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Developing an Internal Leadership Pipeline in Urban Districts: A Pathway to Capacity Building

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A Pathway to Capacity Building

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand how an urban school district designs and implements leadership development programs for internal candidates. The challenge of continuously developing a cadre of committed and qualified leaders is not new (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007). To maintain the high standards of instructional leadership and to continue sound practices in teaching and learning, school districts must think and move strategically to protect their investments in professional development and coaching, and to secure the future growth of its students and staff. The literature is clear and consistent on the elements of effective pre-service programs, candidate selection, and program implementation (Jackson, 2001). The challenge is how to implement these elements in urban schools in an effective and sustainable way. The goal of this work is to develop effective leaders, and Marzano, McNulty, and Waters (2003) noted that at its most basic level, supporting teachers and creating effective organizational structures are key attributes of effective school leaders. Effective school leaders are at the core of teacher growth and student achievement. Without them, schools lack the vision, focus, and support they need to succeed.

The population interviewed in this study was school administrators and teachers who participated in the aspiring leaders program sponsored by Paterson Public Schools in Paterson, New Jersey. In addition, central office administrators and a university partner who designed the program also participated in the study.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, our three daughters my parents and my grandparents. Vaughn, you are the love of my life, my chief encourager and my eternal accountability partner. This simply would not have happened without your support from start to finish. Your humor, empathy, wisdom and confidence in me were consistent. Somehow, you knew when I needed a break to laugh and when I needed an extra boost of confidence. You knew when I needed silence at the table and when I needed your feedback. You knew that although this was one of the biggest undertakings of my life that I could not stop living while I pursued it. You helped me to maintain my physical, spiritual and emotional health and refused to take this dissertation as an excuse for me to neglect my well-being. Your constant refrain was, "All I want you to focus on is writing your dissertation. I will take care of everything else." And you did. At all times, you were motivated by love. I am so grateful to God for you, a true life partner—a genuine and authentic companion. I love you and appreciate you beyond my ability to articulate.

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easy endeavor that is worthwhile. A worthy endeavor is often hard, but don't shy away from it because it's hard. Choose the hard way, because **you** are worth it. I love you.

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me to be satisfied with the accomplishments of the day. You challenged me to continue to set the bar high with each success and not to be ashamed of failure.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The challenge of continuously developing a cadre of committed and qualified leaders is not new (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007). To maintain the high standards of instructional leadership and to continue sound practices in teaching and learning, school districts must think and move strategically to protect their investments in professional development and coaching, and secure the future growth of its students and staff. The literature is clear and consistent on the elements of effective pre-service programs, candidate selection, and program implementation (Jackson, 2001). The challenge is how to implement these elements in urban schools in an effective and sustainable way. The goal of this work is to develop effective leaders, and Marzano, McNulty, and Waters (2003) noted that at its most basic level, supporting teachers and creating effective organizational structures are key attributes of effective school leaders. Effective school leaders are at the core of teacher growth and student achievement. Without them, schools lack the vision, focus, and support they need to succeed.

In today's evolving world, the role of principal is far more complex than simply managing a building and staff. Principals are called upon to be visionary leaders, community ambassadors, instructional leaders, and agents of change. One of the implied expectations of these responsibilities is to develop a line of qualified successors who will fill leadership roles in school and throughout the district (Zigler, McCafferty, Ogletree, Ronan, & Koschorek, 2007). With many competing priorities, the latter responsibility often takes a back seat to the former, with only the most urgent matters of the day addressed.

Statement of the Problem

While many principals understand the urgency of functioning as an instructional leader, the operational and safety concerns of the building often take precedence. This demanding balancing act forces them to constantly make decisions about the best use of their time and how to invest it. Both principals and teachers are aware of this never-ending dance. With an increased focus on improving students' test scores, coupled with the ever-growing demands of a school leader, many teachers shy away from pursuing leadership positions, and turnover among principals is frequent (Winter & Morgenthal, 2002). Furthermore, schools and school districts lose potential leaders because they do not put systems in place to intentionally develop them. In discussing the implications of turnover, Versland (2009) noted, "Rapid principal turnover has significant negative effects on school culture and consequently, student achievement." When school leaders transition from a district, they often leave with a wealth of institutional knowledge, frequently requiring the new leader to start from scratch. This includes learning the culture of the school, its key initiatives, and establishing one's self as a credible leader. Moreover, many principals lack the time or structure to methodically identify, hire, and promote quality teachers from within the school or district. There is a noted shortage of qualified and willing principal candidates. It is even more crucial for urban districts, which have a unique set of challenges, to strategically recruit high quality potential leaders from within the district. Potential urban school leaders are lost because school districts do not intentionally develop them.

Urban school principals must also manage matters of economics and race that their suburban counterparts do not face to the same extent. Due to the effects of poverty and lack of cultural capital, urban school principals must also implement programs to counter the impact of poverty: breakfast programs, snack programs, and extended learning programs. Notwithstanding,

urban school principals must also consider how they will allocate funds to provide their students with cultural experiences that are typically not available to them outside of school. The role of the principal is to constantly serve as the bridge for these needs. This is all in addition to ensuring that students receive an excellent academic education. Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach's (2000) research revealed five key areas in which leadership influences student learning:

- working directly with teachers to improve effectiveness in the classroom;

- providing resources and professional development to improve instruction;

- regularly monitoring teaching and student progress;

- participating in discussions on educational issues; and

- promoting parental and community involvement in the school.

According to this research, effective principals intentionally address these five areas, which require skill and stamina. While the skill continues to develop, the stamina can quickly diminish. As such, urban districts must design and implement in-service programs to prepare potential leaders from within the district. The benefits of in-service leadership programs include continuing the current school culture, further implementing district initiatives, and incentivizing quality staff to remain in the district. To address this shortage, many districts have made a commitment to developing a pipeline of leaders from within (Zigler et al., 2007). For example, there are eight pre- and in-service programs noted in one study by The Wallace Foundation (2013): Bank Street College, Delta State University, University of Connecticut, the University of San Diego, Hartford School District, Jefferson County Public Schools, Region 1 in New York City, and San Diego City Schools. While institutions of higher learning are pre-service models, school district models focus on in-service development. The programs represent a variety of

models, each with its own challenges and benefits. The Delta State model includes a full-time internship experience with financial support from the Mississippi Sabbatical Leave Program, which pays teachers' salaries for one year while they complete their administrator credentials (The Wallace Foundation, 2013). Similarly, Bank Street partnered with Region 1 of the New York City Public School System to identify potential leaders, support their preparation, and provide them with ongoing support and training (The Wallace Foundation, 2013). The Jefferson County model worked with the University of Louisville to create a pathway from the classroom to the principalship that feeds the leadership pipeline (The Wallace Foundation, 2013). This grow your own model helps retain the most innovative academic minds, while protecting the continuity of intellectual capital and innovative programming.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand how an urban school district designs and implements leadership development programs for internal candidates. Another purpose of the study is to add to the field and practice so that urban districts desiring to design and implement such a program have examples of existing programs. The need for strong and consistent leadership in all districts—urban ones in particular—is pronounced and ongoing.

Research Questions

The overarching question for this study is how do urban districts design and implement a leadership development program to identify and to promote potential leaders in-district?

Sub-questions

- What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals in urban districts?

- What are the factors that influence the design of the program?

- What is the role of central office staff (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director) in designing and implementing the program?

Conceptual Framework

The very nature of this work is rooted in capacity building and systems learning (Fullan, 2008). The underlying belief is that schools and districts will fare better when there is a system in place to develop the talent of those who are already a part of the organization. This will ensure continuity in the work and increase the likelihood that strategic initiatives will be carried out with consistency, and sustainably. This is also an appropriate application of the succession theory. This theory is also seen in the business world with companies promoting from existing leadership structures to sustain effective business strategies and organizational direction (Lister & Jonathan, 2017). While not always used purposefully, the same principle applies to education leadership. The model encourages identifying and intentionally grooming of the next CEO from within the company, as opposed to launching an external search. This protects the integrity of effective programs, best practices, and increases the probability they will continue.

Not only does implementing the succession theory help institutionalize best practices in leadership and instruction, but it could also be an effective retention strategy for high performing teachers. The key is to develop a system that is not only focused on leaders but on developing a systematic approach that involves the entire central office team. Many districts focus on

recruiting top talent without creating equal strategies around retaining quality teachers. Designing a process by which high performing teachers can be identified, trained, and placed in a leadership position could be an effective way to keep quality teachers in the district. In addition to serving as a retention strategy, developing potential leaders from the teaching ranks conveys to quality teachers that their work is valued and appreciated.

Description of the Study

I used qualitative research methods for this study. Interviews captured the experiences of those who designed, implemented, and participated in the aspiring leaders program. The study included interviews from participants and contributors of a program in Paterson Public School District in Paterson, NJ. It captured the reflections of past participants—noting both strengths and weaknesses of the program. It was important for past participants to note the specific ways the program prepared them for their roles as school leaders in an urban district. The study also included interviews with district administrators and an external partner who designed and implemented the program. Interviews were semi-structured. This provided an opportunity to pose the same questions to all participants, while also granting an opportunity for me to gather data that was helpful, but not a part of the original intent of the study. Another aim was discovering whether the program's design and implementation were consistent with the research elements that mark an effective program.

<center>**Significance of the Study**</center>

Considerable research points to the critical role of principals' contributions to student achievement and school effectiveness. Through developing human capital and ensuring a positive work culture, principals advance the work of teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Marzano et al., 2003). Some of their most prominent roles are selecting and supporting teachers, and developing processes that affect the organizational conditions of the school. These two bodies of research are closely aligned. Lack of strong principal leadership is a direct threat to student achievement and capacity building among teachers (Leithwood et al., 2000). Teachers who do not feel equipped and empowered to succeed in the classroom are not interested in pursuing administrative positions at the school or district level. As a result, the need for districts to intentionally develop a pipeline of leaders is urgent, as it has significant impact on teaching and learning.

