that mentors are willing and able to assist novice principals with unique areas of need, both personally and specific to school contexts and cultures.

Further research on principals’ need to sequester their own mentors and use personal mechanisms to actively guide and support their socialization into the principalship was also illuminated in a qualitative study conducted by Mendez-Morse (2004). One goal of this research was to identify role models or mentors who were important to careers of Latina educational leaders. The participants in this study were six Hispanic, female principals and assistant principals serving at two different elementary campuses. A sampling strategy was designed to select cases that could provide rich data, gathered via a focus group meeting and through semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. In exploring the mentoring relationships of school administrators,
Mendez-Morse discovered the utility of informal or non-traditional self-constructed mentoring.

Findings revealed that study participants succeeded in the principalship despite a lack of access to mentoring through supportive mentoring programs or traditional mentoring relationships described by Mendez-Morse (2004) as senior members initiating and sponsoring the development and success of protégés. Due to an absence of these traditional mentoring structures, these educational leaders constructed their own role models and mentors from the resources they had available, as based upon talents that could support their leadership needs and priorities. In particular, Mendez-Morse identified self-constructed mentors as individuals who actively taught the study participants how to do their jobs. Role models commonly comprised of individuals possessing characteristics and traits that these novices respected and strove to exude.

The educational leaders in this study relied upon role models and mentors in different life phases. Early role models emerged from their personal lives and included familial role models of a parent or parents. At a time when these study participants considered pursuing education beyond high school, distant role models included a cousin, sister, or friend of considerable physical proximity, such as being away at college. Early professional influences included teachers or counselors with whom they had either positive or negative encounters. Some of these individuals served as both role models and mentors. For instance, the participants’ mothers and a specific childhood teacher were noted as influential role models and mentors, with their mothers being their first mentors. Also, individuals such as counselors and cousins served as mentors.
Later in life, the study participants constructed their own professional mentors that included college professors, supervising principals, and central office personnel. One participant was given the opportunity for a formalized mentoring experience as part of a one-year mentoring program. This educational leader noted that this opportunity proved beneficial due to her efforts to actively solicit her mentor's support and advice. In some mentoring situations both before and during participants' roles as principals or assistant principals, mentors helped them to achieve specific goals. In several of these instances, mentors were supports located outside the political realm of their school communities who provided them with unique personal support related to specific goals. With the possible exception of goals related to those of the school organization, these mentors displayed supports similar to the role of a coach.

Findings also revealed the study participants' use of personal mechanisms, such as their past experience, as resources to support their leadership journeys. They identified their past experiences in teaching, along their childhood experiences as informal leaders in their families as fostering their leadership self-confidence. Further, prior to becoming principals and assistant principals, many of these participants taught under the leadership of more than one principal. These past teaching experiences provided them with opportunities to be astute observers of leaders and to assess their own leadership values and goals. The participants in this study predominantly drew upon role models, informal mentors, and personal mechanisms to compensate for a lack of traditional and formalized mentoring opportunities. Utilizing personal mechanisms and both informal and formal mentors and coaches further enabled these principals to succeed in their leadership positions while facing the high demands and expectations of 21st century principalship.
New principals’ use of informal resources to support their socialization into the principalship, were similarly investigated in a study conducted by Daresh and Male (2000). These researchers explored new principal leaders’ preparedness for and transition into the principalship, as well as the professional support they received during their induction period (p. 89). These researchers employed qualitative research methodology collecting data through in-depth interviews. Study participants were first-year American principals and English head teachers, as these school leaders face similar challenges that include the demand to carry out expectations for educational reform. There were eight head teachers and eight principals from a combination of elementary, secondary schools, and special education schools.

Study participants’ responded to two main questions. These questions investigated new leaders’ perceptions of how their prior training assisted them with carrying out their current duties, and ways in which their training could have been enhanced. Findings provided insight into principal and head teacher preparation and induction support. Data revealed that principals believed their assistant principalship inadequately prepared them for their roles. New principals and head teachers also expressed high levels of stress and experienced difficulties with technical skills, including financials. The primary concern shared by new head teachers and principals was adjusting to a new sense of isolation. Participants had not realized the amount of personal resilience and support resources required to perform their jobs. Further, although several principals worked in states that mandated some type of professional support, these principals voiced their misgivings with this mandate. In particular, some indicated that state-level personnel were not
informed about the realities of the principalship or the actualities of working in the trenches.

This study also illustrated that it was common for head teachers and principals to seek support from their professional colleagues at other schools. In fact, all participants indicated some type of professional networking. Some networks were developed within the same district and others were formed outside the district due to the competitiveness amongst school leaders and their desire to communicate candidly. According to Daresh and Male (2000), “Outside consultants acting as critical friends were important in the lives of many” (p. 98). Additionally, both head teachers and principals felt they received little support from their local districts. The authors discovered that mentors were seldom assigned to principals, and in the case of head teachers, where mentors were made available, head teachers chose not use them. Instead, all respondents created their own forms of mentoring with senior level team members, other principals, and assistant principals. The need for outside human supports highlights the new contemporary principalship as one beseeching opportunities for principals to openly discuss their challenges and vulnerabilities as a way to withstand trials and achieve successes in their roles.

Findings indicating that principals and head teachers sought support from trusted individuals or critical friends located outside their schools who could assist them with their unique challenges, bears resemblance to informal coaching. Similar to informal coaching that was evidenced in the study of Mendez-Morse (2004), principals and head teachers participating in the study of Daresh and Male (2000) drew upon resources who
were not formal coaches, but represented informal coaches in their provision of differentiated support relevant to novices' individualized areas of need and personal goals.

Findings from studies by Aiken (2002), Tackes (2002), Mendez-Morse (2004), and Daresh and Male (2000) all revealed the need for novice principals' to actively and independently pursue informal mentors or coaches as resources of support. Personal mechanisms were also evidenced as a resource used by some principals. Study participants' agency in creating their own resources illuminates principals' necessity for principals to chart their own pathways for navigating the complex phenomenon of socialization into the 21st century principalship.

A Call for Formal Induction Resources and Program Research

Due to new expectations for all principals to ensure that all students attain identified academic standards for success, assessment related to the efficacy of 21st century school principal leadership development is a concern among scholars. This need is compounded by the reality of the current achievement gap (DeVita et al., 2007) and the claim that, “research and evaluation of leadership development programs is generally weak or absent altogether” (Weindling, 2003, p. 4). Additionally, Spiro, Mattis, and Mitgang (2007) concur that although some states and districts have begun gathering information about programs, the content mainly comprises surveys concerning satisfaction levels of mentors and new principals, as opposed to rigorous study to provide enlightenment on the leadership of teaching and learning (p. 8). The findings and recommendations of scholars regarding resources of principal induction may offer suggestions for program planning and development formats. This section examines
novice principals’ experiences with accessing and using formal induction resources and includes their participation in induction programs utilizing mentors or coaches.

**Principals’ Use of Formal Induction Resources**

This section discusses novice principals’ or head teachers’ experiences with drawing upon formally provided resources meant to support their socialization into a new organizational leadership role. Crow (2007) conducted a study of the professional and organizational socialization of new head teachers in the context of school reform in England. The study used a qualitative research design with multiple case studies, and included document analysis, multiple interviews, and observations of four, second-year, primary school head teachers. Findings revealed the content, sources, and methods of principals’ socialization, highlighting various challenges and resources experienced by new head teachers.

All four study participants used resources funded by local education agencies and head teacher associations. Participants identified these structures as learning resources that built self-confidence, as all participants stated a need to grow in self-confidence, specifically with believing that they made correct, respectable decisions. This personal development is important for principals, since they rely upon personal mechanisms as a resource to navigate the complexities of the principalship. Self-confidence is a personal characteristic that is needed for principals to affect changes that will ultimately support the success of all students. These resource opportunities helped to fill gaps in prior knowledge and experience, expanded networking, and provided head teachers with reference information.
The resource of the Local Education Agency (LEA) provided meetings, debriefings, and courses that allowed principals to learn by talking through their problems and mistakes, clarifying their thinking, sharing resources, and being introduced to key initiatives and mandates. Additionally, this resource provided opportunities for new head teachers to receive important information, and, similar to coaching support, to discuss their frustrations without feeling judged. These learning platforms helped link principals' professional socialization to their organizational socialization.

Some participants indicated, however, that first-year pressures prevented them from leaving the building. Therefore, they wished the first-year resources could have been extended. Accordingly, socialization resources that are accessible and that continue throughout all phases of principals' careers are necessary for supporting a new paradigm of 21st century principalship leadership.

Another resource used by study participants were individuals from within the broader community and within the school itself. Head teachers used resources including their superiors, key staff members, and deputies, or assistant principals. Although these informal mentoring relationships were helpful for many, some new head teachers found relationships with assistant principals as challenging, believing assistants withheld information and exhibited untrustworthiness. In addition, learning how to develop relationships with school constituents at various hierarchical levels and learning the politics of the broader community sometimes posed difficulties, as well. In these instances, new head teachers' were left to find ways to address factors stymieing socialization into their roles.
Advisors and formal mentors were other resources from which new head teachers drew upon for support. During their first year on the job the LEA provided head teachers with an advisor and a mentor. These resources were viewed as helpful by study participants. The key experiences with advisors included having convenient telephone accessibility to them, being able to connect with experts and discuss, clarify problems, and thinking, as well as gaining exposure to policies and practices. Head teachers appreciated mentors who visited their schools; engaged them in ways that were nonjudgmental; provided practical support; fostered their self-confidence; and improved their abilities to form relationships with superiors.

Furthermore, Crow (2007) also found that personal socialization sources were powerful factors in the socialization of novice head teachers. The breadth and depth of prior experiences, either within or outside of the educational field, influenced new head teachers' learning. Although some head teachers learned from their previous work as assistant principals, these experiences provided little opportunity for interface with superiors (such as governors) to manage finances, and learn the broader perspectives of their schools. Therefore, head teachers often responded to the vastness of the job through self-learning.

Formally offered induction resources were further discussed in a study conducted by Elmore and Burney (2000). The study participants were six new principals, referred to as inductees, from different schools located throughout the district. Data were collected in the forms of multiple interviews, observations, and documents. The study explored how and why principals in Community School District #2 persevered in their principalship and included their experiences with formal socialization resources.
Noting that the responsibility for school achievement ultimately resides with the principal, this district included a formalized induction networking system called “buddying” (p. 5). This networking system was considered to be a form of mentoring. Mentoring also encompassed the appointment of formally designated and financially compensated mentors pulled from the ranks of senior and high-quality principals. This opportunity included formal mentor assignments to both novice and experienced struggling principals.

Findings revealed that various district structures affected new principals’ socialization. Induction supports included those related to formal district-wide structures intended to focus on curriculum and instruction, such as principal conferences, school-based staff developers, and principal site visits and study groups. New principals believed support groups such as the monthly conferences, such as those limited to new and those including all district principals, and the resource of internal and external consultants were helpful. They indicated that these resources provided opportunities for continued learning in instructional areas, such as with curriculum and in leading instructional change. New principal support groups allowed novices to learn from more seasoned principal colleagues. Also, new principal-to-new principal platforms offered collegial mentoring support that included safe opportunities for novices to converse about the challenges they confronted.

The district’s assigned mentoring arrangements also intended to focus on curriculum and instruction, and provided new principals with opportunities to obtain direct support from seasoned principals who were viewed as effective in their craft. New principals shadowed their assigned mentors and received assistance with routine
administrative tasks. Although new principals’ views of their mentors as resources of support varied, all of them valued their mentors’ knowledge and abilities. New principals identified solid mentoring relationships as trusting and comforting. Contrarily, they identified obstacles to mentoring as including a lack of trust or time with mentors.

Novice principals in the study conducted by Crow (2007) and by Elmore and Burney (2000) indicated principals’ common need for personalized and nonjudgmental support. These principals placed confidential opportunities to expose their vulnerabilities and adequate time or regular opportunities to receive help from mentors as high priorities. Additionally, findings illuminated principals’ need for ongoing supports that complimented their need to continually develop in areas of personal leadership and professional management as necessary for carrying out their duties.

*Mentoring Induction Programs as Resources: Critical Aspects to Consider*

In 21st century principalship, principal leaders must utilize mentoring induction programs as resources in order to better meet the demands and expectations of their roles. In DuKess’ (2001) qualitative study on mentoring, many critical aspects were revealed after investigating new principal mentor programs in six diversified New York City schools. The common attributes of effective mentoring programs were examined through interviews with six supervisory superintendents or deputy superintendents, nine mentors, and 14 protégés. This study showed notable differences among the mentoring models, including variance in the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship, the selection of mentors and professional development topics, and the support and preparation of the mentors.
Dukess' (2001) study indicated that the ideal mentor should have district support and be supportive of the protégé's interests. Also, mentors should possess qualities that include 1) expertise, such as instructional expertise aligned with the protégés needs; 2) strong communication and interpersonal skills; 3) the ability and desire to be resourceful; and, 4) good organizational and goal-setting practices. This study concluded that good mentors provide new principals with instructional support by focusing on learning; sharing models of successful practice; providing managerial and administrative support including advice on prioritizing; and offering emotional support through listening and being available during stressful times. Dukess revealed that the hallmarks of successful programs called for relationships that were welcome, honest, trusting, confidential, participatory, and non-supervisory. The findings from this research study aligned with current literature, illustrating the complexity of the principal's role and the need to support principals with high quality, carefully designed mentoring programs (Hobson et al., 2003; Villani, 2006). Further, these findings largely mirrored roles of coaches, such as with emphasizing the hallmarks of trusting and nonsupervisory relationships and mentors' skillfulness with instructional leadership and commitment to principal protégés' needs. One negative aspect implied in this study was that mentors' schools may suffer if they are not well equipped to devote the amount of time and dedication inherent to effective mentoring relationships. This point reiterates the benefits of using coaches, as they are outside consultants whose primary career interest is to support novice principal leaders.

Another study of mentoring programs, conducted by Alsbury and Hackmann (2006), examined the Iowa Administrator Mentoring and Induction (IAMI), pilot
program for novice principals and superintendents. A two-year mentoring program pilot study was investigated by eliciting the perspectives of mentors, principals, and superintendents during both years, via open-ended surveys as well as document analysis of reflection logs. Electronic surveys were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

In this study, these participants responded to a quantitative survey pertaining to the level at which the program met their expectations. On a scale of one to four (four being the highest), the elementary-level (3.25) and the superintendent (3.53) protégés expressed greater satisfaction with the program than the secondary-level protégés (2.88). The same pattern held true for the mentors’ beliefs, or satisfactions regarding the degree to which the program met their expectations. Additionally, the elementary-level mentors (3.19) and the superintendent mentors (3.25) revealed more satisfaction with the program than the secondary-level mentors (3.07). The program components that received the highest ratings from principal participants included mentor training and contact between mentors and protégés. Feedback from protégés indicated a desire for increased face-to-face contact and for mentors to have close geographic proximity and for mentors to initiate regular communication. The program components viewed as less valuable included statewide training and workshops, audio journals, professional growth plans, reflection logs, and the website survival guide.

Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) also solicited qualitative feedback regarding this mentoring program for novice principals, led by collaborative efforts of the state’s professional organization for building- and district-level administrators, as well as Area Education Agencies from within the state. Findings indicated time as a critical aspect for
consideration when designing mentoring relationships. Specifically, the beginning principal protégés expressed their desire for increased time to provide more opportunities for face-to-face communication with their mentors. These protégés also believed that mentoring for the benefit of skill development was less vital than the development of a supportive mentor-protégé relationship, something they considered as a necessity. Additional findings suggested that mentoring relationships should emphasize aspects such as role socialization and clarification and reflective conversations. This study and the study conducted by Dukes (2001) revealed principals’ desires for mentor support related to their specific needs and stresses in order to fulfill the high expectations of 21st century principalship.

Further, Daresh’s (2007) more recent study that analyzed two different urban school district mentoring programs revealed the difficulty mentors experienced with contemporary mentoring for instructional leadership. Interviews with 20 mentor principals indicated the reality of breaking past paradigms of management in the principalship. Mentor principals indicated that despite the mutual understanding that novice principals were to focus on instructional leadership, novice principals chose to use their interactive time with mentors primarily to learn about the technical and practical aspects of their jobs (p. 23). This confirms an earlier study conducted by Daresh and Playko (1994) indicating new principals’ identification of learning technical skills as most critical for safeguarding their career in the principalship. The questionnaire was divided into three areas: technical, socialization, and self-awareness skills. Experienced principals ranked technical skills third while aspiring principals ranked them first. Over time, as novice principals became more familiar with the technical aspects of their role and moved beyond the beginning stage of socialization, some
began to pursue instructional leadership and move beyond their preoccupation with administrative duties.

Other principals, however, became more comfortable in their roles and took on characteristics aligned with the practices of their mentors and the paradigms of an earlier administrator-oriented role. The study re-emphasizes the need for new principals to receive support with learning the managerial aspects of their role, suggesting that principals do not omit this early socialization stage, but must work through it to potentially achieve focus on aspects of instructional leadership. Additionally, the split in new principals’ choices to pursue instructional leadership suggests that the personal characteristics of mentors and novice principals affect the degree to which new principals become socialized into roles as 21st century learning leaders. Once again, careful mentor selection and mentor and protégé matching is displayed as critical to novice principals’ success with socialization into the role of a 21st century principal leader.

Continuing research on the value of mentoring programs for aspiring principals was presented by Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2004). These authors examined role socialization through mentoring within a pre-service higher education mentoring program. Questionnaires and a case study were used to investigate role conceptions of aspiring principals, as well as their socialization into school administration and role transformation from teacher to principal. Findings indicated that focused mentoring stimulated role socialization for aspiring principals and increased the capacity for both new and veteran principals to meet leadership demands. Aspirant principals viewed the support they received from mentor principals as positively influencing their engagement in learning the role of the principal. The value of authentic engagement and mentoring emerged from the data, emphasizing the need for universities and district partnerships to
form authentic learning experiences. These researchers also suggested that mentors receive training and be carefully matched with protégés, and provide customized professional development support. This study examined mentoring from pre-service and in-service aspects, with a primary focus on the preparatory phase. These findings were similar to previous studies, revealing that mentoring is important in fostering role socialization for aspirants and practicing principals, and should be incorporated carefully (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006, 2004; Dukess, 2001).

