

2009

# Administrative mentoring: An investigation of practicing principals' perceptions of the role mentors played in their professional development and job satisfaction

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ADMINISTRATIVE MENTORING: AN INVESTIGATION OF PRACTICING  
PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE MENTORS PLAYED IN THEIR  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION

An abstract of a Dissertation

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Approved:

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December 2009

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and friends. Without their love and support, this research would never have been completed. To my husband and daughter who supported my efforts. To Dr. Lori Diebel, my friend who encouraged me and supported me when the “going got tough.” Thank you for listening to me while I struggled to finish this doctorate. Your support is appreciated more than you will ever know.

To my parents, Bill and Ruby Evans, who instilled in me a love of learning. Your love and support over the years has enabled me to fearlessly attempt new endeavors. Thank you for helping me grow into the person I am today.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation resulted from the support and encouragement provided by many people. First, I would like to thank Dr. Robert Decker for his guidance, time, and leadership during the entire process. His support and encouragement kept me moving forward. I would like to thank Dr. John Henning for making himself available to guide me through the writing of Chapters 3 and 4. I also want to thank the School Administrators of Iowa for providing research assistance. I also thank the other members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Nick Pace, Dr. Greg Reed, and Dr. John Storm for their words of support and encouragement throughout this research process.

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December 2009

## ABSTRACT

Researchers have alluded to the power of mentorship to connect the new administrator to the organization. Following the lead of business, the field of education is now recognizing mentoring as a critical component of effective leadership development. Daresh (2001) suggests there is a need for a more practical and effective approach to prepare the leaders of our schools. New administrators have little choice but to experience on-the-job training, without any formal support in place. Administrative mentoring programs are growing in attention due to the projected principal shortages, concerns about qualified candidates, and the changing role of the building level principal.

This study sought to fill in a gap in the research by investigating the components of a mentoring relationship that impact new practicing principals' perceptions of the role that mentors played in their professional development and job satisfaction. The mentors' perspectives were examined to determine how they improved their own performance through the mentoring relationship. In addition, the study compared perceptions of first year principals with those of their mentors. Four main research questions framed this study: (a) what are the effects, if any, of the administrative mentoring program on the first-year principal; (b) do mentor/mentee relationships provide professional development; (c) are administrators who have had mentor/mentee relationships more confident in their position? and (d) what impact, if any, does a mentor/mentee relationship in formal mentoring programs have on a new administrator's sense of job satisfaction?

A mixed methods approach was used in this research study. The researcher used quantitative survey research augmented by qualitative interviews. The researcher paralleled the information learned in the interviews to the data from the surveys through the narrative. This study shows an increased confidence level of the new administrator in one year. The study also found that the increased confidence level of the new administrator is directly tied to increased job satisfaction. We know people are more satisfied in their work when they feel confident about the work they are doing and see results. The increased job satisfaction could lead to administrators staying in their positions longer, which has a direct impact on school districts. Not only is there an increased likelihood that a new administrator will stay in his or her position longer, but there is an increased chance the individual will stay in the profession over time. In the day of administrator shortages, increased longevity of service has a positive impact on schools and the educational leadership profession. The Wallace Foundation (2007) describes benefits to the organization from a mentoring program as promoting positive organizational climate, clarifying roles and expectations, increasing satisfaction and retention rates, and mentoring suggests commitment to employees.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

I am in my tenth year of school administration. I started out as an administrative assistant overseeing seventh and eighth grade teachers and students while teaching half time and completing my administrative degree in a small school in Eastern Iowa. No formal mentor was assigned to me, but my colleagues served as informal mentors allowing me to call upon them at any time with any question from daily tasks to understanding school culture. After one year I moved into the high school principal role. I continued to grow professionally due to the relationships with my administrative colleagues.

After two years I moved to a new district. The district was a suburban district in the heart of Iowa with approximately 8,500 students. The administrative team consisted of 39 administrators district wide. There were four administrators at the high school level in which I served as an associate principal. Each new position brings new duties and responsibilities. The new district brought a new culture and climate. Once again, colleagues served as informal mentors. I as the researcher have some of my own bias due to my experiences. My professional growth and enjoyment of each new position is due to my informal mentors. I believe in mentoring for new administrators and am pleased to see the state of Iowa making it a requirement for licensure.

School leadership in the United States has evolved from students taught at home by parents or tutors to the one room school, followed by distinct elementary and secondary schools to the complexity of today's methods of leadership. Three factors



have influenced the change in the role of the principal in recent years: (a) mounting evidence that leadership roles need redefinition, (b) new development in technology, and (c) rebalanced political theory by lay people making policy decisions.

These factors have led to a revised role of the principal as both the manager and instructional leader. A key role of the principal is to lead and guide students and teachers. One dimension is job-oriented and the other is person-oriented. The human emphasis has become just as important as the product.

Whenever the principal must be both the business manager and the instructional leader, a certain degree of conflict in these roles may occur. Managers must adhere to and enforce rules and regulations, whereas instructional leaders focus on improvement of the system. Instructional leaders are also concerned with people, which is in conflict with management guidelines. This reality can bring stress to individuals in the position. “An effective principal must master a broad spectrum of educational and management issues, must build and maintain relationships with multiple constituencies and must lead change processes in highly politicized and conservative institutions” (Bloom, 2004, p. 14). Bloom further described leadership as second to teaching among school related factors in its impact upon student learning.

Due to the changing role in the principalship, there are many individuals who are certified in administration who choose not to move into administrative roles. “There is a shortage of candidates for the principalship, and an increasing trend for individuals with relatively limited experience to move into these positions” (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003, p. 20). There appears to be a shortage of candidates within the teaching pool

desirous of assuming these responsibilities due to high liability, a perceived lack of financial rewards, and limited educational arenas for candidates to prepare for this role.

In this era of increased school accountability, the need to hire qualified administrators as well as train and retain them points to the necessity of an administrative mentoring program to provide a support system for new administrators. Mentoring is one support system that has large rewards for the individuals involved as well as their home districts. Bloom et al. (2003) reminds us that this concept is not new. They state, “Most principals credit their survival on the job at least in part to a relationship with an informal mentor” (Bloom et al., 2003, p. 21).

The need for mentoring has its origins in Homer’s *Odyssey*, when Odysseus entrusted the education of his son, Telemachus, to a wise and learned man named Mentor. Mentor not only provided help and guidance to Telemachus, he also taught him how to think and act for himself (Crow & Matthews, 1998, p. 2). Homer gave us the name, Mentor, which commonly refers to someone with more experience who teaches someone with less experience.

Today, education administrators have complex jobs that require them to be dynamic and visionary in both traditional and reform roles within a school. Ongoing development in knowledge, skills, and competencies is necessary for administrators to be effective school leaders.

Following the lead of business, the field of education is now recognizing mentoring as a critical component of effective leadership development. Daresh (2001) suggests there is a need for a more practical and effective approach to prepare the leaders

of our schools. New administrators have little choice but to experience on-the-job training, without any formal supports in place. The lack of effective preparation of school principals leads to a shortage of candidates within the teaching pool who want to assume administrative responsibilities.

There are school administration mentoring programs in place around the country. The state of Iowa, for example, passed a law, House File 2792, effective July 1, 2006 requiring all school districts to offer a formal mentoring program for administrators who are in their first administrative position. School districts in Iowa were required to create their own program or choose to participate in the School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) Mentoring and Induction program.

#### Statement of the Problem

Do administrative mentoring programs make a difference to first year principals in terms of their professional development and job satisfaction?

#### Research Questions

To investigate what makes a significant difference to first year principals in terms of their professional development and job satisfaction the following four questions guide this study:

1. What are the effects, if any, of the administrative mentoring program on the first-year principal?
2. Do mentor/mentee relationships provide professional development?
3. Are administrators who have had mentor/mentee relationships more confident in their position?

4. What impact, if any, does a mentor/mentee relationship in formal mentoring programs have on a new administrator's sense of job satisfaction?

#### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to understand the components of a mentoring relationship that impact new practicing principals' perceptions of the role that mentors played in their professional development and job satisfaction. The mentors' perspectives will be examined to determine how they could have improved their own performance in the mentoring relationship. In addition, the study will compare perceptions of first year principals with those of their mentors/coaches.

This study serves to provide information for districts seeking to develop administrative mentoring programs in schools. While the design of the study prevents generalizing findings due to the limited sampling group, it suggests outcomes, identifies positive attributes, and examines the effects of structural mentoring relationships.

#### Conceptual Framework

I intend to provide an environment where mentors and mentees feel comfortable sharing their successes, frustrations, and observations about a formal mentoring program. By focusing on participants' personal meanings, qualitative research "gives voice" to people who have been part of the new mentoring and induction program. Research indicates that principals who have gone through either a formal or informal mentor process would rate their level of job satisfaction higher and indicate professional growth through the mentoring relationship as compared to administrators who have not been assigned a mentor.

Although mentoring for administrators has traditionally come in the form of a preservice internship, continuing inservice education once a job has begun may be of great assistance for an administrator. Malone (2001b) found that school leaders, throughout all stages of their careers, could benefit from a mentoring system in which a seasoned leader helps the protégé place theory and practice in the context of experience.

Effective leadership is critical to the success of an organization, especially in schools. Preservice preparation is crucial to ensure future leaders are prepared to meet the challenges of their new position. Mentoring does take place in preservice preparation programs, usually in the form of an internship advisor. It is for this reason that literature on preservice preparation is included.

According to Lauder (2000), there are as many as one-fourth of current administrators who are near retirement and there are not enough skilled, trained, and qualified leaders waiting in the wings to take their place. Baugh (2003) in his research noted that the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) met and reviewed administrative training at the preservice level. One recommendation was that preparation programs include more clinical approaches to learning. The UCEA concluded that adults learn better through on-the-job training in real life situations.

Induction or mentoring programs can be very beneficial for all parties involved. It may be for that reason some recent changes have been made in many areas including state, university, and professional associations. Lashway (2003) points out that Ohio has a first-year academy built on leadership, mentoring, and portfolio development. Kentucky, Louisiana, and Iowa offer a licensure system where full certification comes

only after a successful first year as an administrator. Universities are pairing up with schools to provide guidance to new administrators and professional associations such as the National Association for Elementary School Principals (NAESP) to provide workshops, assessments, and training for new leaders. School districts also need to focus on 'growing their own' and choosing people to pursue administrative degrees based on qualities and skills.

### Definition of Mentoring

Crow and Matthews (1998) suggest the term mentor refers to someone with more experience who teaches someone with less experience. In the *Odyssey*, Homer outlined three requirements for Mentor as he taught Telemachus those things that would make him a ruler. First, Mentor was to serve as a tutor. Second, he was asked to share his wisdom regarding the world. Third, Mentor was to be a companion as Telemachus passed into adulthood. Crow and Matthews believe the companionship aspect of mentoring has also led to the word protégé, from the French term protegere, meaning one who is protected by a person with experiences and influence.

Literature on mentoring includes definitions of the roles and functions to be fulfilled by mentors. Crow and Matthews (1998) indicate that the definitions include but are not limited to teacher, coach, role model, trainer, protector, sponsor, and colleague. A critical aspect of the mentoring process is the development of a relationship where mutual trust and respect exist. The element that appears to provide the foundation of any conceptualization of mentorship is the fact that this activity is part of the nurturing needed by adults at different career and life stages.

Bell (2002) defines a mentor as someone who helps someone else learn something that they would otherwise not have learned at all or less well. Mentoring provides a growth experience for those involved.

“Mentoring is an ongoing procession in which individuals in an organization provide support and guidance to others who can become effective contributors to the goals of the organization” (Daresh, 2001, p. 3). Mentoring programs have leaders working with leaders, collaborating on various issues. Malone states, “Mentor serves not only as a counselor to the prince during Ulysses’ twenty-year absence, but also as guardian and guide” (Malone, 2001b, p. 1). Daresh (2001) describes being a mentor as someone who has responsibility of sharing, listening, and learning.

### Types of Mentoring

There are two types of mentors, primary and secondary. Crow and Matthews (1998) define primary mentors as those who provide a wide scope of assistance and in-depth mentoring. Primary mentors guide the protégé in professional, career, and personal matters both inside and outside the professional role. Crow and Matthews describe the secondary mentors’ role as providing a more limited scope and degree of mentoring because they assist the protégé in technical skills, knowledge, or processes. Mentoring situations in education may incorporate either a primary mentor role or a secondary mentor role. As well, mentoring relationships can be either formal (official program, assignment, etc.) or informal (calling others when needed, touching base at meetings, etc.).

Hansen and Matthews (2002) discuss the difference between formal and informal mentoring. Informal peer mentoring is casual and happens when work requires individuals to interact with one another. By contrast, formal peer mentoring relationship requires a more organized approach. A formal program would begin with goal setting and ultimately end in professional development. Hansen and Matthews explain, “When principals engage in the kind of collective inquiry peer mentoring encourages, they influence their schools to become learning communities” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 33).

#### Challenges of the School Administrator

The first year on the job for a school administrator is crucial for many reasons, including socialization. This means learning the ropes, making connections, and applying what has been learned in daily job situations. During the first year on the job, leaders are often trying to fit into their new environment and this offers districts an opportunity to influence the behaviors of its new leaders. According to Lashway (2003), induction programs have recently become synonymous with mentoring as they both seek to provide an experienced colleague who can assist in teaching, coaching, and guiding a new leader through his or her first year. Lashway suggests the following to ensure a good induction program for new leaders: (a) help leaders stay focused on the big picture, (b) include more than one-to-one mentoring (portfolios, study groups, leader academies, workshops), and (c) embed induction (learning and improving) into the culture, not just a one-shot activity.



The job expectations of today's administrators reach far beyond managing the building and all of its components. Today's administrators are expected to be instructional leaders. Anthes (2002) indicates administrators are expected to understand effective instructional strategies, regularly observe and coach classroom teachers, and be able to analyze student achievement data to make more effective instructional decisions.

Professional development for teachers is one primary job function of an administrator. The administrator works collaboratively with a team of stakeholders to provide high quality training, which has a focus on improved student learning. "The *Iowa Professional Development Model* is to provide a structure for professional development that is focused, collaborative, and that directly supports the Comprehensive School Improvement Process (CSIP) goals for student achievement" (Iowa Department of Education, 2007).

Strong leaders are essential for successful professional development. The leadership must be distributed, shared with stakeholders, throughout the organization. The components of the Iowa Professional Development Model are: collecting/analyzing student data, goal setting/student learning, selecting content, designing process for professional development, training, collaboration/implementation, formative evaluation, and program evaluation. A principal must serve as an instructional leader.

Bloom et al. (2003) characterizes the challenges of the first-year principal role by demands of time, energy, and isolation from colleagues. He put forward that the most difficult issues for new administrators are those of individual style and daily practice, finding one's voice. Bloom suggests that these concerns could best be met by the

practice of effective coaching designed with a relevancy to the new principal's immediate needs that is also perceived by them as useful and appropriate. Similarly, O'Mahoney and Matthews (2003) propose that if new principals are to acquire the technical knowledge, skills and techniques needed to perform competently in a role, there should be a structured and planned set of successive experiences.

### Benefits of a Mentoring Program

The benefits of a mentoring program for mentors, protégés, and school districts could be numerous. Bloom et al. (2003) includes the following as benefits, but they are not limited, to greater job satisfaction, increased peer recognition, practice lifelong learning, exposure to new ideas, effective communication, collaboration, reflective thinking, seeing theory being put into practice, learning tricks of the trade, reduced isolation, higher motivation, and an establishment of a peer network for support and/or job advancement. Mentoring programs for new teachers are abundant, but most training for administrators comes in the form of a preservice internship or on-the-job experiences.

The benefits for the protégés according to Daresh (2001) include feelings of confidence about their competency, the opportunity to see what they have learned working in real situations, improved communication skills, and a sense of belonging. One additional benefit for mentees is receiving help in future placements as a result of knowing mentors who know others. A mentoring relationship can help a mentee create a job network. "Data showed that pre-service principals with a formal or informal mentor were more likely to advance their careers" (Reyes, 2003, p. 54).

Daresh (2001) describes the benefits to the district from a mentoring relationship include a more capable staff, an attitude of lifelong learning, higher motivation levels and job satisfaction, greater productivity and an improved sense of self-esteem.

Daresh (2001) indicates that mentors report personal satisfaction from participating in a mentoring program. The mentor sees himself as a teacher. Likewise, “The program also benefited the experienced school leaders who served as mentors, stretching their thinking about teaching and learning” (Holloway, 2004, p. 2). Daresh and Playko (1993) found that leaders in school districts with mentoring programs are more energized by the mentoring process. Malone (2001b) indicates that a mentoring relationship gives a leader an additional perspective to any problem and prepares principals to become mentors themselves.

Data indicates that graduate training alone does not produce well-trained educational leaders. This increases the need for the development of mentoring relationships at the administrative level. “Recent research indicates that when professional development includes a mentorship, novice principals gain a higher degree of effectiveness that endures throughout their professional careers” (Malone, 2001b, p. 1). There is a shortage of qualified aspiring principals and a shortage of competent practicing administrators wishing to move up to higher-level positions.

Mentoring in professional education has become extremely popular during the last 10-15 years, and in recent years, mentoring programs have been widely adopted across the United States. Playko (1995) suggests that mentoring programs address the needs of new principals in two areas: “One is in the area of pre-service preparation programs for

future teachers and school administrators. The second is as part of the induction programs designed to ease transition pains often experienced by individuals who move into new professional posts” (Playko, 1995, p. 85).

“Educators know that the world of the principal, although exciting, challenging, and often personally rewarding, is also a world filled with considerable anxiety, frustration, self-doubt, and loneliness” (Daresh, 2001, p. 2). A mentoring program creates a network of support, which should alleviate some of the stress that comes with the job of building principal. “Peer mentoring has a way of renewing and strengthening the principal” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 30). By breaking the barrier of isolation, a mentor/mentee relationship can lead to better job satisfaction and a partnership for professional development. O’Brien, Collins, Hogan, and Rowe (1999) describe the mentoring relationship as one where two people are involved and they pay special attention to each other’s development.

Reflecting is an important skill for a school leader. It requires thoughtful expression whether it is in writing or discussion. “Protégés learn more about their professional lives and gain more insight into their personal needs, visions, and values than through any other kind of learning experience” (Daresh, 2001, p. 7). Hibert (2000) tells how she became more reflective and thoughtful due to her mentor/mentee relationship. She maintains that the mentoring process helped her become a better principal.

Crow and Matthews (1998) state there are two specific methods of reflective mentoring; storytelling and visioning. Stories give both the mentor and mentee an

opportunity for reflection. The visioning process utilizes reflection as the principal plans for the future by reflecting on the past.

Many university programs have incorporated some component of on-the-job training in their preparation programs as it became more apparent that internships, mentoring relationships, reflective practice, and cohort groups were important to the learning of the principal candidates. School leaders need encouragement, coaching, and guidance from more experienced principals.

Mentoring can be a way to enhance the formal training a principal receives in the classroom. These hands on experiences will benefit the individual as well as the system. New principals can become more effective educational leaders by participating in a mentoring program. Daresh (2001) describes the characteristics of a mentoring program as powerful tools, which help leaders develop in the profession; it reduces the feeling of isolation, and helps move the beginning principal from survival to success.