Developing this pipeline is certainly not an undertaking that districts can tackle alone, nor should they. Since administrators must complete a pre-service licensure program, a partnership between the district and higher education is one way this challenge can be addressed. Examples of such partnerships are Bank Street College and Region I in New York City, the University of Connecticut and Hartford School District, and Delta State University and Jefferson County Public Schools (The Wallace Foundation, 2013). This has implications for policies regarding professional development and budgeting. The creation of such a pipeline would impact the recruitment and hiring process, as well as address the need to revisit the protocols for recruiting and hiring. This strategic process does not passively rely on an applicant pool. Instead, it actively creates a pipeline to fill leadership positions throughout the school and district, which dictates

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heavy involvement of central office staff. This study could also lead to the creation of district policies to develop and implement leadership preparation programs.

In developing the structure to create a pipeline, it is also critical to examine the factors that discourage teachers from becoming school and district leaders. Examining these factors will give the district leaders and board of education members the knowledge they need to create a work environment that will attract and retain quality leaders. For example, research revealed that the work environment is one of the elements that discourages teachers from becoming school leaders (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Extended work hours, low salary, and lack of support are elements of work environments that make recruiting qualified and willing candidates a challenge. When designing a program, district leaders must also address the work environment components that often discourage strong teachers from pursuing leadership positions.

This study will provide institutions of higher learning, urban school districts, and urban school boards with data that will help them form strategic partnerships to create and sustain programs to develop an internal pipeline for leadership positions within the district. Moreover, foundations and other funding sources may find this study useful when considering where to make an investment that will greatly strengthen education leadership, improve the delivery of instruction, and advance student achievement.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations associated with this study. It is limited to the perceptions of the interviewees. It is limited to Paterson Public Schools and to the questions posed during the interview. This study is limited to a group of cohort members who participated in the program within two consecutive years of each other—2014–2015 and 2015–2016. This ensured that the comparisons among experiences did not reflect major changes in the program's design or

implementation. Moreover, data was also limited to the years in which the program was in place, as well as the conditions under which this program was implemented. Finally, the interpretation of the responses was limited to the analysis of the interviewer.

Definition of Terms

Principal: a person who has completed the required coursework and received the appropriate certification to be a principal.

Pipeline: an intentionally created pool of internal candidates who have been credentialed (externally) and trained (externally and internally) to become principals.

Pool: a group of candidates who apply for a position.

Pre-service program: the university and/or state course work and internship required to attain an administrative certificate.

In-service program: leadership training provided by the school or district to fill leadership positions with internal candidates.

Central Office Administrators: staff who work in the central office and design and implement the program, as well as have influence in the recruiting and hiring process (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director).

University Partner: a representative from the university that assists with the creation and implementation of the program.

Summary

The strength of a principal's leadership has an impact on student achievement. As a result, it is critical for schools to have instructional leaders who can set high standards regarding the delivery of instruction, while also supporting teachers to meet this standard. Consistency in

building this leadership is a challenge in all districts; however, this challenge is exacerbated in

urban districts where external factors provide a more complex context for teaching and learning.

For this reason, effective instructional and leadership practices cannot be lost through turnover,

and an intentional system of identifying and retaining potential leaders from within is a high

priority.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction of the Review

Chapter Two outlines the key components related to the design and implementation of internal leadership development programs in urban districts. The review of the literature revealed several sub-topics that influence the need for and the execution of programs that develop an internal leadership pipeline: deterrents from school leadership, quality of pre- and in-service programs, program commitment and strategic design, program design, definition of successful teacher performance, the role of central office administrators, and standards for school leaders. I conducted the search with a focus on existing programs—their reason for existence, their creation, their execution, and their relationship to community partners. Since this work focuses on developing internal candidates, it is grounded in the principles of succession theory—where an intentional plan is devised and executed to maintain the core values, visionary focus, and organizational approach of an institution by hiring from within.

To complete the literature review, I conducted a search of several topics. Since the goal of every school leader is to have an effective school, I explored literature on effective school models. Additionally, I surveyed literature discussing leadership development programs, including pre-service programs requiring a certification, and in-service programs hosted by schools and districts. I conducted research on this topic through the Seton Hall University Library, Pro-Quest, and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC).

Why is the Pipeline Necessary?

Teaching and learning are at the heart of effective schools. In his discussion about the characteristics of effective schools, Edmonds (1979) noted that one of the distinguishing factors of effective schools is its leadership; without it, effective schools simply cannot exist. However, there is a diminishing number of qualified principal candidates, which means there is a direct threat to the development and sustainability of effective schools. Increases in enrollment require more principals, and finding qualified ones is often a challenge. Vice principals who aspire to the principal role are not always intentionally developed. Districts with high systems of accountability—particularly tied to test scores—often dismiss principals who are underperforming according to the test score measurement of success. The lack of job security and the high turnover do not encourage would-be applicants. Considering this challenge in one urban area, a hiring administrator observed that there were many candidates with the proper pedigree and qualifications, but these did not predict success. As a result, districts saw a glaring need to manage career tracks more deliberately (MacFarlane, Riley, & Turnbul, 2015) This intentional management is what Durden (2008) referred to as "leadership for sustainability and school improvement." The need for urban districts to create a system to develop strong leaders is pronounced. Furthermore, the need for leaders to think and function as a system is an equally compelling case for the development of a leadership pipeline. With that, many researchers in the field agree that the only way for urban school leaders to be successful is through becoming transformational leaders. Blanchard, Hersey, and Johnson (2013) suggest that transformational leadership is a strong strategy for addressing existing challenges and threats to stability.

In The Wallace Foundation's study, novice teachers held various positions prior to becoming principals: vice principals, teacher leaders, coaches, and department chairpersons. This

indicates that some districts had a system for moving aspiring leaders along the leadership development continuum, while others took a more informal approach (The Wallace Foundation, 2015). Districts expressed wanting the vice principal position to be more of an internship, so that they could shape the experiences they had and the skills they developed in preparation for becoming a principal. The pipeline helps districts shape a system in which Marzano's "21 Responsibilities of the School Leader" are taught and supported (Marzano, McNulty, & Waters, 2005). These principles range from affirmation and communication to situational awareness and visibility. In instances where it was apparent that assistant principals were not instructional leaders, but had strong skills in student discipline or building management, district leaders collaborated regarding an exit strategy and counseled them to a position better suited for their skills in a central office.

Deterrents from School Leadership

In discussing the urgency of developing urban school leaders, Beachum et al. (2012) warned that if urban districts do not demonstrate an unrelenting commitment to the success of leadership development programs, the quality of leadership will suffer. Doing this in a systematic way begins with an examination of the factors that prevent teachers from considering leadership positions. In their study on the challenges of recruiting urban leaders, Finn and Northern (2014) shared two key barriers to recruiting quality leaders for urban districts. The first barrier is that the work of a principal is mentally and physically exhausting. Moreover, the exhaustion of the responsibility does not equate to the authority required to execute the functions of the position. The second barrier is their pay is not competitive, given the responsibilities of the position. The combination of the two does not lend itself to an enticing career for educators (Doyle & Locke, 2014). With a less than desirable salary and responsibilities that often bring

stressful days and nights, recruiting educators to become principals in urban schools has become an arduous task. When districts do find choice candidates, they are sometimes lost in the unnecessarily long process.

One recommendation to recruit education leaders is to create and promote better working conditions. Many shy away from positions of leadership due to the hours, stress, salary, and perceived lack of support. District leadership and boards of education must examine these factors more closely, consider the ones they can control, and identify their root causes. A careful review of these issues may reveal that another set of strategies or tools would have more effectively prepared principals to manage the challenges of the position. This could decrease the need for regularly extended work hours, thus, reducing stress levels.

Addressing how districts balance the low salaries and demands of the position, Hitt, Tucker, and Young (2012) noted that one of the greatest forms of recruitment to the profession and leadership positions is a working environment where educators are empowered to do meaningful and gratifying work. In the absence of competitive salaries, an opportunity to make an impact is attractive (Hitt et al., 2012). While the reward of being a principal is not lucrative, other forms of compensation must be utilized to balance the equation. While a board of education has a significant degree of influence on the salaries of principals, their influence has limitations. With many urban school budgets steadily declining due to new calculation formulas, school boards must rely on elements under their control to identify, hire, and promote quality candidates. Many elements in their control could help create an internal leadership pipeline to retain quality leaders and sustain the progress the district makes in teaching and learning.

Quality of Pre-Service Programs

The working conditions are just one element discussed in the literature. Another point of consideration is the quality of pre-service programs. There is consensus among most researchers regarding the elements of effective pre-service programs in institutes of higher learning. An examination revealed that some pre-service programs are missing the mark in some key areas. The need for internal preparation programs becomes even more urgent considering the critique of many leadership preparatory programs. Critics often note that programs neither connect theory to practice, nor reflect the complex layers that today's school leaders face. Topics that are absent include teaching and learning, establishing relationships with stakeholders, and building a positive school culture. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007).

While many pre-service programs provide thorough theoretical preparation, the lack of practical application leaves principals ill-prepared when they begin the role. As a result, they feel overwhelmed by their new responsibilities and work tirelessly to fill in the gaps of their inexperience. An internal leadership program addresses those gaps in a very intentional way. Combining theory with the knowledge of the district's needs, a district is able to create a program that is the result of the district's needs and strategic direction.