Coaching Induction Programs as Resources: Critical Aspects to Consider

The previous review of literature identified the use of mentoring resources as one influence on novice principals’ socialization into the principalship. Although some findings showed a semblance to coaching, this current section reviews two pieces of empirical research specific to principal coaching as a support for socialization into the principal’s role. Bloom et al. (2005), asserts that mentors can use coaching but cannot serve as coaches due to their political ties to districts. Distinctions between the two define mentors as typically working within school districts and coaches as outside consultants free of political connections and supervisory responsibilities. Also, although coaches assist novice principals with personal issues, another function is to assist them with attaining organizational goals. In present-day, this includes a focus on enhancing student achievement. Therefore, the need to incorporate coaching in principal induction programs is further reiterated, as it vital for principals’ to receive holistic support related to their practical needs. Principals struggle to develop personally as well as professionally as they pioneer pathways aimed at ensuring inclusivity for student success.
According to Strong et al. (2003), the literature on the coaching of school leaders is still very limited. As such, these authors (Strong et al.) concentrated on new research terrain in seeking to investigate the distinction between daily management and instructional leadership in the context of the New Administrator Program (NAP) at Santa Cruz, New Teacher Center, California. This program represented a collaborative effort between a university and a state administrator's association. Strong et al. (2005) noted the program's employment of blended coaching techniques falling on a continuum between directly imparting experienced knowledge commonly associated with mentoring, and facilitating learning as a process, as aligned with coaching strategies designed to support new administrators' leadership development. As part of this program's design, coaches and principals were to engage in leveled questioning, reflection, and strategic skill development. This induction program used standards-based formative assessments for purposes that included understanding support with leadership development; skills aligned with standards; relating to individuals' needs; and strategies for increasing student achievement. The foundation for this program was socialization theory, with a focus on coaching.

The study conducted by Strong et al. (2003) included a total of 31 novice K-12 principals, 27 of whom were enrolled in the NAP and received coaching and four who did not receive formal coaching support. Three of the unsupported principals and four of those enrolled in the NAP were also included as part of a case study. This research study was guided by questions investigating the challenges identified by beginning principals, and ways in which these challenges were addressed by coaching, and how effective
coaching was for supporting principals' instructional leadership, satisfaction, and retention.

Case study and survey approaches were used to triangulate data concerning the three perspectives of principal, coach, and researcher. Data collection was comprised of monthly telephone interviews, electronic questionnaires given at the end and beginning of the school year, and shadowing. Data analysis related to managerial and instructional aspects revealed several challenge areas for new principals. Principals reported difficulties related to staff issues, including individual staff concerns and adjusting to the staff culture, with the most prominent staff-related difficulty relating to teacher evaluation. Further, principals' difficulties with time demands, district-level expectations and concerns, analysis of student data, acceptance by parents and the community, and the legacy of previous administrators were also revealed. Novice principals indicated a need to deal with issues such as the discontent, retention, cooperation and evaluation of staff.

Further insights related to principals' coaching experiences indicated that beginning principals needed support from coaches in areas of both management and instructional leadership. End-of-the year interviews revealed that new principals noted the most effective coaching support was with addressing issues of instructional leadership. Fifty percent of the principals who received coaching support identified coaching as a resource for developing and planning their personal vision in the principalship. Additionally, all participants believed the reflective conversations and supportive feedback provided to them by their coaches fostered their overall success and was the most meaningful of coaching behaviors. The participants expressed their appreciation for their coaches, describing the ability to communicate confidentially, grow
professionally, and reflect on professional practice as a function of coaching support. Further, study participants gave coaching as a resource an extremely high rating, while contrarily rating district supports as less helpful. Finally, 22% of new principals indicated that they would have left their positions had it not been for their coaches. This finding, in combination with the others noted within this study, illuminated the importance of principal coaching as voiced by first and second year principals. New principals enter into a new organizational leadership role requiring the execution of seasoned management and leadership; however, a lack of experience and complexities within the environment and professional role implore the implementation of coaching as a resource to support principals with learning and leading.

Another recent study exploring principal coaching was conducted by Silver, Lochmiller, Copland, and Tripps (2009). Data collection included documents, observations, and questionnaires, as well as semi-structured interviews with program participants and leadership coaches. Interviews were designed to develop understanding about participants' experiences in the program and views about the effectiveness of the program design. Other data types more deeply explored the nature of support new administrators received and included review of video-taped coaching sessions.

This grant-funded program included the use of field-based leadership coaches to support new principals. Coaches were recruited from practicing and newly retired administrators in a variety of school districts. They received initial training and ongoing professional development in the practice of blended coaching, congruent with techniques of the NAP. Leadership coaches provided new principals with support in the forms of email and telephone communication, and monthly on-site coaching sessions.
Silver et al. (2009) discussed five, second year interim findings related to coaches and principals. The first finding indicated that coaches adjusted their practice in an ongoing manner to address program weaknesses or support new administrators' needs. Data from coaching logs suggested that coaches were differentiating their coaching support based on administrators' individual need areas. In addition to coaching, they provided resources such as reading materials, personal experience, and modeling. Data revealed that administrators believed modeling was helpful with matters of instruction or instructional leadership. New administrators viewed classroom observations and debriefings as the most beneficial aspect of coaching. Observations indicated that strategic coaching sessions may focus administrators' attention on specific practices, and therefore, aid administrators with determining practices as more or less helpful. A few disparate observations revealed coaching behaviors that merely offered encouragement, but did not press thinking through questioning and reflection.

Another finding recognized that coaches and new administrators spent a substantial amount of time discussing concerns surrounding classroom instruction. Budget, finance, human resources, school improvement, and data analysis were also common topics of discussion. This study further demonstrated that second-year administrators had greater interest in discussing instructional issues than first-year administrators. Coaching and administrator pairs were able to start their second year conversing more immediately, directly, and frequently about instruction. However, due to one isolated case, the need to match administrators with coaches that had similar experiences was emphasized.
Coaches and principals offered their positive views of this program. Principals showed their enthusiasm, and coaches enjoyed the opportunity to engage in interactive problem-solving and to ultimately work and grow collectively and with peers. Findings from this study demonstrate utmost importance for principal induction, as 21st century principal socialization is expected to prepare principals' to lead learning and produce outcomes of enhanced student achievement. This study displayed results aligned with this goal, and therefore, provides sagacious insights for principal induction that includes formal coaching.

**Summary and Conclusion**

Twenty-first century principals must respond to conflicting messages and demands (DuFour, 1999) as they hold positions that have traditionally resisted change (Sergiovanni, 1992). Principals are expected to redefine schools, constituents, and processes (Murphy, 1992). Daresh (2009) summarized the dilemma of the new principals by noting that they are facing “new pressures and stress never experienced by their predecessors” (p. ix). Their socialization into a new role is a path which they must pioneer.

This review of the literature illustrated the challenges and supports affecting new principals’ socialization into the 21st century principalship. A review of the socialization research indicated that novice principals’ struggle with gaps in skill areas (Daresh & Playko, 1994; Daresh, 2007) and with effectively adjusting to an inherited culture (Aiken, 2002). New principals strive to make a rapid social and cultural transition into their roles (Aiken; Crow, 2007; Davis, 1998; Hurley, 1992) by drawing on several types of supports. Personal resources such as self-confidence, social interaction skills, strategic knowledge.
and ability to self-create germane mentoring relationships may support new principals’ success with socialization into a newly defined principalship. Novice principals in the research literature relied on informal mentoring relationships (Daresh & Male, 2000; Mendez-Morse, 2004; Tackes, 2002), including an array of individuals located within and outside their schools and district to support their differentiated needs.

In addition to reliance on informal mentoring and coaching relationships, scholars identified the support of formal induction programs, often based on mentoring or coaching. The research literature on induction practices illuminates the potential value of mentoring and coaching and encourages the use of these practices as a resource to support principals in navigating their principalship (Crow, 2007; Dukess, 2001; Strong, et al., 2003). Novice principals may benefit from resources of support that include high-quality, structured mentoring, coaching, and professional development opportunities to help them address the difficulties associated with assuming a new role as a school principal. Data further suggests that coaching may be more instrumental for assisting new principals in developing instructional leadership capacity, while mentoring may serve the purpose of building managerial skills.

The following chapter describes the research methodology used to explore new principals’ experiences in the first three years of their roles, particularly in regard to the influences affecting socialization. It includes descriptions of the study context and participants, the process of data collection and analysis, and the steps taken to ensure the soundness of this study.
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

This qualitative research study explored contemporary principal induction. The study aimed to contribute to the field of educational leadership through developing enhanced understanding of 21st century, urban elementary school principals’ experiences in the first three years of the principalship. This chapter presents a description of the study’s research design. It identifies the research question and subquestion, study context and participants, and procedures used for data collection. The chapter further explains the systematic process used to analyze and interpret data.

Overall Research Design

Creswell (1998) defines qualitative research as an inquiry process conducted in a natural setting to explore a social or human problem, which in this instance is the exploration of principals’ experiences with resources for navigating the challenges associated with socialization into their role. Qualitative research is used when the theory base and variables of a research topic are unknown and warrant further exploration (Creswell, 2009, p. 98). In the context of this study, a strong empirical theory base for principal induction in an era of 21st century accountability and reform is lacking. Therefore, to identify the essence of principals’ experience with socialization into the contemporary principalship, this study incorporated qualitative research methodology.

This study comprised a descriptive and analytic process of interaction between the researcher and the study participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Kvale, 2006). As an in-
depth interview study, it sought to understand “the experience of other people” (p. 3) and the meaning they attributed to it (Seidman, 1998). A primary research question guided this study by exploring what resources novice urban elementary principals drew upon to navigate the first three years of the principalship. Further, a research subquestion supporting the primary research question asked what influenced urban elementary principals’ socialization into the principalship.

**Study Context**

The study context was a PreK-12 education setting within a large urban school district located in Upstate New York. To support confidentiality, this school district was given a pseudonym, the Maplewood City School District (MCSD). The demographic information (see Appendix A) collected from the MCSD’s website identified this school district as encompassing the highest poverty rate among the five largest urban school systems in the State (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, New York City, and Yonkers). The district also represented the lowest four-year high school graduation rate in New York State.

The MCSD hosted a diverse body of approximately 32,000 students ranging from preschool through grade 12. Students’ origins were from a diverse array of countries, constituting a combined total of 35 different spoken languages. Further, 5,300 adults were employed in the district, including support personnel, teachers, and administrators. A total of 250 administrators included 21 high school and 39 elementary principals. This district also employed a new superintendent, whose length of tenure at the time of this research study was approximately one year. During this time, the superintendent led major reform initiatives aimed at addressing the district’s historical issues related to
urban school failure. These initiatives included a focus on three core values: achievement, equity, and accountability.

A presentation of the district's reform framework (see Appendix B), included academic findings and recommendations revealing that in the 2007-2008 school year, 58% of the elementary schools did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and were not in good standing for every student subgroup for English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science. To address this and other pending concerns the new superintendent committed to major reform focused on three communicated core values: achievement, equity, and accountability. This improvement initiative held district faculty and administration accountable for utilizing best teaching and leadership practices to support increased achievement for all students.

One of many changes resulting from the district's newly defined goals was the restructuring of district-level administrator positions. In the past, the MCSD had two chiefs of schools, also referred to as supervisors, who oversaw principals in numerous school buildings. These new initiatives increased the number of chiefs from two to three, and held them accountable for revised supervisory responsibilities.

One district practice that remained constant was assigning mentors to new principals in the first year of the principalship. Mentors comprised primarily of district-employed, tenured principals and, on occasion, of other seasoned leaders who had former experience in the principalship. These mentor-to-principal matches were made by a committee of district and building-level leaders and an administrative union leader. Although the intent of this study was to seek an understanding of the principals' experiences in the first three
induction years and not to evaluate the program, mentoring is prevalent in the related research literature. Therefore, this aspect of the MCSD context was considered.

**Participant Selection Criteria**

The criteria for the selection of study participants were deliberated carefully to capture the heterogeneity that existed within an identified population of principals (Maxwell, 1996). These criteria included individuals who were first-time, as well as nontenured school principals in the first three years of their principalship. Additional criteria required participants to be elementary principals who worked in the MCSD. The selection of participants required no restriction on the basis of gender, age, or race. Rather, it was dependent upon specified criteria related to the research purpose and individuals' desire to participate.

**Participant Contact**

The researcher's communication with a senior-level leader in the MCSD resulted in identification of first- through third- year principals meeting the criteria for participant selection. Additionally resulting from this communication was an invitation to attend a New Elementary Principals’ meeting, designed for first-year principals. This meeting provided a platform for introductions between the researcher and prospective study participants. It also allowed the researcher to gather contact information and schedule an initial interview with first-year principals who expressed interest in participating in the study. In addition, the district's website provided email addresses and telephone numbers that were later used to contact the remaining two third-year principal participants.

Either during the New Elementary Principals' Meeting or as part of the first interview session, participants received a letter that included a personal introduction,
description of the research study, and brief overview of the interview process (see Appendix C). Interview dates were scheduled with study participants during preceding interview sessions. Finally, participants were informed that they would not receive remuneration for their participation. However, a token of appreciation was presented to each participant at the conclusion of the data-collection period (Seidman, 1998).

Participant Descriptions

The purposive sample (Patton, 1990) for this study included five urban elementary school principals who had three or less years of experience as principals in the MCSD. Also, none of the study participants possessed prior experience in the principalship. The study participants included one male and one female first-year, tenure-track principals, and one female first-year acting principal. In addition, it included two female, third-year tenure-track principals. Tenured track positions are true open positions that have been vacated permanently due reasons such as promotion, leaving the district, and retirement. An acting principal is on temporary assignment as the position belongs to another tenured principal who is also doing another temporary assignment for reasons such as a promotion or extended absence. The district also assigns persons as acting if the position becomes available during the school year. Time spent as an acting principal applies towards tenure when the acting principal is assigned to a tenure track principal position, and it also reserves the right for the acting person to return to their previous position if the acting position should be terminated for any reason.

Data gathered from participant demographic information sheets provided brief background on each principal, including gender, age, race, and employment experience in the MCSD. Specifically, demographic information for Tony displayed his personal
composite as a Black male of approximately 30 years of age. He was a first-year principal who worked in the MCSD for a total of ten years, three and a half of which included service as an assistant principal. Jeannette was a first-time, Black female principal of approximately 40 years of age. She had a 15-year employment history in the MSCD, three of which were as an assistant principal. A third study participant referred to as Cheyenne, possessed some personal demographics that were similar to Jeannette. Cheyenne and Jeannette were near the same age and were Black, female, first-time principals. Cheyenne had 15 years experience in the district QIRH with five years as an assistant principal. At the time of this study, she was serving in a first-year principalship as an acting principal.

Miley differed from the three previous study participants in age. She was approximately 20 years older and White. Also, Miley was a third-year principal with five years experience as an assistant principal and 19 total years experience working in the MCSD. The other third-year principal in this study was Rita, a Bi-racial female of approximately 40 years of age. Rita had five years experience as an assistant principal in the MCSD, with a total of 16 years employment experience in the district. This personal demographic information for participants is shown in Table 3.1.
The study participants were principals of separate elementary schools comprised of unique school demographics, as noted in Table 3.2. The demographics exhibited variance among the principals' schools related to such aspects as the total student population and overall academic standing. The term academic standing identified whether a school attained adequate yearly progress (AYP), was in need of improvement, or was subject to interventions under the Commissioner’s Regulations. According to Federal regulations, schools in need of academic improvement were subject to interventions under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. Aspects of each school’s accountability data as related to its ability to meet academic standards was noted on the New York State Report Cards. This aspect of accountability for each study participant's school is reflected in the School Demographic Information table that follows.
### School Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Grade levels and total student enrollment</th>
<th>Current NYS academic standing/overall accountability</th>
<th>Student ethnicity</th>
<th>Student eligibility for free and reduced lunch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>Grade Levels: PK–6 Good Standing</td>
<td>Student Enrollment: 560 (Watch List)</td>
<td>African American 55.7% 15.7%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino 25.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asian 2.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native 0.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multiracial 0.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeannette</td>
<td>Grade Levels: K–6 Good Standing</td>
<td>Student Enrollment: 303 (Making AYP)</td>
<td>African American 71.6% 10.2%</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino 14.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asian 2.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native 1.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheyenne</td>
<td>Grade Levels: PK–6 Good Standing</td>
<td>Student Enrollment: 376 (Watch List)</td>
<td>African American 69.2% 6.6%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino 8.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asian 14.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native 8.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multiracial 3.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miley</td>
<td>Grade Levels: K–6 Good Standing</td>
<td>Student Enrollment: 316 (Making AYP)</td>
<td>African American 57.0% 15.0%</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino 25.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asian .01%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native .006%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita</td>
<td>Grade Levels: K–6 School in Need of</td>
<td>Student Enrollment: 635 Improvement</td>
<td>African American 44.0% 38.0%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino 16.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asian 1.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native 1.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the district's mission noted on its web site, schools would provide an education that prepared every student to achieve and succeed intellectually and socially. The mission further stated that these results would be achieved through engaging learning, collaborative leadership, and a focus on results. Albeit that only one of the schools in this study was identified by the state as failing to display Adequate Yearly...
Progress (AYP) for meeting academic proficiency, two of the schools were on the state’s Watch List for needing improvement. According to the 2007-2008 New York State Report Card data, not all students were meeting academic learning standards. These marginalized students either did not meet or had only partially met the state learning standards for ELA, Math, and Science indicating their partial or less than partial understanding of the content for a particular subject and grade level. In addition, specific 2006-2007 suspension data, noted in the 2007-2008 New York State Report Cards, indicated that each of the five elementary schools in this study had high suspension rates in comparison to elementary schools in neighboring districts. The district’s noted academic and social challenges placed principals in positions of needing to lead changes for school improvement.

Data Collection

Four types of data were collected in this study. This included data from individual interviews, participant demographic information sheets field notes, and documents relevant to the school district analyzed. To gain an understanding of the meaning novice principals attributed to navigating the challenges and expectations associated with socialization into the 21st century urban principalship, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews were used as the primary means to obtain qualitative data (Creswell, 2007). The interview questions were open-ended allowing for discovery and interpretation of human experience (Lincoln & Gubba, 1985).

Before initiating interviews, Individual Informed Consent Forms (see Appendix D) and Participant Information sheets (see Appendix E) were personally reviewed with each study participant. The completed consent forms were collected prior to interviewing.
and the Individual Participant Demographic Information Sheets were collected at the culmination of the first interview session. Both the consent forms and information sheets were secured in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher’s home office immediately thereafter.

An initial pilot interview was conducted in January 2009, resulting in further developed interview questions (Creswell, 2007). Thereafter, variations of Seidman’s (1998) three-interview series were implemented with study participants. The interview content comprised of three protocols.