“Peer mentoring encourages individuals with similar assignments and expectations to collaborate and explore problems and solutions” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 31). Leaders who are working in a mentoring relationship are allies for each other. This relationship allows for dialogue between principals who may be struggling with some of the same issues. Many schools are organized in such a manner that the opportunities for working with other adults are few.

## Teacher Mentoring

We have been able to learn from the literature on teacher mentoring. Literature on teacher mentoring and induction programs tends to be prescriptive. The literature includes defining mentoring, clarifying the roles of mentors, and the goals of a mentoring relationship. The literature also speaks to induction programs, how they differ from mentoring, and how induction promotes teacher retention. Wilkins and Clift (2006) indicate that new teachers are much more likely to remain in the profession when they are assigned mentors from the same content area, share common plan time with like subject teachers, or have regularly scheduled meetings with other teachers to discuss instruction. Some researchers documented the need for connecting student achievement to teacher induction programs.

Teacher retention is a concern across the United States. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) state that teaching has traditionally been characterized as an occupation with high levels of attrition. "A number of studies have found as many as 50% of new teachers leave within the first 5 years of entry into the occupation" (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004, p. 29). It appears that those leaving are the best and the brightest. Andrews, Gilbert and Martin (2006) share concerns with staffing of schools with qualified teachers, due in part to the requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which requires all schools to have a qualified teacher in every classroom. Andrews et al. (2006) state the following reasons for teacher attrition: (a) pursuit for a better career, (b) job dissatisfaction, (c) lack of curricular support, and (d) student relationships. Teacher retention data can be paralleled to administrator retention. There are administrators who after one or two years

in the position decide to leave the position. There are also many teachers who earn their administrative degree who never step in to an administrative position.

### Business Mentoring

Kerka (1998) explains that the business community has also embraced the concept of mentoring due to organizational trends such as downsizing, restructuring, teamwork, increased diversity and individual responsibility for career development.

Mentorship programs have also been used as a way to help women and minorities break into the “Old Boy Network” and through the “Glass Ceiling.” The programs have helped new employees gain confidence and technical knowledge while they also develop loyalty to the company. Surprisingly, business mentors in these programs have cited that the ongoing contact with senior management in a fairly risk-free environment has allowed them to become assertive and competent employees.

### Limitations of Mentoring Programs

There are times that no matter how much planning, training and evaluation occur, mentor programs can experience problems. Preparation for mentors and mentees is in most cases not adequate. Daresh (2004) states that in no case has any form of training for mentors been required, and no minimal qualifications have been identified.

Mentors are too often chosen solely because they have experience as a school administrator. Unfortunately, experience does not automatically equate to a successful mentor. There are critical skills and abilities needed by mentors in order to be effective. Daresh (2001) sees the following as desirable characteristics for a mentor to be effective as school administrator and regarded as effective by peers: positive leadership qualities,

asks the right questions of beginning administrators, accepts alternate ways of doing things, expresses the desire to see people go beyond their present level of performance, models the principles of continuous learning and reflection, and is aware of political and social realities.

Possibly the most critical aspect of an effective mentoring program is the matching of mentors and mentees. “There is no absolute what to ensure that matches made are matches made in heaven” (Playko, 1995, p. 91).

Although most of the literature on mentoring is focused around the beginning principal, we cannot forget about the needs of the career administrators. “School leaders at all career stages – aspiring, intern, new, mid career, and late career- need other more experienced professionals to guide them in their journey through the challenges of turbulent times in public education” (Reyes, 2003, p. 45).

Some districts across the United States have developed formal peer mentoring or coaching programs for school administrators. Additionally, some states are now mandating mentoring programs for beginning principals. There is literature around the topic of mentoring teachers, but little information around the topic of mentoring for administrators. Reyes said, “In the context of principal shortages, accountability demands, changing school reform efforts, and the changing role of the principal, mentoring is vital to principal development starting at the pre-service stage” (Reyes, 2003, p. 46). Administrators in all stages of their career seem to benefit from mentoring programs and/or relationships.



### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, several key terms were defined.

*Coach:* A coach is an individual who works outside of the organization, provides continuing support that is safe and confidential and has the goal of nurturing significant personal, professional, and institutional growth through a process that unfolds over time (Bloom, Castagna, Moir & Warren, 2005).

*Emotional Intelligence:* Emotional Intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships (Bloom, 2004, p. 14).

*Experienced Administrator:* An experienced administrator is an administrator with four or more years of experience in administration.

*Formal Mentor:* A mentor is someone who has the responsibility of sharing, listening, and learning. (Daresh, 2001)

*Informal Mentor:* An informal mentor is an administrator who is tied to his/her own demanding job, and though she/he may have the best of intentions, she/he are not fully available to the protégés (Bloom et al., 2003).

*Mentee:* “A mentee is one who arrives at the threshold of the principalship without having been a protégé, yet is just as much in need as he or she begins learning the realities of the principalship” (Young, Sheets, & Knight, 2005, p. 2).

*Mentoring:* “Mentoring is an on going process in which individuals in an organization provide support and guidance to others who can become effective contributors to the goals of the organization” (Daresh, 2001, p. 3).

*Novice Administrator:* A novice administrator is a principal or assistant principal with three years or less experience in administration.

*Preservice Internship:* Preservice internship is an advanced professional experience within the preservice program. The internship usually occurs in conjunction with a college or graduate course and/or part of degree requirements.

*Professional Development:* “Focused on the development of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values for dynamic school leadership” (Crow & Matthews, 1998, p.12).

*Protégé:* “One who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence, or influence.” (Merriam Webster, 2008).

Protégé and mentee are synonymous terms for the purpose of this study.

*School Administrators of Iowa (SAI):* School Administrators of Iowa is a statewide professional organization serving all of Iowa's educational administrators.

### Limitations

Due to the interview procedures utilized for this study, limitations that restrict the generalizability of the findings exist. Data was gathered through semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Principals who were new to their positions and their school districts that participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program were selected to participate in the interviews. Because of this limited sampling group, generalizability of these findings to school administrative groups outside of Iowa is cautioned.

It is difficult to isolate the reasons some administrators are more successful than others in their first year. Assumptions can be made that some mentors are more qualified than other mentors or may have spent more time with their mentees.

Despite these limitations, this study addresses principal knowledge, opinions, and attitudes about the mentoring program. Consequently, this study may provide pertinent and useful information on which future research can be initiated.

#### Assumptions

This study was based on the assumption that an acceptable number of eligible respondents (Iowa public school administrators whose district participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program and were in their first administrative assignment during the 2007-2008 school year) responded voluntarily to the survey. It also was assumed that all mentors and mentees were honest in completing the surveys and in responding to any potential follow-up contacts.

#### Population and Sample

The population of the study was Iowa first year building level administrators whose district participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program during the 2007-2008 school year. Those identified for this study were high school principals in their current position for one year. Twenty-seven high school principals participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program. Their names and the schools were obtained from the SAI database.

Mentors were selected through collaboration between SAI and the Area Education Agencies (AEA) located throughout the state of Iowa. SAI contacted the appropriate person at the AEA requesting recommendations for possible mentors. One requirement was for the mentor to be someone within close proximity geographically so the individuals did not have to travel far to see each other. Also, it was very important that

the mentor be from a similar size school district and hold the same position. In most cases, the new administrator was matched with someone outside their own district. Administrators with substantial experience were used as mentors, and as the new legislation was written, it is now required that the mentor have at least four years of experience. Next, the invitation was extended to the mentors. The people invited to be mentors had to have demonstrated leadership skills, had a focus on student achievement, were good listeners and knew how to encourage their mentees' growth as leaders of learning.

#### Instrumentation

This research study used a mixed methods approach. The researcher used quantitative survey research augmented by the qualitative semi-structured interviews.

The quantitative piece of the study utilized survey research methodology. A questionnaire was developed by SAI, which was administered electronically. An email was sent to invite mentees and mentors to complete an online survey. Mentees completed the survey three times throughout the year: beginning of the program, midyear and at the end of the program. (See Appendix A) The mentors completed the survey twice: midyear and at the end of the program. (See Appendix B) One final survey was completed at the end of the program by both the mentees and mentors. (See Appendix C and D) This instrument was received from the Region One – Learning Support Center. Permission to use the instrument had been granted.

The qualitative piece of the study was conducted through face-to-face interviews. All interviews were audio taped, with the permission of the first-year principal or his/her mentor for the purpose of capturing rich data through transcription.

### Data Collection

All administrators whose district participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program received an electronic copy of the survey in the fall, midyear and in the month of May. Each participant received an additional survey in May asking to rate their mentor or mentee.

The novice administrator or mentee completed a survey three times during their first year in the administrative position. The administrator rated him/herself on how confident he/she was in the following twelve areas:

- provide feedback to teachers on their professional practice
- use of building leadership team to accomplish school improvement goals
- provide collaborative professional development
- adapt leadership behavior to the needs of current situation
- use conflict productively
- manage day-to-day operations
- establish effective student behavior management systems
- allocate resources appropriately to accomplish building goals
- establish positive working relationships with students, parents, and staff
- hire quality teachers
- find time for personal rejuvenation

-take time for reflection on professional practice

The mentors also completed a survey twice during the first year rating their mentee on the same twelve areas listed above.

The researcher also used the Principal Mentor Assessment and the Mentee Assessment from the Region One Learning Support Center.

Finally, the qualitative portion of the research included in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The participants in this study were treated as the experts and were assumed to have an accurate and unique perspective. Questions focused on three areas: what the principal is learning, organizational factors, and nature of the first-year principal/mentor relationship. (See Appendix E and F)

#### Data Analysis

The analysis of data was approached inductively, guided by the goal of identifying key variables in the mentoring relationship and the development of effective mentoring relationships and the learning that occurs in these relationships.

The primary data collection methods included in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Interview data was collected using audio tape recording devices and the recordings were transcribed. The researcher conducted ten interviews to substantiate the model and also looked for conflicting experiences from the mentors and first-year principals that might suggest incompatibility with the previously discovered attributes. The researcher used information gained in the interviews in the identification of the relationship between factors that exist between the first-year principal and the mentor and

the organizational factors, which promote or inhibit administrative mentoring. The participants in this study were treated as the experts.

The interviews served as the basis for the development of the preliminary categories or themes, using coding techniques to examine all of the new data thoroughly. These categories served as a basis for the narrative when comparing the data from the interviews to the data from the surveys. The researcher paralleled the information learned in the interviews to the data from the surveys through the narrative.

The results of the survey are confidential, in that the respondents simply logged onto an electronic web address to complete the survey. No identifying information was included in the survey. The Survey Monkey software automatically compiled the responses. Survey Monkey is an online survey tool that enables people of all experience levels to create their own surveys quickly and easily.

The data was compared and analyzed to draw general conclusions with regards to mentors and mentees perceptions of the role that mentors played in the mentee's professional development and job satisfaction. The data was further analyzed to determine differences in answers to the questions for the mentor and mentee. All data was coded and analyzed.

#### Organization of the Paper

This study is organized into four distinct chapters. Chapter 1 presents an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, definition of terms, limitations and assumptions of the study, methodology, data analysis and organization of the paper.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature regarding participation of new administrators in a mentoring relationship. The literature includes the history of mentoring relationships in regards to new administrators and the impact these relationships have on new principals' professional development and job satisfaction. Finally, this chapter focuses on the mentors and their role in these relationships and how the mentor relationship can be improved.

Chapter 3 describes the design of the study and interpretation of data including an explanation of participants, instruments, and procedures used by the researcher for data collection and results. Finally, Chapter 4 is a discussion of the results of the study including recommendations, implications for school districts that are implementing their own mentoring program, and recommendations for further study.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will review the current literature related to administrative mentoring relationships. Topics to be discussed will include: (a) the definition of mentoring, (b) the current legislation regarding mentoring, (c) the importance of the relationship, (d) the benefits of mentoring to mentors (e) the benefits of mentoring to the mentee, (f) types of mentoring, (g) teachers and mentoring, (h) business and mentoring and (i) limitations of mentoring.

#### Definition of Mentoring

“Mentoring is an ongoing procession in which individuals in an organization provide support and guidance to others who can become effective contributors to the goals of the organization” (Daresh, 2001, p. 3). Mentoring programs have experienced administrators working with novice administrators, collaborating on various issues. Malone states, “Mentor serves not only as a counselor to the prince during Ulysses’ twenty-year absence, but also as guardian and guide” (Malone, 2001b, p. 1). Daresh describes being a mentor as someone who has responsibility of sharing, listening, and learning.

Bell (2002) defines a mentor as someone who helps someone else learn something that they would otherwise not have learned at all or learned at a lower level. Mentoring provides a growth experience for those involved. “The goal of mentoring is to foster betterment: better performance, greater productivity, higher effectiveness” (Bell, 2002,

p. 133). Mentoring has come to mean to guide, train, support, give one-on-one counseling to a less experienced administrator.

The principalship has evolved into a more complex position. Mentoring programs can help bridge the gap between teacher and principal.

Coaching has become the new rage. Bloom et al. (2005) define a coach:

A coach is someone who (1) sees what others may not see through the high quality of his or her attention or listening, (2) is in the position to step back (or invite participants to step back) from the situation so that they have enough distance from it to get some perspective, (3) helps people see the difference between their intentions and their thinking or actions, and (4) helps people cut through patterns of illusion and self-deception caused by defensive thinking and behavior” (p. 3).

Today we coach teams, players, kids and employees. Coaching has become a popular form of professional development and way to train new employees. Bloom et al. (2005) describe coaching as the practice of providing deliberate support to another individual to help him/her to clarify and/or to achieve goals. One key element to a coaching relationship is the presence of trust. The mentee must feel comfortable sharing some of his/her most delicate situations with the coach. The coaching relationship will not be successful without trust as a piece of the relationship.

The term coach and mentor are often used interchangeably. Bloom et al. (2005) describe a mentor as an organizational insider who is a senior expert. “A coach is typically from outside of the organization and is not necessarily senior – in age or depth of related professional experience to the coachee” (Bloom et al., 2005, p. 10). A coach is someone who can bring an outside perspective to the situation and has no stake in the outcome.

### Administrative Mentor Programs

Historically, administrative mentoring programs have sporadically been used as a way to support both aspiring and practicing school administrators. Mentor programs followed many of the same trends widely held in private sector management circles by suggesting that experienced managers offer support to neophyte managers in the way of professional development. Daresh (1995) suggested that school personnel began to see the benefits of mentoring as a critical component for providing accountability in the way that new administrators are trained, inducted, and hired. Hall (2008) explains that many school districts are providing mentors for new principals in order for them to learn the ropes when entering the job.

There is a lack of analysis in the research literature regarding administrative mentoring. Relatively few published descriptions exist of research related to structure, implementation, evaluation, or outcomes of mentoring programs designed to enhance the professional development of leaders.

Daresh (1995) identified only eleven research articles that directly dealt with administrative mentoring programs, which could be classified as original research on mentoring. Most of the studies were descriptive in nature and utilized a descriptive survey, asking questions of past or current mentors and protégés, mentees, in hopes of putting together assumptions of and/or aid in finding solutions for a particular problem. It would not be usual for these studies to address such issues as how to schedule the school day or how to complete the budgeting process.

Daresh's more in-depth studies highlighted the importance of the structure and implementation of mentoring programs. Included were examinations of ideal practices for matching mentors with protégés, the duration of mentoring, the content of mentoring and ideal characteristics of mentors.

Challenges with mentor/first-year principal pairings became apparent to Malone (2001b) when he identified that some of the most accomplished administrators do not necessarily possess the trait of a competent mentor. These administrators often do not have the time to offer to the new principal resulting in a neutral-effect relationship, at best.

Geismar, Morris, and Lieberman (2000) suggested that mentor/first-year principal pairings be posed by identifying the skills and attributes that first-year principals should possess and proceed by providing the time, training and commitment for the mentors to fulfill this charge. To avoid unproductive mentor/first-year principal pairings, Geisman concluded that various tools such as the Mentor Identification Instrument and the Haberman Urban Principal Selection Interview should be utilized. These instruments operate on the beliefs that the most successful principals are doers and thinkers, and that their career objectives are built on core beliefs.

Daresh (1986) found that new principals were often unprepared to assume their role as administrator, were afraid of being perceived as ineffective by colleagues and subordinates, and were concerned with three areas:

1. Limitations on technical expertise (how to do the job they are supposed to do);
2. Difficulties with socialization to the profession and the individual school system (learning how to do the job in a particular setting); and
3. Problems with role clarification (understanding who they are as principals and how they are supposed to use their authority).

Bloom et al. (2003) characterized the challenges of the first-year principal role by demands of time, energy, and isolation from colleagues. He put forward that the most difficult issues for new administrators are those of individual style and daily practice. Bloom et al. (2003) suggested that these concerns could best be met by the practice of effective coaching designed with a relevancy to the new principal's immediate needs that is also perceived by them as useful and appropriate. Similarly, O'Mahoney and Matthews (2003) propose that if new principals are to acquire the technical knowledge, skills and techniques needed to perform competently in a role, there should be a structured and planned set of successive experiences. "Though many new principals have the wherewithal to reach out and obtain the support they need to survive the demands of the job on their own, many more find themselves totally at the mercy of the "tsunami of principalship." (Hall, 2008, p. 450).

Reiss (2003) directly examined the needs of the first-year principal in her studies with principals across the country. She designed research to address the internal needs of her protégés. In her words, "Most leadership professional development programs focus on external issues that affect a district – scheduling, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. They're critically important – however, they don't deal with the internal

issues of leadership - who you are and how you think and act” (Reiss, 2003, p. 17). The focus of her training is personal development more than professional development. Her program calls for mentors/coaches to listen deeply, challenge dreams, goals, and obstacles, and hold the first-year principal to the action steps they create to make those changes.

### Administrator Licensure

Mentoring in professional education has become extremely popular during the last 10-15 years, and in recent years, mentoring programs have been widely adopted across the United States. Playko (1995) suggests that mentoring programs address the needs of new principals in two areas: “One is in the area of pre-service preparation programs for future teachers and school administrators. The second is as part of the induction programs designed to ease transition pains often experienced by individuals who move into new professional posts” (Playko, 1995, p. 85).

Daresh and Playko (1992) promote mentoring as a central component of administrator induction and licensure programs in California, Ohio, and North Carolina. Maine has also required mentoring, or some formal support network, as part of the re-certification process. Similarly, Iowa passed a law in July of 2006 requiring each district to have a mentoring program for administrators in their first administrative position. Olson (2007) stated that roughly half of the states require mentoring for new principals during their first few years on the job.

Drawing on the success of mentoring programs in business and industry along with the success of beginning teacher mentor programs, Daresh and Playko (1992)

conclude that administrators in education could also benefit from such an approach. As record numbers of administrators reach retirement age, they will be replaced with novice administrators who may benefit from a mentoring program. Jacobson (1996) suggests a type of mentoring program for knowledge transfer and support for the novice administrator may prove to be an effective tool for school districts.