Most programs are homogenous in their curriculum for teachers who desire to become school principals. They offer the same curriculum for all participants, regardless of their experience, education, or certifications. The partnership between the Philadelphia School District and Lehigh University, however, offered a differentiated approach, which is essential. To assume that teachers who are not in principal positions are synonymous to teachers who are not credentialed for the position is a mistake. Some teachers completed the coursework, earned their

advanced degree, and received their administrative certificate, but have not served in a leadership capacity. The district-sponsored program for principals must differ from the program prescribed to teachers who have not completed their coursework or received their certificate. For the experience to be meaningful, it must consider the broad experiences and backgrounds of those participating in the program. This program (Lehigh University and Philadelphia Public Schools) offers three tracks: one for aspiring leaders with no certification, one for aspiring leaders with a certification, and one for principals and vice principals who are in their first or second year of leadership. This differentiated approach customizes the program to acknowledge and complement the work that the participants have already done, while preparing them for the next phase of their career. It preserves resources, like time, finances and human resources, and directs those resources to the areas for the most impact. Darling-Hammond et al., (2007) provided a framework for implementing a program that takes these factors into consideration:

1. Selection of Candidates for Preparation Programs

    A. Require demonstrated success as a classroom teacher

    B. Require demonstrated success in leading adults in some capacity

    C. Require an advanced degree

    D. Screen for passion and commitment to leadership

2. Structure and Delivery of Program Preparation

    A. Maximize social support networks

    B. Optimize candidate growth through a continual cycle of assessment and feedback

    C. Provide a challenging, relevant, standards-based curriculum

    D. Focus on field-based experiences and effective adult learning practices

3. Recruitment and Selection into Professional Positions

A. Create supportive conditions for leadership development

B. Structure career ladders for educational leaders

C. Consider the school context and individual capacities when making a match

D. Use behavior-based interviewing in the selection process

Identifying these elements makes the central office administrators a key part of the process. There must be an organizational agreed-upon understanding of what the prerequisites are and why they are valued.

Defining Successful Teacher Performance

Each program in the research identified successful teachers. The thought follows that when identifying potentially strong instructional leaders, districts must first identify teachers whose strength lie in delivering instruction. This is, without a doubt, the first pre-requisite to becoming an effective principal. Success in the classroom must be defined. It could be based on student performance (measured by growth or attaining a certain level or proficiency), ratings on teacher observations, or participation on school and district committees. All of this must be clear considering the framework as outlined. Likewise, success must be defined for "leading adults" and "passion and commitment to leadership." The central office administrators must apply this analysis to each facet of this process. Without common standards, the recruitment results will be inconsistent, and it will be difficult to determine if success—or a lack thereof—is attributable to the program, or a flawed recruitment process.

It is also important to give more attention to the "structure career ladders" portion of this list. While it is important for districts to intentionally create pathways for advancement, program participants cannot confuse their participation with a promise of promotion. Few districts have the financial ability to create positions for new leaders; therefore, promotions come by attrition.

The challenge for districts is keeping participants meaningfully engaged until appropriate positions become available. This could be accomplished through a continuum of courses, as implemented by the San Diego School District. Effective engagement during this bridge period is another piece of knowledge that this study can provide to practitioners.

In-Service Programs

While some districts emphasize their pre-service program, many districts develop an in-service program to complement the pre-service experience or fill in the gaps that the pre-service program did not address. To examine the effectiveness of an in-service program, it is important to examine the commonly accepted components of an effective in-service program. The challenge districts must work through is to provide a meaningful program for teachers who have already matriculated through the coursework and internship experience of education leadership programs. Districts must be careful not to duplicate that experience.

In the San Diego and Denver Public Schools program models, the courses are co-designed and co-taught by university instructors and district practitioners. Through the leadership of central office administrators, districts can design courses to meet the specific needs of their district and promote the strategic initiatives of the district. In addition to the academic and managerial components, self-preservation and self-reflection are two additional components of leadership preparation programs. It is important for leaders to understand who they are and why they make the decisions they make (Silverman, 2005). Furthermore, assigning a mentor after the program ends is an element that Brown (2016) admonishes as a best practice for any in-house leadership development program. While mentors are helpful during the program, they are especially needed when the leaders are in their new position, to help them reflect and think strategically. An example of this is found in the Broad Center's Residency in Urban Education

Program, where the program provides residents with their colleague's feedback from a 360-degree assessment. The assessment results are accompanied by coaching sessions to address the areas that were raised in the feedback. This helps the leader to not only reflect on his or her performance, but consider how he or she is perceived by peers (The Broad Center, 2018).

The components of an effective in-service program as defined by Darling-Hammond et al. (2012) and the components of effective implementation are listed below. They encompass the foundational skills that all school leaders need to do their job well and what central office administrators must consider when implementing a program.

Table 1

Effective programs and program implementation

Components of an effective in-service program	Components of effective program implementation
• Learn strategies that can be used to foster continuous school improvement	• Research based content
	• Curricular coherence
• Understand how to build supportive school cultures that promote and support adult and student learning	• Field-based internships
	• Problem-based learning strategies
• Develop knowledge about individual and organizational change processes	• Mentoring or coaching
	• Collaboration between universities and school districts
• Develop knowledge of effective staff development strategies	• Vigorous recruitment
	• Financial support
• Understand important sources of data about their schools and students, and how	• District or state infrastructure
	• Cohort structure

to use data to guide instructional improvement efforts • Learn public engagement strategies, including interpersonal relationship skills	

Successful Models

Establishing standards for an effective program is one step in this process, but without examining the concepts in practice, the components are reduced to theory. A review of effective models highlighted their commonalities. Below is a list of what exemplary programs do, as well as an overview of three successful programs and the factors that contributed to their success. Districts considering the creation of such a program must consider the approach that will best address their needs and could be implemented most successfully. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2007), the components of effective program implementation include internship, financial support, government support, university partnership and a pathway to leadership.

Table 2

Contributors to successful programs

	Delta State University	Hartford (CT) Public Schools	The Principals Institute at Bank Street College	Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools
Internship	X			
Financial Support	X	X		
Government Support	X			
University Partnership		X		X
Pathway to leadership			X	X

Program Commitment and Strategic Alignment

An analysis of these programs suggests that the time element is critical when designing

and implementing a principal preparation program. It is important to remember that the

participants work full-time, and are often enrolled in classes. This, coupled with the internship

and other meetings associated with the program, make program completion a challenge.

Moreover, because time is such a priceless commodity, all assignments and meetings must be

intentional, strategic, and have a direct link to the desired outcomes of the program. Without this,

participants experience the program as a waste of time.

What Factors Influenced the Design of the Program?

There are several factors that impact program designs: district needs, relevant research,

and resources (time, finances, and human capital). In addition to the time factor, there are several

monetary expenses associated with implementing a program: general administration and

infrastructure, recruitment and selection, coursework, mentoring and mentor training. It is

important that districts identify funding sources outside of their local budgets to offset some of

these costs. While these costs would qualify as professional development expenses for budgetary

purposes, the expenses for the in-service leadership program cannot consume the entire

professional development budget. Districts must consider foundations, state governments, the

federal government, and volunteers as resources to offset some of these costs. The successful

models all note that funding is a key component to ensuring the model is fruitful.

The Role of Central Office Administrators

It is impossible to analyze the effectiveness of an internal pipeline programs without

examining the role of a district's central office administrators. It is the responsibility of central

office to create systems and structures that enable leadership identification, development, and empowerment. Central office administrators must understand their role in the hiring and leadership development process to accomplish this work (Childress, Elmore, & Grossman, 2006). Traditionally, the human resources department has been responsible for all aspects of the hiring process, particularly ensuring that all compliance requirements have been met. As districts become more strategic about their goals and create a plan of action, all central office administrators are important contributors to and stewards of this process. When considering the redefinition of the central office, Childress et al. (2006) noted, "District leaders must come to view their organization as integrated systems whose interdependent parts are directly linked to the work of teachers and students in classrooms."

The human resources department is one component of this process. As noted in the work of the Strategic Management of Human Capital (2009), "Without 'strategic management' of human capital the nation's schools will not be able to attain their goal: increased student achievement." While one aspect of "strategic management of human capital" involves recruitment for currently open positions, another aspect is managing that process for succession. In schools, the day to day operations often prevent district leaders from seeing beyond the immediate, and they view reflection and strategic planning as a luxury. In instances where an upcoming vacancy is known, it is the responsibility of the central office staff to consider the future needs of the school and district and recruit or develop talent accordingly. In the Dynamic Leadership Succession model (Peters, 2011), this process is known as forecasting. In addressing this challenge, Kingsberry, Peters-Hawkings, and Reed (2018) noted, "little attention has been paid to leadership succession as a mechanism directly impacting on school improvement, via the supply of talented individuals capable of acting strategically, given the position of

the school on its own improvement journey." Jacobson, Orr, and Young (2008) extended this further by adding that districts must create a program that is customized to local challenges and priorities to produce effective leaders.

All members of the central office administrative team lead the strategic planning and implementation of the district's mission and vision. All central office staff must work together to create and function in a system with a laser-like focus on supporting the work of the schools and their leaders (Knapp, Copland, Honig, Plecki, & Portin, 2010). The curriculum leader sets the direction through the development of curriculum and the delivery of instruction. This helps frame the types of teachers and leaders a district needs to achieve success. Furthermore, the role of the business administrator is to ensure that there is funding available to support this work, as a district's budget reflects its priorities. The human resources department's role in identifying, recruiting, developing, and retaining high quality principals is critical. Additionally, Hitt et al. (2012) offered the importance of screening passion and commitment for leadership as a component of selecting candidates for preparation programs. This work must be informed by data and district goals. Departments must know which institutions or organizations produced the district's top performers and intentionally form alliances with them (Strategic Management of Human Capital, 2009).