*Interview Protocols*

The goal of the first interview protocol, as suggested by Seidman (1998), was to aid the study participants in reconstructing past events for the purpose of placing their experiences in context (see Appendix F). This protocol included six broad questions relating to the participants’ pathways to the principalship. For instance, this first interview protocol asked study participants to describe how they envisioned the principalship before assuming their new roles and it also allowed them to reflect upon their personal attributes.

The focus of the second interview protocol was for participants to reconstruct their experiences in the principalship (Seidman, 1998) (see Appendix G). In this study, the second level of interviewing explored details pertinent to the challenges of the principalship and the resources that study participants used to navigate the complexities of their new roles. Open-ended questions were used to probe for factors that influenced their daily experiences. Finally, the third interview protocol focused on one primary
question asking study participants to reflect on the meaning of their experiences as novice urban elementary school principals (see Appendix H).

The content of the tiered interviews was covered in a flexible fashion, ranging from one to three interview sessions for each participant. Although the content of the interviews was consistent among all participants, the three-tiered interview process was altered for four of the five participants. Several participants desired to combine interviews due to time constraints. As a result, a one-visit extended interview was conducted for three of the participants. A two-tiered interview was conducted with another, while the fifth participant engaged in three-tiered interview process. According to Seidman (1998), the revision of this three-tiered interview format may occur as long as it “…allows participants to reconstruct and reflect upon their experience within the context of their lives” (p. 15). The interviews began in February of 2009 and extended over a three month period. To accurately capture original data and preserve the study participants’ words, (Seidman) all interviews were audio-taped and professionally transcribed to written text.

**Field Notes**

Field notes represented another source of data to support research conclusions and interpretations of the study findings. The field notes consisted of observations, such as those related to interesting and varied human interactions and aspects of physical environments pertinent to the study inquiries. Summaries of informal discussions occurred at various district locations before and after interviews or while observing at meetings were recorded in a notebook, and on loose leaf paper placed in specified file
folders. These field notes were typed into Word documents and arranged into electronic files in preparation for data analysis.

**Participant Demographic Information Sheets**

The study participants’ basic personal information was collected through the use of a Participant Demographic Information sheet. This data source contained basic information, including each study participants’ full name, address and telephone numbers. The study participants’ personal data facilitated the planning of interviews and communications. Other participant demographic information included data to be considered during the analysis process, such as study participants’ age and years of service within the district.

**District-Related Documents**

Study data was also retrieved from district-related documents. These documents were relevant to the district’s administrative processes and influenced principals’ role expectations. Documented information pertained to the district’s Seven Essential Standards (see Appendix I); principal evaluations (See Appendix J); and, principal mentoring (See Appendix K). Information posted on the district’s web site was also considered in this study, and included electronic documentation such as the district’s demographics (See Appendix A) and reform goals (See Appendix B). Finally, pertinent electronic New York State Report Card data located on the New York State Government web site was also considered in the analysis process.
Data Analysis

The rigorous and multifaceted process of data analysis required systemization and a structure for organizing and managing materials (Seidman, 1998). Transcripts of interview audio tapes were saved in electronic form. Printed information was photocopied and organized in a binder stored in a locked filing cabinet. Other confidential data such as field notes were also secured in files in a locked filing cabinet.

Data analysis used a hybrid of analysis techniques (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Glesne, 1999; Kvale, 2006; Lofland & Lofland, 2005; Seidman, 1998) and followed a spiral-type process that required self-awareness on the part of the researcher (Creswell, 2007). Several iterations of coding and classification followed common qualitative research procedures that included decision-making regarding the use or non-use of data. Inductive immersion into the data was necessary for discovering emerging patterns, themes, and interrelationships (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Coding of Data

After engaging in several preliminary readings of each interview transcript to get a sense of its whole (Kvale, 2006), the first round of coding was completed using Atlas.Ti. qualitative analysis software. The software facilitated coding of data through noting and labeling with keywords various aspects (Kvale; Seidman, 1998) of principals' socialization into the 21st century urban elementary school principalship. This resulted in rudimentary coding labels that were considered tentative during the early stages of analysis using a constant comparison of data (Seidman).

A second round of coding also occurred. At this time, electronic versions of the interview transcripts, field notes, and pertinent district-related documents were accessed.
The electronic files and the code list were printed to allow for another round of coding that was completed by hand. This next step in coding expanded the consideration of data sources, and resulted in a broadened list of codes and companion definitions (Seidman, 1998). An electronic list of codes and corresponding definitions were used to create index cards that were sorted into preliminary categories.

**Categorizing Data**

Initial categories that captured the richness of the participants' experiences were identified (Charmaz, 2005) by comparing codes and statements in Atlas Ti. To efficiently and effectively differentiate the study participants while manipulating data through constantly comparing similarities and differences, (Kvale, 2006) each participant received a different color code. Using specified colors helped with labeling and identifying each participant’s contextual data while reviewing and electronically cutting and pasting significant statements into conceptual categories. These color assignments remained as an individual's visual identifier throughout the study.

As intended with qualitative research, patterns and contextual findings were discovered through careful analysis of the data. Rudimentary themes were based on contextual features such as the study setting, participants' actions and beliefs, and interrelationships among the data, theory, and literature. Rules for the inclusion and exclusion of categories were further re-evaluated and refined (Lofland & Lofland, 2005) as analysis moved from description to meaning interpretation (Glesne, 1999). A smaller number of broader themes were developed through considering meaning statements of how (structural) and what (textural) study participants experienced (Creswell, 2007).
In addition to the study participants' experiences of the world, the researcher's personal experience with the phenomenon of principal induction and socialization into the principalship was considered (Lofland & Lofland; Moustakas, 1994). Statements were then grouped into larger units of meaning or themes that included versions of both what the study participants experienced with the socialization into the 21st century principalship, and how they experienced it. A summary depicting the essence of principals' common experiences culminated the study (Creswell, 2009).

**Trustworthiness**

Transparency was offered by providing a detailed description of the research process. To obtain improved understanding and support trustworthiness, data were triangulated through the use of multiple sources (Maxwell, 1996). Trustworthiness was also supported by providing rich descriptions of the study participants' experiences and by mining data collected through multiple methods (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Connections were identified through the emergence of themes representing the commonalities in participants' experiences with socialization into the 21st century principalship. Themes were substantiated by content from interviews, documents, field notes, and memos. Triangulation through the use of four sources helped to make findings more dependable by confirming its replication (Miles & Huberman,). Also, triangulation provided various lenses with which to view and converge data (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), and supported consideration of alternative understandings of the data and the theories related to socialization and mentoring (Maxwell, 1996). To support the researcher's integrity, two practicing scholars offered intermittent peer review. The peer reviewers posited difficult questions about the
“methods, meanings, and interpretations of the research” (Creswell, 2007, p. 208; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Member checking was another strategy used to enhance trustworthiness (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Maxwell, 1996). This was initially accomplished by sending study participants copies of interview transcripts to check for accuracy. Additional member checks occurred within the data analysis process as deemed necessary to clarify information and solicit the participants’ perspectives in regard to the researcher’s interpretation of the data.

Chapter Summary

This interview study applied qualitative research methodology that was a bricolage and applied recommendations from field experts, such as Creswell (2007); Glesne (1999); Kvale, (2006); Lofland and Lofland (2005); and Seidman (1998). It interpreted the meaning of central themes related to five elementary school principals’ experiences with socialization into the first three years of the urban principalship (Kvale, 2006). To examine these experiences, data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2006); documents; field notes; and participant demographic information sheets (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Triangulation enhanced the trustworthiness of this study and occurred through collecting and analyzing a combination of these data sources.

Chapter Four will introduce the findings of this study. Each finding will be presented beneath a separate heading, and will include the illumination of the five study participants’ voices. A summary capturing the essence of these findings will conclude the chapter.
Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

All five principals in this study expressed their desire to lead inclusive schools that would ensure the success of all students. However, as these study participants were all first-time principals merely in their first through third year on the job, they were still untenured professionals experiencing the newness of their principalship. As part of the novice principals’ attempts to learn a new organizational role and navigate through its complexities, it was necessary for them to draw on resources or supports that could assist them with becoming socialized.

To explore urban elementary school principals’ experiences with socialization into the 21st century principalship, a primary research question guiding this study asked: what resources do urban elementary school principals draw upon to navigate the first three years of the principalship? The term “resource” is defined as a source of aid or support that may be drawn upon to sustain and/or improve the quality of life. A research sub-question asked: what factors influenced urban elementary school principals’ socialization experiences in the first three years? The sub-question spurred inquiry into what shaped, modified, or affected novice urban elementary principals’ socialization experiences, or their experiences with learning a new role in an organization (Chao et al., 1994; Crow, 2004). As a result of this qualitative study, four findings emerged and are presented next. Further, the conclusion section of this chapter provides a summary of the study findings, as well as a preview of the final chapter of this dissertation.
Ongoing Learning and 21st Century Principals' Realities

The first finding from this study indicated that all five principals expressed a need to engage in ongoing learning to meet the challenges and expectations of the 21st century principalship. In an effort to satisfy the requirements of their roles as contemporary urban elementary school principal leaders, each of the five study participants described the actuality of needing to continue learning on an ongoing basis. For instance, as a newly hired acting principal in the MCSD, Cheyenne equated the principalship with needing to continuously learn anew. She said,

You’re constantly learning. I mean everybody’s experience is different... everybody comes from different experiences. but you’re still learning. I guess you really have to be open-minded and you have to be flexible because the learning is ongoing to me. I mean there’s not a day that goes by that I’m not learning something new, from budgeting to learning how to enter staff absences, to procedures about visitors coming in. I thought when I entered I had that down pat, but then because of the layout of this building, it’s very different. You just have to be flexible.

Despite having a 12-year familiarity with the MCSD, gleaned from employment experiences including her past administrative role as an athletic director and as an assistant principal, Cheyenne realized a need to continue acquiring new knowledge and skills each day.

Similarly, Tony, a first-year principal in the second largest school among all five principals in this study, predicted that he would confront a need for continuous development in his principalship. Regardless of Tony’s three and a half years experience
as an assistant principal and ten years total experience in the MCSD, he faced the
dissonance inherent to socialization into the principalship. Tony said,

Once I got into the job I thought that I wanted to take it as it came. I don’t want to
try to overload myself on things because there’s so much to learn and if I just
focused on one area it would have taken away from some other things that I really
need to do. [I really need] to lay down my foundation and laying my foundation is
my vision and my mission for this building. Along with that, budgeting things are
going to come up.

Tony made an effort to prepare himself for his new role, but nonetheless, he knew that he
would need to continue expanding his capacities. Tony said, “I’m constantly learning
from those around me.” He believed in personal development, stating.

I believe as a good leader you need to always be abreast on the best practices and
the most current literature, so you’re one step ahead and can start to prepare your
staff for the future …knowing the direction education is going. If I’m behind the
times then I’m not any good to my staff.

He indicated that he was going to set time aside each Wednesday to read current
literature. Additionally, he expressed his strong desire to use experienced leaders to
support his ongoing learning in the principalship.

Another first year principal, Jeannette, illustrated the shock she experienced due
to realizing the amount of new learning that needed to take place as a novice principal.
Jeannette commented that prior to accepting the position, she thought she knew so much
more about what to expect than transpired. She recalled her experience with interviewing
for the principalship and the conversation that she had with the superintendent. Jeannette said,

I thought I knew so much more about what to expect and it was funny because at the interview I said to [the] superintendent and the team, 'Well, you know, I've been working closely with my principals for years. I've been very supportive of the administrator as a specialist in AIS and ELA and I worked very closely with the administrative team. Then, when I became the assistant principal, I worked very closely with the principal. When we had vacations I would come in and we would talk. So, I am prepared because I've worked so closely with all of the principals that I've ever worked with, or my supervisors.'

Jeannette continued by describing the superintendent’s response to her naiveté:

And, he [the superintendent] said to me, ‘Once you sit in that chair it will be different.’ I thought in my head, ‘I beg to differ,’ because I thought I knew. It wasn’t until I sat in that chair that I understood I don’t know it all. I’m still learning.

Trying to learn the multifaceted role of a principal was described by Jeannette as overwhelming and ongoing. She stated,

I had never been overwhelmed with so many e-mails. As an assistant principal, oh of course I got e-mails, but as a principal, whew, you must know more than what you want to know sometimes. You must really wear different hats... Each phase [of my career] has been a learning experience, and each time I transitioned I thought I knew. I thought I knew, but, whew. I’m still learning and I know I will
continue to learn for several more years because we’re going in a whole different
direction in our district now.

Jeannette explained that she was beginning to understand the compulsion for
continuous learning as evidenced in her new role as a 21st century principal in the MCSD.
She further noted,

Well, to be a principal, means learning and then finding out who you are and what
you bring to the table…because not every building has the same needs. You have
to kind of figure that out early, ‘Who am I and what am I bringing to that
school?’

Learning was not only about professional development, but personal development, too.

The two third-year principals in this study also expressed their obligation to learn
continuously, indicating the necessity for furthering their knowledge and skills even after
two years of experience as principals, and five years of prior experience as assistant
principals. Miley indicated that she was persistently learning in her role and often did so
by seeking to understand the goals and needs of her faculty. She pointed out that 21st
century leadership required ongoing and collaborative learning among her and all school
constituents. She said, “It [fostering the success of all students] really has to be a team
effort and I think through teaming and collaboration you continue to learn. You learn
from each other.”

Continuous learning was a similar requisite for Rita in her oversight of the largest
school among all five principals in this study. She agreed with Miley, indicating that her
need to learn new knowledge and skills in the principalship was interminable. She said,
“This is… as you know, this is an on the job training. I mean there’s nobody who can
really prepare you for what goes on every day.” Rita also viewed the 21st century urban elementary school principalship as an active and ongoing learning process that included a reality of experiential learning.

Continuous learning was synonymous to the contemporary principalship, as all of the study participants recognized the centrality for ongoing professional and personal advancement related to knowledge and skills areas. Due to the complexity of their roles and the expectations placed upon them, all five principals relied upon resources to advance their socialization into the principalship. These resources are further illuminated in the second study finding.

**Informal and Formal Mentors and Coaches: Inside and Outside Resources**

A second finding that emerged from this study was that participants used an array of mentoring and/or coaching resources to support their socialization into the novice urban elementary principalship. Specifically, all five principals used informal mentoring and/or coaching resources, and four of the five principals used formal mentoring and/or coaching resources. In addition, three of the five principals used both inside mentors and outside coaches. The principal participants’ reliance upon informal and formal resources from inside and outside the district is noted in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1

*Mentoring and Coaching Resources*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Pseudonym</th>
<th>Informal Mentor (Inside-District: Not Designated)</th>
<th>Temporary, Short-Term Transitional Mentor</th>
<th>Formal Mentor (Inside-District: Designated)</th>
<th>Informal Coach (Outside-District: Not Designated)</th>
<th>Formal Coach (Outside-District: District Supported)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeannette</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheyenne</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miley</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rita</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although data in Table 4.1 presented principals' uses of varied socialization tactics, all five principals drew upon informal, self-created mentors within the district. Two of the five principals, Cheyenne and Tony, also drew upon informal, outside coaches. Principals indicated some use of formal resources, with four principals using formal mentors. Jeannette, Cheyenne, Miley and Rita used formal mentors from inside the district to assist with socialization into their new roles. Though, the degree to which each principal indicated a reliance on their mentor varied. This range of variance included one principal, Tony, not mentioning the use of an assigned mentor; Jeannette's mention of her brief and minimal use of a temporarily assigned mentor; and Miley's longstanding relationship with her first-year assigned mentor. Although the use of a temporary, short-term district-provided mentor emerged from the data for two principals, Jeannette and Cheyenne, the reasons for these provisions and the possible exclusion of the remaining...
three study participants are not known. Though this information did not surface from the study data, reasons could relate to predecessor principals’ length of tenure or unique needs of individual schools or participants. Finally, one principal, Miley also noted drawing upon the resource of a critical friend performing the role of a formal coach.

In this study, the term informal is representative of mentoring or coaching relationships that were not assigned, or formally provided to principals, or financially supported by the district. The term formal insinuates the opposite, wherein the district assumed a role in providing principals with a particular resource. Also, once again, formal mentors are defined as typically senior members of organizations, including principal peers (Crow & Matthews, 1998), who have track records as successful practitioners, and who may be able to effectively assist newcomers (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003). Informal mentors are typically self-created mentors, from whom principals actively seek guidance or support.

Additionally, formal coaches represent committed, ethical, and trusted professional experts located outside the institutional walls of schools and severed from any political ties who offer principals confidentiality and support with wide-ranging, problematic professional and personal issues (Bloom et al., 2003). They use a variety of skills and strategies to foster the clarification and achievement of goals, including organizational goals (Bloom et al.). Informal coaches are not designated by the district and do not receive financial support for coaching services.

Inside Informal Mentors

Although variations of both mentoring and coaching emerged as resources, informal mentoring resources were prevalent across all five principals in this study. All
study participants identified unassigned mentors (those not designated to them by the MCSD) as resources supporting their socialization into the principalship. These informal mentoring relationships often formed in a self-initiated or self-created manner and comprised individuals such as superordinates, principal peers, assistant principals, and faculty members.

Jeannette expressed her appreciation for the informal mentoring relationships she developed with three other novice principals. At the time of her candidacy for a principalship, she and three candidates who were concurrently applying for principal positions in the district established friendships. She noted their formation of informal collegial mentoring relationships that resulted from their parallel experiences with preparing for and engaging in a series of principal interviews.

After she and her three peers were officially hired and placed in their perspective schools, as first-year principals in the district, Jeannette continued to draw upon these colleagues as a resource to support her with navigating the challenges she encountered in the principalship. She noted that these informal peer mentoring opportunities facilitated the sharing of basic information necessary for the start-up of a new position. Jeannette replayed the type of conversations she had with her colleagues illustrating ways in which they supported her learning:

We would have little conversations such as, ‘Oh you got new furniture. Who did you go to for that?’ It was those kinds of things that helped us get to where we might not have gotten... One person found out and they shared. So those little things, just having people to tell you, as we were all new. ‘Okay, this is the person
that you contact for this. Okay, this is what I got.’ We would have conversations… We took turns visiting each other’s school… We were all new.

This collective socialization method supported Jeannette emotionally and provided a risk-free opportunity for learning and sharing of inside knowledge. This informal mentoring resource assisted Jeannette with obtaining district-specific information that supported her endeavors as a new principal.