#### Importance of the Mentor/Mentee Relationship

“Educators know that the world of the principal, although exciting, challenging, and often personally rewarding, is also a world filled with considerable anxiety, frustration, self-doubt, and loneliness” (Daresh, 2001, p. 2). A mentoring program creates a network of support, which should alleviate some of the stress that comes with the job of building principal. “One of the difficulties that new principals face is that they must lead while they are learning to lead.” (Alvy & Robbins, 2005, p. 50). “Peer mentoring has a way of renewing and strengthening the principal” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 30). By breaking the barrier of isolation, a mentor/mentee relationship can lead to better job satisfaction and a partnership for professional development. O’Brien et al. (1999) describe the mentoring relationship as one where two people are involved and they pay special attention to each other’s development. Moir of the University of California, Santa Cruz states, “Those who receive high-quality mentoring are much likelier than those who are unsupported to progress from ‘problem driven to vision driven, from management focused to instructionally focused, dependent to independent, and reactive to analytical.’” (Wallace Foundation, 2007, p. 20).

Reflecting is an important skill for a school leader. It requires thoughtful expression whether it is in writing or discussion. “Protégés learn more about their professional lives and gain more insight into their personal needs, visions, and values than through any other kind of learning experience” (Daresh, 2001, p. 7). Hibert (2000) tells how she became more reflective and thoughtful due to her mentor/mentee relationship. She maintains that the mentoring process helped her become a better principal.

Many university programs have incorporated some component of one-the-job training in their preparation programs as it became more apparent that internships, mentoring relationships, reflective practice, and cohort groups were important to the learning of the principal candidates. Holloway (2004) reports that the participants in a mentoring program concurred that the greatest benefit of mentoring is having someone to talk with and consult for advice, thus lessening their feelings of isolation. “The program also benefited the experienced school leaders who served as mentors, stretching their thinking about teaching and learning” (Holloway, 2004, p. 2).

The Wallace Foundation (2007) reports the following guidelines for mentoring programs: required high-quality training for mentors, gather information about how mentoring is or is not contributing to the development of leadership behaviors and dispositions, mentoring should be provided for at least one year and ideally two or more years, funding should be sufficient to provide quality training, and finally the primary goal of mentoring should be clear. “It should provide principals with the knowledge,



skills, and courage to become leaders of change who put teaching and learning first in their schools” (Wallace Foundation, 2007, p. 4).

### Benefits of the Mentoring Program

#### Benefits to Mentors

Mentoring can be a way to enhance the formal training a principal receives in the classroom. These hands on experiences will benefit the individual as well as the system. New principals can become more effective educational leaders by participating in a mentoring program. “If you are ready to be mentored, you must be willing to take risks, to go through the painful process of growing” (O’Brien et al., 1999, p. 130). “It is a tough balancing act, however, to keep improvement of classroom instruction as the center of the job while barraged with administrative tasks. Successful principals must lead bifocally – taking care of both learning and business as they move through the day.” (Alvy & Robbins, 2005, p. 51).

Daresh (2001) describes the characteristics of a mentoring program as powerful tools, which help leaders develop in the profession; it reduces the feeling of isolation, and helps move the beginning principal from survival to success.

“Peer mentoring encourages individuals with similar assignments and expectations to collaborate and explore problems and solutions” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 31). Leaders who are working in a mentoring relationship are allies for each other. This relationship allows for dialogue between principals who may be struggling with some of the same issues. Many schools are organized in such a manner that the opportunities for working with other adults are few.

Recent research on administrative mentoring is not abundant, but it does support the need for mentoring programs. Hansen and Matthews (2002) state the following as advantages to a mentoring program:

(a) shared goals and ideas are met with understanding and empathy, (b) reflection becomes an individual and interpersonal activity, (c) open communication is a hallmark for understanding and insightful thinking, (d) trusting relationships are established, (e) risk-taking becomes a less threatening experiences, (f) change is viewed as a process for growth and improvement, (g) instructional leadership functions are validates, (h) creativity and innovation are encouraged, (i) reallocation of time for high-priority concerns is required (p. 31).

Daresh (2001) states there are benefits to the mentor, protégés, and the district. The benefits to the mentor are greater job satisfaction, recognition from their peers, possibilities for career advancement, and a renewed enthusiasm for the profession.

Daresh (2001) indicates that mentors report personal satisfaction from participating in a mentoring program. The mentor sees himself as a teacher. Likewise, Holloway (2004) maintains, “The program also benefited the experienced school leaders who served as mentors, stretching their thinking about teaching and learning” (p. 2).

Mentoring relationships help make the administrator feel part of a team and less isolated. Crow and Matthews (1998) suggest that through the mentoring relationship, mentors gain a renewed enthusiasm for the profession, gain new insights, have the opportunity to evaluate their processes, gain the satisfaction of being a teacher again, gain a network of ideas and opportunities for promotion, gain validation of their importance and the importance of their work and the most important benefit is the mentor gains long-lasting and meaningful friendships long after the mentoring relationship has ended.

The Wallace Foundation (2007) reports the following benefits to mentors: opportunities for professionals to strengthen their knowledge and improve communications, teaching and coaching skills, greater collegiality, satisfaction from helping new administrators, and enhances professional reputation.

### Benefits to Mentees

The benefits for the protégés according to Daresh (2001) include feelings of confidence about their competency, the opportunity to see what they have learned working in real situations, improved communication skills, and a sense of belonging. Crow and Matthews (1998) indicate that benefits from the mentor/protégé relationship can be categorized as follows: exposure to new ideas and creativity, visibility with key personnel, protection from damaging situations, opportunities for challenging and risk-taking activities, increased confidence and competence, and improved reflection.

One additional benefit for mentees is in receiving help in future placements as a result of knowing mentors who know others. A mentoring relationship can help a mentee create a job network. “Data showed that pre-service principals with a formal or informal mentor were more likely to advance their careers” (Reyes, 2003, p. 54). Similarly, Roche (1979) states that most studies in the business world about mentoring indicate that mentoring is important to career advancement.

Probably the most important benefit of a mentoring relationship for the mentee is the feeling of belonging. As stated previously, a mentoring relationship can reduce the feeling of isolation for a new administrator. Crow and Matthews (1998) indicate that

mentoring may aid in the successful assimilation of individuals to new leadership roles by helping them establish a network of peers and experienced professionals.

The Wallace Foundation (2007) indicates the following benefits of a mentoring program for the mentees: guidance and support during first year, increased self-confidence, encouragement to take risks, opportunities to discuss professional issues, and it promotes networking.

### Benefits to Schools

Daresh (2001) describes the benefits to the district from a mentoring relationship include a more capable staff, an attitude of lifelong learning, higher motivation levels and job satisfaction, greater productivity and an improved sense of self-esteem. Gaskill (1993) concludes that with mentoring programs for new administrators, turnover can be reduced, feelings of isolation can be minimized, and networks within the organization can be enhanced through communication.

School districts will gain better candidates for administrative positions when mentoring programs are provided. Crow and Matthews (1998) indicate that a community of learners will be apparent in school districts as a result of the mentoring program. There will be an attitude of lifelong learning among those involved in the program.

Daresh and Playko (1993) say that leaders in school districts with mentoring programs are more energized by the mentoring process. Malone (2001b) indicates that a mentoring relationship gives a leader an additional perspective to any problem and prepares principals to become mentors themselves.

Districts without mentoring programs have administrators who are reluctant to seek help and assistance because it may suggest he or she is somehow weak or incapable of doing the job. Playko states, “When a school district initiates a mentoring or peer coaching program, it sends a clear message that there is no longer any need for principals to approach their work like the ‘Lone Ranger,’ and that it is acceptable to work with colleagues in collaborative problem solving” (Playko, 1995, p. 89).

One additional use of a mentor relationship is with struggling administrators. In many states it is the obligation of the school district to provide support and assistance to practicing administrators prior to termination or non-renewal of a contract. Mentoring may be one approach districts can choose to implement to provide this support. Clearly, beyond the benefits to mentors and protégés, districts and individual schools also realize the benefits of a mentoring program.

The Wallace Foundation (2007) describes benefits to the organization from a mentoring program as promoting positive organizational climate, clarifying roles and expectations, increasing satisfaction and retention rates, and mentoring suggests commitment to employees.

### Types of Mentoring

Hansen and Matthews (2002) discuss the difference between formal and informal Mentoring. Informal peer mentoring is casual and happens when work requires individuals to interact with one another. By contrast, formal peer mentoring relationship requires a more organized approach. A formal program would begin with goal setting and ultimately end in professional growth. Hansen and Matthews explain, “When

principals engage in the kind of collective inquiry peer mentoring encourages, they influence their schools to become learning communities” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 33).

Brady’s study (1996) involves three levels of peer assistance: with facilitators, without facilitator, and by shadowing. The first two levels involve principals working together for three days. The third level involves principals observing each other and then giving feedback. All participants went through a one-day training session to meet each other and to better understand how to observe and provide feedback. Her findings indicate a strong value in peer assistance as a form of professional development. Brady states, “It involved an affirming process in that it allowed principals to see that they were doing a job well, and in a similar way to others” (p. 60).

The Wallace Foundation (2007) reports that new leaders pass through five stages: survival, control, stability, educational leadership, and professional actualization. It is difficult to imagine most school leaders go through the five stages in the year of mentoring that is provided.

### Business and Mentoring

The business community uses mentoring for a variety of reasons. The education system can learn from the business community when implementing mentoring programs. Kerka (1998) explains how the business community has also embraced the concept of mentoring due to organizational trends such as downsizing, restructuring, teamwork, increased diversity and individual responsibility for career development.

Mentorship programs have also been used as a way to help women and minorities break into the “Old Boy Network” and through the “Glass Ceiling.” The programs have helped new employees gain confidence and technical knowledge while they also develop loyalty to the company. Surprisingly, business mentors in these programs have cited that the ongoing contact with senior management in a fairly risk-free environment has allowed them to become assertive and competent employees.

Mentoring is also emerging as a way to assimilate the new employee into the organizational culture and to provide a two-way transfer of skills and experiences. Business personnel are branching out to include group mentoring in which the mentor is a learning leader of a team or learning group within a learning organization. Members of this diverse learning group can learn from each other as well as learn from the leader. Researchers in business and industry settings have observed the different types of supportive relationships that are appropriate at varying times in a professional’s career.

#### Limitations of Mentoring

There are times that no matter how much planning, training and evaluation occur, mentor programs can experience problems. Some of the pitfalls according to Crow and Matthews (1998) include mentors who try to fulfill personal agendas, mentors who become too protective and controlling, mentees who only get a limited perspective from the mentors, mentees who become too dependent on mentors, mentees who become carbon copies of mentors, and mentees expecting too much from a mentoring relationship. Playko states, “ I have seen and have had direct experience with some of the

down sides.... however; I would say emphatically that I believe mentoring is a most effective approach to ongoing professional development.” (Playko, 1995, p. 89).

Preparation for mentors and mentees is in most cases not adequate. Daresh (2004) stated that in no case has any form of training for mentors been required, and no minimal qualifications have been identified.

Mentors are too often chosen solely because they have experience as a school administrator. Unfortunately, experience does not automatically equate to a successful mentor. There are critical skills and abilities needed by mentors in order to be effective. Playko (1995) includes the following as the skills and abilities needed by mentors: human relations, instructional leadership, and the understanding of mentoring as a form of instruction.

Daresh (2001) sees the following as desirable characteristics for a mentor to be effective: experience as a practicing school administrator and regarded as effective by peers, positive leadership qualities, asks the right questions of beginning administrators, accepts alternate ways of doing things, expresses the desire to see people go beyond their present level of performance, models the principles of continuous learning and reflection, and is aware of political and social realities.

In addition to the above named characteristics, mentors must also possess knowledge of the field, enthusiasm, the ability to communicate a clear picture of personal attitudes, values and ethical standards, the ability to communicate the needed feedback in a sensitive way, be a good listener, and have a caring attitude and belief in their mentee. As one can see, being an effective mentor is much more than just having experience.



Training helps to weed out those who may not be cut out to be a mentor. Olson (2007) believes that too often programs result in “buddy systems” or “checklist exercises,” rather than helping new principals improve teaching and learning in their schools.

Possibly the most critical aspect of an effective mentoring program is the matching of mentors and mentees. “There is no absolute to ensure that matches made are matches made in heaven” (Playko, 1995, p. 91). However, there are four common myths about matching that need to be dispelled.

The first myth is that of matching genders. Daresh (2001) suggests that studies of gender differences indicate that women prefer to have women as mentors. Yet, there are no clear suggestions that women make better mentors to their female colleagues.

The second myth is that mentoring must occur within the same level of schooling. “Although, it might be true that many technical parts of the administration of secondary schools differ from those of elementary schools, the foundations of school leadership, as defined by much of the literature dealing with effective leaders, remain the same in elementary, middle, senior high, or even postsecondary schools” (Daresh, 2001, p. 59).

The third myth is that mentors must be older than their protégés. According to Daresh, one must remember the primary role of a mentor is not to know all the answers but to work with a protégé to develop common understandings and solutions to concerns, issues, and problems that might occur in practice.

The fourth and final myth is that mentoring matches must be formed around geographical proximity. Daresh believes that effective mentoring matches can occur in sparsely populated regions where drop-in visits and same building experiences are not

possible. Although being in close geographic proximity may make the mentor meeting sessions easier, it is not necessary to make them effective.

There is not one fool proof way to match mentors with their protégés. Daresh states, “The ideal matching of mentors and protégés should always be based on an analysis of professional goals, interpersonal styles and values, and the learning needs of both parties” (Daresh, 2001, p. 62). The following are other areas Daresh (2001) suggests to consider when matching mentors and protégés: learning styles, leadership styles, and philosophical/educational platforms.

Malone (2001a) explains that when principals are asked to identify a vital component of their preparation, they typically identify other school leaders as their primary source of help. Zachary (2000) points out that the focus of mentoring relationships has shifted over the years from guiding the novice principals to creating a strong relationship. This requires a learning relationship to exist between the mentor and mentee.

Zachary (2000) shares that the learning relationship has four phases. In the first phase, the mentors prepare. In the second phase, a dialogue between the mentor and protégé allows the two parties to create a learning path. The third phase is the longest and most crucial and it is where the actual learning takes place. The fourth and final phase consists of evaluating the goals and either ending or renegotiating the relationship.

Although most of the literature on mentoring is focused around the beginning principal, we cannot forget about the needs of the career administrators. According to Reyes, “School leaders at all career stages – aspiring, intern, new, mid career, and late

career- need other more experienced professionals to guide them in their journey through the challenges of turbulent times in public education” (Reyes, 2003, p. 45).

Crow and Matthews (1998) indicate three levels of administrators who can benefit from a mentoring program. The first is a new assistant principal who is entering their first administrative job, usually coming from the classroom. The second is a new principal. These are often individuals who have been assistant principals for at least one year. The third is the mid-career administrator. This is an administrator who has been an administrator for several years. Crow and Matthews (1998) explain that these administrators usually would only need the assistance of a mentor program if they have major changes that occur within their school, they change schools, or they change school districts.

### Summary

Some districts across the United States have developed formal peer mentoring or coaching programs for school administrators. Additionally, some states are now mandating mentoring programs for beginning principals. “Fifty-six percent of nearly 100,000 principals is a lot of job openings, and with a widely acknowledged shortage of qualified candidates to take those jobs, the need for effective mentoring programs has never been more immediate and should “send sparks flying about the importance of providing quality mentorship programs for our rookie administrators.” (Hall, 2008, p. 452). There is literature around the topic of mentoring teachers, but little information around the topic of mentoring for administrators. Reyes said, “In the context of principal shortages, accountability demands, changing school reform efforts, and the changing role

of the principal, mentoring is vital to principal development starting at the pre-service stage” (Reyes, 2003, p. 46). Administrators in all stages of their career seem to benefit from mentoring programs and/or relationships.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESIGN OF STUDY AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter contains a description of the study design and interpretation of data including restatement of the purpose and research questions, instrumentation, data collection and management, reliability and analysis.

For this study, survey research and interviews were used to understand what effects, if any, the administrative mentoring program had on the first-year principal. Mentors and mentees completed a survey regarding the level of confidence of the mentee in performing duties of a principal in twelve areas of the job. Also, five mentors and five mentees were interviewed. The researcher created a protocol to use during the interviews. The researcher coded each question prior to the interviews into three categories: Nature of the First Year Principal/Mentor Relationship, Organizational Factors, and Principal Learning. The mentor and mentees' perspective was examined to determine if their confidence level improved, if the mentoring relationship provided professional development and that their job satisfaction increased.

#### The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to understand the components of a mentoring relationship that impact new practicing principals' perceptions of the role that mentors played in their professional development and job satisfaction. The mentors' perspectives will be examined to determine how they could have improved their own performance in the mentoring relationship. In addition, the study will compare perceptions of first year principals with those of their mentors/coaches.

This study serves to provide information for districts seeking to develop administrative mentoring programs in schools. While the design of the study prevents generalizing findings due to the limited sampling group, it suggests outcomes, identifies positive attributes, and examines the effects of structural mentoring relationships.

### The Research Questions

To investigate what makes a significant difference to first year principals in terms of their professional development and job satisfaction the following four questions guide this study:

1. What are the effects, if any, of the administrative mentoring program on the first-year principal?
2. Do mentor/mentee relationships provide professional development?
3. Are administrators who have had mentor/mentee relationships more confident in their position?
4. What impact, if any, does a mentor/mentee relationship in formal mentoring programs have on a new administrator's sense of job satisfaction?

### Selection of Participants

Iowa first year building level administrators whose district participated in the School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) Mentoring and Induction program during the 2007-2008 school year was the population for this study. Those identified were high school administrators in their current position for one year. There were twenty-seven high school principals whose district participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction Program. Their names and the schools were obtained from the SAI database. These 27

high school principals were new to their position and will serve as the population to select mentees.

Mentors were selected through collaboration between SAI and the Area Education Agencies (AEAs) located throughout the state of Iowa. SAI contacted the appropriate person at the AEA requesting recommendations for possible mentors. One requirement was for the mentor to be someone within close proximity geographically so the individuals did not have to travel far to see each other. Also, it was very important that the mentor be from a similar size school district, and hold the same position as the mentee. In most cases, the new administrator was matched with someone outside their own district. It has always been past practice to use mentors with substantial experience, and as the new legislation was written, it is now required that the mentor have at least four years of experience as an administrator. Next, the invitation was extended to the mentors, the people invited to be mentors had to have demonstrated leadership skills, had a focus on student achievement, were good listeners and knew how to encourage their mentees' growth as leaders of learning.

### Participants

The researcher used all of the quantitative data collected by SAI. The researcher selected a subset of the high school principals with whom to conduct interviews. The researcher decided to interview five mentors and five mentees. All ten participants were high school principals from two quadrants in the state of Iowa. The researcher received a list of mentors and mentees who participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction

program during the 2007-08 school year. These participants were from all parts of the state of Iowa. The school size varied from small rural districts to large urban districts.