In addition to identifying potential external partnerships, human resources departments must be at the forefront of creating an internal pipeline from teacher leadership positions to principals (Strategic Management of Human Capital, 2009). Everyone involved in the interview process must be trained to use behavior-based interviewing in the selection process, which will improve hiring decisions (Hitt et al., 2012). In addition, those delivering professional

development to mid-level leadership must be consistently assessed to ensure that their content

aligns with the principles of the program and that delivery-quality is high.

Regarding the role of human resources in implementing this leadership program,

researchers describe the brand of education and the institution as a key factor. When reflecting

on the brand of a career in education, one researcher notes that, "How the education profession

presents itself in terms of the caliber of leaders in schools and school districts, and the conditions

under which they work, may be the best form of recruitment" (Hitt et al., 2012). This point

underscores the urgent need to pay attention to the reasons many teachers do not pursue positions

of leadership. Quality working conditions are a key consideration when developing a leadership

program (Hitt et al., 2012). Moreover, when designing leadership programs, the support provided

to novice leaders is critical, as they will need well-trained mentors.

While the procedural components of this process are primarily led by the human

resources department, researchers found some districts view principals as "glorified teachers," as

opposed to "executives with expertise in instruction, operations and finance—and the ability to

add others to their leadership teams who may possess the skills they don't already have" (Doyle

& Locke, 2014). This lack of autonomy and honor for the position also makes recruiting for the

position difficult.

Key Takeaways for the Role of Central Office Administrators

Utilizing a progression of assessments to select aspiring leaders was a benefit to districts.

They created a system that allowed interviewers to calibrate when assessing a candidate's skills.

Through the use of standards-based rubrics, interview protocols and performance tasks,

interviewers were better prepared to identify candidates who would likely succeed in their

program. This process engaged top-level leaders and included discussions of succession planning

and placement. Finally, the use of a leader tracking system allowed district leaders to follow the experiences of participants to make determinations regarding their most optimal placement (MacFarlane et al., 2015).

The prerequisites for principalship application must be clearly defined. Hillsborough County instituted a process that required the completion of its Preparing New Principals and Future Leader Academy. A revised preparation and interview process evaluates a district's capacity. In this regard, the capacity question is not only a matter of skill, but also a question of considering the time required to implement this process well. Implementing this process requires a huge investment of time. With that, a district must ask itself how district administrators will complete the other functions of their jobs, while implementing the interview process with consistency and fidelity. As districts implement new practices and modify old ones, transparency and clear communication are key. The success of the program is tied to its credibility. The moment teachers lose confidence in the integrity of the process, they no longer trust that they have equal access to the possibility of participating, and then, participation loses its prestige.

Existing Leadership Pipeline Programs

According to research conducted by The Wallace Foundation, there are four domains that require attention to positively impact district policy and practice regarding the development of the leadership pipeline. The first is that the standards for leadership are reflected in their job descriptions, their preparation, how they are selected and how they are supported. The second is that there is selective admission to pre-service programs. The third element is a selective hiring and placement process that gave great consideration to the compatibility between the school and the candidate. Finally, the support administrators provide teachers would be targeted to the needs identified by their evaluations (MacFarlane et al., 2015).

Revisiting leader standards is an important part of this process. It is difficult to prepare aspiring leaders for positions where expectations are unclear and standards are nebulous. In understanding the urgent need to develop quality principal pipelines, The Wallace Foundation (2015) noted,

> If an urban district and its principal training programs provide large numbers of talented, aspiring principals with the right 'pre-service' training and on-the-job evaluation and supports, the result will be a pipeline of principals able to improve teaching quality and student achievement district-wide, especially in schools with the greatest needs.

Reviewing Standards for School Leaders-Takeaways

One of the successes of this process is that districts viewed their standards documents as fluid and allowed themselves the freedom to update them after reflection. As a result of such reflection, the language of the standards was used to create curricula for the preparation program, to create hiring criteria and as tools for principals' evaluation and support. This naturally informed the professional development offerings and evolved into an ongoing reflective process (MacFarlane et al., 2015).

This research is clear that districts must examine how job descriptions, policies, practice, evaluations, and hiring processes align to standards. Reflecting on the impact of utilizing the standards in the leadership development process, one district official noted that candidates are assessed on particular competencies throughout their matriculation through the Future Leader Academy for Aspiring Principals. They collect data and assess those competencies through a tracking system. When leadership positions become available in the district, they refer to the competencies to identify whether a placement is an appropriate fit (MacFarlane et al., 2015).

For the pipeline process to be effective long-term, there must be clear leadership

standards utilized throughout the process: selection, preparation, and functioning in the principal

position. Likewise, the same standards should be used for assistant principals, so that they are

continuing to prepare for their role as a principal. While the expectation of competency level is

not the same as the expectation for a principal, assistant principals will be familiar with and

trained in the standards. When reflecting on the impact of having consistent standards in their

system, one district administrator shared the observation below:

> I think that what's really been working is that we now have a single consistent set of
>
> standards that is used through the entire trajectory of a principal's development and then
>
> work as principal. So, it's the same set of standards that we're using to select people for a
>
> principal preparation program, to evaluate their readiness to become a principal, and then
>
> to evaluate their work as a principal, as well as to drive the support that they're given in
>
> the principal role (MacFarlane et al., 2015).

Preservice Leader Preparation

There are key takeaways regarding successful districts' involvement in preservice leader

preparation. Districts did not rely on the formal preparation programs alone but instead also

developed their own program. To do this effectively, districts formed partnerships with

preparation programs and used data of programmatic elements and outcomes to inform the

components of their program (MacFarlane et al., 2015). This data includes the licensure

requirements various states have, which impacts the ease with which candidates can obtain

principal certification. There are a variety of requirements among six states; Georgia and Florida

require university preparation for candidates to receive principal certifications. Maryland,

Colorado, New York, and North Carolina, on the other hand, have approved alternate routes for

attaining the principal certification. This alternate route option provides more flexibility and control for local school districts.

Benefits of District-Run Preparation Programs

The benefits of a district-run preparation program are undeniable. The selective admissions process provided the district with a system to identify high-potential leaders. Additionally, district leaders who facilitated sessions were able to observe and assess the rising cohort of candidates. Finally, the curriculum could be tailored to the priorities and routines of the district and submerge the aspiring leaders into the district's culture (MacFarlane et al., 2015).

These programs provide an opportunity for district administrators to see aspiring leaders in leadership positions and determine whether they would be a good fit for the principal role. Additionally, coaching opportunities and areas in need of additional support are identified. However, participants not meeting the requirements could be counseled out of the program.

Summary

Considering the need for urban school districts to proactively address the lack of potential leaders in the profession, it is no surprise that many districts are partnering with higher education to develop an internal leadership pipeline. Regarding the drivers of the program, including its content and delivery, many of the programs had several factors in common. The underlying principle was succession theory. It would be short-sighted for any organization, particularly a school district, to make tremendous strides in teaching and learning and not protect their investments. Having an internal leadership pipeline is one way to address this. Chapter Three describes the methods I used to conduct research regarding an existing leadership development program in Paterson, New Jersey.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Procedures and methods used to gather data are included in this chapter. The chapter will describe various components of the research process: (1) population and sample studied (13 people), (2) instrumentation used, (3) data collected, and (4) description of how data was analyzed and reported.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how urban school districts design and implement leadership development programs for internal candidates. Another purpose of the study was to add to the field and practice so that urban districts desiring to design and implement such programs have research and examples of existing programs. The need for strong and consistent leadership in all districts—urban especially—is pronounced and ongoing.

Overarching Question

How does an urban district design and implement a leadership development program to identify and promote potential leaders in-district?

Research Questions

- What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals in urban districts?

- What are the factors that influence the design of the program?

- What is the role of central office staff (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director) in designing and implementing the program?

Population and Sample

The population interviewed in this study was school administrators and teachers who participated in the aspiring leaders program sponsored by Paterson Public Schools in Paterson, New Jersey. In addition, central office administrators and a university partner who designed the program also participated in the study.

Instrumentation

The study utilized interviews of Paterson Public School administrators in Paterson, NJ. This captured the reflections of past participants—noting both strengths and weaknesses of the program. Past participants noted the specific areas in which the program prepared them to be school leaders in an urban district. The study also included interviews with district administrators and a university partner who designed and implemented the program. Interviews were semi-structured. This provided an opportunity to pose the same questions to all participants, while also granting an opportunity for me to gather data that was helpful, but not a part of the original intent of the study. The research noted whether the program's design and implementation were consistent with established elements of an effective program.

The interviews lasted approximately thirty minutes and took place in one of the district's buildings. I developed a protocol, which is included in this chapter. Interviewees, who were contributors to the design and implementation of the program, were asked questions about their role and how they carried out their functions. Those who participated in the program were asked how they became aware of the program, the application process, the expectations for participation, and the process of them earning an administrative position in the district.

In addition to the interviews, I intended to analyze key documents associated with the design and implementation of the program: meeting minutes, program description, agendas, and communications regarding the program. However, these documents were not available for the same period in which the interviewees participated in the program. Paterson Public Schools was an appropriate case because it is an urban district that, in partnership with a local university, designed and created its own internal leadership development program to identify, recruit, and retain leaders. The subjects were members who matriculated through the Aspiring Leaders Program and were identified by the Paterson Public Schools, former central office administrators who designed and implemented the program, and a university partner who designed and implemented the program.

Rationale for Qualitative Design

The qualitative design allowed me to gather data about participants' perspective regarding their experiences as participants or designers of the program. This qualitative study focused heavily on interviews. As Biklen and Bogdan (2007) noted, using interviews is an effective way to gather data in the subjects' own words and identify themes based on the data. I designed specific interview questions and aligned those questions with the research questions. Gathering this data allowed for an analysis to identify trends and to improve the quality of planning and implementation.

