2016

Legal, Moral, and Transformational Leadership for our School Districts and Universities

Pauline M. Sampson
Stephen F. Austin State University

Kerry L. Roberts
Stephen F. Austin State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/slr

Part of the Educational Leadership Commons

Tell us how this article helped you.

Legal, Moral, and Transformational Leadership for our School Districts and Universities

This current issue of the School Leadership Review has a wide variety of topics addressing the legal, moral, and transformational leadership for our school district administrators and university personnel. The legal issues of bullying and transportation liability are important to the safety and welfare of our students and staff. As administrators develop policies and procedures, there needs to be careful consideration to legal and moral implications that will guide their district. These many legal issues would be minimal if the leaders led with honesty and integrity. Transformational leadership has this honesty and integrity woven throughout its tenets.

Another area of importance is addressed in this issue with the development of strong leaders for campuses and districts. As university faculty and administrators work to increase their enrollment, the issues of how candidates are selected as well as how faculty prepare future leaders becomes extremely important. Many universities are offering more certifications through online programs while ensuring that the candidates are well prepared and have strong field experiences in their preparation. Additionally, many programs have removed a requirement such as the Graduate Research Examinations (GRE). This comes amidst higher accountability at the university level for state passing rates on the advanced certifications. Candidates must pass the state test with only five tries and the state gathers information on universities where candidates must retake a second time.

The state requirement for limiting the number of times the candidates may take the certification test has little to do with their ability to lead. In another state, one teacher took a test 12 times in order to gain administrative certification. This person became an outstanding leader. Further, superintendents from other states, must also take the certification test, even though they have had success as a practicing superintendent.

Further, university preparation programs need to make the learning relevant for those who will be leading rural, suburban, or urban campuses. Leaders have different skills needed to serve in different types of schools. The importance of school context and school improvement have been identified by the University Council of Educational Administrators.

This issue also showcases practices of STEM success as a continuing dialogue for areas that will support high school Hispanic girls pursue Engineering fields. This confirms much of the current research on STEM. There continues to be a need for high quality research in the STEM fields with an examination of all aspects: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The area of Technology in research related to STEM courses and careers has been less well documented than the other areas.

Amy Burkman's *I'm Telling: A Quantitative Analysis of Reporting Cyberbullying versus Reporting of Traditional Bullying in a School Setting* is a nonexperimental correlational quantitative study that examined the relationship between the place of bullying and the reporting of bullying. The researcher used secondary data from the U.S. Bureau of Justice database, "Indicators of School Crime and Safety". The findings indicated that students who experienced cyberbullying were more likely to report bullying than those who had experienced traditional bullying.

W. Sean Kearney, Nathern Okilwa and Jeff Goldhorn authored, *Who is Preparing School Leaders to Transition into the Job of Urban School Principal? Analyzing the Impact of a Regional Principal Readiness Education Program on Principal Self-efficacy.* Looks at one principal preparation program provided through Region 20 Education Service Center, Texas A & M University – San Antonio, and This survey research studied two groups of assistant principals and the Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale Survey. One group had 35 assistant principals who did not participate in the collaborative preparation program and the other group had 41 assistant principals in the preparation program. The assistant principals in the collaborative preparation program had statistically significant gains in their self-efficacy scores when compared to the control group.

Kayne M. Smith, Melissa Arrambide, Timothy Letzring, and Chuck Holt wrote *Texas School District Liability in Pupil Transportation: A Legal Analysis of the Texas Tort Claims Act and Sovereign Immunity.* This qualitative case study examined possible liability for public schools by summarizing 13 litigation court cases of incidents at school bus stops, walking to and from bus stops, and student incidents on the bus. The authors review the cases in order to help administrators and transportation directors understand potential liability.

Pamela J. Bryant, Jennifer T. Butcher, and Johnny O'Connor's *Improving School Leadership: The Connection of Transformational Leadership and Psychological Well-being of the Followers* is a phenomenological narrative study of seven school superintendents. The superintendents had to have success at a low performing school district with at least two years of experience. The authors found that idealized influence and inspirational motivation showed the highest concepts for transformational leadership. Building trust and high moral behavior were necessary for a good relationship between the leader and the followers. The followers' well-being was positively impacted by the leaders' shared vision, enthusiasm, buy-in, and increasing morale. Additionally, the followers' well-being increased when the leader had good two-way communication and built a personal relationship.

Virginia Leiker and Theresa M. Campos wrote *Selection Process for Educational Leaders Does Make a Difference.* The researchers examined the process used to select students for educational leadership program by looking at four cohorts of students. Three of the four cohorts had a traditional and rigorous selection process, while one of the cohorts accepted all applicants. They found that the fourth group where all students were accepted actually had a higher GPA than the other cohort groups. However, the fourth group was less successful on the state certification examination and had fewer percentages of students promoted.

Veronica Vijil, Julie P. Combs, and Rebecca M. Bustamante authored *Barriers to Pursuing STEM-Related Careers: Perceptions of Hispanic Girls Enrolled in Advanced High School STEM Courses.* Their qualitative case study of seven high school Hispanic girls in an engineering program examined barriers and support systems for the girls. The barriers found were existing or perceived such as gender discrimination, ineffective teachers, future limited college funding, and future work-life balance. The support themes were perseverance, relationships with a teacher, and family support.

Pauline M. Sampson, Ph.D.
Editor

Kerry L. Roberts. Ph.D.
Associate Editor