The researcher narrowed the list by separating out the high school principals. Once the researcher identified all of the high school principals, then the researcher divided up the state in four parts by categorizing the AEAs in four quadrants. The researcher attempted to find volunteers from each quadrant of the state of Iowa. Emails were sent introducing the researcher to the mentors and mentees inviting them to participate in the interviews. The researcher was not able to obtain mentor/mentee pairs from all four quadrants of the state of Iowa. The mentor/mentee pairs who agreed to participate in the interviews were from central Iowa or Northeast Iowa. Three AEAs were represented in the interview pool.

A total of 10 were interviewed for this study. The decision was made to include five mentees who were serving as a high school principal and five mentors who also were serving as high school principals. Each of the mentees would have completed their first year of the principalship during the 2007-08 school year.

#### Participant Demographic Data

The sample of the qualitative portion of this study was limited to ten high school principals, five mentees and five mentors.

For the reporting of the findings in this study, all names and identifying information have been changed to protect the identity of the principal participants. Last names of the mentees begin with the letters "A," "B," "C," "D," and "E": Anderson, Black, Coleman, Dunn, and Evans. Last names of the mentors begin with the letters "J,"



“K,” “L,” “M,” and “N”: Jones, Knott, Lane, Miller, and Nelson. Please refer to Table 1 for the names that will be utilized for the purpose of this study and the school district.

Table 1

*Identifying Information of Mentor/Mentee Participants*

Name	Mentor/Mentee	School	Quadrant
Mr. Anderson	Mentee	One	Quadrant 1
Ms. Black	Mentee	Two	Quadrant 1
Ms. Coleman	Mentee	Three	Quadrant 2
Mr. Dunn	Mentee	Four	Quadrant 1
Mr. Evans	Mentee	Five	Quadrant 1
Mr. Jones	Mentor	Six	Quadrant 1/2
Mr. Knott	Mentor	Seven	Quadrant 1
Ms. Lane	Mentor	Three	Quadrant 2
Mr. Miller	Mentor	Eight	Quadrant 1
Ms. Nelson	Mentor	Nine	Quadrant 1

Individual Interviews

The interviews took place at a location mutually agreed upon by the mentor/mentee and researcher. Eight out of the ten interviews took place in the school where the individual is employed. In one case, the interview took place at Panera. The other interview location was at an AEA.

Mentee Interviews

Mr. Anderson. The interview with Mr. Anderson took place in his office at school at 8:00 a.m. The researcher arrived early and waited in the outer office area. Mr.

Anderson returned from the middle school wing of the building and met the researcher in the office. Mr. Anderson and the researcher went to his office to conduct the interview. Mr. Anderson had a small but very neat office. His desk was clear of any clutter. Not one piece of paper was on his desk. There was a row of chairs across from his desk for visitors to use. The researcher sat across the desk from Mr. Anderson. The arrangement of his office was very formal.

Mr. Anderson graduated from high school from school one. He went away to college and has returned to his hometown to serve as principal after teaching for ten years. He participated in the interview in a very positive manner. Mr. Anderson described his school with great enthusiasm,

It is a great small school where kids get along, I think. You know, relatively speaking. Certainly there are bumps in the road, but I think they are inclusive to others or students that have different interests. I think it is a very welcoming school. I think that is one of the advantages that we have being a small school is that kids participate in a lot of extracurricular and co-curricular activities too along the way. And I think that is a bonus of being in a small school. He continued to say, we have about 325 students K-12, and probably to make that more practical, we have three grades that are in the thirties. Our top three grades in high school and following that we are in the twenties and we have three grades in the teens, I think.

His comments about the mentoring and induction experience through SAI were favorable. He answered all of the questions freely. Mr. Anderson used his words wisely and carefully. He did not elaborate with his answers. There were no interruptions during the course of this interview. Out of 73 total comments, 24 comments pertained to the nature of the first year principal/mentor relationship, 15 regarding the organizational factors, and 34 comments were about principal learning.

Ms. Black. The interview with Ms. Black, mentee, took place in her office at the high school. The researcher followed Ms. Black to her office. Ms. Black and the researcher sat down at a round table. Ms. Black's office was somewhat cluttered. Her desk was filled with piles of papers as was the table. Ms. Black was very personable. She seemed to enjoy talking. The conversation was very open and free flowing. There were no interruptions during the interview.

Ms. Black started her educational career twenty years ago. She spent time outside of the school educational arena for a few years during the last twenty years. She was very happy to share information in order to help improve the mentoring and induction program. Out of 54 total comments, 16 comments revolved around the nature of the first year principal/mentoring relationship, 12 comments were about the organizational factors and 21 comments regarding principal learning with 5 miscellaneous comments.

Ms. Black described her school in the following way,

Fantastic school. We have fantastic kids. The education is important. The kids know that. We have a supportive community because education is important to the community that we have for the most part the parents backing. They want the kids to have a good education and they want to do what's best for the kids. We have a dedicated staff, trying to do what's best for kids. Does that mean they're perfect? No. We always have things we'd like them to do better. Just like I'm sure there are things people want me to do better too. It's just always a growing process, but we're one building and that's a huge plus to have those benefits within the building because we have high school students that go down and work with elementary students, we have elementary students who come up and do things with the high school so that's a big plus, but I just think it's a community, and it's a family feel and we try to keep a family feel within the building and within the community.

Ms. Coleman. Ms. Coleman, mentee, asked the researcher to meet her at her office after lunch one afternoon. Ms. Coleman is a new principal. She has worked in the

district prior to her new assignment as an assistant principal. The school office was quiet with no distractions during the hour together. Her office is quite small. There is not room for a table only her desk and another chair. She had stacks of papers on her desk and books scattered around her office.

Ms. Coleman started her educational career as a first grade teacher. She then moved to a new district as a special education teacher. After a few years as a teacher she decided to leave the classroom and begin working at an AEA. She has spent 20 years working for the AEA before coming to her current district. She has been in her district for three years. Ms. Coleman started her educational career as a first grade teacher. She then moved to a new district as a special education teacher. After a few years as a teacher she decided to leave the classroom and begin working at an AEA. She has spent 20 years working for the AEA before coming to her current district. She has been in her district for three years.

When Ms. Coleman was asked to describe her school, she responded with the following,

Well, the school is -- is connected to the agency, and the agency is a facility so it's a psychiatric medical facility for children, so whoever is admitted to the agency for that level of psychiatric care automatically comes to school here. So we have small class sizes, and we have teachers and associates in each classroom, and we work really hard on relationships, building relationships with kids. A lot of times this is the first successful school experience they've had. A lot of kids come here with just a history of school failures. So that's one of our focuses is to really work on relationships. And we use a circle of courage as the foundation for our PBS and all of our behavior expectations, and it's from the Lakota Indians. And it has an underlying theme that all children need is to have belonging, mastery, independence and generosity in their lives so to base everything on those four quadrants of the circle, so it really has been a good foundation for what we expect for kids and from adults.

Ms. Coleman had 86 total responses with 28 regarding the nature of the first-year principal/mentoring relationship, 13 comments on the organizational factors, 33 comments on what the principal is learning and 11 miscellaneous comments, which will not be analyzed. Ms. Coleman mentioned several times during the interview that she wished she had prepared for the interview by reviewing information. She also mentioned how difficult the past year had been due to staff reductions that took place throughout the fall of the year.

Mr. Dunn. Mr. Dunn served as a high school principal for one year. He decided to change positions after his first year as a principal. Mr. Dunn had served as a technology director prior to taking the principalship. He learned early on in his first year that he wanted to return to a position where he would be working in his strength area, technology. Mr. Dunn is a very quiet individual. He is a reflective person. It was difficult for him to speak about his experience as a principal. It was evident that he did not have a good experience. He seemed a bit guarded with his answers.

The interview took place at Mr. Dunn's new office. Mr. Dunn thought it would be best to talk in a more private setting, therefore the interview was done in a private meeting room. The meeting room had a table and chairs and nothing on the walls. It was a very sterile environment. Mr. Dunn's office is out in the open with other cubicles around and would not have been very private.

Mr. Dunn described his former district,

We're definitely in a transition and they are really going through a rough time right now. I think things will be fine after the rough stretch. You have a community that has a lot of pride but it is getting smaller, big declining enrollment. You can tell they have a feeling to themselves where they like kind

of the sense this is how we have always done things but also the feeling we have a very metropolitan community. We've got the college there and we are right on I-80 and that causes some schizophrenia. They don't necessarily know their identity. How that plays out, you have a new superintendent comes in, tries to do some new things and change is tough and this community is kind of backlash but they brought in the superintendent for change cutting edge they wanted to bring in this person to make sure your school is on the cutting edge. And that has been kind of the issue – and it is a community that has got a lot of talent and they've got a lot. I really enjoyed working with the students, I can say that with just about every school I have been at, but the community takes a lot of pride in their schools. And just coming to an understanding of each other, I think that is a hard task for that community to do.

Mr. Dunn had a total of 34 responses with 19 regarding the principal learning, 8 comments on the organizational factors and 7 around the nature of the first-year principal mentor/mentee relationship. Mr. Dunn was very complimentary when talking about his mentor, but his experience working with the larger community was a struggle throughout his first year.

Mr. Evans. Mr. Evans agreed to meet in his office at the high school. He was the only person in the office on the day of the interview. Mr. Evans said that his superintendent might stop by during the interview. The researcher began asking questions. Mr. Evans was very open with his responses. After about ½ hour the superintendent did stop by to say hello. The researcher stopped the recorder. The interview resumed once the superintendent left.

Mr. Evans spent four years in the military after high school. During this time he went to various colleges and earned an English degree. He spent six years teaching English to middle and high school students. He started his first administrative position as a Dean and moved into the high school principalship after one year. He completed his

endorsement in December of 2008. Mr. Evans portrays his school in the following manner,

I would say great opportunities to all students in extra-curricular, whether it's music, band and vocal, speech opportunities -- although it's not the strongest -- athletic opportunities, which I think is one of the major advantages to a small school is you can be involved in anything you want really. They don't cut people. I would say that above and beyond many school districts in the area on many things whether it's a homework policy, moving kids forward, availability to college classes, I really just think we have a quality place here to educate students, and I think the staff does an outstanding job. And we're really, you know, moving. I think when we set goals, we set goals to our core purpose, providing quality instruction to kids -- successful, I mean, that's -- those are the things that really make the school what it is, and I think if you go into any of our classrooms, our teachers will talk about that, and I think the majority embrace that, and so it works.

Mr. Evans had a total of 47 responses with 13 responses addressing the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship, 18 responses were in reference to the organizational factors and 9 responses were about the principal learning. Seven responses will not be coded for this study. Mr. Evans was very matter of a fact in his answers. He mentioned that he is what his district and school needed at this time, but there may come a time in the future when his skills will not be enough for the building or district. Mr. Evans sees himself as a manager and not so much as an instructional leader. He believes the district will need more of a visionary in the future and he may not be the right person for the job when that time comes.

#### Mentor Interviews

Mr. Jones. Mr. Jones has been in educational administration for 23 years. He has served in various roles in various size school districts. He began his education career as a

social studies teacher and special education teacher. He has worked in private schools as well as public school systems. For a short time he served as a guidance counselor.

Mr. Jones asked the researcher to meet him in his office in the afternoon. School was in session and Mr. Jones was off working with some students when the researcher arrived. He entered his office a short time after the researcher had arrived. There was an air conditioner running near the table, which made it difficult at times to hear what Mr. Jones was saying.

Mr. Jones has served as a mentor to other new principals through the SAI program. He enjoys serving as a mentor and helping the profession. He mentioned that he was planning not to serve as a mentor this year, but was called upon late in the summer to fulfill the role as mentor again. SAI was having difficulty finding someone to serve as mentor for a nearby colleague. Mr. Jones was happy to help.

Mr. Jones expressed the following about his school,

Oh, I'd say that we're a very -- we got a group of students that -- what we lack for in diversity we make up in work. SF is virtually; we serve kids from three counties. Over the years we've seen the percentage of kids that -- whose economic status has slowly increased. I have seen the percentage of kids that continue to go to post secondary education stay about the same. Eighty-five to 95 percent. Eighty-five is pretty honest. Now, I think an increase is the percent that has went to the military. Relatively strong, five to 8 percent each year that goes that way.

Mr. Jones answered 50 questions in total. The questions revolved around the mentor/mentee relationship, organizational factors and what the mentee is learning. Nine of his answers were around what the mentee is learning. Twenty were about the organizational factors and 17 were about the mentor/mentee relationship. Four of his comments were not coded.



Mr. Knott. Mr. Knott graduated from college with a BA in history. Secondary education was his minor. He is currently in the process of earning his certification to serve as a superintendent. He is unsure if he will ever move into that role. He has served in various roles in education for 18 plus years. He is in his eleventh year as an administrator. All of his eleven years have been in his current district. He started out as a junior high teacher in the district and then accepted a position as a half-time principal and now serves as the principal.

Mr. Knott has served as a mentor to other new principals. The interview took place in his office at the high school. He closed the door so there would not be any interruptions. He is very complimentary of the SAI mentoring and induction program. He enjoys serving as a mentor. He feels as though he can give back to the profession by helping new aspiring administrators.

Mr. Knott expressed the following about his school,

We have great kids. We have a great staff. I think I've been here long enough now to see the tenured staff move on and I've been able to hire young people who are interested in education. They do a fantastic job. I live in a community where there's a great deal of interest as to what's best for kids and education is very, very important. We passed a bond issue ten years ago on the second try. We have a community college here, which is about a half a block away, and we started an early childhood center which is another half a block away so we're actually a K-14 campus here so it's a great, great community a great school district, and I'm especially proud of the high school and the kids and the staff here.

Mr. Knott had 56 total responses, which were comprised of 14 learning, 19 nature of the mentor/mentee relationship and 21 organizational factors. Two of his responses were not coded. Mr. Knott did not participate in a formal mentoring program when he began in administration. He recalled the number of colleagues who were willing to help

him during his first few years as an administrator and believes it is his duty to help others succeed as well.

Ms. Lane. Ms. Lane was pleased to meet and discuss the mentoring and induction program. She was very much a proponent of the program. She was very energetic and enthusiastic about the program. She is a talker and started describing the program before I had time to ask a question. Ms. Lane has worked in her current district many years. She has been working with special needs students most of her educational career. The interview took place in Ms. Lane's office. There were no interruptions during the hour-long interview. It was difficult to follow the interview protocol during this interview.

Ms. Lane responded 71 times to questions by the researcher. She had 41 responses to the questions regarding the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship, 9 answers about the mentee's learning and 20 responses revolved around the organizational factors. There was only one comment not coded.

Mr. Miller. The researcher and Mr. Miller knew each other from working in the same conference. He is a very open and honest individual. He enjoys serving as the high school principal. He started in education as an industrial tech teacher. He then went back to get his principal certification. After a few years he started to work on his superintendent certification, but stopped and decided he did not want to go in that direction.

The interview was conducted in Mr. Miller's office at the high school. School was not in session and therefore there were no other employees in the office area. Mr. Miller was happy to meet and discuss the mentoring and induction program. He believes

in the program and has served as a mentor several times in the past. He sees the importance of giving back to the profession. Mr. Miller spoke of his first administrative job and how he did not have a formal mentor, but that he would call his professor or the individual who preceded him when he had questions. He understood how involved the principal job is and the need to have a colleague who is there just to listen and offer suggestions.

Mr. Miller described his school,

Small, rural school County seat, very proactive community, very progressive, not closed. Expects a lot from educationally than some. It's not just get by. Make sure you have the class or make sure -- push it that way. I also think our students, it's a very -- it's not a hard march in the hallways, things like that. I mean they make choices to screw up and things happen. Probably very loose in spots, and have switched through the years that way. Kids actually taking courses though I still think right now -- kids actually concerned about going on and finding success versus so many years ago -- okay, they just did it, but now getting a push every once in awhile more than in the past I think.

Mr. Miller responded 54 times to questions by the researcher. He had nine responses to the questions regarding learning, 33 in response to the organizational factors and 12 responses in regard to the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship.

Ms. Nelson. Ms. Nelson has been in education for 21 years. Three of those years she has served in an administrative role. The interview took place at Panera at the request of Ms. Nelson. Her schedule is very busy and it requires her to travel throughout the conference. She has athletic director responsibilities on top of all the duties that go along with being a principal. Panera was a neutral location that helped Ms. Nelson meet her schedule. The restaurant was very busy and it was difficult to hear her responses at times due to the noise.

Ms. Nelson expressed the following about her school,

We're a class 2A school; so we average about between 50 to 70 kids per grade, middle income. We do have about 25 percent of our kids that are a low socioeconomic category, I guess. Overall, parents are pretty supportive of the school, teachers, and administration. And I'd say a great school to be at. I enjoy J, or I guess I wouldn't be there as long as I have.

Ms. Nelson is another supporter of the mentoring and induction program. She did not have a formal mentor when she first began her administrative position, but on several occasions she mentioned a couple of informal mentors who helped her succeed and learn in her position. She responded 55 times to questions. Four of her responses revolved around the learning of the new principal, 26 responses were in regard to the organizational factors and 25 responses were directed at the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship. She had not applied to serve as a mentor, but when she got the call from SAI she decided it would be nice to help a new principal. She remembered how helpful her informal mentors were for her when first starting out as an administrator. Ms. Nelson said,

They called me, so somebody must have dropped my name somewhere. And then I just thought it was a good idea just because I didn't have the mentor that it would be nice to have – I was fortunate because my former principal was still in the area, but I thought it would be nice to just to have that somebody to say – I got this, what is going on here?

### Survey

This research study used a mixed methods approach. The researcher used quantitative survey research augmented by the qualitative interviews. When analyzing the results of the formative program survey, the data was disaggregated for principals and a short summary of the findings is presented.

The quantitative piece of the study utilized survey research methodology. A questionnaire was developed by SAI, which was administered electronically. An email was sent to invite mentees and mentors to complete an online survey. Mentees completed the survey three times throughout the year: beginning of the program, midyear and at the end of the program (see Appendix A). The mentors completed the survey twice: midyear and at the end of the program (see Appendix B). One final survey (see Appendices C and D) was completed at the end of the program by both the mentees and mentors. The final survey was received from the Region One – Learning Support Center. Permission to use the instrument had been granted. SAI sent an email to nonrespondents four weeks after the initial email.

All administrators involved in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program received an electronic copy of the survey in the fall, midyear and in May. Each participant also received an additional survey in May asking to rate their mentor or mentee. There was a follow up email contact to nonrespondents four weeks later.

The beginning administrator or mentee completed the survey (see Appendix A) three times during their first year in the administrative position. The administrator rated him/herself on how confident he/she was in the following twelve areas:

- provide feedback to teachers on their professional practice
- use of building leadership team to accomplish school improvement goals
- provide collaborative professional development
- adapt leadership behavior to the needs of current situation
- use conflict productively

- manage day-to-day operations
- establish effective student behavior management systems
- allocate resources appropriately to accomplish building goals
- establish positive working relationships with students, parents, and staff
- hire quality teachers
- find time for personal rejuvenation
- take time for reflection on professional practice

The mentors were also asked to complete a survey twice during the first year rating their mentor on the same twelve areas listed above.