Methods and Data Collection

I received approval from Dr. Jeron Campbell, the Chief Accountability Officer for Paterson Public Schools, to conduct the study. I secured the approval of the Internal Review

Board (IRB) to protect the identity of those being interviewed. The data is housed in a secure system to protect the identity of interviewees.

Reliability and Validity

I ensured the validity of the research in two ways: I spoke with those being interviewed to identify patterns in the data I collected to ensure that the interpretation of that data is not colored by my biases; I also triangulated data by looking at multiple data sources (interviews, documents, and the implementation process). I ensured the reliability of the research by creating an interview protocol, including the audio recording of interviews and data collection process. This produced a consistent interview process.

Data Analysis Plan and Coding Scheme

Interview recordings were transcribed and coded to ensure the sentiment of the interview was captured as accurately as possible. A software system was used to categorize data and align the data with the corresponding research questions. The coding was based on the research questions. After conducting this analysis, I identified the theory to which the data is connected.

- What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals?
- What are the factors that influence the design of the program?
- What is the role of key central office staff (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director) in designing and implementing the program?

Table 3

Interview Questions

Research Question Supporting	Interview Question	Interviewee
1. What is the role of key central office staff (superintendent, business office, the human resources department) in designing and implementing the program?	• How did you learn about the leadership development program? (1) • Describe the application process. (2) • Who communicated with you regarding program expectations and dates? (3) • How were candidates of interest identified? (10) • What are the various components of the program? (11) • Who was responsible for creating the components of the program? (11) • Who is responsible for implementing the program, and what are their specific	• Past participants • District administrators

	responsibilities? (12)	
	• Who facilitates meetings/sessions? (13)	
	• Describe the interview process for internal candidates applying for administrative positions. In what ways, if at all, was this process different than the process of candidates who did not matriculate through the program? (15)	
	• What percentage of the participants have earned administrative positions (supervisor or higher) in the district? (14)	
2. What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals?	• What was your understanding of the program's purpose? (4)	• Past participants
	• What was your expectation of the program when entering it? (5)	
	• Do you think participating in this program helped to prepare	

	you to lead in the district? If so, how? (8)	
5. What are the factors that influenced the design of the program?	• Did the program meet your expectations? (6) • What would you recommend to improve the experience for future participants? (7) • What factors did you take into consideration to create the program? (9)	• Past participants • District administrators

Ethical Consideration

As a qualitative researcher, I had to be cognizant of my own biases regarding leadership development programs. As a result, it was critical to take notes that reflected what was actually said, as opposed to my interpretation of what was said.

Summary

Chapter Three includes a description of the study design, as well as the interview protocol and its connection to the research questions. It also includes a description of the population, data collection process, and data analysis process.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter outlines the outcome and analysis of the research and a synopsis of the context in which the study took place. It explores themes that developed throughout the research, as well as their connection to the three research questions.

Over time, public schools have evolved into highly complex institutions with many more questions to answer and challenges to face than were ever present in the days of John Dewey. Both the role of teacher and leader have expanded to include responsibilities that were once foreign to public schools. This complexity is exacerbated in urban schools, where students' personal needs compete with the academic priorities of school, and limited resources demand teachers and leaders to be creative and adept. For this reason, the challenge of recruiting and retaining quality leaders in urban schools has increasingly become commonplace. Identifying this unique skillset and attracting qualified candidates has eluded many urban districts and forced them to employ more creative strategies to meet their distinct leadership needs. One of those strategies is to develop an internal pipeline to develop leaders from within the district (Zigler et al., 2007).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how an urban school district designed and implemented a leadership development program for internal candidates. In addition, the study can add to the field of practice so that urban districts seeking to implement such a strategy can use this as an example during their design and implementation. This work is

critical, as the needs of urban schools become more complex, and the need for strong leadership becomes more urgent.

The context of this study was Paterson Public Schools, an urban district in New Jersey with 54 schools. The district consists of schools with pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. Of the 54 schools in the district, 5 are designated as a "priority school", and 19 are designated as a "focus school." A priority school is a school that has been identified as among the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools in the state over the past three years, or any non-Title I school that would otherwise have met the same criteria. A focus school is a school that has room for improvement in areas that are specific to the school (http://www.nj.gov/education/reform/ PFRschools/TechnicalGuidance.pdf, n.d.). This is significant data, as these designations reflect the pressure school leaders face in their efforts to advance student achievement in their building. There were 13 participants in this study: 9 former program participants (from the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years), 3 district administrators who influenced some aspects of the design, and 1 university partner who designed and implemented the program. Three of the 9 past participants interviewed were teachers when they entered the program and have since become administrators in the district. The study was conducted in the winter of the 2017–2018 school year.

After a review of the literature, I developed questions to interview the 13 subjects. Prior to conducting interviews, I vetted the questions for reliability with a panel of experts in urban education. The purpose of the questions was to gain an understanding of how an urban district designed and implemented a leadership development program to identify and promote potential leaders in the district. It is important to note that some aspects of the program were developed in collaboration with a university partner. The purpose of the interviews was to gather data to answer the three research questions below:

1. What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals in urban districts?

2. What are factors that influenced the design of the program? and

3. What is the role of central office staff (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director) in designing and implementing the program?

Themes: Research Question 1

Research Question 1: What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals in urban districts?

This question presupposes that recruiting strong principals is a challenge for urban school districts. Establishing this provides context for and gives credence to the need to create internal leadership development programs. Interview questions 4, 5, 8, and 15 addressed this research question and were asked of both past participants and administrators.

The major themes for this question were the uniqueness of leading in an urban environment and the lack of funds for offering a competitive salary. When reflecting on the unique skillset required to lead effectively in an urban environment, Subject #10, a former assistant superintendent, shared her experience in this process: "When searching for candidates we were looking for well-rounded leaders that could be instructional leaders, managers, motivators and had great people skills. This is a skillset that is not found easily." Expounding on the uniqueness of leading an urban school, the former assistant superintendent discussed the ability to manage crises daily, while also meeting the academic and social-emotional needs of students. She talked about the pressure of leading in an environment where these factors are at work:

In a low-performing school or a school in need of improvement, you deal with crises.

You deal with social, emotional issues. You have the socio-economic issues of the

families. You have the curriculum issues, which are perhaps impacted by the fact that

maybe in a low-performing school, the children come with delayed development in their

skills. "Do I have what it takes to deal with crises every day as a leader?"

There was agreement among the central office administrators that their recruitment

challenge was directly tied to being in an urban environment, as opposed to encountering a

dearth of leaders. One of the discoveries of the central office administrative team was that while

some leaders are brilliant, they not prepared to lead in an urban environment. Subject #222, also

a former central office administrator, program designer, and facilitator, noted this simply,

"…after the simulation was done, they [facilitators] did look at some of the results of the data

and say, 'Um, good potential, but not for the setting.'" Furthermore, according to the district

administrators, there are nuances of working in an urban district that may be lost on those

unfamiliar with the context. Subject #9, another former assistant superintendent, recalled his

experience as a principal when he understood the behavior changes of students on Mondays and

Fridays:

We have a lot of social ills, a lot of community ills, a lot of poverty that we deal with. I

can tell you as a principal, I realized that my Mondays and Fridays are never the same,

because Mondays I'm dealing with all the things that happened over the weekend, and

Fridays, I thought it was because it was Friday, but I realized later in my career it was

Friday because some kids did not wanna [*sic*] go back to what they had to deal with the

weekend. And these things just happen. So, we deal with a lot of stuff that we as

educators should be dealing with if that's the community we serve; understand that's part.

This is where the education comes in, but we get fixated on the constructs of, it has to be

this curriculum.

This same former assistant superintendent noted that the unique skills are not limited to

managing internal relationships but must be expanded to external partners. While this is not

unique to urban school districts, it is a layer that is added to the other challenges that they

balance and manage daily. In pointing out the need to navigate the political landscape, he

recalled that Paterson is a very unique school district in terms of the push and pull of politics. He

further described how one of the benefits of cultivating internal leaders is that they are privy to

the political climate of the district and know how to navigate it to avoid landmines to the greatest

extent possible.

In addition to the need for urban school leaders to have a particular skillset, not having a

competitive salary was a stumbling block in hiring qualified candidates. Subject #10 (a former

assistant superintendent) reflected on this handicap and its impact on the district's ability to hire

candidates. Candidates of choice would accept an offer in a district that offered better pay with

fewer stressors:

> One of the biggest challenges, if not the biggest, was that our salaries were not as
>
> competitive as those in surrounding districts. We often lost great candidates to districts
>
> that offered higher pay. Candidates who had already accepted a position [in Paterson]
>
> would decline after receiving a higher paying offer elsewhere. This would sometimes
>
> happen weeks or days before opening schools, which would create an issue to ensure we
>
> had no vacancies in the principal seats.

In these scenarios, budgetary limitations dictated the limits of the candidates' potential

salaries. To ensure that buildings were covered with an administrator, district administrators

would fill the principal position with an internal candidate who would otherwise not be selected. While this practice was not the most ideal to advance teaching and learning, it satisfied the mandate to have an administrator in the building, while also not going outside of the budgetary constraints. In discussing this nuance, Subject #10 (former assistant superintendent) discussed how the budget dictated their choice of less desirable internal candidates:

> Another challenge was budget related—when cuts or reductions in budget came about, we were unable to hire the most qualified candidates because the positions had to be back-filled with inside staff even if we knew they may not possess the skillset required for the principal role.