Field notes and interview data confirmed the importance Jeannette placed upon resources who she could trust and share her vulnerabilities. As such, Jeannette described her appreciation for the moral support she received from this same group of principal peers. She stated:

I feel very comfortable calling any one of them. All of their numbers are programmed in my phone and I have all of their e-mail addresses. I can go pull up several e-mails we’ve sent each other as chain e-mails just tagging off each other to say, ‘Oh I’m praying for you today, or good luck…’ If you watch any of the reality shows, you see people grow close just because, and they support each other no matter what.

Jeannette was grateful to have professional peers she could confide in.

Succeeding a principal who had established a 30-year presence in her school was challenging for Jeannette. Therefore, the moral support offered by a peer who was also the previous vice principal in her school prior to her arrival was helpful. Jeannette indicated the comfort she received when her colleague would call and say, “I was just thinking about you and just letting you know you’re in my thoughts today.” She said, “[He] and I used to converse all the time, but again not necessarily about his experience
here, because we both have different experiences." She emphasized that since her colleague had experiences within a different job role than she, his moral support and collegiality outweighed his advice or insights about her new principalship in his former school setting.

Tony also expressed his need to rely on informal mentors. He described his efforts to seek mentoring while attempting to acquire certain technical knowledge and skills, including those related to budgeting. Tony said, "The budget piece I can speak to. Actually when it was rolled out that we were going to have control of our budget more as time progressed with this district with our new superintendent, I jumped right on it." To address the challenge of learning how to develop and manage his school budget, Tony initially approached more experienced principal colleagues from within the district to learn the process or formula they used to make decisions regarding budget cuts in their schools.

Additionally, Tony indicated that although the district provided its principals with a half-day to work together with a recently adopted site-based budgeting protocol as per the newly hired superintendent, he wanted to garner additional resources to aid his learning. In an attempt to gain expertise from seasoned professionals possessing specialized knowledge, Tony also sought guidance from informal mentors at the district-level. He consulted with his Zone Chief and other district-level department specialists. Tony described his actions, stating:

The day we had a [½ day] meeting with all the principals, I took a full day. I wanted to meet with downtown personnel like [an administrator] from the No Child Left Behind department along with the budgeting analyst for my zone. I sat
down with these people and just picked their brain and really tried to get a true understanding of the budget, along with my chief who I report to. I sat down with her and set up a time. She came out and met with me here at the school and we sat down and looked over the budget... She really gave me a lot of good information, really good background.

Further, as noted in an article in the local city newspaper, financial resources had customarily been a challenge for novice, as well as experienced principals who were not politically adept at vying for monies from the district's decision-making parties. Similarly, Tony saw his responsibility for executing his budget as critical to his livelihood, as well as to his integrity as a school leader who strove to be accountable to the children and families he served. Therefore, after being mentored by more experienced peers and district level administrators, Tony noted feeling more comfortable with his role and with meeting both his own and the district's expectations.

Cheyenne, a first-year acting principal expressed her need to draw upon informal mentors as she personally struggled with feeling overwhelmed by the complexity and rapid pace of the principalship. Specifically, she identified her challenge with adjusting to the amount of email communication required of her and with learning the different names, roles, and responsibilities of the people in the organization. Cheyenne described the stressfulness she experienced, stating:

Now that you're the principal everybody e-mails you and they reply 'All.' Then, you get these e-mails from central office, and it's like, 'Oh my God. Who is...?' I don't know who some of these directors are. We had had a lot of changes and a lot of new directors... and a lot of new names. I didn't know my staff members
names and it was like ... ‘Will I ever get this down?’ But, my assistant principal, he was like, ‘Don’t worry. You’ll get it. You’re fine.’ I was like, ‘No I won’t.’

In the isolated role of her principalship, she needed to reach out for comfort. Having her assistant principal as an informal mentoring resource provided her with the reassurance she needed at this time.

Cheyenne also expressed her lack of preparation for addressing a variety of aspects of her role, indicating that she was, “… just kind of learning a lot.” In Cheyenne’s previous position as a secondary school assistant principal she was required to focus on the operational aspects of managing within her school building. Therefore, spending three previous years performing duties related to secondary school operations left Cheyenne feeling out of touch with current best practices for elementary level instruction. As a result, Cheyenne expressed her particular concerns as needing to build a knowledge base in elementary-level curriculum and instruction. She said,

I am kind of getting back into it with instruction because I’ve been out of instruction for so long. Sometimes it was kind of overwhelming because I didn’t know. It was like I had to really do my homework and research. ‘Where do I find this information?’ I’m coming from secondary. I came from a high school. So, there were a lot of adjustments that I had to get used to.

Not only did Cheyenne need to acquire knowledge related to instructional practices at a new educational level, she also needed to learn the process for accumulating this knowledge. Therefore, Cheyenne used faculty members from within her building as informal mentoring resources to support her learning about elementary curriculum and
instruction. She visited classrooms to watch teachers engage in instruction and met with the instructional leadership team in her building. She explained,

For me [I learn by] just doing classroom visits, sitting in the classroom and observing the lessons. I find that that’s helpful, because just being able to just sit and read the books... I don’t really have time for that. I just feel just having the conversations with my different leadership teams, or instructional teams, those are helpful. But really, it’s just being able to get into the classroom and watch lessons.

And, just having conversations with the teachers is what I find most [helpful].

In addition to relying upon her assistant principal and teachers as informal mentoring resources, field notes indicated that Cheyenne also reached to other informal mentors that she felt she could trust, such as principal colleagues and friends from within the district.

Miley also noted the informal mentoring she received from faculty members and administrative colleagues in the school where she had previously served as an assistant principal. She kept in contact with these professional comrades and sought their perspectives, especially when first assuming her new principalship. Further, Miley indicated that even as a third-year principal, isolation still existed. She said, "...as an administrator you really are [lonely]. It’s lonely at the top." Therefore, to address the isolation of the principalship and support her learning endeavors, Miley drew upon other informal mentors even into her third year.

Miley also recalled lacking knowledge and skills necessary for addressing procedural responsibilities during her first-year as a principal. She specifically expressed a need to draw upon resources that could help her address the new managerial aspects of her role, such as budgeting. She noted reaching out to a principal colleague from within
the district for help. This colleague and peer mentor was someone with whom she had established a friendship when she was an assistant principal. Miley recollected her first-year in the principalship, saying:

I would call my friend. ‘Oh, what do I do with this and how do I do this?’ I wasn’t really aware of budgeting because that was not one of the things I had to do as an assistant principal. There were so many things I had to learn.

As a peer mentor, Miley’s colleague minimized the seclusion of the role and helped her understand the procedural and technical aspects of the principalship.

Later, in her third-year of the principalship, and as indicated by interview and field note data, Miley stated that she still needed support with addressing various district expectations, including the need to learn new budgeting procedures. Although ongoing professional learning and implementation of best principal leadership practices was the primary work of her collegial learning circle, Miley believed that due to their professional camaraderie, she was better able to address technical and procedural aspects of her job, as well. Miley viewed peer collaboration as a vital learning platform for principals and appreciated her peer mentoring relationships. She said,

It [learning] really has to be a team effort and I think through teaming and collaboration you continue to learn. You learn from each other. You just, this is what you need to do. You get e-mails every day, ‘This is due this date; this is due this date; the budget is due February 27th. The taboo budget is due and has to be uploaded the 25th. I mean those kinds of things.

The constant need to learn was inevitable in the principalship and collaborative peer mentors were a valued support system for Miley.
During her first year in her new principalship, Rita experienced feelings of isolation and anxiety and expressed her reliance upon informal mentoring resources providing moral support. Stepping into her new role was not easy, especially within a context that seemed to exhibit skepticism toward administration as a whole. Rita described the challenge she faced when realizing the tenseness and negativity that pervaded her building. It was at this point in time that she felt like her perceived skillfulness with people and her happy disposition seemed to emulsify. She stated:

I think once you get here the reality, especially when I first got to this building, was that people just didn’t like administration. And it didn’t matter who was in the job. It was just administration was evil. So, it didn’t matter who I was or what I was...

While experiencing this discord, Rita sought comfort and guidance from other first-year peers. In working to internalize her personal values along with those of others, she appreciated the moral support offered by her principal colleagues.

Also, a communal opportunity to break the isolation of the principalship and receive peer mentoring support from other new principals was provided by the district via monthly first-year principals’ meetings. These meetings allowed Rita and her peers to engage in open dialogue, and thereby provided Rita comfort in learning that her peers were experiencing similar challenges. She explained:

We had a new principal meeting once a month with our supervisor. All the new principals got together and we were able to share what was going on and they would bring in a speaker. For example, [a speaker] came and worked with us on helping us with teambuilding and experiences. We were able to share with each
other and then say, ‘Okay, I’m going through that...’ So I think just being able to have other people to talk things through with so that you don’t feel so alone... I can’t imagine [not having someone to talk to]...

Rita appreciated the opportunity to combat the remoteness of her principalship through the informal mentoring support she received when uniting with new principals.

Rita also noted her reliance upon her principal peers for addressing certain managerial aspects of her role. She particularly struggled with being organized and with understanding how to complete job-related forms. Hence, she called upon informal peer mentors for support with these aspects, as well. Rita explained that as part of her college experience she developed relationships with a cohort of other aspiring principals, some who also became employed in the district after earning their credentials. As such, she was able to call upon individual peers to help her learn the technical aspects of her role, even as a third-year principal. She said,

Because I went through the [local private college’s educational leadership] program there are other people from my cohort that I was able to call upon and say, ‘How do I fill out this form, or how do I do this?’ I am not a paperwork person and so it’s very hard for me to sit down and stay organized with paperwork. I’d rather be out there in the mix and so things kind of stack up.

Rita believed that having access to members of her cohort peers for informal mentoring support fostered her learning in the principalship.

The head secretary was also an informal mentoring resource for Rita. According to Rita, this individual possessed knowledge that she initially lacked in regards to managerial, technical, and cultural knowledge. She stated, ‘When I first came, the head
secretary had been here and so she was able to help me [become acclimated] . . .” This serial method of mentoring met Rita’s need to receive personalized, one-to-one assistance. Specifically, Rita noted seeking the secretary’s aid with preparing the annual budget. Further, as a third-year principal, Rita said she continued to receive budgeting support from the new school secretary.

In addition to the mentoring support provided by her colleagues and the school secretary, an informal mentoring relationship with the assistant principal served as another resource for Rita. This relationship included collegial conversations that supported Rita with addressing student- and faculty-related issues, such as student-related crises and tenuous faculty evaluations. The assistant principal shared her personal perspectives with Rita and provided helpful feedback. Their collegial conversations supported Rita’s ability to retrospectively, as well as proactively, reflect upon difficult situations. These debriefing sessions interrupted the rapid pace of the principalship and fostered Rita’s ability to evaluate her experiences and make more thoughtful future decisions. She stated,

I try to reflect with the vice principal when I have two minutes to sit down. I try to bounce things off of her because she has experiences, too. She sees things in a different way and is able to share [her perspectives] with me, saying, ‘I might have done this,’ or ‘Maybe we should do this.’ Having another person is definitely helpful… My assistant principal has been very helpful all three years because she’s reflective too. She’s able to look back at things and say, ‘This went well.’
Although the numerous demands of the principalship made finding regular time for professional collegiality difficult, her informal mentoring relationship with her assistant principals afforded her opportunities to apply alternative lenses for decision-making and problem-solving.

Outside Informal Coaches

Two principals in this study also relied upon outside informal coaches as resources to support their socialization into a new principalship. For instance, as acting principal of a school that had undergone many changes and was preparing for future ones, such as phasing out a portion of the school’s population, Cheyenne appreciated the informal coaching provided by her family members. Her husband, children, and mother all invested time in helping her cope with challenges that related to the stress, remoteness, and duties of her role. The accessible and trusting relationships Cheyenne had with her husband and children provided additional opportunities for informal coaching support. She explained that these family members listened and offered her differentiated support through discussing personal challenges and district expectations. As part of this open dialogue, her family shared their perspectives and offered advice.

Cheyenne also had direct access to her mother, as she and her immediate family shared a home. Cheyenne and her mother had a trusting relationship and she could identify with mother, as their culture and professional experience possessed commonalities. Cheyenne viewed her mother as a coaching resource from whom she could learn about her craft. She noted, “My mother has always been my influence because she’s been in education in various roles, but when she retired she was [a district-level leader] for the City School District. She’s always been my biggest role model. She
still is.” Her mother was still active within the district and with supporting innovative efforts in the broader educational field.

Cheyenne described her mother, stating, “She still works with the district… helping [different] schools…and she works with America’s Choice and the National Center of Education Economy.” Having her mother as an informal outside coaching resource allowed Cheyenne to have conversations with a seasoned professional. Cheyenne commented, “We have conversations every day. I talk with her every day.” This resource allowed Cheyenne to freely discuss her role as a new acting principal in the district and her aspirations to become a tenure-track principal in her own building.

Tony also described a seasoned professional who he drew upon as an informal coach in his life. This role model and coaching resource was a Black male scholar and educational leader who Tony portrayed as influencing his personal and professional philosophy. This external coach also guided and inspired him. Tony provided details, saying,

[Dr. ___ is] someone I looked up to and I still do look up to, seeing how he’s achieved such a great height in the education field; how many hurdles he’s overcome to get where he is today; and, the things that he’s accomplished. He’s really been … a trailblazer in leading the way… I’m inspired by those who have obtained and who reach back. He’s one of the people who’s reached back and poured into me and has helped me become one of the people that I am today, a successful African American male in an urban school district.

As a budding educational leader, Tony expressed an inoffensive pride in his accomplishments, vision, and the informal coaching resource he drew upon for
individualized support. He explained, “being able to have someone I can look up to and talk to who has been there, done that, and has been very successful has really impacted me.” As a young, driven Black male principal, Tony strove to positively affect the lives of all children, especially Black male children. Fulfilling this goal required external leadership support beyond that which was available to him in the district.

*Inside Formal District-Assigned or District-Provided Mentors*

Each novice principal in the MCSD received a district-assigned mentor for their first full year in the principalship. Leadership personnel from both the district and administrative union oversaw the selection, training, and matching of these mentors with first-year principals. Primarily, these formally assigned mentors comprised of tenured principals who were employed in the MCSD and designated to assist novice principals during their first-year by providing support both through example and offering of advice. They were also expected to help new principals focus on achieving organizational goals in support of student achievement. Additionally they were charged to observe, confer, and create biennial status reports on new principals’ progress.

In combination with receiving a year-long assigned mentor for their first-year in the principalship, two of the novice principals also received a temporary mentor who was assigned to them by the district during their initial transition into the principalship. Temporary mentors worked with novice principals for an abbreviated time period of less than two months to help them become acclimated to their school and the district and to offer what may have been thought of as practical support for starting up a new school year.
During their first-year, two principals indicated a need to interact with mentors on an almost daily basis. Specifically, Miley indicated that in addition to relying upon informal mentors and an informal coach for support and guidance, she also relied upon the resource of her district-assigned mentor, who, as supported by field notes, resembled her in trait areas such as race and motivation for learning. Since Miley was accustomed to the symbiotic relationship she had with two other administrators from her past assistant principalship, now, as the only administrator in the building she felt isolated from opportunities to learn with others. Therefore, she sought the guidance and collaborative learning opportunities her assigned mentor provided on a near daily basis. Miley said:

Yes, I was given a mentor and that was wonderful as I was a single administrator in this building. I was coming from a three administrator building where you could bounce ideas off of and run things by someone. At the end of our work day, we debriefed every single day. [Here] I had no one. There was no one.

Miley’s formally assigned mentor had familiarity with the political milieu of the district. She also displayed a commitment to Miley’s success, was easily accessible, and exuded collegiality. Miley appreciated the moral support that her formally assigned, inside mentor provided during her first year of transition into the principalship.

Rita also reiterated her need to seek assistance from her assigned mentor on a regular basis during her first year on-the-job. Rita, now a third-year principal, recalled her first year in the principalship, beginning with her hire date approximately the third week in August. She was anxious about the journey ahead, particularly knowing that she only had a matter of days to prepare for the start of the school year. Further, she remembered her supervisor personally asking her to assume the principalship, believing that she would
be able to “bring calm” to the school. Since Rita saw herself as a happy and people-oriented individual, she imagined herself being able to bring harmony to the school; however, in spite of her vision and five years of experience as an assistant principal in this same district, the realities of the principalship left Rita in need of immediate guidance.

At this stage Rita recalled feeling totally unprepared. Rita explained, “Once I got here, the reality was that people just didn’t like administration. It didn’t matter who was in the job... or who I was ... I was trying to deal with staff on staff issues... and students in crisis.” She also stated, ‘Luckily, I had a mentor that was able to support me during the first year. We would communicate at least once a week, sometimes more. She came and visited and talked with me in person, and I [also] went to her building...’ As a first-year principal, Rita found her assigned mentor’s one-to-one support and immediate accessibility to be critical factors in their relationship.

Along with year-long assigned mentors, two first-year principals commented on using formal temporary mentors provided to them by the district during their initial transition into their first principalship. In particular, Jeanette noted a time when she needed help with gaining basic skills related to the ways things were done during the reign of the past principal. Therefore, since the outgoing principal was knowledgeable with planning school events, Jeannette drew upon her as a formal, but temporary mentoring resource. Specifically, the retiring principal assisted Jeannette with planning and coordinating a summer Orientation Picnic. Jeannette said, “…there was so much on top of me preparing for a summer orientation picnic and she helped me plan through that. Bless her.” However, Jeannette also indicated that although her predecessor left various
files of information regarding past practices, she found these resources to be of little use. Jeannette said, “Once she [the previous principal] left officially in August, I packed everything up and I put it on the shelf. That [the orientation picnic information] was probably the only thing that I was able to take from her.” Jeannette expressed that she had own vision for the school, unique from that of her predecessor.

Cheyenne also found her formal, temporary mentor helpful, particularly during the period of her initial hire. Similar to the other research participants, she also encountered the challenge of having an abbreviated time-frame in which to transition from her previous role into the principalship. Cheyenne described this period of transition in the following manner:

There was such short turnaround. I was pretty much hired... and really had about a week or two to get ready. I was faced with some glitches because once I was hired I had to attend like a week of in-service, so, I wasn’t able to come into the building. They [the MCSD] had a professional development in-service that we had to attend. Then, I found out that the head secretary that was here transferred with the principal that was here prior to me. So, I was starting the school year off without a head secretary.