The researcher also used the Principal Mentor Assessment (see Appendix C) and the Mentee Assessment (see Appendix D) from the Region One Learning Support Center as a summative assessment of the mentoring program. The summative assessment was administered in May to all mentees and mentors.

Permission was obtained from SAI to use the quantitative data and perform the study with administrators involved in their study.

The results of the survey are confidential, in that the respondents simply logged onto an electronic web address to complete the survey. The Survey Monkey software automatically compiled the responses. Survey Monkey, <http://www.surveymonkey.com/>, is an online survey tool that enables people of all experience levels to create their own surveys quickly and easily.

### Interviews

The qualitative portion of the research included face-to-face, in-depth, semi-structured interviews. All interviews were audio taped, with the permission of the first-year principal or his/her mentor for the purpose of capturing rich data through transcription. The participants in this study were treated as the experts and were assumed to have an accurate and unique perspective. Questions asked focused on three areas: the nature of the first-year principal/mentor relationship, organizational factors, and what the principal is learning (see Appendices E and F). Permission was obtained from the Human Subjects Review Board (See Appendix G) from the University of Northern Iowa.

The interviews took place in a location mutually agreed upon by the mentor/mentee and researcher, usually the mentor or mentee's school. Participants were assured complete confidentiality in the final reporting of the findings of this research. After the completion of the dissertation and its approval, the interview tapes were destroyed. Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

The protocol was utilized during the participant interviews (See Appendices E and F). Glesne (1999, p. 68) stated, "Questions may emerge in the course of interviewing and may be added to or replace the reestablished ones; this process of question formation is the more likely and the more ideal one in qualitative inquire." Bratlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach, and Richardson. (2005) concurred by stating,

Because as qualitative researchers we are constantly evolving instruments and because settings and people also are dynamic and diverse, data collection is most productively done in creative ways. This might involve using a tentative interview protocol in a flexible way (rather than using a rigidly structured protocol in the same way with all 'subjects') so that questions might be modified or added to as preliminary evidence emerges.

Consequently, the interview protocol was not followed verbatim. The researcher ensured that all questions on the protocol were addressed during the interview, however, not all questions were formally asked. The researcher found that most participants spoke freely and sometimes addressed upcoming questions while answering other questions. The researcher also asked questions that did not appear on the interview protocol as themes emerged during the interviews that were not anticipated.

### Data Collection

The primary data collection methods included in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Interview data was collected using audio tape recording devices and the recordings were transcribed. The researcher hired a third party to transcribe the interviews. The individual was a student who was in her final year of a court reporter program at the college level. The researcher conducted ten interviews to substantiate the model and also to look for conflicting experiences from the mentors and first-year principals that might suggest incompatibility with the previously discovered attributes. The researcher used information gained in the interviews in the identification of the relationship between factors that exist between the first-year principal and the mentor and the organizational factors, which promote or inhibit administrative mentoring. The participants in this study were treated as the experts.

The researcher guided the interviews with general probing, conversation-like questions or situations. Open-ended probes, encouraging remarks and follow-up questions dominated the interviewer's responses. First year principals and their mentors were encouraged to be spontaneous and reflective in exploring their experiences.



The interviews served as the basis for the development of the preliminary categories or themes, using coding techniques to examine all of the new data thoroughly. The broad categories included: the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship, organizational factors and what the principal is learning. The researcher started with these broad categories due to the information gathered in the literature review. These categories served as a basis for the narrative when comparing the data from the interviews to the data from the surveys. The researcher paralleled the information learned in the interviews to the data from the surveys through the narrative.

### Data Analysis

The Constant Comparative Method was utilized to examine the data gathered from the interviews. According to Boeije (2002, p. 393), “By comparing, the researcher is able to do what is necessary to develop a theory more or less inductively, namely categorizing, coding, delineating categories and connecting them.” Initially, data from participant interviews was coded using broad categories that demonstrated trends in the data. These broad categories included: The Nature of the Mentor/Mentee Relationship, Organizational Factors and Principal Learning. The researcher used these broad categories due to the information found in the literature review. The researcher coded her questions prior to setting up the interviews. Each question was specific to one of the identified categories above.

Each mentor/mentee interview was stored electronically. The researcher highlighted each question according to the following code: All questions regarding the Nature of the Mentor/Mentee Relationship were highlighted using the color blue, the

questions that referenced the Organizational Factors were highlighted using the color pink and lastly the questions asking about Principal Learning were highlighted electronically using the color yellow. All this was done electronically using the highlighting feature in Word.

*Nature of the Mentoring Relationship:* Comments were categorized as Nature of the Mentoring Relationship if they pertained to the individual's background, where the mentee went when he/she had a question, the mentoring arrangement, development of the relationship, and components of the relationship. Example quotes include: "I was never uncomfortable with it because I think that people know that for the first year you are learning lots of things and especially with my lack of years in the district, you know, I really don't know how things work internally, so that was part of what was going on. And it really didn't bother me at all to ask for help." "Yes, my mentor was assigned by the district. We went to a series of meetings together right at the beginning of the year, the beginning of the school year, and we set up monthly meetings and it just happened she came here each time that we met." "I'm going to trust and help you, but you have to let me know how much trust and help you want. If you don't to want discuss things with me, that's your prerogative."

*Organizational Factors:* Comments were categorized as Organizational Factors if they pertained to formal or informal opportunities to learn, barriers to the mentoring relationship, how the mentoring relationship differs from other professional relationships, the organization of the mentor/mentee meetings, and training. Example quotes included: "But you know there are times people just don't click. That's the way of the world. I'm

certain that could happen.” “And I’m thinking that’s why perhaps people weren’t taking it as seriously as they needed too, but time is probably you know, anywhere you go, everything you do, that’s the biggest barrier everyone talks about is time.” “I attended the meetings with the mentee, the pre-trainings with that.” “There are barriers to any type of situation. Time was my biggest problem.”

*Principal Learning:* Comments were categorized as Principal Learning if they pertained to learning that took place in a formal setting such as meetings at SAI or the meetings between the mentor and mentee or the informal times the pair communicated through email or phone conversations. Comments also belong in this category if the participant was describing his/her school, the mentoring relationship, what was learned during the first year of the job, and the type of input the mentee had in the mentoring relationship. Example quotes include: “I think one of the things I probably learned was everybody thinks their decision is important and you need a decision now and just the matter of stepping back, you know, take four hours make sure you process whatever you're processing, and I think that was a biggie that you don't have to respond immediately, take some time and think.” “Well, you know, management is a high percentage of the job, that I need to make time for myself, there’s a balance issue that needs to be addressed and if that balance isn’t done correctly on either side (work or home) neither of them will work.”

Glesne (1999, p. 152) stated,

As you are planning, collecting and analyzing data, and writing up your findings, do not forget the invaluable assistance of others. Ask friends and colleagues to work with portions of your data – developing codes, applying your codes, or interpreting field notes to check your perceptions.

This researcher asked a colleague who has her doctorate and completed a qualitative study on her own to code mentor and mentee comments. This would determine if the themes utilized by the researcher were discrete and if the definitions used for coding the comments were valid.

#### Interpretation of Data

The researcher reviewed the definitions with the coder and then provided two mentor and two mentee interview field notes to the coder electronically. The researcher selected 32 random comments from the field notes to compare coding. The coder coded 29 of 32 comments the same as the researcher. Consequently, there was 91% agreement between the researcher and the coder.

After the researcher concluded that the three identified themes were distinct, further analysis of the data was completed. The researcher grouped comments from the mentors together and comments from the mentees together in each theme. Patterns were identified based on what mentors said versus what mentees said.

Following the examination and analysis of the interview data, three main themes were identified and will be reported. These themes are: Nature of the Mentoring Relationship, Organizational Factors and Principal Learning. The Nature of the Mentoring Relationship evolved from the mentor/mentee arrangement and components of the mentoring arrangement. The Organizational Factors theme included categories of: formal and informal opportunities to learn, barriers to learning, the mentoring relationship versus other professional relationships, and the meeting protocol. Finally, the theme of Principal Learning involved the following: what was learned through the

mentoring relationship, topics discussed during the meetings, administrative skills needed to be successful, and the skills and attitudes developed through working with a mentor.

Survey Research: Study Population and Return Rates

The 2007-2008 SAI Mentoring and Induction program included 131 administrators. The 2007-08 school year was the first year for each of these administrators in their current position. Of those 131, there were 100 principals, 28 superintendents/assorted directors and the remaining three were AEA administrators. A mentor was matched with each new administrator. The total number of mentors and mentees who participated in the program were 262. The average number of mentee respondents throughout the three reporting periods included 61 principals (27 of those served as high school principals), 18 superintendents and assorted directors. The mentor respondents in both reporting periods included an average of 73 principals, 19 superintendents and assorted directors. In total 191, 12-item surveys were returned in May between both groups. When compared with the total program population, the return rate was 72.9%. This study will focus only on the principals involved in the study.

Table 2

*Principal Return Rate*

Principals N=100	Oct.	Jan	May
Mentee	50	65	69
Mentor	NA	62	84
Return Rate	50%	63.5%	76.5%

Both mentors and mentees completed the summative assessment in May. The summative assessment had a slightly lower return rate of 71.4%. There were 86 mentees and 101 mentors who completed the summative assessment.

#### Results and Discussion of the Formative Assessment Data

Mentees self reported an increased level of confidence in 11 out of the 12 items on the survey between October and May as stated in Table 1. Mentees confidence level grew by 12% in the category of providing feedback to employees between October and May. They also increased their confidence by 10.7% on use of team to accomplish goals. There was a large percentage increase (31.5%) in confidence level of the principals between October and May in their ability to allocate resources appropriately to accomplish building goals. Mentees reported feeling confident about hiring quality employees in October with 90% confident and then feeling less confident about their ability to hire quality employees in January (83%) and then 88.4% reported that their confidence level increased slightly by May.

Finding time for personal rejuvenation was an area in which the mentees grew in confidence by 11.9%, but the overall confidence level remains lower at 73.9%. Eight respondents (11.6%) reported that they were worried about whether they were able to find time for personal rejuvenation at all. Ten mentees (14.5%) reported feeling as though they would be able to find time for personal rejuvenation with coaching and support (See Table 3).

Table 3

*Principal Formative Assessment Data*

Survey Questions	Oct. Mentees N=50	Jan. Mentees N=65	May Mentees N=69	Jan. Mentors N=62	May Mentors N=84
Provide Feedback	88%	96.9%	100%	93.5%	92.8%
Use of team to accomplish goals	82%	89.2%	92.7%	79%	91.7%
Provide collaborative professional development	78%	83.1%	88.4%	75.8%	85.7%
Adapt leadership behavior	93.9%	100%	100%	93.4%	95.1%
Use conflict productively	84%	89.1%	91.2%	88.7%	92.8%
Manage day-to-day operations	90%	95.3%	95.7%	91.7%	97.6%
Establish effective personnel policies	87.8%	92%	97%	95%	94.1%
Allocation of resources	54%	76.9%	85.5%	87.1%	91.4%
Establish positive working relationships	98%	96.9%	100%	93.6%	96.4%
Hire quality employees	90%	83%	88.4%	80%	92.9%
Personal rejuvenation	62%	70.3%	73.9%	79%	81.9%
Reflection on professional practice	77.5%	78.5%	85.5%	69.4%	83.3%

The principal mentors perceived level of confidence of their mentees increased significantly from January to May in the area of ability to use the leadership team to accomplish goals from 79% to 91.7%, the ability to provide collaborative professional development from 75.8% to 85.7%, the ability to hire quality employees from 80% to 92.9%, and the ability to find time to reflect on professional practice from 69.4% to 83.3% (See Table 1). There was no significant decrease in confidence level from the mentors. The mentors rated their mentees high in all of the categories in January and their perception of the mentees stayed consistent through May (See Table 3).

### Results and Discussion on the Summative Assessment Data

Both mentors and mentees via email completed the summative assessment in May. The mentors assessed the mentees on nine skills: being an effective listener, effective speaking, ability to ask clarifying questions, talking openly, is open and honest, maintains confidentiality, focuses on improvement plan, is well prepared, and welcomes the presence of the mentor.

The majority of mentees visited the mentor's school 1-6 times with 82.7% of the mentees reporting they visited their mentor's school between one and three times throughout the year. The same information was reported for the mentors. Phone, email and individual meetings were the primary means of contact between the mentor and mentee reported by the mentor (See Table 4).

The mentees were asked to rate the frequency in which their mentored performed on 25 items. Overall, the mentees were pleased with their mentor's performance and believed their involvement helped the mentee feel more confident as the year progressed. 87.2% of mentees reported that their mentor always was an effective listener during their meetings. 91.8% of the mentees reported their mentor was an effective speaker. Trust is important in any relationship and 92.9% of the mentees reported that their mentor always created a trusting relationship and was honest. 95.3% of the mentees reported feeling supported by their mentor throughout the mentoring relationship (See Table 5).

One area of concern as reported by the mentees is whether the mentor pushed the mentee. Thirteen (15.7%) respondents say either occasionally or never did their mentor push them.



Table 4

*Mentor Assessment of Mentee (N=101)*

Survey Questions	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Effective Listener	1%	5%	33.7%	60.4%
Effective Speaker	1%	3%	28.7%	67.3%
Asks questions to clarify issues	1%	7.1%	40.8%	51%
Talks Openly	1%	7.9%	36.6%	54.5%
Open and Honest	2%	3%	19%	76%
Maintains confidentiality	2%	0%	9.1%	88.9%
Focus on improvement plan	2%	2%	35.6%	60.4%
Well prepared	2%	2%	34.7%	61.4%
Welcomes my presence	1%	5.9%	13.9%	79.2%
<b>General Information</b>				
Mentee visited mentor's school	1-3 82.7%	4-6 10.2%	7-9 3.1%	10 or more 4.1%
Mentor visited mentee's school	65%	23%	9%	3%
<b>Primary means of contact with mentee</b>				
	Phone	Email	Individual Meeting	Other
Primary means of contact with mentee	30%	24%	37%	9%

Benefit of the Program

An additional question was added to the summative assessment for mentees. The question asked the mentee if the mentoring program was important in their success as a first year administrator. Mentee respondents reported that the program was extremely helpful for 33.7% or 29 mentees. Thirty-nine (45.3%) mentees reported the program to be very helpful. Fourteen (16.3%) reported it to be somewhat helpful to them in their first year and 4.7% (4) of respondents did not think the program was helpful to them (See Table 5).

Table 5

*Mentee Assessment of Mentor (N=86)*

Survey Questions	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Effective listener	1.2%	2.3%	9.3%	87.2%
Effective speaker	1.2%	1.2%	5.9%	91.8%
Gives effective feedback	1.2%	2.4%	10.8%	85.5%
Asks questions to help see issues	1.2%	2.4%	13.1%	83.3%
Affirms my work	1.2%	1.2%	16.7%	81%
Creates a trusting relationship	1.2%	1.2%	4.7%	92.9%
Is honest	0%	1.2%	5.9%	92.9%
Maintains confidentiality	0%	0%	3.5%	96.5%
Sense of humor	0%	1.2%	13.1%	85.7%
Is willing to share	0%	2.4%	4.7%	92.9%
Relevant experience and expertis	1.2%	1.2%	15.3%	82.4%
Gives relevant and helpful advice	1.2%	2.4%	16.5%	80%
See issue and lay out implementation plan	3.6%	3.6%	23.8%	69%
Knows where to go for necessary assistance	1.2%	1.2%	20.2%	77.4%
Supports me	1.2%	0%	3.5%	95.3%
Probes deeply	1.2%	7.1%	28.2%	63.5%
Keeps focus on priorities	0%	2.4%	22.4%	75.3%
Share best practices	0%	4.7%	15.3%	80%
Pushes me	2.4%	13.3%	30.1%	54.2%
Is well prepared	1.2%	3.6%	19%	76.2%
Asks essential questions	0%	3.6%	19.3%	77.1%
Survey Questions	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Is available and accessible	0%	1.2%	12%	86.7%
Helps to move ideas through planning into implementation	2.4%	2.4%	28.2%	67.1%
Impacts leadership skills	2.4%	2.4%	23.5%	71.8%
Impacts instruction	2.4%	4.8%	31%	61.9%
General Information				
	1-3	4-6	7-9	10 or more
Mentee visited mentor's school	75.9%	15.7%	2.4%	6%
Mentor visited mentee's school	61.6%	24.4%	5.8%	8.1%
	Phone	Email	Individual Meeting	Other
Primary means of contact with mentee	34.1%	22.4%	38.8%	4.7%
	Extremely	Very	Somewhat	Not
How important was the program to your success?	33.7%	45.3%	16.3%	4.7%

### Written Responses

There was one open-ended section for comments in the summative mentor/mentee assessment.

#### Positive Responses

Overall, the majority of written comments were of a positive nature: expressing support for the program. The most common emergent comments included (a) the support from the mentor, (b) sharing of ideas, (c) networking with colleagues, (d) professional growth for both the mentor and mentee, and (e) the professional relationship.

#### Suggestions for Improvement

Participants provided a few suggestions for improving the program in their written comments on the survey. There were three areas identified as needing improvement. These areas, if improved, would improve the formal mentoring relationship.

Time. Time was cited as a critical factor in the mentoring relationship. Mentees felt that there wasn't enough time for face-to-face meetings with their mentors, especially where distance between schools was a factor. The amount of time spent together was also a concern. One mentee reported that he/she only spent three hours with their mentor. This amount of time did not allow for a trusting relationship to form and therefore the experience was not as valuable to the new administrator.

Mentor/mentee pairings. It was evident through the responses that the mentee appreciated their mentor greatly. However, there was one suggestion to pair administrators of the same size of district together and not pair a large school

administrator with a small school administrator. One mentee stated, “While best practice is similar no matter the size of the district, the way a situation plays out can be very different depending on the size of the district.”

Program Engagement. One final area emerged from the written comments of the mentors. A few mentors reported that their mentee did not see the value in the program and therefore did not return phone calls, emails, etc. Despite the numerous attempts of the mentor, some mentees did not engage in the program. Examples from the written comments are: “Mentee was not very interested in the mentor program. I would have been very interested in developing more and working more, but calls and emails were not returned.” “It has been difficult to have a meaningful experience as my mentee does not want support.” “The mentee I was assigned completely blew off this program and me.”

Examples of the written comments from mentees are as follows: “My mentor is a great person and I wouldn’t have made it through my first year without him.” “My mentor has been an outstanding mentor. I will continue to call him and use as a mentor.” “This was a great experience and I appreciate the relationship that has been developed through it. I feel confident that Mentee is someone I can look to for support and guidance in the years to come.” “Having a mentor has been very valuable to me. Thank you for having this program.”

Samples of written comments from mentors are: “Great experience. I think I got just as much from being a mentor as did my mentee!” “I feel like I gained more from my mentee than I offered him.” “It has been a joy this year- I’ve learned more than my mentee has.”