> Subject #9 (a former assistant superintendent) asserted that to fully understand the lack of

suitable candidates to lead urban schools, there must first be an examination of the lack of respect for the teaching profession overall. As a result, it is difficult to recruit teachers into the profession, and if recruiting into the profession overall is a challenge, recruiting high quality candidates to lead in urban districts is, therefore, an even greater feat. Teaching, he believes, is not held in the same regard as other professions—particularly those with higher paying salaries. He expounds on that point below:

> In other countries, especially in Latin America, the teacher, they are kept at the highest…So if the profession is not respected, then it brings up together things. Why must I go to college and major in education as compared to other professions when I know when I get out, I'm only starting at 75 [thousand dollars] where other professions are now starting at 210 [thousand dollars], 175 [thousand dollars] off the bat. There is a stigma there. Waste all this time in school. The other part about our profession is that, there is a notion out there that anybody could be a teacher; all they have to do is go

alternate route. So even your college prep is not specific. Anybody. In other words, if you

weren't successful, you can fall back on this. You have that, you have the salary. If you

get your cert, if you just go through all this other stuff. So, if there is also an inner-city

school district where you're dealing with a lot of issues, sometimes, the pool is not as

strong.

Themes: Research Question 2

What are the factors that influenced the design of the program?

Overall, the factors that influenced the program design are the reasons that make

recruiting urban school leaders such a challenge. Interview questions 6, 7, 8, and 12 garnered

responses to this research question. Some of the themes that were present in these responses were

instructional leadership, crisis management, change management, political savvy, understanding

the community they serve, and self-awareness of their strengths and challenges as leaders. The

overall need for the program was a proactive step in anticipation of upcoming administrative

openings. Subject #10 (a former assistant superintendent) observed the need to create the

program:

> Actually, I believe that the biggest factor was that we knew that we were going to be
>
> hiring leaders—that we were looking at the population of leaders that we had. And when
>
> I say that, I refer to the principals and the vice principals that were sitting at the time, and
>
> we could see that some were considering retirement or perhaps leaving the district. And
>
> so, we wanted to begin to develop a cohort from within of leaders that could take on
>
> those roles eventually.

Additionally, Subject #9 (a former assistant superintendent) noted that cultivating leaders from within is beneficial because they can leverage pre-existing relationships in the community to accomplish their leadership goals:

Then you started to see the people from within actually understood the community, understood the Paterson culture a lot better, and actually had more resources to tap into because of relationships within the district. Knowing where to acquire resources, and also knowing what landmines to avoid, I think, was very beneficial for leadership development from within.

The university partner discussed her approach to writing the curriculum for the program, noting that Paterson's Strategic Plan was the driving force behind the design. If the district were to succeed at achieving the goals of its Strategic Plan, then it would be incumbent on its future leaders to understand what actions and skills were necessary to do so. She said,

I wrote the curriculum on Paterson's Strategic Plan the first year. Then I continued to use Paterson's Strategic Plan as it [the program] evolved in the subsequent years, making modifications as I went along for two reasons. The compositions of groups change over the years and as the work of the district and my work evolved I found that the Aspiring Leaders knew more about leadership and Paterson's priorities than the very first group did.

One past participant, Subject #12, who is now a leader in another district, discussed how the Aspiring Leaders Program introduced her to the district's Strategic Plan and her role in implementing it:

I didn't know what the district Strategic Plan was until I was actually in the Aspiring Leaders Program where part of the work was actually researching the plan and seeing

how the work I did fit in that plan or whether or not it fit. I think that prepared me for the role of a supervisor in that it wasn't just curriculum. There were all these pieces that kind of work together and recognizing that the part of curriculum that I was responsible for had a role in it ... There was a plan for what that work should look like and that I should be working aligned to that plan and the action steps of that plan, rather than what I thought worked best.

In addition to the study of the Strategic Plan, the university partner anchored the curriculum in Ron Edmonds' (1979) effective schools research. Knowing that the goals of the Strategic Plan were an outgrowth of Edmonds' work, the university partner regarded his effective school principles as a vehicle to accomplish the work of the Strategic Plan, thus an appropriate curricular base to train aspiring leaders. The university partner recalled forming the alignment among Paterson's Strategic Plan, Edmonds' effective schools research, and Mid-content Research for Education and Learning's (McREL) leadership research:

It was mostly based on the effective school principles. I would say 90% of it was based on that along with McREL research on the change process. Paterson's Strategic Plan, from my perception, really came mostly from the research that Ron Edmonds did on effective schools. We certainly looked at McREL's research on change on the different levels of change process. We looked at the research in the different areas that was Paterson's Strategic Plan. We looked at the research on teacher evaluation…which was McREL and Danielson. We looked at the research again, that McREL did on using data to improve instruction. Then we looked at the research in specific areas that Paterson was looking to improve: literacy, positive student behavior, intervention strategies, the impact of poverty on student achievement—those types of things.

One of the former assistant superintendents (Subject #9) who contributed to the development of the curriculum also recalled the topics of tenure and teacher evaluation, as New Jersey had recently adopted a new regulation regarding teacher evaluations and their impact on tenure acquisition. He also recalled a focus on the use of assessment data to drive instruction and the impact of culture and climate on teaching and learning. With all of the planning involved, the former assistant superintendent noted that the program design still allowed for fluidity, "…the conversation, the topics were really flexible, and Dr.___ kind of let the group dictate where they wanted to go. In terms of the conversation, [it] developed in different stages."

With those foundational components identified, there were many aspects that were completely unknown or vaguely known to the participants. As a result, the program's design provided a venue for participants to see schools, the district, and leadership through a different lens. One former assistant superintendent (Subject #10) recalled participants' response to the practical design of the program:

> Everything from how to work with difficult parents, to managing budget, to the teacher evaluation. They wanted to understand the behind-the-scenes of how central office operates, and I remember it was almost like an 'A-ha' moment for some of the teachers when they heard that there's layers of decision-making down in the central administration in a district. That yes, the superintendent certainly is the one that makes the ultimate decision, but they were somewhat surprised that before he reaches a decision, there were layers and other things that were considered and many meetings and many back-and-forth discussions and things like that.

The program's curriculum on the change process had a strong impact on Subject #5:

What was told to us as the purposed outcome was to identify leaders who will eventually

be able to be the leader of a turnaround school, and be able to have the tools to turn

around a failing school. I feel that they properly prepared us. The leadership component,

everything that they did, it went step by step, from beginning to end on what we would

need to do, in order to be an effective turnaround leader. From articles to projects,

collaborating with other leaders…

In addition to exposing participants to ideas and information, the program was also

intended to provide the participants with a safe space to share their thinking as emerging leaders.

Since so much of this information was new to them and they had not yet had many opportunities

to implement their learning, part of the design's strength was to build a community of thinkers

where cohort members could examine challenges together and test their thinking. Subject #4

shared her response to this element of the program's design:

I felt like the group that was there was very diverse in their thinking and the way that we

talked about topics. I loved the debate. And just to hear the different ways people

approach problems…And even that type of scenario. When people say, "You know what,

what will you do in the Y and the reasoning behind it?" And that was my greatest benefit.

I think that I enjoy the listening to ... the argument of ... the issues just being presented in

different ways.

Knowing the emotional, intellectual, and physical investment urban school leadership

requires, one component of the program was designed to talk with leaders about making their

well-being a priority. Participants noted their appreciation of this facet, as they had not

considered that aspect of leadership prior to participating in the program. Subject #5 marked how

this portion of the program helped her identify her strengths and weaknesses as a leader and to invest in herself so that she can be more valuable to her students and staff:

> It helped you to identify and recognize your strengths and weaknesses as person, and as leader. It went through the spiritual aspect of who you are as a person, and making sure that your emotional bank account is where it needs to be, so that you can truly give to your staff, and give to your students, and serve at your highest, best self.

Subject #14 reflected on the importance of this component, as it prompted her to constantly remind herself of why she chose to become a leader:

> …The spiritual aspect of the leader. That part I really enjoyed because I really do believe that as a leader, it is who you are as a person, that you can't really be one person as an individual and the other person as a leader. You have to be who you are and it has to be genuine. Just always looking from within and I guess being very positive and understanding always what your purpose is and why you're choosing to be in the role that you are.

Themes: Research Question 3

What is the role of the central office staff (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director) in designing and implementing the program?

The role of the central office staff in designing and implementing the program was limited. While the central office staff provided feedback and ideas for the program's content, the overall design of the program was driven by its university partner. Interview questions 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 were designed to gather responses to this research question. The superintendent provided the framework for the program through the district's Strategic Plan, and

the university partner designed the program around the elements of the Strategic Plan. In recalling central office's role in the program design, former assistant superintendent, Subject #9 noted, "She did have certain topics that she would discuss. She did ask us if we thought they were good topics, and I think we were all aligned on the same page with that." The central office staff were also invited to speak to the group regarding topics with which they were most familiar and experienced. Former assistant superintendent, Subject #10, recalled that central office staff were invited to speak to the cohort from their perspective, highlighting the work they did as assistant superintendents. They also shared their idea of what a good leader is and what they were looking for in the leaders that were developing through the program.

Based on responses from past participants, central office staff members and the university partner, the role of the central office staff was primarily administrative regarding program implementation. Their greatest role was at the beginning of the program and after participants completed the program. They were responsible for identifying participants who would benefit from the program and would ultimately serve as effective leaders in the district. Former assistant superintendent, Subject #9, recalled when the superintendent introduced the idea to the cabinet:

> Initially, it was a concept that the superintendent of schools had brought to his cabinet level in terms of theory, and what he wanted to do to create an Aspiring Leaders program…He had asked me to first of all, if there was anybody that I knew of that could have been successful in this program, individuals that had leadership qualities, or individuals that I may have thought wanted to be an administrator within the school system.

The second greatest responsibility of central office staff in this process was to manage the hiring process for leaders—a process which sometimes included candidates who had gone

through the Aspiring Leaders Program. When asked if the expectations of the hiring committee were a bit more rigorous for candidates who had gone through the program, former assistant superintendent, Subject# 10, responded affirmatively, "Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. With those candidates, we were expecting to see certain reactions, certain responses. We were expecting a little bit more from them because they had gone through this process, without a doubt."