During this time of early transition into the principalship, the MCSD provided an experienced principal who was familiar with Cheyenne’s school as a temporary mentor for her. Cheyenne identified this assigned mentor as a resource that helped her acclimate to the building and its culture and to prepare for the start of the school year. Cheyenne stated.
There was a principal that was here, a retired principal because the school had
gone through some changes the year prior... so they brought this retired principal
in. She was able to stay over the summer and she helped get me acclimated and
set up prior to school starting.

Cheyenne's learning in the principalship was influenced by the abbreviated period
between her hire date and start dates, her lack of experience, and the opportunity the
MCSD provided her to have an experienced, temporary mentor who could assist her with
preparing for the start-up of a new school year.

*Outside Formal Coaching*

The third-year principals in this study also expressed their same need to rely upon
resources that could provide them with moral support during times of isolation and
heightened stress. Miley remembered the heightened feelings of isolation and anxiety she
experienced during the year of her initial hire. She explained feeling overwhelmed the
first day on the job as a new principal, alluding to the unsettling social experience she
encountered as the teaching and support staff reacted to the unexpected arrival of a new
building principal. She, too, was initially taken aback by the perceived differences
between the culture of her new school and the school where she previously served as an
assistant principal.

In particular, Miley remembered feeling shocked and overwhelmed after
partaking in a school based planning meeting that first day. She stated, "I went home that
night absolutely in tears. I said, 'I'm not going to be able to do this job.'" Hence, one
resource she drew upon in her attempt to receive moral support, as well as guidance with
leading cultural change was the resource of a formal critical friend or coach that she
described as being “sort of like a mentor” to her for the past two and a half years. This individual was a seasoned professor at a local private college who possessed scholarly and practical knowledge in the fields of business and educational leadership. Although his primary career was in higher education, he was familiar with the procedures, processes, and political milieu of the district and was able to support Miley with the attainment of organizational goals in a role resembling a non-evaluative coach.

Personal Mechanisms as a Resource for Principal Socialization

A third finding revealed that all five principals relied upon the resource of personal mechanisms to guide their navigation of the principalship. Personal mechanisms are defined in this study as personal traits, skills, and experience. Included in principals’ personal traits were dispositions, such as core values; beliefs; motivation; and learning style. Finally, experience included principals’ daily experiences and also past experiences, such as in the assistant principalship and college. Principals used personal mechanisms to actively pursue socialization into their organizational roles.

The resource of personal mechanisms was used by Tony to guide his leadership decisions. Tony was committed to changing circumstances in order to improve conditions for student success; however, he experienced challenges in attempting to do so. He commented,

Trust is the huge, huge, huge obstacle I’m trying to overcome right now because coming into a building brand new, not knowing anyone in the building, I have to learn to build relationships and find out who I can trust… and what are certain people’s strengths. It takes time to really learn your building and learn the different dynamics. For me it’s frustrating because I want to know who I can
depend on and... it’s trying to navigate, ‘Okay, who’s really passionate about kids and who’s not, and, trying to work around that and getting people to understand where I’m going with the direction.

To garner comfort and guidance, Tony expressed a need to draw upon the resource of his personal mechanisms. Like other new principals entering into an existing school culture, Tony also experienced challenges as a newcomer in an organization. Although he was responsible for making numerous decisions on a daily basis, he was unfamiliar with the norms and expectations held by the constituents in his building. Finding his way through complexities of this nature was challenging and often required emotional endurance. Therefore, during times of ambiguity and isolation, Tony expressed a need to draw upon his Christian beliefs. He explained:

*I am very spiritual... I constantly pray, pray for wisdom and try to read my Bible on a daily basis and to really seek out the heart of God... when things get difficult and things get tough and you’re faced with some adversity... I would like to say the secret to success is having that personal relationship with God... just praying about what I’m going through. Maybe I don’t know or don’t quite understand something and I’ll just pray, ‘Lord give me clarity. Help me understand what’s happening before me.’ I read the Bible and it gives me a sense of peace...*

Tony explained that his reliance upon the personal mechanism of his Christian faith provided him with the principled support he needed to navigate the complexities of his role.
Another personal mechanism Tony relied upon as a resource was his belief in personal development and in using personal reflection to guide his decision-making. He offered an example, stating,

I have a nice 25 minute commute home every day and then coming in, and I like to use that time to reflect on one of the different things that happened throughout the day, how I handled the situation, and just kind of think, "Well, hmmm, maybe I should have handled that a little bit different and the next time it presents itself maybe I will have a different approach." I also like to get feedback from people.

Tony believed in personal reflection and in seeking feedback from those around him. For instance, he sought feedback from faculty members after he had communicated his personal vision and delivered news about the district's financial situation, including budget cuts that would affect school personnel. This task had been difficult for Tony and he responded to his feelings of discomfort by taking actions that aligned with his beliefs and integrity. He described his decision-making process, saying,

After that meeting, I went home and I reflected and I thought that what I said was said appropriate, said professionally and respectfully. The first thought was maybe I should just touch base with some teachers when I do my morning rounds and ask them what their thoughts were of the staff meeting.

The day after the meeting, Tony learned more about the beliefs of faculty members by seeking feedback from several individuals. The use of his personal mechanisms as a resource for navigation enabled him to learn more about the school culture and the dispositions of his faculty.
Another way in which Tony worked to become socialized into his role was by drawing on his belief in the use of strategy and his value of leading by example. Due to the discontinuity in his professional development, Tony's professional repertoire lacked in certain knowledge and skill areas. Therefore, he noted his desire to address this gap, stating, “Because I was never a classroom teacher sometimes I kind of get lost in some of the lingo, the acronyms that are used to describe certain services or disabilities, especially in special education.” Tony provided an example of needing to draw upon his personal wisdom, integrity, and belief in a particular leadership strategy to guide his decision-making. He explained, “I call it my three A’s: analyze the situation, adjust, act accordingly.” He illustrated how his reliance on his personal mechanisms guided his ability to learn, and provided him the opportunity to model his beliefs in integrity and transparency. He explained,

I may be in a situation where my leadership team is discussing a particular child and they’re going through maybe some of the challenges... that are prohibiting this child from excelling academically. A part of me just wants to jump right in and show that I know it all or try to make it seem like I know what’s going on, but wisdom says, ‘Okay, analyze, listen. listen to what’s being said, okay, adjust ... I have a question.’ and I always preface the question, ‘You know, some of this is new to me so I’m asking, what do you mean by this?’ and I always try to get clarification.

Tony said that he was constantly learning from those around him, and further, was continuously disclosing his weaknesses in effort to affect positive changes in the cultural atmosphere of his school.
Miley believed that she was responsible for ensuring the success of all students and for making decisions that would affect every person in the building. She said, “I always say with leadership comes great responsibility and I just carry that with me... and I need to do whatever it takes to do what’s best for our kids.” She held herself accountable as a principal leader and drew upon her values and experiences to guide her efforts to become socialized into the principalship, as well as to socialize others, saying.

I don’t feel successful and will never feel successful unless I don’t have that group of kids not meeting standards. I mean as a parent and as a grandma, I have seven grandchildren, and what I think about, I look at those babies and I think I would never want my child to be in that pool. People say, ‘Oh God, our scores went up. We’ve got 70% passing the social studies test.’ Well guess what, ‘There’s still 30% not passing. What are we going to do for those kids?’

Miley noted her belief in her students’ and teachers’ abilities to succeed and drew upon her personal mechanisms as a resource to guide her actions. She specifically relied upon the traits of her values and integrity to guide her decision-making and overcome obstacles. She presented a scenario:

When I have kids say to me, like we just did math groups and one of my 6th grade boys said, ‘Mrs. ..., I don’t want to go to that math group. They’re too smart.’ I said, ‘I’m putting you in that math group because you’re as smart as anyone in this group. I’m putting you there to be a help...’ But nope, because he’s a special education student, he said, ‘Well, you know, they look at me funny.’ I mean those are the kinds of things that I take home and I don’t sleep at night. Like what are we going to do to help this kid?
Miley stated that the students were like family and she expressed her belief in all children’s abilities to succeed. She worked to foster an inclusive atmosphere, yet recognized that as a school they were not fully succeeding; therefore, there would need to be more opportunities to advance her learning and other individuals’ in the school.

Rita experienced the isolation and stress in her principalship and noted the cataclysmic state of her building. She acknowledged that her building of 635 diverse students was a hectic environment characterized by a cascade of competing demands made by children, parents, staff, faculty, and the district office. She found that actualizing her goals was more difficult than anticipated. Rita shared an example of the culture she observed. She said,

I’ll give an example, when you come back from a vacation the first thing you say, you say, ‘How was your vacation?’ [You hear], ‘Oh, it was great just not long enough.’ Most people go to work every day and I mean we count down to summer vacation and I mean some of those things are natural but at the same time I want people who are here to be excited to be with the kids and excited about working with the students. Who aren’t just wishing their life away by saying, ‘Oh I can’t wait until 10 days later, you know, vacation.’

Despite her initial perceptions, Rita encountered challenges that required a need to inspire teachers and students. In her efforts to become socialized she also worked to socialize her faculty and staff. She drew on the personal mechanisms of her courage and values to set expectations. She said,
I tell the staff, you know; if they don’t like it, I say, ‘You chose this. You know, you chose to teach in the city. You chose to be a teacher. Be the best at it and let’s do our best to give our students the best of us and not just blame the kids.

Rita said she tries to communicate positively, stating,

I think I try put a positive spin on it, but I do believe that we should represent the best of ourselves all the time and that...people choose to work in the suburbs and people choose to work in rural areas and we choose to work in the city. Let’s do the best that we can and understand what that means.

To maintain her positive outlook and continue her attempts to move forward, Rita relied upon personal mechanisms, such as her resilience; courage; beliefs; and, values. She also believed in the power of positive thinking and used it to boost her motivation and persevere in her principalship. Motivational quotes offered her daily inspiration and guidance.

Admittedly, due to the cultural challenges in her school, it was sometimes difficult for Rita to want to engage socially. Therefore, by using her personal mechanisms as a resource to guide her actions. she reflected on her situation and re-evaluated her core beliefs. surmising that she should strive to interact with her faculty and staff, especially during apparently chaotic times. Rita said,

Sometimes you get into a rut and I have to learn to force myself out of that rut to say, ‘You know, when things are crazy out there I can come in my office and close my door, but in reality I shouldn’t do that. In reality I need to be out there and finding out why there’s chaos and to bring calmness to the building.’
Rita indicated that regular reflection supported her continuous growth as a leader. She expressed her belief in working with the faculty to create positive changes that would ultimately support students, and thus, drew upon her personal mechanisms to try and move forward in a collaborative fashion with faculty. To support this goal, she decided to create a regular forum with the teaching staff to foster open communication. She said, I started something new here called “Coffee with the Principal” which gave the staff an opportunity [to communicate] in a non-threatening way. We focused on one concern and they were able to share and they hadn’t been able to do that before. They hadn’t had open communication with the administration in the past... I brought food to the building. That’s one thing that they hadn’t had before was they didn’t eat.

Initiating change was oftentimes tenuous, and it was necessary for Rita to rely on her personal mechanisms of courage and self-confidence to do so. Rita revealed that inspiring open dialogue and collaboration was not an overnight process, stating, It took some time. At first it was more of a gripe session, but then we got around to saying, ‘Okay, let’s get the problem out. Okay, now let’s talk about the solution.’ I think it took some time to get to that but it was just constant thing that we were going to have these sessions.

Determined to empower her staff by offering them an opportunity to partake in resolving issues through open dialogue, Rita drew on her personal mechanisms as a resource. She decided to act upon her values and create a more welcoming environment by expressing generosity and care. She believed it was difficult to argue when, “breaking bread” with
others. Further, she was hopeful in believing that faculty members were displaying more collaboration and student-centeredness.

Jeannette dedicated numerous years to her work within the district, stating, “My entire teaching career or educational career has been here.” However, despite her time with and commitment to the district, she also encountered numerous challenges when she began her principalship. Specifically, she described her perceptions about working in a new school that was smaller than that of her assistant principalship. She said,

A small school is very difficult… I’m a principal now with a different title and a different hat so to speak, that I wear, but I find that it’s very, very clear to me that there are many more problems that are surfacing in a smaller school… I think building capacity…building trust… [and] learning the direction to go when there’s already been a vision here. This is a very… a very seasoned staff, meaning that they’ve had time here in the building … so change is not reoccurring here.

She noted one of her struggles as overseeing an unfamiliar faculty and staff. Jeannette stated, “The management of the staff I think is a little more so than it was when I was an assistant principal.” She believed that change was not something her faculty and staff experienced or were comfortable. She indicated the succession difficulties she experienced, stating, “I think me having to build trust, but them getting to know me for who I am… I’m very firm. I speak with conviction sometimes, with confidence and that’s not what they were used to for so many years.” Although Jeannette did not receive a warm reception when she arrived, she relied upon her personal mechanisms to persevere. She believed in herself, her values, and in self-reflective practice. She described how her personal mechanisms helped her endure a difficult time in her principalship. She said,
How did I get through it, I stayed the course... I believed in myself. I reflected back on what would I want for my own kids? What would I want for them? What would I want for myself if I was that classroom teacher? Am I being unfair? Am I expecting too much? So I started to self-reflect to say, ‘You know what, I am doing the right thing and I need to stay the course. I need to stand the pressure. I need to understand that it’s about dealing with change.’

Jeannette similarly found principal induction to be challenging and needed to rely on her personal mechanisms to pioneer her way through the difficulties.

Miley drew on her personal traits, as well as skills and past experience to strategically guide her socialization experiences. She described her six year experience in her past assistant principalship. She said,

I was there almost 6 years... at the time there were three administrators, a principal and then I was an assistant principal, and there was another assistant principal. This was an elementary, K thru 6 building that had had a cultural shift also... the year that I came there were going to be three women administrators. Miley explained that her involvement with leading cultural change in the assistant principalship proved to be a learning and skill-building opportunity and a resource that she drew upon in her principalship. She recalled her past experience, stating, “We moved the staff. We moved the kids. It was about education and academics, but it was also about educating really the whole child.” She believed this experience helped to prepare her for the expectations of her principalship. Miley continued:

I’m coming from a building that was so innovative, just everything we did was research based, and my principal is like a literacy guru, so, I had great
training...I’m coming from a building where every week the 1st grade teachers had a block of time embedded into their day to meet, look at student work, whatever.

When Miley entered into her principalship, she observed a uniquely different culture. She indicated that the culture resembled schools of eras long ago, with teachers working in isolation within an atmosphere of minimal diversity. She illustrated some of the challenges she encountered, stating,

This building was in turmoil when I came... It was once just a neighborhood school and it’s a very affluent neighborhood and the majority of our children, I would say all of our children were Caucasian. When I came... there were four teachers that had been teaching 34 years in this building at the same grade level... [Certain initiatives never got off the ground] because parents were fighting with teachers, staff were fighting among themselves ... I was coming into an environment where there was absolutely no collaboration among staff. Little pockets, you know, your best friend is your teacher next door or across the hall, but never crossing those lines. When I first came there were not even grade level meetings.

The cultural values and beliefs that Miley observed differed from the ones she possessed. She valued diversity, inclusivity, and collaboration. Miley recognized the needs of and expectations of a 21st century society and the need to advance the culture of her school. Miley implored,

Teachers can’t do it alone anymore, but they were used to closing their door. Some teachers even had paper like on the windows of their door. My thing is
collaboration. We can't do this job alone. It's a very difficult job. You just can't do it alone.

To address the challenge of leading change, Miley drew upon her personal mechanisms, including her personal characteristics, skills, and past experience. Miley described herself as a lifelong learner, and field notes supported her commitment to reading professional literature. Additionally, like her mother, she was industrious. Therefore, one step Miley took was to try and execute changes methodically. This process included setting new expectations, such as establishing grade level meetings and bringing people together to converse about teaching and learning. She explained.

I established grade level meetings immediately. I said, 'We're going to have a grade level meeting every week. I'll be at the meeting, or somebody will be at the meeting to facilitate. That was early on. The next year, we had whole faculty study groups. They signed up again for their whole faculty study group and even that was like if you weren't in this little clique you couldn't be part of that study group.

In addition to forming study groups, and as supported by field notes, Miley encouraged her faculty to share her commitment to reading professional literature. She established a professional library and placed a focus on using best practices in literacy. She said, "Teachers would say, 'Well we want to do this.'" By drawing on her personal judgment, Miley responded, "Go get those books from the professional library. Look what we have, 10 copies of this." Miley respectfully and confidently guided teachers to new and collaborative learning opportunities. Miley said,
Now their study groups are up and running and last year what we did was what we’ve called it a gallery walk. We wanted to see evidence of their study and their student work displayed in their room and we did that as a professional development, and teachers loved it. We’ll do that again this year.

Miley expressed that faculty members now also partake in leading change. She built teachers’ capacity by availing resources such as professional literature and empowered them by creating time for them to meet and engage in collaborative decision-making. Miley also recognized and honored teachers’ accomplishments. Her belief in lifelong learning and professional collaboration enhanced practices of teaching and learning among faculty. Further, the self-confidence she gained from her past experience and her ability to foster collaboration were personal mechanisms that she drew upon to establish a community of learners.

When recalling her past experiences as an athlete, Cheyenne noted that timely feedback fostered her personal growth. She said, “Whenever I was in my sports, my coach always gave me immediate feedback… to me coaching is always giving immediate feedback.” Therefore, as a new acting principal, Cheyenne strove to give feedback to teachers on a daily basis. She said, “Even if it’s just a quick pop in, I say, ‘I think you’re doing a really good job with such and such. When I came in your class and you were teaching that lesson on math, you gave him instant feedback.’” Cheyenne drew upon her personal values, and past experience and skills with coaching to inspire teachers to provide students with immediate feedback. Her personal mechanisms were resources she relied upon in her attempts to inspire new practices of her building.
A personal mechanism that Jeannette heavily relied upon was her value for transparency and belief that it was an ideal strategy. She expressed her reliance on this personal belief, stating,

[The] superintendent, he talks about transparency and I feel that’s very important. Coming in this position I had told myself I’m going to be transparent because there’s nothing to hide... We’re all starting from scratch. So, if you don’t know me, and I don’t know you now it’s about building relationships. I took that philosophy throughout my introduction sort of speech.

This personal mechanism was a resource that guided Jeannette’s decision-making in the principalship. She re-emphasized her belief in being transparent and thought that being upfront and communicating her feelings would help her solve, “any situation, any problem... in an expedient manner.” She said, “It [being transparent] kind of releases my anxieties sooner than later... Again, I coin... pick up that phrase from [the] superintendent.”