### Interview Data

Five mentor/mentee pair interviews were completed. Each of the interviews was conducted separately with the mentor and mentee. The interviews were conducted at a location agreed upon by the mentor/mentee and researcher. Each of the interviews lasted approximately one hour. The mentors/mentees were very complimentary toward the SAI Mentoring and Induction program. Mentors reported that they liked the flexibility the program gave them to address concerns of the mentee at the appropriate time. The schedule of items to review was not so rigid that the mentor could not discuss an urgent topic brought up by the mentee. Another theme throughout the interviews with the mentors regarded the training. Each mentor felt that the amount of training provided by SAI to the mentors was sufficient. They especially enjoyed the time when SAI brought the mentors and mentees together in Des Moines. Each mentor reported learning from their mentee just as much as the mentee learned from them.

The mentees also reported the program was helpful to them in their new position. Each responded they liked having someone they could go to and bounce ideas off of without worrying about their response. They all had other people in their district or from their college cohort in which they could go to with questions, but they enjoyed having one person assigned to them who would call, email or stop by to see how things were going. Both shared the concern about finding time to meet face-to-face due to distance or job responsibilities.

Overall, both mentors and mentees reported satisfaction with the SAI Mentoring and Induction program. They see value to them and their success as an administrator.

### Nature of the Mentoring Relationship

The mentoring relationship was formed by SAI for all of the five pairs involved in this study. SAI selected the mentors for each new principal.

### Benefits of the Mentoring Program

Mentors and mentees saw benefits to participating in a mentoring and induction program. The benefits varied depending on the individual. The Wallace Foundation (2007) reported the following benefits to mentors: opportunities for professionals to strengthen their knowledge and improve communications, teaching and coaching skills, greater collegiality, satisfaction from helping new administrators, and enhances professional reputation. Ms. Lane reported the following benefits,

Well again, I think anything – any time I’m working with another person it broadens my experiences and my thoughts so it forces you to look at your – what you’re doing yourself so I think that is a huge benefit because I think sometimes we can get—without that, you can get stuck in ruts just like anything else so I think that is a huge benefit. Limitations, again it would be time – but you have to make time if you are committed so.

Mr. Knott added,

“I just -- Lisa, it's like kids. You watch them grow, you watch them mature, not that they're immature. That's not the case. Just watching them, you know, take jury charges, handling jury charges, being successful, and getting good. It's interesting to go back and talk to some of these people that have now been in it and just talking about yeah, remember, you know, three years ago when we had the situation here and we sat and talked about this maybe we got together and had a tonic after work, you know. Just -- and then also knowing that, you know, you really are helping some of these people, or thinking you're helping some of these people. And then calling these people back and asking them. You know, especially some of these people who have been in it now. I don't mind calling them. Hey, help me out. Establishing this bond and this relationship with them. Because these are some of the people that you network with all the time. Because we're still dealing with some of the same problems. It's how are we going to approach them.”

Ms. Nelson shared,

“It made me again re-look at – okay, you’re telling him to look back at his decisions, so you know, I think you look back and it makes you look at research again, what are my numbers, you know, like he was struggling with the schedule, he thought if it were moved to a different kind of block system, would that be better, so – okay, maybe it’s time for me to look at our schedule again. Can I make it better than what it is right now? And for me, it made me communicate more with my staff as well, so it was like, you know, we do our little Wednesday meetings, but what are we doing at them? So it kind of made me look back at okay, this guy is looking at me for some kind of leadership. Am I doing it with my staff like I’m asking him to do with his? And it’s a great refresher, and we got together that one-day with a lot of the mentor and mentees, when we all came down, and it’s just good to network again. It’s like – and hear that, you know, this one guy had twenty-some years of administration, and it was like jeez, do you ever just go ‘what am I doing, you know, is this right, should I be doing this’? So it’s kind of like okay, I’ve only been in it for this amount of time, and he’s still struggling with it, so it’s okay for me to struggling with it. So you’re like okay, I’m still okay. And that part I liked when we all kind of got together. It was like, you know what it’s okay this guy has been here doing this forever and is well respected, so I’m okay. I’m okay so-“

The Wallace Foundation (2007) indicates the following benefits of a mentoring program for the mentees: guidance and support during first year, increased self-confidence, encouragement to take risks, opportunities to discuss professional issues, and it promotes networking. Ms. Lane stated,

Oh, ok. A relationship with another person who has experiences, a sense of support, someone to throw ideas, bounce ideas off of, somebody to share your successes with as well as your disappointments. Ms. Coleman got through a couple of things pretty darn gracefully. And she learned a lot. She was thrilled with herself as she should have been so it was someone to celebrate with.

Mr. Evans reported,

Networking, really, just knowing – having someone there to – vent isn’t the word, but I mean it’s -- it works, to bounce things off of. Having somebody that if, you know, for me I had so many people that I could go to. I didn’t have a problem finding help, but I have other friends in cohorts and the cohort that, you know,

they don't that – they don't have a superintendent that's going to give you minimum of an hour every day if you ask for it.

Ms. Black reported, “Just knowing somebody was there that I could call, I could call on the cell phone, I could e-mail, and again it comes from that relationship of knowing that there wasn't a judgment.” Ms. Coleman said,

Having somebody to talk to. I just think that old saying that about as lonely at the top, there really isn't anyone, you know, you really don't have colleagues in your building, and so just knowing that I could talk to her when I needed to was very, very helpful, and besides the fact that she had so much experience that she could give me good advice and answer my questions.

Mr. Anderson described,

I think just the timely conversations that you have, you know, for Mr. Jones and I we met at least once a month at meetings and we'd carve out extra time just to be able to visit about how things were working in his school, how things were happening here and just make sure that items are taken care of as they should be. Anything else there, I also found the time that we spend at each other's school to be helpful too for one day he comes here and one day I went and visited his school and it is always interesting. We are all doing the same thing, we are educating kids, but each school looks a little different.

#### Important Components of Mentoring Relationship

The most important component of a mentoring relationship to the mentees was the relationship itself with the mentor. There was satisfaction knowing that the new principal could call upon their mentor with any question. Ms. Black stated, “Most important components? Just knowing somebody was there that I could call, I could call on the cell phone, I could e-mail, and again it comes from that relationship of knowing that there wasn't a judgment.” Ms. Coleman said,

The relationship is important and the scheduled meeting times are important, but I also like the idea of having some guidance as far as topics to cover and things to talk about, because if you don't know the person, you know, that gives you a place to get started. And trying to match people who have the same interests and



the same backgrounds would be important, and looking at people's knowledge bases and what kinds of experiences they've had.

Mr. Anderson shared,

I think the timely conversations, just that it – that it has the guidelines that you meet or visit weekly and that you follow that.” Mr. Dunn reported, “Finding good mentors is number one and the rest doesn't matter I would say. If you find a good mentor for the program that can work with other people, they are going to be adaptable and flexible to make it work because, you know, every person going in has got new needs, comes from different perspectives so that's – just finding that right personality is the most critical.

### Summary of the Nature of the Mentoring Relationship Theme

After examining and analyzing the data based on comments made by the mentors and mentees two patterns emerged. First, when discussing the benefits of the mentoring program both mentees and mentors mentioned growing professionally. There was a sense of support from the mentors, no matter what the question a mentee had someone who would listen to them and lend a hand.

Second, the relationship was the most important component of the mentoring program. Mentees felt comfortable just knowing someone was there to help. The meeting times with the mentor were especially important to the relationship. The meetings provided a time to get to know each other.

Finally, the timely conversations were important. Mentees used the meeting times with their mentors to get specific questions answered.

### Organizational Factors

#### Formal Opportunities to Learn

A new principal is faced with new tasks daily. There are both formal and informal learning opportunities for new administrators. A mentoring relationship can help

the new principal learn some of those critical skills needed to be a successful administrator. The mentees shared the formal learning opportunities. Mr. Evans stated that he took advantage of being involved with SAI. He said, “ I used the mentorship program, the new administrators institute, went to the conference at the beginning of the school year, went to a legal lab, just a lot of opportunities through them, did some things through UNI that I guess could be considered coursework, but that helped.” Ms. Black added, “I think the big thing was right away when I did this, my superintendent was pretty adamant and I'm glad he was to get involved in the mentor/mentee program that SAI had so I think that was a big plus.” Ms. Coleman stated, “Last year my school sponsored a middle school leadership series of workshops, and I went with the principal here -- I was vice principal last year -- and I went with her to those and I thought they were well done. And the mentor program really has been really helpful too. You know, I'd have to say that's right up there at the top.”

#### Informal Opportunities to Learn

Mr. Dunn spoke about the informal opportunities he had to learn as an administrator and said that connecting with former colleagues was a great help to him. He also said that he had a good relationship with other district administrators, so that helped him to ask questions and learn from them as well. Mr. Anderson said, “ There were a lot of informal opportunities along the way and certainly workshops too. But generally just the conversations between myself and colleagues or myself and the administration at the time.”

### Mentoring Relationship vs. Other Professional Relationships

The mentoring relationship is not vastly different from other professional relationships according to the mentees. The most common difference between the two types of relationships was the overwhelming feeling that a mentee could ask any question to their mentor. Mr. Evans said, "Very good question. I think there should be. If not – I think it's a little closer. It's a little more – what would the word be – I think you're a little more – I'll just say close." Ms. Black described, "I think just the fact that I honestly believed I could talk to Mr. Knott about anything and it wasn't going anywhere, it wasn't, you know -- confidentiality, and there was no judgment as far as, well, you should have known that, or you know that was really something stupid that you did." Carol went on to say, "I know I wouldn't have shared with everyone what was going on or certain situations because I just didn't feel the trust was there." Mr. Anderson said, "That is a good question. I don't know that it is really that much different other than that we always found the time to contact each other. You come to expect a consistent conversation about topics." Ms. Coleman added,

Well, the privacy is really important, you know, knowing that I can say things to her that maybe I couldn't say to other people, and unfortunately people find that out the hard way, you know people who maybe you share things with before you're the administrator aren't necessarily the ones you want to share with, because for some reason that all changes, unfortunately. And so I was able to share things with her that I couldn't share with other people, but I also think it's set up as a learning experience so you feel like it's okay to ask questions right away because that's what she's there for. So I think just the fact that it's set up as a mentor/mentee relationship, gives you some freedom to ask some questions.

### Barriers to the Mentoring Relationship

The type of barriers varied from individual to individual. Most agreed that there were barriers to the mentoring relationship.

The following comments were made by mentees. Mr. Anderson said,

Could have been. I didn't really experience any. I think it would be harder if we belonged to different AEAs because it might be harder to meet, or even though you are getting what you be the same information, you might be getting it through a different method so I think it is helpful being part of the same AEA. Similar size school is probably helpful which I think we have close enough anyway.

Ms. Black added,

I think what I see as a barrier was just the demands of the job. And my unwillingness to let go and say I have to take the time to do it. Otherwise for me, no. In my position I don't think there's any barriers that I -- because I felt comfortable like I said sharing with Mr. Knott and pretty confident, you know, that nothing was going anywhere-- so I find it hard to say there was a barrier. Not that there wasn't. I just don't know what it was or what it would have been.

Ms. Coleman shared,

Well, you know you have to give a lot you have to kind of like each other, and it's just like when we have teachers with mentors, if they don't have the same style or they don't have -- you know, if they don't really have anything in common, it's hard to have a positive relationship with someone. Because we've had teaching mentor relationships that haven't worked very well and ones that have. And I think you have to try to balance the personalities a little bit. You can't -- it's just like co-teaching, you know." She added, "If people aren't similar in some ways, it's going to be hard for them to work together. And you know, the experience would be a barrier because I suppose if I'd have been with someone who was in one of the comprehensive middle schools or high schools, maybe we wouldn't have as much in common. I wouldn't have, you know, that same frame of reference, so that might -- I'm sure that's why they put Suzy and me together, but it really, really does make sense to do it that way so you have the same kinds of needs.

Mr. Dunn said, "Time can be an issue. Again for what I was looking for -- the advice he gave was more than what I was looking for and again it probably was

proportional with the amount of challenges I had throughout the year.” Mr. Evans reported,

Yeah, just the distance somewhat, and I hated to have her come out here. In fact, on many occasions she said ‘I want to come out’ and I’m like ‘God, don’t worry about it’. I mean we can talk on the phone, and that’s fine because that’s how I am, not because I didn’t have time for her, it’s because I’m not that type of person. I don’t want to put people out, you know, I think you saw that with my superintendent. You know, I’ve got the information. If you want, I’ll give it to you. You’ll have to figure out how to put it together. For me, you know, can I do a little something that will help them even though that person is doing their darndest to try and help me. The distance was a little rough, and I have to imagine that it wasn’t too bad, really compared to some people. We have kind of a – the nice thing about it was we live two miles apart maybe, and so we could’ve met more in the morning, but we just didn’t do it as much as we could’ve. I think like I said, I think we did a couple of times in the morning at – Panera, and the rest she came here or at the principalship meeting.

Mentors made the following comments. Mr. Jones said,

I don't know if there are any barriers. I think that I look at it this way. Everybody has 24 hours. How you allocate that is up to you. Some people spend a lot of time on things and more time on other things than I do and I just think well, you know, if you follow, I like the Franklin system says what are the values you have in your life and if leadership and developing leaders is a value, then what are you going to do to do that.

Mr. Knott stated,

I found that in the people that I've been working with, even though you try and establish trust, personnel issues are sometimes very difficult to bring up. And that's -- that's a good thing in the sense that, you know, as a professional in another school district this person would like to share some things, but still doesn't feel very comfortable so the confidentiality issue is there which is a good thing. Sometimes I think if we could ask more directly how would you handle this situation they'd make it a little easier, but then again you're taking that opportunity away from the person who has to deal with that issue. So I think confidentiality sometimes is an issue. It also goes to you know, student issues that these kids have to face especially in a school district where we're so close here, we may know families and you don't always want to share everything about families, which is a good thing.

Ms. Lane added, “Oh, I think there could be. In our relationship, no. No, it was great. But you know there are times people just don’t click. That’s the way of the world. I’m certain that could happen.” She added, “Time could be a barrier. And I’m thinking that’s why perhaps people weren’t taking it as seriously as they needed too, but time is probably you know, anywhere you go, everything you do, that’s the biggest barrier everyone talks about is time.” Mr. Miller stated,

Probably this one was 3A versus a 1A, 2A school. I felt a little -- not that it's that much bigger, but it's a little different with that. But still similar with that. Other barriers -- when he decided -- he was hired for interim for one year and if he liked it he could stay. He decided early on I'm thinking November, oh, I don't know. I know he was advertised for Christmas time when they interviewed and hired somebody so then he was just a lame duck. So how do you -- how do you build something when you know I'm going out the door? He's not, I'm not -- I mean --“ Mr. Miller continued, “But time is always a barrier but again to try to get both of you to pull out of a district and to get together it's hard with that. Jump -- jump in and go down and see him. I wish I had tons of time where I could go down, you know, every other week you just lock the building, we spent most of -- it was -- it's very enjoyable, but the time, I mean for me to jump in a car and run down there, I mean, there was a couple phone calls with -- even early on they were hour and a half.

Ms. Nelson said,

I would say, you know -- Mr. Evans and I got along fine. I can't imagine doing that -- I mean, I would hope as a mentor if I couldn't get along with that person, I would say we're not going to be compatible here. I think the mentors have to understand -- or the -- and the mentees that if it's not working, you don't need that extra stress to try to make it work. I think I was fortunate because Mr. Evans and I just kind of hit it off, I think. But I would say if -- because we kind of talked about that a little bit in one of our last meetings of what if we didn't like each other, and you know, but -- And I think it means -- and you're not there to make the decisions for them. And I think that was a good thing for us that, you know, I kept that in my mind of, you know, he's got -- because I don't have to live with his staff. I don't have to be in his building. I don't have to, you know, when he makes his decision, I'm out. So I kind of said to myself I would never tell him 'I would do this' because I don't know his staff. I don't know his community. I don't know any of that, so I made sure I kind of -- like I said, the barrier would be -- I think the biggest thing for us was the time to get together.

### Meeting Protocol

Mentors and mentees both said SAI had a guideline for their meetings. SAI asked each mentor/mentee pair to keep a record of their conversation and turn it in each month. SAI asked the mentors to guide their conversation around the Iowa Standards for School Leaders. Each person said that they discussed the standards, but wanted to make sure they had time for mentee's questions. Mr. Anderson shared, "Certainly. It was more of a conversation than a PowerPoint presentation or anything like that." Mr. Dunn agreed with Mr. Anderson and said that his mentor did not have specific topics to discuss, but opened up the conversation to topics he wanted to talk about. In review, the meeting protocol was somewhat loose. Mentors allowed the mentees to dictate most of the agenda items during the conversations.

### Summary of the Organizational Factor Theme

After examining and analyzing the data based on comments made by mentors and mentees, several patterns emerged. Mentees stated there were both formal and informal learning opportunities during their first year. Mentors characterized time spent with their mentees at SAI as formal learning opportunities. The informal learning opportunities were characterized as times when principals would talk to colleagues or pick up the phone and call their mentor.

Secondly, the mentees shared the differences between the mentoring relationship and other professional relationships. There was not a great difference between the two types of relationships. The broadest difference was the feeling the mentee could ask their mentor any question and not be judged.

Next, the barriers to the mentoring relationship were mentioned. Both mentors and mentees said there were barriers to the relationship. Time, demands of the job, distance, style of mentor, trust, and size of school were the barriers identified by the mentors and mentees. The barriers stated above did not stop the mentoring relationship from being successful.

Finally, the mentor/mentee pairs shared their thoughts on the meeting protocol. Most mentors/mentees said there was not a specific protocol. A few commented on using the Iowa Standards for School Leaders as the protocol. The meeting protocols were usually created at the time of the meeting between the mentor and mentee. Each mentor wanted to make sure he/she gave time for the mentee to ask questions.

#### Principal Learning

This theme focused on the learning that took place during the mentoring relationship principally for the mentee as well as secondarily for the mentor. Comments revolved around formal opportunities to learn what is needed to be successful and informal opportunities. What was learned and was there a schedule around that learning, plus the input from the new principal into the type of learning that took place.

#### Mentoring Relationship

Each mentor/mentee pair was satisfied with the mentoring relationship. Each person spoke highly about the mentoring program or his or her mentor/mentee. The mentoring relationship is different for each mentor/mentee pair. A mentoring program creates a network of support, which should alleviate some of the stress that comes with the job of building principal. "One of the difficulties that new principals face is that they



must lead while they are learning to lead.” (Alvy & Robbins, 2005, p. 50). “Peer mentoring has a way of renewing and strengthening the principal” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 30).

Mentees described their mentoring relationship as follows. Mr. Evans said, “I appreciate Ms. Nelson being here as a sounding board, and I think that was one of the most positive things about the relationship.” He continued, “You know, the – the paperwork stuff is one thing, you know, that’s just you’ve got to document the things, but the conversations are what was most important. And just being there to help out if I needed something.” Mr. Anderson added, “My mentor was Mr. Jones. I just appreciated our conversations. He is not one to tell you how to do things. He is one to suggest or ask. It is just more of a nurturing relationship.” Ms. Coleman stated,

She came here once a month, and we usually talked about an hour and lots of times I would call or e-mail her. And she had a list of topics that we covered, you know, things that needed to be done. Like have I done report cards, do I have my staff evaluations done, and she had areas that she wondered if I had questions about like budget, so we stayed on those topics, but we also just talked about whatever was happening.