Summary

In this chapter, interview responses were shared to answer the overarching research question, "How does an urban district design and implement a leadership development program to identify and to promote leaders in-district?" The results of the interviews with 9 former participants, 3 former district administrators, and 1 university partner reveal responses to the interview questions that suggest the program was intentionally designed and made its desired impact on participants. Chapter Five explores how these findings align with the research, as well as outlines recommendations for policy, practice, and future studies.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a synopsis of the research study, outlines major themes, and provides recommendations for policy, practice, and future studies. The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand how urban school districts design and implement leadership development programs for internal candidates. Another purpose of the study is to add to the field and practice so that urban districts desiring to design and implement such a program have research and examples of existing programs. The need for strong and consistent leadership in all districts— urban ones in particular—is pronounced and ongoing.

Considering the research on leadership development programs, there are several models that serve this purpose. While some models are facilitated by an institute of higher learning, others are a partnership between school districts and a local partner—typically the state's department of education or an institute of higher learning. In either case, there is agreement among districts and partners regarding the attributes of effective leaders. The challenge is not the identification of the content, but providing appropriate training for leaders. Moreover, in an urban environment, there must be a strong commitment to training and retaining high caliber leaders to promote continued growth in teaching and learning.

The Wallace Foundation examined partnerships with urban districts whose purpose was to grow their own leaders from within the district. Some included an internship experience, while others included paid sabbatical leave (The Wallace Foundation, 2013). Nevertheless, the purpose of this study was to examine the design and implementation of such work in Paterson Public Schools in Paterson, New Jersey.

To gather data for this qualitative study, the sample consisted of 13 interviewees: 9 former program participants (2014–15 and 2015–16 school years), 3 district administrators who influenced some aspects of the design, and 1 university partner who designed and implemented the program. Three of the 9 past participants interviewed were teachers when they entered the program and have since become administrators in the district. The study was conducted in the winter of the 2017–2018 school year.

Research Questions

Below are the three research questions that informed the study:

1. What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals in urban districts?
2. What are the factors that influenced the design of the program?
3. What is the role of central office staff (superintendent, assistant superintendents, business administrator, and human resources director) in designing and implementing the program?

Summary and Discussion of the Findings

The challenges of urban education are many: poverty, limited social resources, and burned-out educators, among other factors. With these challenges mounting, the task of securing qualified and steady leadership is one of the greatest difficulties facing urban education. Urban educators make an intentional decision to serve those communities, understanding that the commitment requires more than teaching content and standards and that they will face barriers in their work. Some barriers are known before the commitment is made, and others are revealed as the days unfold. Nevertheless, committing to teach and lead in an urban environment requires a unique skillset that not all educators possess.

With knowledge of this distinctive skillset and having experienced a shortage in qualified candidates, many school districts have developed programs to create a leadership pipeline from within. By doing this, they affirm the approach that many corporations have taken for years— build leadership, retain quality employees, and sustain the culture through developing leaders from within the company. The design and implementation of such a program in an urban school district was the focus of this study. Moreover, the examination of the role of central office staff in designing and implementing the program was of equal interest.

Research Question 1

What are the challenges of recruiting strong principals to urban districts?

When people are not equipped, they experience failure. People like to feel that their work is meaningful and that there is an opportunity for them to be successful. Moreover, they like to know that they can be successful—not that they are fighting an uphill battle that can never be won. They want to feel respected for their work and appropriately compensated monetarily. They want to make sure they have the resources—finances, time, and human resources—to accomplish the work set before them. The findings of this study aligned with the work of Darling-Hammond et al. (2007). Extended work hours, low salary, and lack of support are elements of the work environment that make recruiting qualified and willing candidates a challenge. Additionally, this study revealed that while leaders may be intellectually brilliant, not everyone is equipped to serve in an urban school environment

What are the factors that influence the design of the program?

The design of the program was influenced by the district's Strategic Plan, the stated needs as expressed by the participants, and Edmonds' research. Additionally, the need for the program was largely due to the district anticipating its long-term future leadership needs as a result of retirements and its short-term leadership needs as a result of resignations. This anticipation was consistent with the Dynamic Leadership Succession (DLS) model component known as forecasting. Although the program's design did not strictly follow the planning element of the DLS model, elements of this planning were present when some participants also met with the building leaders that they would likely succeed as a transition process. While there was structure, there was enough room to accommodate needs that arose from the participants. One of the strengths of the program was that it linked theory to practice—a key component that many pre-service programs lack (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007).

Additionally, when the university partner and the district noticed the diversity of experience and roles among the participants, they began to design program variations that would best meet the needs of its mixed group. This is the approach that Lehigh University and Philadelphia Public Schools took when designing and implementing their program.

In the Paterson Program, some participants received one-on-one mentoring, and some did not. The practice of providing a mentor as a best practice, is suggested by Darling-Hammond et al. (2007). Subject #5 had a mentor and reflected on its great value to her. The connection was so strong that she still maintains a relationship with her mentor. In addition to the mentoring component, Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) noted the importance of financial support for a leadership development program. The Paterson Program had financial support, which provided a

stipend to one of the two cohorts interviewed. The Paterson Program was funded by a federal grant for which they competed. As a result of the grant's expiration and discontinuance, the District could not offer each facet of the program to both cohorts. While this was a disappointment for some, it did not lessen the overall impact of the program for them.

The portion of the program that focused on the leader as a person and his or her well-being was an aspect that many noted as an unexpected benefit of the program. It is a critical component that can easily be overlooked in a leadership development program, yet ignoring it in practice could be disastrous. Silverman (2005) discusses this principle in her article about successful urban school leaders and the mandate for self-care.

Research Question 3

What is the role of central office staff in designing and implementing the program?

For the most part, central office staff provided feedback and guidance regarding the curriculum the university partner created. They participated in sessions by responding to specific questions participants had and to provide a real-time context for the curriculum taught. Central office staff also provided administrative support to the program.

While central office staff had very clear expectations among themselves regarding the prerequisite requirements of participants, those requirements were not clearly articulated to participants. The district followed the framework of Darling-Hammond et. al. (2007) by identifying participants who were successful classroom teachers, were successful in leading adults in some context, and demonstrated passion and commitment to leadership. Unlike the research, the participants in Paterson did not require an advanced degree to participate. The lack of communication led some participants to initially believe that the invitation to participate was punitive, as opposed to seeing it as an honor and potential opportunity for advancement.

Those who participated in the Aspiring Leaders Program in Paterson did not accept the invitation in hopes that there would be tremendous financial gain; however, their expectation was that there would be more leadership opportunities available to them upon completing this program. As noted by Hitt et al. (2012), most educators do not pursue the profession in hopes of becoming financially wealthy. Instead, their desire was to engage in work that they believed was meaningful and impactful.

The way the district recruits and selects for professional positions is another aspect of the framework outlined by Darling-Hammond et al. (2007). One component of that process is to "structure career ladders for educational leaders." This is critical if the program is to fulfill its intent and have credibility in the district. Subject #12 left Paterson to work in another district where she could lead in the manner that the program taught her. Two others, who remain in the district, expressed their disappointment about not receiving an opportunity to lead. The key is to identify how to meaningfully engage alumni of the program so that their time in the program is honored, and they have an opportunity to use what they have learned.

Somewhat consistent with the San Diego model, Paterson's university partner led the creation of the curriculum with confirmation from the district's central office team that the curriculum was appropriate. The model was not completely co-teaching (between Paterson and the university partner), as the central office staff made guests appearances during several sessions. Former assistant superintendent, Subject #222, observed internal candidates' ability to navigate the local political arena is an example of what Darling-Hammond's reference to the principal's need to nimbly interface with various populations Darling-Hammond et al. (2007). Through this program, central office staff discerned which participants had this ability, as well as which were best suited to lead in an urban environment.

Recommendations for Policy, Practice, and Future Studies

Recommendations for policy

Participation in this program is a big investment of time for aspiring leaders. It is important for the district to secure funds for participants to receive a stipend. Secondly, each participant should take a pre- and post-assessment to measure the impact of their participation on their leadership IQ. Finally, institutions of higher learning must revisit their curricular offerings regarding urban school leadership. There must be some distinct offerings to equip leaders to lead in this unique environment.

Recommendations for practice

In addition to utilizing the program to develop leaders within the district, the Aspiring Leaders Program was also a vehicle to retain top talent. Some aspiring leaders found that when they went to implement what they were learning, they were rebuffed by their leaders. This contradicts the purpose of having the program—to grow leaders from within and to retain them. As a result, some left the district to work in districts that were more amenable to some of the approaches that the aspiring leaders learned. For future practice, districts may consider exposing central office administrators to the same sessions that those in the Aspiring Leaders Program attended. This will empower central office administrators to provide an opportunity for the aspiring leaders to practice what they are learning and continue to grow.

Central office staff must institute ways in which participants can engage as leaders once they complete the program. One of the unintended consequences of this program could be that it further exacerbates the retention challenge because people who complete the program expect to lead. However, the district did not have plans for them upon their exit from the program.

It is critical for participants to know why they were chosen to participate in the program. Many participants consistently stated that they did not know why they were chosen, and it diminished the exclusivity of the program. Part of the pride of being in the program is that there were high standards for selection. Ideally, the entire program should be laid out for participants to see an intentional progression: aspiring leaders, transformational leaders, and turn-around leaders. Some participants were unsure of the connection between the phases, while others were clear about the connection. As a result of the expired grant, the District was unable to forecast the program's continuation or structure.

Furthermore, the design of the program should be more collaborative to include central office administrators and external partners. Lastly, districts must review their Strategic Plans and ensure their program's goals are aligned with it. Moreover, there must be overall alignment to the program for each part of the organization, particularly central office administration.