Jeannette also stated that she learned mainly through conversations. This was her learning style and the way in which she was able to learn best. She said,

I think the thing that helps me most is conversations. I’m a talker. So I often will go out and have conversations with the staff. They may come in here to see me about one thing and it may end up that we talk about many others. So I think that’s one thing that helps me to learn what’s really going on and the culture of the building.

Jeannette relied upon the personal mechanism of her learning style as a resource for socialization into the principalship. She also believed open communication would serve
as a resource for helping others to learn, too. She described her use of this personal mechanism, stating,

I’m sending out e-mails all the time and then asking for responses because that lets the teacher know, the teachers then know that these are my expectations. I [also] talk to my teaching staff. I meet weekly with my support staff, support staff, meaning my specialists and instructional staff.

Jeannette realized through personal experience, however, that transparency and communication as a principal was more complicated than she first thought. She described an incident that occurred when relying on this personal mechanism, saying,

Communicating ... and communication comes in a variety of ways and so utilizing all of those channels and being able to know when it is something that I want to get better at. For instance, I need to know when to send an e-mail and when to have the one-on-one, and when to have the full group, when to have the little memo, and it depends on the situation and the manner in which you communicate.

Experience or trial and error in the principalship emerged as a resource for Jeannette’s socialization. She shared an experience that she had with using communication tactics. Jeannette said,

I responded to an e-mail by sending it to the entire staff. Now I’m thinking, “Oh good. I’m letting the staff know. I’m being very transparent,” but that wasn’t the time to be transparent. It wasn’t the time. That wasn’t what I needed to be transparent about.
The person that sent the email was reciprocally transparent with Jeannette and let her know how she felt about the incident. Jeannette explained,

Yes... the person that sent me the e-mail, she let me know that was something for me, there was something... and so that's why I said communication, because sometimes you think that you're being transparent and you're really not. You're being, how can I say it?

Jeannette said that she still chooses to rely upon her leadership belief about being transparent, as she is very honest, except in the future she wants to rely using transparency with enhanced judgment. She stated,

I'm very up front, but there are some things, you have to know who to be, or sometimes you have to know when it's time to be transparent. That wasn't the right time or the right issue to be transparent about. The manner in which I went about communicating, it was not the right manner. That should have been more of a one-on-one session of communication. I needed permission to communicate with the entire staff.

Jeannette concluded that it may have been better to “do staff meeting communication” versus an email because she would have had a chance to address individuals. Jeannette realized that drawing on her personal mechanisms had its risks and she further understood the importance of developing both personally and professionally.

Cheyenne also noted her need for additional resources to develop new skills. She explained that the increased demands of the principaship in comparison to the assistant principaship left her struggling to find ways in which she could learn how to address the technical and managerial aspects of her job and still allot time for her personal life. She
specifically noted that time management was one of her biggest challenges, saying, "I think it is time management and... stepping out of the role in this job." She continued,

I have to say it’s more dealing with the personal aspect of just balancing it [the job expectations] and making sure that this doesn’t overflow into my personal life because this can be a 24 hour job. It is about knowing when to cut it off because I leave here and I can go home and easily get back on the computer and get on the e-mails and continue responding all night long. The district has given us these Q-phones that alert us when we have e-mails popping up and so I can just really do this work all night long.

Hence, the technology of Q-phones actually added pressure for Cheyenne in her role as a new principal who was still learning how to budget her time. Cheyenne also utilized a large amount of time and energy to address several managerial tasks assigned to her by the district. She emphasized the difficulty she experienced with trying to balance her time, stating,

So to me that’s top priority and one of my biggest challenges. Especially as a new principal, you want to make sure that you’re hitting all your deadlines on time and they have all these forms. That was one of the biggest challenges at the beginning of the school year is they [district-level personnel] were sending out a lot of like compliance forms that needed to be finished. I mean they would send it out to you and you needed to have it done within three days. That was really time-consuming, especially for being brand new to the position. You have to manage your time appropriately to do all these responsibilities and I guess it’s hard for me.
Although Cheyenne indicated that one of her top challenges was learning to manage her time appropriately, she did not indicate having a resource to draw upon to help her with this aspect of socialization into the principalship. Instead, she was forced to rely on her personal mechanisms. Although, she lacked past experience in this area of challenge, and further believed in working hard to attain success, she noted her continued efforts to try and successfully tackle this challenge. Ultimately, she relied upon learning experientially each day.

A final finding answered the subquestion that inquired what influenced urban elementary school principals' socialization experiences in the first three years of the principalship. The totality of this study revealed that socialization into the urban principalship was influenced by principals' identification, solicitation, and use of resources. Novice principals' abilities and wherewithal for sequestering an array of informal and formal, inside and outside mentoring and coaching resources were critical factors in their experiences with socialization into the principalship. The resource of principals' personal mechanisms influenced socialization into the principalship, as well. For instance, strengths in personal traits and skills, and rich past and present learning experiences positively affected principals' experiences with becoming socialized and influencing the socialization of school constituents. Principals' socialization was also influenced by the challenges and expectations of the internal and external environments (i.e. district constituents, NCLB).

**Summary**

Findings from this study revealed that novice principals found themselves in a state of constant learning while attempting to pioneer the terrain of the 21st century urban
elementary school principalship. Their attempts to overcome socialization challenges and meet the expectations of a contemporary principalship necessitated an ability to identify, garner, and utilize pertinent resources. The district’s consistent practice of designating formal first-year mentors was not sufficient for meeting first- through third-year principals’ needs. Instead, novice urban elementary school principals either supplemented this resource or did not use it altogether. Supplemental resources included a need for accessible companionship to break the isolation they experienced in their principalship. This appeared in various forms, including informal and formal inside mentoring using both serial and collective socialization tactics. Novice principals also drew upon skill-building resources to address the gaps in their skill-sets and provide professional development, as well as resources to support their personal growth. The resource of personal mechanisms was often used as a means of self-examination and decision-making for executing principal leadership. The use of mentoring and coaching as a resource for instructional leadership did not emerge as a finding. Accordingly, the challenges and expectations of the 21st century urban elementary principalship and principals' identification and use of pertinent resources influenced their socialization experiences.
Chapter 5: Discussion

Introductory Overview

This study explored the meaning principals' attributed to their socialization experiences in the first three years of the 21st century urban elementary school principalship. Data were gathered from in-depth semi-structured interviews, documents, field notes, and participant demographic information sheets. The study specifically investigated the resources that principal participants drew upon to navigate the first three years and factors influencing their socialization into the principalship. Socialization was defined in this study as an active process of learning a new role in a novel setting (Chao, et al., 1994; Crow, 2004) that encompasses the organization's methods and influences in combination with the individual's values, experiences, and characteristics (Crow, p. 293; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Hart, 1993). Inducting principals who are capable of meeting the 21st century leadership challenges and role expectations may be phenomenon of current concern for policy-makers, school districts, and practitioners.

This final chapter provides an overview of the study findings and describes the relevance of these findings in reference to other literature surrounding the challenges experienced by contemporary and urban school principals, and novice principals' experiences with socialization into the principalship. The significance of the study findings is presented in regard to their implications for current policy and professional practice. This chapter also includes the limitations of this study and offers
recommendations for future research. Finally, Chapter Five concludes by presenting a comprehensive summary of this dissertation.

21st Century Challenges and Ongoing Daily Learning

Principals in the 21st century are confronted with numerous and varied socialization challenges (Crow, 2004). These challenges include principals’ isolation from professional peers (Villani, 2006) that frequently results in feelings of frustration and loneliness (Daresh & Playko, 1993; Villani). Interpersonal skills (Davis, 1998) and management duties have also been cited as concerns for novice principals with a particular concern for preparedness to address budgeting responsibilities (Bolam et al., 1995). Additionally, novice principals often experience conflict between outside expectations and the realities inside their schools and districts (Hurley, 1992; Tackes, 2002). For instance, teachers’ expectations for principals to exude custodialship by carrying out cultural traditions and focusing on school management and operations (Hurley, 1992) competes with outside expectations for principals to lead innovation through instructional leadership and the development of professional learning communities committed to ensuring the academic success of all students (DuFour, 1999; Hord, 1997; NASSP, 2008).

Similarly, data from this study also illustrated principals’ encounters with cultural, technical, and personal struggles as they worked toward becoming socialized into a new organizational role. In addition, this study extended previous research by illuminating principals’ need to engage in assiduous learning in their attempts to meet the challenges and expectations of 21st century principal leadership. This particular finding contributed to theoretical and practical understandings by supporting a framework of contemporary
socialization that illustrates this process as ongoing, and by reinforcing the need for novice principals to receive supportive access to appropriate resources aligned with their varied and vigorous everyday learning needs. Findings from this study also added to current research by revealing principals’ reliance upon a combination of three key socialization resources necessary for supporting their obligation to pursue ongoing learning, or assume active responsibility for guiding their socialization into the principalship.

Socialization Resource of Mentorship

Both formal and informal mentoring can serve as a resource for principal’s socialization into a new principalship. Daresh and Playko (1992) suggest that mentoring relationships reduce the feeling of isolation commonly experienced by new principals. Daresh (2001) notes that in formal mentoring programs, the benefits for principals include increased confidence in professional abilities, improved communication skills, enhanced sense of belonging, and learning the ways in which things are done in the trade. Daresh’s (2007) more recent study of beginning principals in two urban school districts revealed the difficulty mentors experienced in breaching past administrative practices as they primarily assisted novice principals with managerial aspects of their roles.

The current study showed some similarities, as well as differences to Daresh’s (2007) work. Comparably, this study illustrated principals’ need to seek mentors to address challenges such as needing to acquire technical skills and moral support. However, in this study, principals’ use of internal mentors for acquiring technical skills was commonly linked to district-specific processes and expectations. Further, congruent with Daresh, mentoring for instructional leadership did not emerge as a theme in this study. Instead, the majority of principals expressed a need to know, understand, and adjust to the culture of the school and
district, with some principals also working to influence the school culture. Incongruously, this study illustrated principals’ greater overall emphasis on the use of informal mentoring in comparison to formal mentoring support. Findings specifically revealed all five principals’ use of informal mentoring and only four principals’ need to rely upon formal mentoring. In addition, findings showed one principal displaying very minimal use of a formally designated, short-term temporary mentor and no evidence of using the district-assigned full-year mentor. Therefore, two of the five principals in this study did not indicate drawing upon their district assigned first-year mentor. Although data did not illustrate why there was no mention of formal first-year mentors from two principals, inferences presume disconnect with seasoned principal mentors’ carrying out the status quo and novice principals’ attempting to lead innovatively, or possibly a mismatch between mentors and novice principals including an inability to establish mutual trust. These findings, as well as assumptions reinforce the need for carefully and respectfully matched mentor-novice principal combinations.

Dukess (2001) found that new principals need to develop trusting, confidential, participatory, and non-supervisory relationships with mentors. Alsbury and Haekmann (2006) also noted novice principals’ desire for frequent contact with a supportive mentor. Both studies illuminated the necessity for mentors’ commitment to supporting beginning principals’ success and to gear their efforts toward meeting the individualized needs of principal learners. Data from this current study corroborated portions of Dukess’ findings by revealing novice principals’ need to rely upon trusted individuals, and in one instance, a spiritual being, for moral support in times of heightened stress and loneliness.
Socialization Resource of Coaching

Studies from Mendez-Morse (2006) and Daresh and Male (2000) indicated the value novice principals placed on outside consultants who served as critical friends. These outside resources resembled informal coaches who were disconnected from the political realm of schools and committed to providing principals with personal support geared toward individualized needs. Although Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) examined a mentoring program, findings also found that principals preferred personalized, face-to-face support allowing for social interaction over resources such as statewide workshops and conferences, and reflection logs. In a study specific to principal coaching, Strong et al. (2003) further illuminated principals desire to receive personal and confidential support from outside coaches. Once again, these findings reiterate principals’ plea for meaningful resources that meet their unique needs for professional, as well as personal ongoing development.

Findings from this current research study also revealed novice principals’ reliance upon coaching resources. Coaching included outside informal coaches offering principals’ opportunities to consider new perspectives and a formal coach providing moral support, as well as assistance in the areas of strategic leadership. Principals required personalized attention and support, and sought individuals situated outside the school district to retrieve it. Once again, principals’ need to speak confidentially implied a school district atmosphere that lacked trust. Unique from findings of Daresh and Male (2000); Strong et al. (2003); and, Silver et al. (2009) found that the majority of principals in this study used a combination of coaching and mentoring supports. This finding implies a need for mentoring to be supplemented by coaching resources, but not
eradicated altogether, as the 21st century principalship requires leadership for change and management affiliated with the existent industrialized structures of school districts.

_Socialization Resource of Personal Mechanisms_

Upon investigating the commonalities of principals who were identified as having successfully led changes and improvements in their schools and having navigated the cultural and social transitions into the principalship (p. 34), Aiken (2002) found personal mechanisms as a beneficial resource. Personal mechanisms used by principals deemed as effective with leading change included: commitment to core values and beliefs, self-confidence, courage, strategic knowledge, and skills related to negotiation and social interactions. Findings from this study also illuminated the critical role of personal mechanisms for principals’ socialization into the principalship. In a contemporary era, the reciprocity of socialization is emerging as increasingly important, as principals must determine ways to not only understand the values, beliefs, and norms of an organization and its members, but must also influence these aspects.

Outside expectations in the forms of professional standards and Federal law are obligating principals to deny the maintenance of previous principal paradigms and enact change. However, principals must absorb the unique contextual characteristics of their schools wherein faculty’s resistance to or discomforts with change is evidenced (Hurley, 1992; Strong et al., 2003). As such, principals’ need to rely on personal mechanisms to overcome cultural barriers to create a professional community of learners dedicated to all students’ academic success. Principals are required to display the courage; confidence; conviction; commitment; and competency for building trusting relationships foundational to attaining innovations aligned with best research practices.
Aiken's (2002) study and this study demonstrate the critical need for novices to create their own guides to address the phenomenon of successful socialization into the 21st century principalship. Davis' (1998) study indicated that principals' failures with interpersonal and political relationships were detrimental to their career success. This study found principals' use of personal mechanisms to be one of three primary socialization resources. Therefore, principals' need for personal development is pivotal for meeting expectations of 21st century leadership.

Implications for Local Policy and Practice

Although outmoded induction practices are still evident in schools today, there is a need to supplement current practices to achieve congruency with the expectations of the 21st century principalship. Principal induction must no longer be addressed in an antiquated or haphazard fashion, or ignored by districts, policy-makers, and practitioners. The findings from Dukess' (2001) study and other scholars (Hobson, et al. 2003; Villani, 2006), illustrate the complexity of the principal's role and the need to support principals with high quality, carefully designed mentoring programs.

Findings from this current study further imply that novice principals need mentoring opportunities with individuals from both within and outside school district boundaries. A complex and ever-changing 21st century society warrants equally dynamic and multifaceted resources to support the attainment of effective 21st century principal leadership. They need opportunities to develop skills, especially regarding professional judgment and decision-making. New principals also need opportunities to develop personal stamina by examining and strengthening their core beliefs and self-confidence. Coaching assists principals' with personal development. Strong et al. (2003) explained
that coaching practices focus on challenges that relate to novice principals' unique concerns, including those related to school climate issues and the development of leadership skills to build trusting relationships. Findings from Strong et al. revealed that all principals believed that reflective conversations with and supportive feedback from coaches fostered their success and comprised the most meaningful aspect of their coaching experiences.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that school districts not only offer novice principals mentoring support, but also offer principals opportunities to work with coaches located outside the institutional walls (Strong et al., 2003). This practice may eliminate political ties and provide principals with a safe way to attain the differentiated help they require. These trusting relationships with coaches should offer novice principals the emotional support they need and foster their leadership development through tenets of ethics and a commitment to student success (Strong et al.). Coaching opportunities should provide planned support designed to foster the clarification and achievement of goals, professional expectations, and personal goals (Strong et al.).

Districts must provide carefully planned principal induction programs based on evidence-based best practices to address the dynamic world of the 21st century principal. Since current research examining the content, processes and outcomes of induction programs is limited, program-based research that includes ongoing data collection, analysis, and public reporting must continue. Authentic program-based research should assess how principals' needs are being met, and the degree to which the needs of all students are ultimately being addressed. This ongoing commitment to program
assessment and evaluation will support progress in developing powerful synergies between induction program practices and student achievement.

*Implications for State Policy*

The expectations of federal legislation as per the No Child Left Behind Act requires principals to ensure the academic success of every student. Similarly, ISLLC standards call for school principals to be educational leaders who build a shared vision and implement collaborative school community processes. Although policy requires all principals to effectively lead as well as manage their schools, they encounter difficult challenges from a multitude of sources. Principals in this research study, along with previous studies, described their first year as traumatic (Davis, 1998). Further, some principals were dismissed due to weaknesses with interpersonal and decision-making skills. Job loss was also attributed to new principals' lack of knowledge regarding district politics, and their inability to accurately assess and successfully address the culture of a school (Davis). Weak or erratic leadership must be avoided, as the leadership of principals impacts students' success. Therefore, challenges to principal leadership equates to challenges with student learning. For needed reforms to be take root and bear fruit, policymakers must consider the complex dynamics typifying the 21st century school environment.

Additional supports are required to help new principals deal with stress and role isolation as they master leadership and administrative duties. The acquisition of resources cannot be left solely to random destiny in developing personal coping and networking skills. Just as novice principals are accountable for supporting teachers and students and
to ensure the academic success of all students, Federal and State constituents must
shoulder accountability for the acclimation of new principals to their demanding roles.