Mr. Dunn replied, “It was very informal. What do you want to do type of relationship, which I really appreciated. I think it worked really well and again it was crazy.” Ms. Black said,

I think just the fact that I honestly believed I could talk to Mr. Knott about anything and it wasn't going anywhere, it wasn't, you know -- confidentiality, and there was no judgment as far as, well, you should have done that, or you know that was really something stupid that you did. There was no judgment it was just processing through it and not saying you did it right the first time, but if it happened again, what would you do – just that reflection okay, now that you've done it and this has happened is there something you would have done differently.

Mentors made the following comments. Ms. Lane stated,

It was a very difficult year for her. So support was a lot of it, but then sometimes because emotionally her staff—because they were dealing with some things and she was trying to work with them on those things, some of the other things like how are you coming on your school improvement plan, tell me about your goals she's say oh, I haven't really been – you know, or let's walk through evaluations again.

Mr. Knott added,

The past couple of years I've really made it a point to get to know the mentee in as many different ways as possible. Whether it's telephones, whether it's visits, whether it's e-mail. I always want to make sure that the person feels comfortable working with me and I tell the person I want to feel comfortable working with him or her. I think you have to establish a pretty decent working relationship and you have to establish a trust, you have to trust them, you hope that they trust you, and that they are going to contact you whenever they can. Should there be a crisis -- I always ask a lot of questions at the beginning to find out, you know, the comfort level of these people, and then work on a regular basis with them. I know the last year the focus was on the standards. I tried to pay attention to the standards, but I thought it was more important to get to know the person and just get them not only to feel comfortable with me, but also to feel comfortable with the job. I mean there are some things coming at these people I mean I'm sure there's days they go home and say what am I doing, what's next. So Lisa, I think it's important that you have this trust that you establish, then once the trust is established, then the confidence factor, then offering possible solutions or offering what might work, but let those people make the decision on their own. I also encourage them to make use of SAI attorneys, make use of a school attorney because in some of these situations it may be a little bit more complex than it appears to be. So I encourage them to not only rely on me. Rely on your superintendent. Rely on your attorney. Talk to your teachers. Get their input.

Ms. Nelson commented, “So we kind of bounced ideas off, so it was like the goal was (A) to get through the year, but (B) knowing that someone was there because – as maybe a resource guide.” Mr. Miller,

To me I think it's about relationship first. It's nothing about what I had to offer or what I have to give. It's all about the relationship. If that person -- if I expose myself to that person, this is who I am you're more than welcome to call me at any time day or night for things, building a relationship was first with that. That would be e-mails, phone calls, meeting in person, just as soon as we possibly

can.” Mr. Jones responded, “The first thing you do is you build a relationship, the second thing you do is you talk about how do you see you as a principal, is that role working, and is there anything -- this is what's coming up at our school, what's coming up in yours? Listen and talk about -- see where it goes from there.

### Learning/Skills/Input

All five mentees responded affirmatively regarding the mentoring program and their learning. Each new principal commented there was a professional development component in the program through the conversations with their mentors and the few meetings held in Des Moines. Mr. Anderson stated, “I think especially scheduling, I think of just current issues that Mr. Jones went through the school sharing arrangement too, and that’s just interesting to see the direction of some small schools, the way they are taking—you know is that a direction we will go? Maybe. Tough conversations.” Mr. Anderson continued to say, “Discipline. We talked a lot about discipline too, of course. Just what was working for him and what I might try in certain situations.” Mr. Evans said, “Deadlines. And that is one of my goals for next year is to improve on that, Deadlines, communications, climate, culture. You almost need a – like a cupid.com or a match.com for your mentor, because if you don’t have the same leadership style, that’s a tough go.” Mr. Evans also said, “Well, you know, management is a high percentage of the job, that I need to make time for myself, there’s a balance issue that needs to be addressed and if that balance isn’t done correctly on either side (work or home) neither of them will work.” Ms. Black shared,

I think one of the things I probably learned was everybody thinks their decision is important and you need a decision now and just the matter of stepping back, you know, take four hours make sure you process whatever you're processing, and I think that was a biggie that you don't have to respond immediately, take some time and think. That was probably a big one. And then just the importance of

returning phone calls. If you get a phone call, even if you can't get to it at that time at least call and say I got your message, give me a chance to check on it, but I will reply to you and set a deadline for yourself and them so you don't leave them hanging I think that was the biggie you don't have to give them an answer right away when they're on the phone, buy yourself some time, but make sure you return the phone calls.

Ms. Coleman added,

Oh, did you see my "I'm still learning" thing? I've been saying that ever since I was in a vice principal position. You know, the isolation is something that I wasn't expecting. And I know that's not a leadership skill, but it's something that surprised me. You know, the first time I went to a meeting and a group of my teachers came and sat someplace else, and I think I have a pretty good relationship with my staff, but you know the -- how important those interpersonal skills are is really amazing. And also how much you're expected to know. I mean, thinking about this -- is we have fourth graders and to try to even get a handle on all the curriculum and instructional strategies, there's just a vast amount of information that I'll always be learning."

She continued, "Yeah, and the really need for confidentiality. Unfortunately, I found that out the hard way, so I'm very careful now with what I say so --"

Mentors also agreed that there was learning in the mentor/mentee relationship.

The mentors stated that they learned along with their mentee. Mr. Knott replied,

Yes, I have. I mean I think I've become a better administrator because of that. Because again you get to network, you get to network with other administrators. I always try to maintain a relationship with the superintendents of these mentors so that they kind of know I'm in the mix but I'm not -- I'm helping, but you know, I'm willing to work with that district. Not that my expertise means anything, it doesn't, but it's always good to know the boss of that mentee and I've got to know some very good superintendents because of that. And they've helped me. So I've probably learned as much as a mentee, maybe more.

Mr. Miller added,

Oh, it's -- it's -- their ideas. They are the ones just coming out. I mean one of the readings, have you read this, no, I haven't. Okay. And stuff like that. Also to see the commitment and knowledge that they are bringing out on for their grading whether it be evaluation, whether it be how they are setting things -- I mean I was -- it's interesting. I learned more than -- I learned as much as or more than they

do. Steal things from them too. What they are thinking with stuff, so it's worthwhile. I mean I'm stealing too. They are stealing. I'm stealing. That's fine.

Ms. Lane reported, “Well, I took ideas from her just as much as she took ideas from me. For example, because she’s been doing evaluations, she would send me things that were working for her; I would e-mail her things that were working for me. Just ideas also to put in play here. And that she could put in play there. I think it was a real mutual relationship.” Mr. Jones responded,

The opportunity to be with other people, other mentors. So we had a chance to be with other people, share ideas with -- what was good about that workshop, what's your mentee and that type of thing. Do I think, you know, that advantage is to be with other professionals and have a similar, you know, grow professionally participate in a chance to I guess have an influence on a peer. And learn from them as well.

#### Summary of the Principal Learning Theme

Two themes emerged after examining and analyzing the data based on comments made by the mentees and mentors. The first is the mentoring relationship itself. Both mentors and mentees were satisfied with the mentoring relationship. Each person spoke highly of the program and his or her mentor/mentee. The mentoring program helped alleviate stress for the new principal. It provided professional development for both the mentee and mentor. Mentees shared how the mentoring relationship provided a support person to whom one could go to with any question.

Lastly, the learning and skills acquired by those involved in the program was vast. Each mentee reported there was a professional development component of the mentoring program. The learning took place during informal meeting times as well as the large group meetings held in Des Moines by SAI. Mentees learned the difference between

management and instructional leadership. They learned how important climate and culture are to a building. Learning is so vital to the success of a leader. The mentoring relationship provides the learning needed to be successful.

### Summary of Chapter 3

In summary, the researcher partnered with SAI and utilized their survey data. There were 27 high school principals who participated in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program. Each of the 27 principals was assigned a mentor. The researcher invited five mentor/mentee pairs to participate in the qualitative portion of her study. These 10 people volunteered to participate in the interviews. The mentor/mentee pairs were from two quadrants of the state of Iowa. The survey and interview data was organized and analyzed. In response to the four research questions:

1. What are the effects, if any, of the administrative mentoring program on the first-year principal?
2. Do mentor/mentee relationships provide professional development?
3. Are administrators who have had mentor/mentee relationships more confident in their position?
4. What impact, if any, does a mentor/mentee relationship in formal mentoring programs have on a new administrator's sense of job satisfaction?

Administrative mentoring programs do have effects on first year principals. The effects are positive in nature. The positive effects are the sense of belonging a new principal feels by participating in the program, the new learning gained by working with

a mentor and being involved in a structured program, and the increased leadership capacity of the new administrator.

Professional development is a consistent theme throughout the data. All mentees and mentors reported some learning throughout the mentoring relationship. Mentees reported in May with 88.7% respondents saying they were able to provide collaborative professional development. Mentors reported with an 85.7% confidence that the principal provided professional development. Individuals increase their own capacity when they are providing learning for others; therefore the survey indicates mentees grew in their ability to provide professional development, which means they also grew professionally.

Administrators who are involved in a mentoring relationship are more confident in their positions due to the mentoring relationship. According to the survey data first year principals reported feeling more confident in all 12 areas with the exception of hiring quality employees. This self-reporting indicates a sense of increased confidence by the new administrator.

The principal mentors perceived level of confidence of their mentees increased significantly from January to May in four categories: ability to use the leadership team to accomplish goals, ability to provide collaborative professional development, ability to hire quality employees and the ability to find time to reflect on professional practice. There was no significant decrease in confidence level from the mentors. The mentors rated their mentees high in all of the categories in January and their perception of the mentees stayed consistent through May (See Table 3).

Finally, the surveys asked mentees to report confidence levels on 12 items. The mentors were also to respond regarding the perceived confidence level of their mentee. The increased percentages reported by both mentors and mentees indicates a greater confidence level, which in turn indicates a greater level of job satisfaction. Almost all mentees reported in the qualitative portion of the survey as having a greater feeling of job satisfaction due to the mentoring relationship. Ms. Black stated,

Yeah. Because I knew somebody else had gone through it. It wasn't just me and you know like I said so yeah, just knowing that, yeah, that that person was there and if you needed to, yeah, satisfaction is there because you knew you had somebody you could talk to and right or wrong, if he told you were wrong, that's fine. I can deal with that. But then they also -- you know, there was a way, this is how you could do it differently, and I shouldn't say wrong, but just here's another way to think about it.

Mr. Dunn reported, "Yes, yes. Now overall I wasn't satisfied with my job, but it was better because of the mentoring relationship." Mr. Anderson stated, "Everything helped, so it would have to be greater."



## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

The main purpose of this study was to understand the components of a mentoring relationship that impacted new practicing principals' perceptions of the role that mentors played in their professional development and job satisfaction. The mentors' perspectives were examined to determine how they could have improved their own performance in the mentoring relationship. In addition, the study compared perceptions of first year principals with those of their mentors/coaches.

While the design of the study prevented generalizing findings due to the limited sampling group, it suggested outcomes, identified positive attributes, and examined the effects of structural mentoring relationships.

For this study, interviews and surveys were used to understand the effect of mentoring on the job satisfaction and professional development of beginning principals. Five mentor and mentee pairs who participated in the School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) Mentoring and Induction program during the 2007-2008 school year were interviewed. Surveys were distributed to all participants in the SAI Mentoring and Induction program three times throughout their first year as an administrator. These surveys were intended to gather perceptions of the new principal on twelve topics. The mentor also completed the twelve-topic survey sharing perceptions of their mentee. Finally, this study examined the relationship between the mentor and mentees throughout the first year.

The data was compared and analyzed to draw general conclusions with regards to mentors and mentees perceptions of the role that mentors played in the mentee's professional development and job satisfaction. The data was further analyzed to determine differences in answers to the questions for the mentor and mentee. All data was coded and analyzed.

The primary data collection method included in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The interviews served as the basis for the development of the preliminary categories or themes, using coding techniques to examine all of the new data thoroughly. The broad categories included: what the principal is learning, organizational factors and the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship. The researcher started with these broad categories due to the information gathered in the literature review. These categories served as a basis for the narrative when comparing the data from the interviews to the data from the surveys. The researcher paralleled the information learned in the interviews to the data from the surveys through the narrative.

## Conclusions

### Nature of the Mentoring Relationship

Mentors and mentees in this study reported there were benefits to the mentoring relationship. Participants stated the following as benefits of the mentoring relationship; support, networking, broadens experience, timely conversations, able to ask any question without judgment and have a person to call upon. These findings were in agreement with the findings from the Wallace Foundation (2007) which indicated the following benefits of a mentoring program for the mentees: guidance and support during first year,

increased self-confidence, encouragement to take risks, opportunities to discuss professional issues, and it promotes networking. Holloway (2004) reported that the participants in a mentoring program concurred that the greatest benefit of mentoring was having someone to talk with and consult for advice, thus lessening their feelings of isolation.

The mentees had differing views on the most important component of the mentoring relationship. Some reported that knowing there was someone to go to with questions and that that person would not judge them according to the questions they asked was the most important aspect of the mentoring relationship. Other mentees reported the scheduled meeting times and structured topics were an important piece to the mentoring relationship. Finding the right mentor was also mentioned as an important piece to the relationship. A mentor with similar background and experience is an important component to the relationship; so to help the mentee through his/her first year on the job. The final comment was that the timely conversations were important as well. These findings were also found in the literature. Malone (2001a) explains that when principals are asked to identify a vital component of their preparation, they typically identify other school leaders as their primary source of help. Zachary (2000) points out that the focus of mentoring relationships has shifted over the years from guiding the novice principals to creating a strong relationship. This requires a learning relationship to exist between the mentor and mentee.

### Organizational Factors

Hall (2008) explains that many school districts are providing mentors for new principals in order for them to learn the ropes when entering the job. The researcher found that the mentee participants in this study had similar feelings. Each mentee shared that there were formal and informal opportunities to learn in their first year as principal. Some of the formal opportunities were workshops, conferences, the mentorship program through SAI, and the new administrator institute put on by SAI. There were also informal opportunities to learning as a new administrator like connecting with colleagues from college classes, or other administrators in the district. Hansen and Matthews (2002) discuss the difference between formal and informal mentoring. Informal peer mentoring is casual and happens when work requires individuals to interact with one another. By contrast, formal peer mentoring relationship requires a more organized approach. A formal program would begin with goal setting and ultimately end in professional growth. Hansen and Matthews explain, "When principals engage in the kind of collective inquiry peer mentoring encourages, they influence their schools to become learning communities" (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 33).

Unlike the research, most participants in the study did not identify many barriers to their mentoring relationship even though they did state that there could be barriers. Time was the one barrier mentioned by multiple participants. Participants realized that there are only so many hours in the day and that it was important to schedule time to meet with the mentors/mentees. Some of the pitfalls according to Crow and Matthews (1998) include mentors who try to fulfill personal agendas, mentors who become too protective

and controlling, mentees who only get a limited perspective from the mentors, mentees who become too dependent on mentors, mentees who become carbon copies of mentors, and mentees expecting too much from a mentoring relationship. Preparation for mentors and mentees is in most cases not adequate. Daresh (2004) stated that in no case has any form of training for mentors been required, and no minimal qualifications have been identified.

### Principal Learning

Each mentor/mentee pair was satisfied with the mentoring relationship. Each person spoke highly about the mentoring program or his or her mentor/mentee. The mentoring relationship is different for each mentor/mentee pair. A mentoring program creates a network of support, which should alleviate some of the stress that comes with the job of building principal. “One of the difficulties that new principals face is that they must lead while they are learning to lead” (Alvy & Robbins, 2005, p. 50). “Peer mentoring has a way of renewing and strengthening the principal” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 30). Daresh (2001) describes the characteristics of a mentoring program as powerful tools, which help leaders develop in the profession; it reduces the feeling of isolation, and helps move the beginning principal from survival to success. Daresh (2002) indicates that mentors report personal satisfaction from participating in a mentoring program. The mentor sees himself as a teacher. Likewise, Holloway (2004) maintains, “The program also benefited the experienced school leaders who served as mentors, stretching their thinking about teaching and learning” (p. 2).

All five mentees responded affirmatively regarding the mentoring program and their learning. Professional development was a key component of the mentoring relationship as commented by each new principal. The learning occurred during conversations with their mentors, workshops, conferences and meetings.

#### Effects of the Administrative Mentoring Program

All first year principals described the mentoring program as having an effect on them as a new principal. The School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) Mentoring and Induction program gave them someone to call on when they had questions. The new principals felt comfortable calling on their mentor to ask any question no matter how trivial it may have seemed. The first year principals reported feeling less isolated due to having a mentor. Bloom (2003) characterized the challenges of the first-year principal role by demands of time, energy, and isolation from colleagues. He put forward that the most difficult issues for new administrators are those of individual style and daily practice. Bloom suggested that these concerns could best be met by the practice of effective coaching designed with a relevancy to the new principal's immediate needs that is also perceived by them as useful and appropriate. The conversations between the mentee and mentor were timely and provided insight to the new principal. Holloway (2004) reported that the participants in a mentoring program concurred that the greatest benefit of mentoring was having someone to talk with and consult for advice, thus lessening their feelings of isolation. Mentors reported an increase in trust throughout the year. Mentees were willing to open up to their mentors, a friendship developed over the year. Each mentee stated that they would feel comfortable calling upon their mentor

even after the formal mentoring program ended. Each mentee described value in the program, even in the one situation where the new principal learned early on in the year that he wanted out of the position as principal.

### Professional Development

Every new principal talked about learning that occurred by having a mentor. The learning took place through formal opportunities such as structured workshops put on by SAI as well as informal opportunities with their mentor through emails, phone calls and conversations. The learning revolved around understanding their new role as principal, climate, culture, working with staff, communication with staff, students and parents, and how to build trust to mention a few. Reiss (2003) stated that personal development is as important as professional development.

Most leadership professional development programs focus on external issues that affect a district – scheduling, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. They're critically important – however, they don't deal with the internal issues of leadership - who you are and how you think and act" (Reiss, 2003, p. 17).

The loose structure of the SAI mentoring program allowed mentors to focus conversation around the mentee as principal and how their actions may affect the outcome.

Likewise, Holloway (2004) maintains, "The program also benefited the experienced school leaders who served as mentors, stretching their thinking about teaching and learning" (p. 2). Mentors reported learning from their mentees. The mentoring program does not only benefit the new principal, there are benefits to the mentor as well. One of those benefits is feeling like a teacher again and learning along with the new principal. Through conversations with their mentees, mentors gain

perspectives on how to handle issues, network with colleagues and feel as though they are making a difference.

### Confidence Level

The confidence level of new principals increased over time from October through May. Overall, mentees reported increased feelings of confidence in all 12 areas with the exception of hiring quality employees. Principals reported feeling less confident about their ability to hire quality employees in January and their confidence level increased slightly by May. There was a large percentage increase (31.5%) in confidence level of the principals between October and May in their ability to allocate resources appropriately to accomplish building goals.