Recommendations for future studies

Conducting this research raised questions for several future studies. How does mentoring add value to new leaders in urban school districts? After reading that some leadership development programs include a mentoring component, and learning that some participants in the Paterson program were assigned a mentor, it would be valuable to know mentoring's impact on this experience. Additional, future studies could pursue these questions: What is the average length of time that leaders remain in the district after completing an internal leadership program? Why do they stay? What percentage of leaders leave the district within one year after completing the program? Why do they leave? This would help identify whether or not the leadership development program is an effective talent retention tool and what districts must do to protect the investment they made into this leadership development program. Finally, another future

study could be how are universities preparing leaders for urban schools? This is a critical question because in order to be relevant and impactful, university programs must respond to the needs in the field.

Summary

The aspiring leaders program in Paterson Public Schools in Paterson, New Jersey incorporated key elements identified in literature as components of an effective model. The curriculum was based on the needs and priorities of the district and included opportunities for participants to put theory into practice. The cohort model was an effective model, as it provided opportunities for participants to test their thinking in a safe environment among peers. While some participants had mentors, not all participants did. There was no explanation of this difference, other than limitations in funding. It was this distinction that led me to ponder the impact of a mentor on a participant's experience and to recommend it as a future study and to recommend as a matter of policy that funding for the program and mentoring is secured.

In the Paterson model, the university partner took the lead in creating curriculum with input from the district administrators. In the effective models, district administrators took a more active role in creating the curriculum. For this reason, I recommend that future models give more voice to the district administrators in the creation and implementation of the program. This impacts the continued growth and development of other district leaders, as some in Paterson were not prepared for the new ideas of those who participated in the aspiring leaders program.

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APPENDIX A

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Marnie McKoy** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 08/20/2016.

Certification Number: 2129448.

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

1 8 5 6

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT & POLICY

APPROVAL FOR DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Candidate, _Marnie G. McKoy_, has successfully completed all requisite requirements. This candidate's proposal has been reviewed and the candidate may proceed to collect data according to the approved proposal for dissertation under the direction of the mentor and the candidate's dissertation committee.

If there are substantive differences between what has been approved and the actual study, the final dissertation should indicate, on separate pages in the Appendix, the approval of the committee for those changes.

Title of Proposed Dissertation:

How does an urban district design and implement a leadership development program to identify and to promote leaders in-district?

Dissertation Committee:

Anthony Colella Ph.D.   Signature/Date 10/17/17
Mentor (Print Name)

Jeffrey A. Robinson, PhD
Committee Member (Print Name)   **Signature/Date**

Dana A. Freemon Ed.D   11/8/0
Committee Member (Print Name)   **Signature/Date**

_____   _____
Committee Member (Print Name)   **Signature/Date**

_____   _____
Committee Member (Print Name)   **Signature/Date**

18

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**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION OR
RELATED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

<u>**All material must be typed.**</u>

PROJECT TITLE: _____ _How does an urban district design and implement a leadership development program to_
identify and to promote potential leaders in-district?

_____

_____

_____

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

In making **this application,** I(we) certify that I(we) have read and understand the University's policies and procedures governing research, development, and related activities involving human subjects. I (we) shall comply with the letter and spirit of those policies. I(we) further acknowledge my(our) obligation to (1) obtain written approval of significant deviations from the originally-approved protocol BEFORE making those deviations, and (2) report immediately all adverse effects of the study on the subjects to the Director of the Institutional Review Board, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079.

_____   10/12/17
RESEARCHER(S)   DATE

**Please print or type out names of all researchers below signature.
Use separate sheet of paper, if necessary.**

My signature indicates that I have reviewed the attached materials of my student advisee and consider them to meet IRB standards.

_____   10/17/17
RESEARCHER'S FACULTY ADVISOR [for student researchers only]
DATE

Please print or type out name below signature

The request for approval submitted by the above researcher(s) was considered by the IRB for Research Involving Human Subjects Research at the _____ Dec 2017 _____ meeting.

The application was approved ✓ not approved ___ by the Committee. Special conditions were _____ were not ✓ set by the IRB. (Any special conditions are described on the reverse side.)

_____   12/18/17
Seton Hall University
3/2005

APPENDIX D

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Data, Accountability, and Technology
90 Delaware Avenue, Paterson NJ 07503
Data Office: 973-321-0813   Technology Office: (973) 321-0905

Jeron T. Campbell, Ed. L.D.
Chief Data, Accountability, and Technology Officer
jtcampbell@paterson.k12.nj.us

Eileen Shafer
Acting State District Superintendent

October 30, 2017

Ms. Marnie McKoy
Seton Hall Doctoral Candidate
Jubilee Hall
400 South Orange Ave.
South Orange, NJ 07079

Ms. Marnie McKoy,

Thank you for your interest in conducting research in the Paterson Public Schools. I have reviewed your proposal titled "How does an urban district design and implement a leadership development program to identify and to promote potential leaders in district?" I have also communicated with Susana Peron, Acting Deputy Superintendent for Paterson Public Schools. Based upon her feedback and willingness to support your work, your proposal is approved.

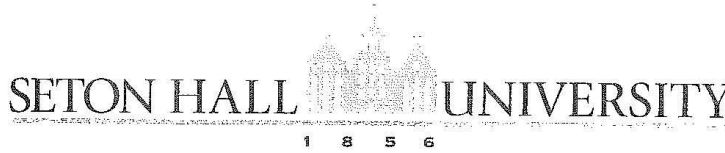I wish you the best in your effort to conduct research with Paterson Public Schools.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the Office of Data and Accountability at (973)321-2244.

Cordially,

Jeron T. Campbell, Ed.L.D
Paterson Public Schools

cc: Susana Peron

Preparing All Children for College and Career

APPENDIX E

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
1 8 5 6

Informed Consent Form

RESEARCHER: The researcher, Marnie G. McKoy, is completing a doctoral dissertation in K-12 School Administration at Seton Hall University, College of Education and Human Services, Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy.

TITLE OF THE STUDY: How does an urban district design and implement a leadership development program to identify and to promote potential leaders in-district?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how an urban district designs and implements a leadership development program to identify and to promote potential leaders in-district. Participants will be involved in a thirty minute interview.

Procedures

Participants will participate in a thirty minute interview that will take place at your school or a mutually agreed upon location. If participants give permission to be audio taped, the researcher will do so. If participants do not grant permission to audio tape, the researcher will take notes.

Before the session, the researcher will explain the study. The participants will select a ficticious name that will be used throughout the study. The researcher will then pose questions that are related to the study.

Instrument

The instrument is a set of interview questions regarding participation in or development of the leadership program. Sample questions are below:

- How did you learn about the leadership development program?
- Describe the application process.
- What was your understanding of the program's purpose? What was your expectation of the program when entering it?
- What factors did you take into consideration to create the program?

Voluntary Nature of the Project
Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants are free to end their participation at any time. Discontinuing participation will not involve any penalty or loss of benefits to which participants would otherwise be entitled.

Anonymity
No information that can be used to identify the participant is acquired for this study. No one will ever be able to link the data to a specific individual.

Confidentiality
Each participant's data will be assigned a participant number, and only this number will be used in reference to the data. Numbers cannot be matched to specific participants.

Records
Data will be password protected and stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home. Any external storage devices used will also be kept in this locked cabinet. Only the researcher and the three members of the dissertation committee will have access to the data.

Risks or Discomforts
There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts involved in this study.

Benefits
There are no direct benefits to participants for taking part in this study. However, the information gained from this study may increase the effectiveness of urban districts in creating a leadership development program, as well as assist boards in creating policy and budgeting resources for such programs.

Remuneration
There are no monetary benefits from participation in this study.

Compensation for Minimal Risk
This study does not involve any risk to participants; therefore, no compensation is offered.

Alternatives to the Research Study
There are no alternative means of participation in this research study.

Contact Information

If participants have questions about their rights as a participant, they may contact Seton Hall University IRB at (973) 313-6314 or email at irb@shu.edu.

Seton Hall University
Institutional Review Board

DEC 1 8 2017

Approval Date

Expiration Date

DEC 1 8 2018

If participants have questions about the research, they may contact Marnie G. McKoy, the researcher and Seton Hall student, at (908) 208-0530 or marnie.mckoy@student.shu.edu, or they may contact her faculty advisor, Dr Anthony Colella, at (732) 539-0412 or ajcolella@icloud.com.

Participant Consent:

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study, and I am at least 18 years of age. A copy of this signed and dated Informed Consent will be provided to you.

Agreement to be Audi-Recorded or Not:

____ I agree to be audio recorded.

___ I do not agree to be audio recorded.

| Participant Name (Print) | Participant Signature | Date |

Seton Hall University
Institutional Review Board

DEC 1 8 2017

Approval Date

Expiration Date

DEC 1 8 2018

Marnie G. McKoy

███████████

Dear Administrator:

I am currently enrolled as a doctoral student in the College of Education at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. A major part of my program is to complete a research study, and I am very interested in your participation in the leadership development program sponsored by Paterson Public Schools.

I am conducting interviews with past participants and district administrators who designed and implemented the program. The individual interviews are approximately thirty minutes and will be digitally recorded. I will schedule the interview with you based on your availability.

Participation in this research study is voluntary, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If at any time you decide that you do not want to participate you may stop. To protect your identity, a number will be assigned to you. This number will be used during the process, and all data collection, analysis and reporting will be coded to protect your privacy.

All data will be stored on a password protected USB drive, which will be locked in a file box.

The information obtained from this research study will remain confidential. You will also be provided a consent form to sign and return to me if you are interested in participating. If you are interested in participating in this study, please email me at marnie.mckoy@student.shu.edu or contact me by phone at (908) 208-0530. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marnie G. McKoy, Doctoral Student

Seton Hall University