It is recommended that States not currently requiring mentoring and coaching as a
resource of support for principals consider mandating the practice. This support should be
systematically designed to help principals meet the challenges and expectations of the
21st century principalship. Findings from this study illuminated mentoring, coaching, and
personal mechanisms as three main resources from which principals drew upon to
navigate socialization into the principalship. Viable, evidence-based induction programs
consisting of mentoring, coaching, and focus on the development of personal
mechanisms must exist for principals, at least in the first three years of their role.
However, consideration should be given to the continuance of coaching resources
throughout principals' careers to meet the inevitableness of change consistent with the
current era and as expected for future eras. Principals in this study displayed a need to
learn on a daily basis. It also revealed the differences in principals' abilities to garner
adequate resources to do so. The need to support principals is plainly urgent, especially
for new principals grappling with professional leadership and self-actualization (Parkay
et al., 1992). Socialization into the principalship is a daunting process. Due to the
criticalness of successful socialization and the need for 21st Century principals to rapidly
progress through developmental stages, it is highly recommended that the responsibility
for planning and implementing principal induction be assumed with deliberate
collaboration among Federal, State, school district, and college and university
constituents.
Limitations of the Study

Part of establishing the trustworthiness of data is by recognizing the study limitations (Glesne, 1999, p. 52). As a former novice principal, this researcher was respectful of the challenges novice principals face with time management. Additionally, this researcher was mindful of the political nature of the principalship and the non-tenured status of the participants. To uphold integrity related to prioritizing a respectfulness of the participants’ professional standing, caution was used by way of the degree that probing questions were implemented. Further, as an outsider to the study of participants’ schools, this researcher was also aware of the need to establish a relationship of professional deference in asking new principals’ to participate in three, in-depth interview sessions, in a very compact time frame. Consequently, the numbers of interview sessions were a function of the previously allocated blocks of time found by study participants to support this study. Conducting three interview sessions with all study participants would have enhanced trustworthiness by fostering the study participants’ comfort, and therefore, likelihood to be more open and comprehensive about what they communicated (Glesne). Additionally, engaging in three interview sessions with all study participants would have increased opportunities for reflection and the creation of field notes, and thus, deepened triangulation. Therefore, the choice of reduced data was a study limitation.

Finally, due to the abbreviated time-frame slotted for data collection and analysis this study was limited to five participants in a single urban school district. By collecting data from only one district, this study was less extensive than if data had been retrieved from more than one urban district or from rural and suburban districts in surrounding
cities. This study focused on the views of participants serving in one urban school district located in New York State.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Additional research with a larger sample of beginning elementary school principals should be considered. Depending upon the goal of the research inquiry, future research could continue to concentrate on urban schools and include study participants from several urban districts. Future research of this nature may corroborate findings in regards to challenges and resources unique to urban principals. An alternative research lens might compare urban elementary principals’ socialization experiences with those from rural and/or suburban districts. Further, future research endeavors should consider duplicating this same study, but with the strict adherence to Seidman’s (1998) multi-tiered interview process. This may provide for richer data and may extend this study’s findings.

Although study participants represented a racial minority of White and a gender minority of male, findings did not illuminate race or gender attributes of principals, nor did this study use a theoretical lens supporting this critical aspect for examination. To enhance knowledge that may better support all principals, it is recommended that these characteristics, among other demographics such as ethnicity and age are considered in future research. This may be accomplished through incorporating new or additional theoretical frameworks, such as critical race (CRT) or feminist theory. Specifically, employing feminist theory may provide visibility and presentation of the female experience that will positively influence women’s restrained social status (Lather, 1991). Using a theoretical lens of CRT may confirm principals’ race as social construct affected
by the framework of American society while supporting the need to abolish racial
invisibility (Creswell, 2007). Use of these theoretical perspectives may reveal findings
that will serve to change ways of thinking in 21st century American society (Creswell).

Findings from this study revealed that principals relied upon mentors for support
with challenges such as technical and managerial aspects, as well as for moral support
with addressing the isolation of the principalship. The majority of new principals in this
study commonly revealed their reliance on personal mechanisms such as beliefs and self-
confidence, oftentimes to address issues concerning leadership, a prerequisite for leading
change. Although study participants expressed a desire to lead innovations that would
serve the best interests of all students, change did not emerge as an outcome for all
principals. Future research with a focus on the resources novice urban elementary
principals use to lead change may benefit other principals by illuminating additional
resources and strategies that facilitate success in acclimating to the 21st century
principalship. Examining novice principals’ successes with innovate leadership may
further support the creation or development of principal induction programs.

Summary and Conclusions

Data from this qualitative research study revealed urban elementary school
principals’ need to sequester an array of mentoring and/or coaching resources in an
ongoing manner to continuously advance their learning. Findings also illustrated
principals’ reliance upon personal mechanisms as resources to support their socialization
into a new organizational role. The 21st century principalship has evolved beyond the
expectation for principals to just persevere and, somehow, survive. Further, the new role
of the 21st century principal does not reflect the fabled notions of the heroic principal
leadership of yesteryear. The voices of five, non-tenured urban elementary school
principals highlight and underscore the challenges of socialization into the 21st century
principalship.

To support acclimation and minimize the loneliness, stress, and void in skill-sets
experienced by novice principals, socialization into the principalship must become a topic
of study, concern, and action by policymakers at all levels. This should be accomplished
in a studied manner consistent with constant change that depicts life in our changing
society. It should be based on empirical research conducted in the real world of schools,
and melded with evolving scholarly studies. This study sought to establish linkage of the
experiences of the 21st century urban school principals to existing research and may help
advance the knowledge base concerning best practices for principal induction.

Findings confirm other research in regards to the challenges faced by urban and
novice principals and substantiate new principals' needs for multiple and varied resources
that support their socialization into the principalship. Consideration should be given to
multiple mentors in the form of coaching from outsiders who serve as critical
friends/coaches, as well as from mentors who work inside or who are familiar with the
internal workings of districts.

This study's findings also indicate novice principals' struggles with the
complexities of the principalship and the necessity to lead organizational change.
Therefore, principals should receive training and assistance in this critical leadership
area, as it currently reflects an expectation as well as a necessity. Collaborative and
supportive efforts from constituents such as school districts; colleges and universities;
States; and outside agencies may improve the incidence of success of new principals in
leading reform designed to support the success of all students. The induction of principals
should not be left to chance, or be given minimal attention or short-lived commitment.
The compelling need to level the playing field and account for the success of each and
every school child demands nothing less than a highly prioritized, long-term dedication to
the success of new principals from all stakeholders.
References


Carter, G. (2004). *Is it good for the kids? Why support school leaders?* Retrieved February 19, 2008 from http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.ef397d712ea0a4a0a89ad324d3108a0e/template.article?articleMgmtId=3fe20f05c1520010VgnVCM1000003d01a8c.0RCRD


Appendix A

City School District Demographic Information Sheet

City School District | District Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Home Page</th>
<th>Student Profile</th>
<th>Schools and Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>City School District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages of Information</td>
<td></td>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Look Inside...</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Schools and Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City School District</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Profile</td>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Schools and Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65% African American/Black</td>
<td></td>
<td>12% White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% Hispanic</td>
<td></td>
<td>9% Af/As/Ind/Co/En/Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>15% Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17% with Special Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>9% with Limited English Proficiency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% ESL</td>
<td></td>
<td>16% Native American/First Language/Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schools and Programs

- 50 Pre-K Sites
- 40 Elementary Schools
- 19 Secondary Schools
- Young Writers Program
- Family/Adult Learning Center
- A centralized Parent Information & Student Registration Center
- Customer Service Center
- Parent Education/Training Center

During an average school year, the City School District:
- Provides and delivers 11,000 lunches and 18,000 breakfasts daily.
- Provides transportation for 28,000 students to and from school daily.
- Provides support (including counseling) to more than 3,000 students who attend non-
  district private, parochial, and charter schools, urban/suburban sites, and home-schooling.
- Has approximately 5,300 employees, including:
  - 2,000 teachers
  - 250 administrators
  - 1,500 support personnel
- Utilizes approximately 700 substitute teachers.
Appendix B

A Framework for Reform

Findings and Recommendations Based on the Superintendent's 60-90 Day Plan of Entry

It Is About Every Child

- "Ensuring that every child in Rochester has access to world class content taught by world class teachers in schools led by world class leaders"
  - Three Core Values
  - Achievement - Improving student achievement through a laser-like focus on teaching and learning with an emphasis on results.
  - Equity - Equitable distribution of resources based on the needs of schools and students.
  - Accountability - Use of data to ensure that we hold adults accountable for the success of all students.

Where We Are

- Achievement gaps and disengagement indicators are concentrated among similar populations of students: male, Hispanic, Black, special education students and those receiving free/reduced price lunch.
  1. Student performance declines between 4th and 8th grade among those who were meeting standards in 4th grade.
- Time spent on ELA and Math falls significantly from elementary to secondary school.
- Opportunities for students to receive individual attention falls at 7th grade.
- 7th and 9th grades are trouble spots for disengagement (attendance, suspensions, retentions, dropping out).

Where We Are

Early Childhood

- Pre-K system ranked first in the U.S. and Western Europe for six consecutive years.
  1.7 standard deviations above U.S. and European averages

How did Pre-K system help students to meet New York State's new higher standards?

English Language Arts, Grade 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Standards</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoring in Lowest Level (1)</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparable gains in Science and Social Studies

We could not have accomplished this without the massive infusion of Pre-K resources - both funding and quality.

- Since 2001 we have seen an 18% - 30% staff turnover at kindergarten every year.
- TerraNova Data on Reading Comprehension - May 2007

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Where We Are
Current Progress / Accomplishments
The percentage of students performing at or above proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) for the New York State English Language Arts assessment in grades 3-6 has remained stable since the introduction of 3-8 testing.

Where We Are
Current Progress / Accomplishments

- The percentage of students performing at or above proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) for the New York State Math assessment in grades 3-6 has increased by eight percentage points since the introduction of 3-8 testing.

- The percentage of students performing at or above proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) for the New York State Math assessment in grades 7-8 has only increased by three percentage points since the introduction of 3-8 testing.

The percentage of students performing at or above proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) for the New York State English Language Arts assessment (6th graders one year later) significantly dropped.

The percentage of students performing at or above proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) for the New York State Math assessment (6th graders one year later) parallels English Language Arts performance.

High School Graduation Trend (four year cohort of all students)
2005: (2001 Cohort) = 41%
2006: (2002 Cohort) = 39%
2007: (2003 Cohort) = 48% preliminary results through 2007

Where We Are
Graduation Comparison – Preliminary Results
District 2006-2007 (2003 Cohort) Graduates
Where We Are

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Elementary Schools Status

- 16 out of 38 or 42% made AYP by being a school in good standing for ELA, Math, and Science for every subgroup in which they were accountable
- 2007-2008: 58% Did not make AYP
- 2007-2008: 42% Did make AYP

Where We Are

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Secondary Schools Status

- 4 out of 14 or 29% of secondary buildings made AYP by being a school in good standing for ELA, Math, and Science for every subgroup in which they were accountable
- 2007-2008: 71% Did not make AYP
- 2007-2008: 29% Did make AYP

Where We Are

Percentage of students with less than 80% attendance increases in 7th grade and peaks in 9th grade

In grades 9 and 10, over 30% of students have less than 80% attendance rate or have been out of school for almost 2 months

Where We Are

Project 2006 Highlights (students who entered 9th grade in 2002)

- 41% of Project 2006 students were on track to graduate in 4 years
- 31% left the system for reasons other than transferring

Graph 3: 2005-2006 Dropouts by Age
Where We Are

Student Suspensions

❖ 45% of elementary school suspensions are for “Disruption of the Educational Process” and non-violent disruptions.
❖ Where We Are
  Student Suspensions
❖ 64% of secondary school suspensions are for non-violent disruptions.
❖ Teacher perception is consistent with this finding: 93% of teachers say discipline is a concern in their building.

Where We Need To Be

Elementary Schools

❖ 2011: 80% meeting AYP
❖ 2013: 100% meeting AYP
Where We Need To Be

Graduation Rate – Implications for current 7th and 8th graders

- 2009: 50%
- 2011: 60%
- 2013: 75%

How Do We Get There?

Three First Steps

System Changes/Org Effectiveness -

Reconfigured Central Office – downsized and agile. The Office of the Chief of Staff in collaboration with key managers has begun a thorough analysis of the central office. New organization will roll out May 1, to be completed by June 30, 2008.

Creation of Secondary Schools Reform Plan - Increasing the graduation rate – addressing the need to create both preventive and recuperative designs, the reform agenda will bring more integrated school design through greater personalization, partnerships, and focus on instruction of manageable group of students by a cluster of teachers.

Safety and Security - Improved school tone – reducing the number of short- and long-term suspensions, eliminating the practice of sending students home when suspended; enhancing the Sentry force.

How Do We Get There?

Renewed Focus on Middle Grades 7 and 8

- Parental involvement in meeting the developmental needs of middle-grade students.
- 6th to 7th grade summer bridge program
- 7th grade advisory program
- Information transfer among teachers from grade to grade
- ELA/Math Specialist in every school
- Increased number of guidance personnel
- Extended day and Saturday programs for enrichment and remediation
- Early high school programs—opportunities to earn high school credits in middle grades
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program in all secondary schools

How Do We Get There?

Youth Development

- Increased elementary school guidance support
- Counseling from elementary through high school
- College and career advisement
- Elementary/secondary mentoring programs
- Explore and implement concept of turn-around teams.
  - Student/family/school/community networks supporting individual students—perfect for Rochester Children’s Zone and Dream Schools

How Do We Get There?

Secondary Reform

- Small, academically rigorous schools and small learning communities
- Multiple pathways to graduation
- Schools offering a variety of opportunities (CTE, early college, GED Plus, programs for over-age and under-credited students, etc.)
Serve the needs of students who enter high school under-prepared.
- Focus on 9th and 10th grades.
- Accountability for student achievement.
- Innovative instructional practices.
- Recruitment, training, and support of school leadership and teachers.
- Creation, conversion, and restructuring of schools by expanding and replicating proven effective programs in Rochester and beyond.
- Partnering with external intermediary organizations.

How Do We Get There?

Secondary Reform – Portfolio of Schools

A portfolio of schools that maximize student achievement through leadership, outstanding teaching, alignment of resources, investment, and accountability.

Preventative: Schools that strengthen achievement and persistence –

"beating-the-odds" –

prevent entering students from falling behind regardless of their incoming skill levels and keep them on track to graduate.

Recuperative: Schools that serve the needs of over-age and under-credited students, put them back on track, and enable them to achieve graduation.

How Do We Get There?

Dream Schools – Reduce the Opportunity Gap

- Modeled after the widely-recognized Chancellor's District in New York City (Dr. Rudy Crew) and the Dream Schools concept in San Francisco (Dr. Arlene Ackerman).
- District's poorest performing schools.
- Coherent set of capacity-building interventions.
- Intensive focus on instruction including a required, uniform curriculum.
- Centralized management to initiate, enforce, and ensure implementation of school improvement.
- Intensive professional development and on-site staff developers (ELA/Math).
- Reduced class size.
- Extended time (school day/year) (90 minute literacy/60 minute math block).
- After-school programs including tutoring to enhance and enrich daily learning.

How Do We Get There?

School Choice

- Evaluate and make recommendations on:
  * Elementary School Parent Preference/Managed Choice process
  * Secondary School Choice process
- Extensive public engagement will precede any action regarding implementation of recommendations.

How Do We Get There?
Organizational Change

► Office of Parent Engagement
  • All community partnerships and parent programs under one umbrella with singular goal: to serve parents
► Office of Strategic Partnerships
  • Develop Principal for a Day program modeled on NYC "PENCIL" program to create school/business partnerships
  • Leverage funding from private sources
  • Build on University of Rochester's $1M tuition benefit for RCSD graduates to create larger "Rochester's Promise"
  • Single entry point for volunteers, mentors

How Do We Get There?

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  • Elementary School Parent Preference/Managed Choice process
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  • Single entry point for volunteers, mentors

How Do We Get There?

Organizational Change

► Office of School Safety and Security
  • Research-based interventions and alternatives to suspension
  • End the practice of sending students home when suspended
  • Districtwide Disciplinary Code for students
  • Safety audits on a rolling basis based on incident data
  • Enhance and professionalize the Sentry force
  • Work with RPD and School resource Officers

Overall Organization

► District divided into three K-12 clusters
  • Provides for clear lines of accountability: Superintendent to Principals
  • Creates opportunity for intense conversation among all stakeholders of the city
► Two new Deputy Superintendents
  • Teaching and Learning
  • Administration
► New Offices (not adding to bureaucracy)
  • Office of Accountability
  • Office of Family & Youth Services
  • Office of School Innovation
► Expect real reduction in total number of central administrators
Appendix C

Protocol for Letter of Introduction

(Accompanying in-person introductions or an email to follow-up telephone introductions)

Dear (Principal’s Name),

My name is Michelle Walczak-Corsi. I am currently a doctoral candidate in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership at College located in , New York. I have a total of 17 years previous experience serving as an elementary teacher, assistant principal, and principal. Currently, I work College in the role of a graduate assistant in which I support the successful operations of the Ed. D. Program through collaboration with the faculty and staff.

My experiences as an educational practitioner have fostered my interest in the early principalship and furthered my desire to seek enhanced understanding related to principals’ experiences in the first three years. My goals are to contribute to scholarly knowledge in the field of educational leadership and to promote enhanced understanding of this topic to support beginning principals. Specifically, this research study will explore urban elementary school principals’ early experiences with socialization, as well as with resources from which they draw on to navigate in the first three years of the principalship.

The use of two (with possible option for three), in-depth, one-to-one, in-person interviews will provide early-career principals with an opportunity to voice their lived experiences. If you are interested in participating in this research study, feel free to let me know in person, or if you prefer, I will send an email to which you may respond. Further, to help maintain the integrity of the proposed research time frame, please communicate your interest by February 13, 2009. Thereafter, you will be asked to review and sign a participant consent form and to provide options for interviewing that are most convenient to your schedule.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this request. I look forward to having an opportunity to communicate with you further.

Respectfully,

Michelle Walczak-Corsi
Doctoral Candidate, Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership at College:
walczakcorsi@yahoo.com
Appendix D

College

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Title of study:** Navigating the Beginning Principalship

**Name(s) of researcher(s):** Michelle Walczak-Corsi, Ed.D. Candidate

**Faculty Supervisor:** Dr., Committee Chair, can be reached at.

**Purpose of study:** By seeking to understand the lived experiences of beginning, urban elementary school principals' from the perspectives of these principals, current knowledge regarding novice principals' socialization experiences and experiences related to resources may be extended. It is also hoped that by expanding current scholarly knowledge, beginning principals will be better equipped to navigate the early principalship and supervisors and/or mentors will be more able to support beginning principals.

**Approval of study:** This study has been reviewed and approved by the College Institutional Review Board (IRB).

**Place of study:** College

**Length of participation:** Multiple, one-to-one, in-person interviews will be conducted during the March through May of 2009. Follow-up telephone calls or final in-person interviews for the purpose of clarifying data and member-checking may extend into June 2009, if necessary.

**Risks and benefits:** The expected risks and benefits of participation in this study are explained below:

**Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks to participants.

**Benefits:** Benefits to participants of the study include:
- Opportunity for principals to reflect on, as well as voice their lived experiences, and to have an opportunity to be heard
- Potential for gaining increased awareness related to socialization
- Possible identification of additional or alternate resources
- Identification of a potential opportunity to guide the planning and implementation of coaching and other supportive practices
Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy: The participants will not be associated with any data collected or any records kept by the researcher, as pseudonyms and codes will be used. Data will be collected in-person, and possibly by telephone, and the process will include the individual participant and the researcher, only. Only the principle investigator, and possibly a hired and confidential transcriptionist, will have access to any raw data.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
4. Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to you.
5. Be informed of the results of the study.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

Print name (Participant) Signature
Date

Print name (Investigator) Signature
Date

If you have any further questions regarding this study, please contact the researcher listed above. If you experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please contact the Office of Academic Affairs at [ ] or the Wellness Center at [ ] for appropriate referrals.
Appendix E

Principal Demographic Information Sheet

Pseudonym

Name

Address

Telephone - Cell: Work: Home:

Email

Biographical Information

Place of birth

Race Gender Age

Parents’ names and occupation(s)

College

Professional Information

Years of experience in this principalship

Prior leadership experience outside of PK-12 education

Training and certification for the principalship

Other relevant preparation Concurrent work

Professional and/or Community affiliations

School Demographics - Total Enrollment Grade Levels

Assistant Principal Assigned: Y or N

Predecessor information: Male Female Number of years in his/her role

NYS Math ELA Climate factors

NCLB Accountability Status
Appendix F

Interview #1 Protocol

Interview Protocol Using Open-Ended Questions
(Note: Questions may vary, as the participant contributes in directing the interview.)

Interview One

Question #1: Talk to me about the influences on your decision to become a principal (your path to the principalship).

Question #2: Once you found out you got this job as a principal, describe what you did, especially what you did to prepare yourself (to ready yourself for your new role in a new, or not new environment).

Question #3: Talk to me about the area or areas you thought, or predicted you might need support with as a first-time principal.

Question #4: Describe the area or areas you thought, or predicted you would do well in, or believed you would be confident with as a first-time principal.

Question #5: Talk about the areas you thought or predicted you would do well with, or believed you would be confident with as a first-time principal.

Question #6: Share an experience that might typify the way(s) in which you believe you learn in or make your way in challenging and complex situations.
Appendix G

Interview #2 Protocol

Interview Protocol Using Open-Ended Questions
(Note: Questions may vary, as the participant contributes in directing the interview.)

Interview Two

Question #1: Describe how and what you once envisioned for yourself as a principal differs from the realities of your life-world as a principal.

Question #2: Help me to understand the challenges that you experience in the principalship (What aspects of the principalship are most challenging to you?).

Question #3: Describe for me in a way that will help me to experience it, the influences in your learning during a typical day in your life as a principal.

Question #4: Talk about any external influences on your learning how to be a principal.

Question #5: Talk about any internal influences on your learning how to be a principal.

Question #6: What are the resources you draw on to support you in your daily life as a principal? (Describe your experiences)
Appendix H

Interview #3 Protocol

Interview Protocol Using Open-Ended Question
(Note: Questions may vary, as the participant contributes in directing the interview.)

Interview Three

Question #1: Capture for me, the essence of what learning to perform in the role of a principal means from your perspective (experience). Restated: What description could you give to help someone capture the essence of your reality?
Appendix I

District's Seven Essential Standards

ESSENTIAL STANDARD 1: Relevant, Engaging, Aligned and Data-Driven curriculum and Instruction
[The way the school applies standards uses assessment data and diversifies practice to improve instruction]

District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
Curricula are aligned to standards in every grade level. Student assessments, standards, curriculum and instructional time are aligned. Data is frequently used to provide extensive, complex and varied information about student performance in relation to the standards. Instructional teams use student work and data to make school-wide instructional decisions that are presented to the School-based Planning Team. Teachers and students know and are working toward rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge to meet the standards. Pre-K-12 classrooms are learner centered, full of a variety of instructional strategies, interactive in delivery and encourage high-level reasoning and relevant independent work.

ESSENTIAL STANDARD 2: Professional Development that Directly Impacts Teaching and Learning
[The way the school develops its staff to deliver effective instruction]

District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
The school uses a professional development plan in which activities and professional learning are directly linked to maximizing teacher proficiency and student performance. The school has a professional culture in which time is allocated for coaching, adding to instructional strategies, collaborative work and individual learning time for adults. Schools make their practice public. Staff may work with a coach and their collaborative work teams. There is a targeted focus in literacy, including content area literacy, numeracy, and pedagogy development.

ESSENTIAL STANDARD 3: Support for Diversity and Individual Student Learning
[The way individual practitioners in schools know their students, use student work and diagnostic assessments to provide culturally relevant and responsive instruction to meet students' individual needs and learning strengths]

District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
School staff understand that their school is comprised of students with diverse learning needs and backgrounds. Recognizing this, the school purposefully plans and establishes learning opportunities that are relevant and respond to students' distinctive cultural, developmental and learning style contexts. Instructional teams use student work and data to customize/individualize instruction and still ensure consistent quality from classroom to classroom.
ESSENTIAL STANDARD 4: Collaborative and Shared Leadership with Principal as Educational and Transformational Leader
[The way the school's leadership takes responsibility for leading instructional development and school wide improvement and how the school works together as a team to drive effective instruction]
District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
The principal and instructional leaders in the school know, articulate, and implement effective practices based on sound research. They understand the concept of learning communities and leading learning communities. All school staff shares a common vision and are jointly accountable for improving student performance. The school has organized teams with the time and resources to analyze student needs and share and develop strategies for ensuring students success. School leadership regularly works with regular classroom teachers to monitor strategies that ensure student progress toward highest performance.

ESSENTIAL STANDARD 5: Family and Community Partnerships
[The way the school communicates and collaborates with its families and the community to support student learning]
District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
Families are welcomed and included in their child’s learning. Communication from and collaboration with the school help families understand standards for performance and achievement as well as their role in supporting their child in meeting them. The school develops active community partnerships that nurture and support student outcomes. Families are encouraged to participate in the teaching and learning process in their child’s school.

ESSENTIAL STANDARD 6: Safe and Supportive Learning Environment
[The way the school establishes and maintains its rules of safety and conduct with staff, families, community and students and creates a culture that fosters respect for diversity and responsibility]
District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
Staff, students and families behave appropriately and show mutual respect. Everyone feels safe in and around the school. Students, teachers, parents and administrators have a process to talk together and resolve school issues that affect a safe and supportive and they use it regularly.

ESSENTIAL STANDARD 7: Organizational Focus and Resource Management
[The way the school organizes its structures, and allocates its resources to support effective instruction]
District Success Factors & Expectations for Schools
The school leadership (including both principal and teacher leaders) ensure that school resources are used so that all students move toward proficiency. A successful School-based Planning Team develops a schedule that maximizes time for instruction and planning and ensures resources are assigned to students and classrooms with the greatest need.
Appendix J

Excerpts from Principal Evaluation

PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERVISORS

The City School District and the Association of Supervisors and Administrators of agree that core standards, reflecting the strategic framework, benchmarks, and design task areas, together with guidelines and principles for collegial review, form the basis of overall professional expectations for the administrators and supervisors of the City School District.

Because these core standards, considered together with the expectations set forth in the performance appraisal review process for administrators, represent collectively a broader and more comprehensive set of expectations than previously in place, the following are established as a framework for the administrative leadership appraisal system.

DIRECTIONS: Check all items listed on the following pages on the basis of your observations and contacts as follows:

- **Exceeds Professional Expectations** -- This is a level of performance that few attain. It is highly unusual and reflects the successful combination of quantitative and/or qualitative accomplishments over a sustained period of multiple years. Virtually all elements of the employee's job description and duties were accomplished in an exceptional manner. He or she has demonstrated the willingness and ability to consistently go well beyond the job responsibilities. The use of this category also implies that significant documentation is available and can be made available upon request.

- **Meets Professional Expectations** -- This is a level of performance which is expected in the majority of employees or may be the norm for some longer service employees. Employees at this level are consistently productive in meeting their responsibilities. In general, all ongoing responsibilities have been concluded and performed successfully.

- **Needs Improvement** -- This is a level of performance which is not completely satisfactory. Specific ongoing responsibilities have been unfulfilled, incomplete, or not met in a timely and/or acceptable manner. The employee does not always work diligently or produce sufficiently on a consistent basis. Professional support services are to be recommended; intervention is required if performance does not improve.

- **Unsatisfactory** -- This is a level of performance which, unless substantial and immediate improvement is achieved, will lead to termination. Key and/or basic responsibilities are not met and without good cause. Placement in this category may have been preceded by a "needs improvement" rating. Formal recommendation for intervention is required and salary withhold is to be implemented.

- **Not Applicable** -- In cases where information is not available or the area does not apply.
Dimensions of Leadership

Professional administrators display all the dimensions of leadership in their daily work. Leadership is crucial to effective performance and encompasses a number of essential capabilities: having a vision and being able to communicate it well, understanding and applying good leadership skills and group process techniques, and developing an effective team to manage educational change so that students achieve demonstrable growth in what they know and can do.

Standards for Leadership

- Articulate vision and beliefs persuasively, effectively communicate and defend decisions, explain innovations, and behave in ways that are congruent with these beliefs and decisions.
- Maintain ongoing and effective communications with various constituencies.
- Demonstrate effective human relations skills.
- Encourage and develop the leadership of others.
- Analyze relevant information, make decisions, delegate responsibility, and provide appropriate support and follow-up.
- Initiate and/or manage constructive change.
- Participate actively as a member of local, state, and national professional groups.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to individual needs of all staff, students, and parents, including those with varied cultures, backgrounds, and abilities.
- Apply effective human relations skills and conflict-resolution methods in all situations.
- Model District values.
- Demonstrate consensus building, both as a leader and as a member of a group.
- Involve staff and members of the community in the development of budget priorities, based upon the mission and goals of the District.
- Demonstrate evidence of growth.

Knowledge of Teaching and Learning and Commitment to Students

Professional administrators possess and demonstrate knowledge of the teaching and learning process and are committed to student success. Teaching and learning is the center of an administrator's mission and improved outcomes for students is his/her chief purpose. Every aspect of schooling must connect to and support this process. An effective administrator understands the theory and practice of the learning process, models this understanding in his/her daily work, and involves staff, parents, and students continually and appropriately both in and out of the classroom.

Standards for Teaching and Learning

- Encourage staff input and involvement in continual review and monitoring of curriculum.
- Provide and support multicultural, nonsexist and developmentally appropriate programs.
- Support student, staff, and parental participation in activities that enhance and complement classroom learning.
- Understand and apply the principles of human growth and development.
- Utilize a variety of techniques and strategies to assess:
  - Student performance:
  - Individual staff and personal performance:
  - Effectiveness of the overall District programs.
- Model and support effective principles of teaching and learning for both children and adults.
- Articulate effective instructional management and planning strategies.
- Demonstrate awareness of learning styles.

Effective Organization Management

Professional administrators understand effective organizational management and employ effective management techniques. Organizational management is the structural framework of an administrator's daily practice. Understanding contracts, policies, rules and procedures, whether federal, state or local, and applying them appropriately is one element of this framework. Equally important is the understanding, preparation and management of budgets and taking into account their ramifications. The third major element of the organizational management framework is how an administrator can work well with staff, parents, and colleagues, organizing effectively to accomplish the business of teaching and learning.

- Develop and implement administrative procedures consistent with local policies, state and federal rules and regulations, and contractual agreements.
- Utilize collaborative strategic planning to help identify and accomplish the District's mission and goals.
- Demonstrate and understand of the School District budget priorities and their specific implications of one's role or position.
- Plan, prepare, and manage budgets in accordance with School District budgeting procedures.
Recruit manage, and organize staff in such a way as to assure the greatest potential for the accomplishment of the District's mission.

- Utilize research and technology to guide decision-making.
- Provide a caring, safe and orderly climate for learning.
- Manage the operation and maintenance of the physical plant.

IV. Public Engagement and Collaboration with Others

Professional administrators understand the significance of public engagement and meaningful collaboration with others. Creating strategies to engage education's various publics appropriately is a key component of effective administration. This involves both the ability to be an effective communicator of the District's work, and the ability to involve those publics in the business of public education. This translates into success when staff, parents, and students are deeply engaged in program development and presentation. It also suggests the administrator's active presence in his/her community.

Standards for Public Engagement

- Develop and support strategies to promote public education.
- Develop strategies and plans to attract continual support for public education.
- Involve members of the community in the development and support of school programs.
- Demonstrate effective strategies for dealing with the dynamics of School District decision-making.
- Support and/or participate in local, state, and federal legislative activities.
- Understand and support the District's values policy as it is applied to its initiatives.
- Involve staff, parents, students, and the community in the planning process.

V. High Performance Management Incorporating Professional Development and Reflective Practice

Professional administrators display high performance management in their work. They think about what they do, analyzing their performance to improve it, and constantly seek out development opportunities to enhance their knowledge base. High performance management incorporates those administrative attributes which allow the individuals within an organization to move it from acceptable performance to exemplary achievement. It also provides the connection to all those system elements which are broadly referred to as professional development. An administrator must understand how individuals grow and change, individually and organizationally, and must be able to apply that understanding to his/her own practice as well as to assist others in their growth and development. (She must also understand how systems work, including the formal and informal processes and procedures that shape or guide the conduct of individuals within the system as well as their interaction with each other.

Standards for High Performance

- Demonstrate effective observation and conferencing skills.
- Utilize both formative and summative evaluation procedures.
- Utilize due process procedures and legal assistance in dealing with disciplinary and dismissal cases.
- Be familiar with and follow contractual and legal procedures.
- Engage in and encourage continuing personal and professional development.
- Identify and utilize appropriate support services.
- Encourage and support teaching strategies that complement the varied learning styles of students.
- Encourage and set high expectations for students, staff, parents, and self and offer encouragement and support in the attainment of those expectations.
### LEADERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provides purpose and direction for individuals and groups.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitates the development of a shared strategic vision for school or department.</td>
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<td>Formulates goals and change efforts with staff and sets priorities for school or department in the context of District priorities and student and staff needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaches logical conclusions and makes high quality, timely decisions based on the best available information, giving priority to significant issues.</td>
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<td>Puts programs and change efforts into action and facilitates the coordination and collaboration of tasks.</td>
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<td>Creates conditions that enhance the staff's desire and willingness to focus energy on achieving educational excellence.</td>
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<td>Facilitates teamwork and collegiality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Makes oral presentations that are clear and easy to understand. Expresses ideas clearly in writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintains ongoing and effective communication with various constituents.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates sensitivity to individual needs of all staff, students, and parents, including those with varied cultures, backgrounds, and abilities. Deals tactfully with others.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates evidence of growth.</td>
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Comments on Leadership ratings:
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<tr>
<th>TEACHING AND LEARNING</th>
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<tr>
<td>Creates a school culture for learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Envisions and enables, with others, instructional and auxiliary programs for the improvement of teaching and learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands the developmental needs of students. Applies appropriate strategies to meet their specific needs.</td>
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<td>Initiates needs analysis; plans and implements with staff a framework for instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourages staff input and involvement in continual review and monitoring of curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilizes a variety of techniques and strategies to assess student performance, individual staff and personal performance, progress toward achievement of school's goals, and effectiveness of overall District programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Articulates effective instructional management and planning strategies.</td>
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## ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Exceeds Professional Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Professional Expectations</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gathers data, facts, and impressions from a variety of sources; analyzes relevant information in order to facilitate decision-making and monitoring. Manages data flow.</td>
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<td>Assists others to form reasoned opinions about problems and issues; uses good judgment.</td>
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<td>Seeks knowledge about policies, rules, laws, precedents, or practices. Applies such knowledge.</td>
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<td>Plans, prepares, and manages budgets in accordance with District budgeting procedures.</td>
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<td>Recruits, manages, and organizes staff in such a way as to assure the greatest potential for the accomplishment of the District’s mission.</td>
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<td>Provides a safe, caring, and orderly climate for learning.</td>
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<td>Manages the operation and maintenance of the physical plant.</td>
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## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Exceeds Professional Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Professional Expectations</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
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<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Develops common perceptions about school or District issues among various publics.</td>
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<td>Interacts with external and internal publics in a professional manner.</td>
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<td>Initiates and reports news through appropriate channels.</td>
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<td>Enlists public participation and support.</td>
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<td>Understands and supports the District’s values policy as it is applied to initiatives.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates effective strategies for dealing with the dynamics of District decision making.</td>
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HIGH PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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<th>Plan and schedules work so that resources are used appropriately.</th>
<th>Exceeds Professional Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Professional Expectations</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Schedules the flow of activities related to the operation of the school or department.</td>
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<td>Works with staff to identify professional needs.</td>
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<td>Plans, organizes, and facilitates programs that improve staff effectiveness and are consistent with goals and needs.</td>
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<td>Initiates self-development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates effective observation and conferencing skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilizes both formative and summative evaluation procedures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilizes due process procedures and legal assistance in dealing with disciplinary and dismissal cases.</td>
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<td>Encourages and sets high expectations for students, staff, parents, and self, and offers encouragement and support in the attainment of those expectations.</td>
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Appendix K
Excerpts from Mentor/Intervention Specialist Handbook

CAREER IN ADMINISTRATION/SUPERVISION

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE POSITION OF:
MENTOR/INTERVENTION SPECIALIST

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Mentors will provide help to newly assigned administrators designated as interns or to administrators who have changed tenure areas.

2. Mentors will develop and direct the internships of new administrators by involving building-level administrators as well as appropriate Central Office supervisors/administrators when appropriate and by assisting with the development of specific performance goals. These performance goals must reflect the District's focus on improving student performance and will include the use of data, benchmarks, and goal-setting. The mentor will offer assistance, provide feedback, and monitor the intern's progress.

3. Mentors/Intervention Specialists will enlist the assistance of other administrators when and when it is deemed appropriate.

4. Mentors/Intervention Specialists will participate in professional activities as required by the CIA/S Panel and will complete reports in a timely manner.

5. Intervention Specialists will provide assistance and support to tenured administrators who are experiencing severe difficulties in their current placement.

6. Intervention Specialists will direct the implementation of an assistance plan for administrators who choose to participate in the Intervention Program. The program will include the design of specific performance goals, support, and monitoring. Other school or district personnel may assist in the program when needed and when invited to do so by the Intervention Specialist.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT AS MENTOR/INTERVENTION SPECIALIST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Status as a permanently certified and tenured administrator or previously tenured as a RCSD Administrator, or at least five years of successful administrative experience.

- Demonstrates outstanding administrative/supervisory skills. These should include but are not limited to: leadership, organizational management, teaching and learning expertise, high performance management, and public engagement.