Finding time for personal rejuvenation was an area in which the mentees grew in confidence, but the overall confidence level remains lower at 73.9%. Eight respondents (11.6%) reported that they were worried about whether they were able to find time for personal rejuvenation at all. Ten mentees (14.5%) reported feeling as though they would be able to find time for personal rejuvenation with coaching and support (See Table 1).

The principal mentors perceived level of confidence of their mentees increased significantly from January to May in four categories: ability to use the leadership team to accomplish goals, ability to provide collaborative professional development, ability to hire quality employees and the ability to find time to reflect on professional practice. There was no significant decrease in confidence level from the mentors. The mentors rated their mentees high in all of the categories in January and their perception of the mentees stayed consistent through May (See Table 3).



Table 3

*Principal Formative Assessment Data*

Survey Questions	Oct. Mentees N=50	Jan. Mentees N=65	May Mentees N=69	Jan. Mentors N=62	May Mentors N=84
Provide Feedback	88%	96.9%	100%	93.5%	92.8%
Use of team to accomplish goals	82%	89.2%	92.7%	79%	91.7%
Provide collaborative professional development	78%	83.1%	88.4%	75.8%	85.7%
Adapt leadership behavior	93.9%	100%	100%	93.4%	95.1%
Use conflict productively	84%	89.1%	91.2%	88.7%	92.8%
Manage day-to-day operations	90%	95.3%	95.7%	91.7%	97.6%
Establish effective personnel policies	87.8%	92%	97%	95%	94.1%
Allocation of resources	54%	76.9%	85.5%	87.1%	91.4%
Establish positive working relationships	98%	96.9%	100%	93.6%	96.4%
Hire quality employees	90%	83%	88.4%	80%	92.9%
Personal rejuvenation	62%	70.3%	73.9%	79%	81.9%
Reflection on professional practice	77.5%	78.5%	85.5%	69.4%	83.3%

Job Satisfaction

Almost all of the new principals reported increased job satisfaction due to the mentoring program. Even the one new principal who after one year as a principal decided to change positions and get out of the principalship described the mentoring program as helpful. A mentoring program creates a network of support, which should alleviate some of the stress that comes with the job of building principal. “One of the difficulties that new principals face is that they must lead while they are learning to lead” (Alvy & Robbins, 2005, p. 50). “Peer mentoring has a way of renewing and strengthening the principal” (Hansen & Matthews, 2002, p. 30). By breaking the barrier

of isolation, a mentor/mentee relationship can lead to better job satisfaction and a partnership for professional development. The increased feeling of job satisfaction helps with the retention of administrators. New principals who feel better about their work and themselves have a greater chance of staying in the profession.

#### Implications for Districts/Universities/Administrative Organizations: Personal

##### Reflections

School districts around the nation are beginning to understand the importance of a mentoring program for new administrators. The job of a school administrator is very complex and demanding and even more so for an administrator new to the position. Besides the essential responsibility of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of curriculum, instruction and assessment, the administrator cannot do the large task of managing a building, supervising staff, using appropriate data to establish rigorous and concrete goals in the context of student achievement, and leading professional development without the help of others. Professional literature reinforces the necessity for mentoring programs for new principals in order to improve their job satisfaction and professional development. My current study of mentoring programs for new principals can aid school districts, university leadership programs and administrator organizations in learning about the positive effects mentoring has on new principals.

When districts, universities, organizations, or states are planning to implement a mentoring program for new administrators, they should consider the following areas for focused attention: mentor pairing, training, professional development in the areas of

personal reflection and personal rejuvenation, mentor cadres and the use of retired administrators as mentors.

First, the pairing of mentors and mentees is vital to the success of the mentoring relationship. When determining mentor/mentee pairs, personal relationships and trust between the mentor/mentee pairs is first and foremost the foundation of the relationship. Trust takes time. I would suggest setting up formal meetings with formal activities so the mentor and mentee can get to know each other better at the beginning of the mentoring relationship.

When pairing mentors and mentees, geography is an important factor to consider so that the new principal and mentor do not have to spend time traveling instead of meeting. Geography is not a major factor in the success of the relationship, but could be seen as a barrier to some individuals, especially those who prefer face-to-face conversations. Daresh believes that effective mentoring matches can occur in sparsely populated regions where drop-in visits and same building experiences are not possible. Although being in close geographic proximity may make the mentor meeting sessions easier, it is not necessary to make them effective. I would suggest keeping geography at the forefront of the decision when pairing mentors and mentees when possible.

Along with the geography as an important consideration, so is the size of the district and job assignment. One benefit to pairing mentors and mentees of similar district size and job assignment is an understanding of the job. In general, small and large schools do not function in the same way; so a mentor can better help his mentee who works in a similar sized district because he understands how the basic operations

work. Likewise, the job assignment may vary slightly from a small to a large district due to the number of administrative staff in a larger building.

A second consideration besides the pairing of mentors and mentees that is vital for program success is the training for mentors. I recommend statewide training of mentors continue, such as what was provided by SAI. Training does not need to be limited to statewide efforts, however; professional development offered in districts or regions would benefit the capacities of mentors. Training for mentors will help set the expectation for the program and provide guidance for the mentor. Colleges and universities could provide mentor training. One consideration would be to incorporate a coaching component in their leadership curriculum.

In addition to the consideration of mentor pairing and statewide training, a third significant area I recommend for consideration is professional development for mentors and mentees. Results of the current study revealed that there are two areas that mentees and mentors rated their confidence level as low: personal rejuvenation and personal reflection. The life of a principal is very busy with balancing numerous roles and responsibilities, including but not limited to the oversight of curriculum and instruction, the monitoring of student assessment, the supervision and evaluation of staff members, the planning and implementation of goals and related staff development, the management of one or more facilities, supervising activities, and responding to parent concerns. It is difficult to find time to reflect on one's actions or find time for him/herself. Therefore, it is important for program administrators to set up formal learning opportunities in the areas of personal rejuvenation and personal reflection to help mentees understand the

importance of reflection on one's practice and the necessity of personal renewal.

Personal reflection is a way for a new principal to learn from their experiences.

A fourth consideration would be to create mentor cadres. Consistent with recent research, my study found that mentors reported how important time spent with other mentors was to their development as a mentor. Mentors suggested meeting with other mentor/mentee pairs by region along with individual pair meetings. These regional meetings would bring together multiple mentor/mentee pairs. All involved would benefit from each other's experiences and knowledge on creating master schedules, evaluating teachers, using data to establish goals in the context of student achievement, and responding to parental concerns.

In addition to the aforementioned considerations of mentor pairings, training, professional development, and mentor cadres by region, I would finally suggest using retired administrators as mentors. When mentoring programs use administrators who are working full time, it can be difficult to find the time to devote to the mentoring relationship. By using retired administrators, the mentor can devote time and attention solely to the mentoring relationship. A retired administrator has performed the duties of a principal and can share experiences and knowledge with the new principal. The retired administrator does not have a staff, students and parents vying for their time, as do working administrators. Certainly, the qualities of a good mentor would need to be present in the retired administrator in order for him or her to serve as a mentor.

This study of a mentoring program for new school administrators shows an increased confidence level of the new administrator in one year. The study also found

that the increased confidence level of the new administrator is directly tied to increased job satisfaction. We know people are more satisfied in their work when they feel confident about the work they are doing and see results. The increased job satisfaction could lead to administrators staying in their positions longer, which has a direct impact on school districts. Not only is there an increased likelihood that a new administrator will stay in his or her position longer, but there is an increased chance the individual will stay in the profession over time. In the day of administrator shortages, increased longevity of service is a positive impact on all schools and the educational leadership profession. The Wallace Foundation (2007) describes benefits to the organization from a mentoring program as promoting positive organizational climate, clarifying roles and expectations, increasing satisfaction and retention rates, and mentoring suggests commitment to employees.

One final implication for school districts is the impact mentoring has on the overall effectiveness of the school. Research shows that the school leader can have an impact on student achievement. A principal who is satisfied with his or her work, is growing professionally, and is confident his or her performance can impact change for school improvement. This change can be as subtle as improving the climate to improved student achievement.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations for future research are offered based on the findings of this study:

1. This study's focus was limited to high school principals and their mentors. Consequently, the middle level or junior high principal, the elementary principal, or the central office administrator was not investigated. Further research is needed to understand how the role of mentoring impacts their roles
2. The participants in this study were all Caucasian. Future research should focus on administrators with other ethnic backgrounds to determine the similarities and differences in perceptions about mentoring and induction programs.
3. This study did not focus on the mentor/mentee matches. Further research should examine gender pairings. Does gender pairings made a difference to the success of a mentoring relationship? Does mixed gender mentor/mentee pairs have an impact on the relationship?
4. The qualitative portion of this study was limited to five mentor/mentee pairs. Further research involving larger numbers of administrators would help further investigate the research questions defined in this study.
5. The findings and recommendations drawn from this study focused on first year principals as a group. Further research should examine different subgroups of new principals. For example, how could associate or assistant principals benefit from this type of mentoring program? Do members of this group have different needs for socialization and leadership actualization?

6. It may be beneficial to explore the differences between the need for managerial mentoring with the need for instructional leadership mentoring inside of a school. The former addresses the day-to-day operations, while the later addresses curriculum, instruction and assessment.



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## APPENDIX A

## SAI MENTEE SURVEY FOR PRINCIPALS

How confident are you in your ability to provide helpful feedback to teachers about their professional practice?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to use the building leadership team to accomplish school improvement goals?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to provide collaborative professional development focused on school improvement goals?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to adapt your leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to use conflict productively?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to manage day-to-day operations?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.

- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to establish effective student behavior management systems?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to allocate resources appropriately to accomplish building goals?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to establish positive working relationships with students, parents, and staff?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to hire quality teachers?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to find time for personal rejuvenation?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

How confident are you in your ability to take time for reflection on professional practice?

- I can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- I can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- I think I can do this with coaching and support.
- I'm worried about whether I can do this.

## APPENDIX B

## SAI MENTOR SURVEY FOR PRINCIPALS

What is your mentee's ability to provide helpful feedback to teachers about their professional practice?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to use the building leadership team to accomplish school improvement goals?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to provide collaborative professional development focused on school improvement goals?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to adapt his/her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to use conflict productively?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to manage day-to-day operations?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.

- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to establish effective student behavior management systems?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to allocate resources appropriately to accomplish building goals?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to establish positive working relationships with students, parents, and staff?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to hire quality teachers?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to find time for personal rejuvenation?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.

What is your mentee's ability to take time for reflection on professional practice?

- S/he can definitely do this successfully and consistently.
- S/he can do this, making a few mistakes along the way.
- S/he can do this with coaching and support.
- S/he does this with significant struggles.



APPENDIX C

SAI MENTEE ASSESSMENT OF MENTOR

Region One, NYC Dept of Education

School Administrators of Iowa  
Mentee Assessment of Mentor  
Used with Permission of

Region One Learning Support Center, NYC Department of Education  
Directions to mentee: Please reflect on the support given by your mentor this year and complete the following items.

Never    Occasionally    Usualty    Always

Communications Skills

- Effective listener – hears content and message of what is being said directly, as well as what is not being said that may be relevant to issue at hand
- Effective speaker – speaks truthfully, raises difficult issues, and supports the mentee
- Gives effective feedback – helps the mentee to understand strengths, weaknesses, and need for improvement – both specific and in general
- Asks questions that help mentee see the issues or find his/her own answers

Human Relations Skills and Behaviors

- Affirms mentees' work
- Creates a trusting relationship
- Is honest
- Maintains appropriate confidentiality
- Has a sense of humor
- Is willing to share

Content Expertise

- Has relevant experience and expertise
- Gives relevant and helpful advice
- Helps mentee not only to see issue but also to lay out implementation plan
- Knows where to go for necessary assistance and resources

	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
<b><u>Mentoring Practices</u></b>				
• Supports the mentee	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Probes deeply	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Keeps focus on priorities	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Shares best practices	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Pushes the mentee	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Is well prepared	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Asks essential questions	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Is available and accessible	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Helps mentee to move good ideas through planning into implementation	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Affects Practice**

- Impacts leadership skills \_\_\_\_\_
- Impacts instruction \_\_\_\_\_

**General Information**

1. What was the primary means of contact with your mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

2. Approximately how many times during the school year did your mentor visit you at your school: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What level is your school (please check all that apply): \_\_\_\_\_ Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_ Elem. Principal \_\_\_\_\_ K-8 Principal \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Middle School Principal \_\_\_\_\_ High School Principal

APPENDIX D

SAI MENTOR ASSESSMENT OF MENTEE

School Administrators of Iowa  
Mentor Assessment of Mentee  
Used with Permission of

Region One Learning Support Center, NYC Department of Education

Directions to mentor: Please reflect on your work with your mentee this year and complete the following items.

My mentee:

	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
• Is an effective listener - hears content and message of what is being said directly, and follows through accordingly	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Is an effective speaker - speaks truthfully, confronts school related issues, both instructional and non-instructional in nature	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Asks pertinent questions that in order to clarify issues	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Talks openly concerning his/her needs	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Is open and honest with mentor	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Maintains appropriate confidentiality	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Maintains focus on improvement plan	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Is well prepared	_____	_____	_____	_____
• Welcomes the mentor's presence	_____	_____	_____	_____

Contact Information:

1. What was the primary means of contact with your mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Meeting \_\_\_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please specify)
2. Approximately how many times during the school year did your mentee visit you at your school: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Approximately how many times during the year did you visit your mentee's school: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What level is your school (please check all that apply): \_\_\_\_\_ Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary Principal \_\_\_\_\_ K-8 Principal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Middle School Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Middle/High School Principal \_\_\_\_\_ High School Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E

## FIRST – YEAR PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS

Legend: L= What the principal is learning, O= Organizational factors, NR=Nature of the first-year principal/mentor relationship

## First Year Principal Questions:

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your background in education? (NR)
2. How do you learn what you need to know to be successful here? (O)
3. Are there formal opportunities that help you learn what you need to be successful? If so, what are they? How about informal opportunities? (O)
4. Who do you go to when you have a question about something? (NR)
5. If you were going to describe your school to someone from the outside, what would you say? (L)
6. Are there barriers to learning as a new principal? If so what are they? (O)
7. What is your current mentor/mentee arrangement? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this arrangement? (NR)
8. Can you tell me a little more about the mentoring relationship? For example, who initiates contact? What do you learn? How often do you meet? Is there a set schedule of learning that occurs? (L)
9. What kinds of things do you talk about with your mentor? (L)
10. What makes this relationship different than other professional relationships in the school? (O)
11. How was the relationship developed between you and your mentor? Was it arranged or was there some input for you? (NR)
12. Are there barriers to this relationship? What are they? (O)
13. When you are meeting with your mentor, what is the protocol? What are the types of topics discussed? (O)
14. Is your mentor someone you feel comfortable with going to regarding a professional concern? (L)
15. What have you learned? How did you learn it? (L)
16. What are the key administrative skills that you feel are crucial to being successful in your current position? Are those opportunities being made available for you? (L)
17. Do you share ideas and concerns with other colleagues? Can you tell me a little bit about that? (NR)
18. Are there sorts of things that you need to go outside of the formal mentoring relationship to learn? What are they, and why? (L)
19. Think about your own development as an administrator over the past year. What have you learned that you didn't know coming in to your respective district? (L)
20. What are the most important components of the administrative mentoring program to you? What are the limitations? (NR)

21. What skills and attitudes has your mentor aided you in developing? (L)
22. If you were to design your own mentoring program for administrators, what would it look like? (O)
23. Is there anything else you would like to add?

## APPENDIX F

## MENTOR QUESTIONS

Legend: L = What the mentee is learning, O = Organizational factors, NR = Nature of the mentor/mentee relationship

1. What is your educational background? (L)
2. IF you were going to describe your school to someone from the outside, what would you say? (L)
3. What kind of mentoring (formal or informal) training did you undergo as a new principal to your current district? (O)
4. Was there an administrative mentoring program available to you? If not how did you acclimate to that organization? (O)
5. What was the training program provided to you for your responsibilities as a mentor? Was it adequate to provide for the needs of your mentee? Please explain. (O)
6. What are the actual goals and desired outcomes of the mentoring program? (L)
7. What are the key components (skills, attitudes, values) that you want to convey to the new principal? How do you go about doing that? (NR)
8. How was the relationship developed between you and the new principal? Was it arranged or was there some input from you as to what you were looking for in a new principal? (NR)
9. Is there a set schedule of meetings or are they random? Is there some other arrangement? (O)
10. Are there barriers to this interaction? What are they? (O)
11. What is your role as a mentor? (NR)
12. What are some of the benefits of taking on the role of the mentor for a new administrator to the school? (NR)
13. What are some of the limitations of being a mentor for a new principal? (NR)
14. When you think back on the beginning of the school year, how has your mentoring experience evolved? (L)
15. Does your district support this program? How? (O)
16. If you were to design a program, what would it look like? (O)

## APPENDIX G

## HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW COMMITTEE LETTER



Office of Sponsored Programs

Human Participants Review Committee  
 UNI Institutional Review Board (IRB)  
 213 East Bartlett Hall

Lisa Remy  
 7242 Cody Drive  
 West Des Moines, IA 50266

Re: IRB 07-0243

Dear Ms. Remy:

Your study, **An Investigation of Practicing Principals' Perceptions of the Role Mentors played in their Professional Development and Job Satisfaction**, has been approved by the UNI IRB effective 10/20/08, following an Expedited review performed by IRB co-chair, **Susan Etscheidt, Ph.D.** You may begin enrolling participants in your study.

**Modifications:** If you need to make changes to your study procedures, samples, or sites, you must request approval of the change before continuing with the research. Changes requiring approval are those that may increase the social, emotional, physical, legal, or privacy risks to participants. Your request may be sent by mail or email to the IRB Administrator.

**Problems and Adverse Events:** If during the study you observe any problems or events pertaining to participation in your study that are *serious* and *unexpected* (e.g., you did not include them in your IRB materials as a potential risk), you must report this to the IRB within 10 days. Examples include unexpected injury or emotional stress, missteps in the consent documentation, or breaches of confidentiality. You may send this information by mail or email to the IRB Administrator.

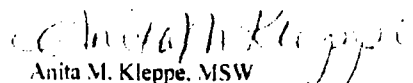
**Expiration Date:** Your study **approval will expire on 10/19/09**. Beyond that, you may not recruit participants or collect data without continuing approval. We will email you an Annual Renewal/Update form about 4-6 weeks before your expiration date, or you can download it from our website. You are responsible for seeking continuing approval before your expiration date *whether you receive a reminder or not*. If your approval lapses, you will need to submit a new application for review.

**Closure:** If you complete your project before the expiration date, or it ends for other reasons, please download and submit the IRB Project Closure form. It is especially important to do this if you are a student and planning to leave campus at the end of the academic year. Advisors are encouraged to monitor that this occurs.

**Forms:** Information and all IRB forms are available online at [www.uni.edu/osp/research/IRBforms.htm](http://www.uni.edu/osp/research/IRBforms.htm).

If you have any questions about Human Participants Review policies or procedures, please contact me at 319.273.6148 or at [anita.kleppe@uni.edu](mailto:anita.kleppe@uni.edu). Best wishes for your project success.

Sincerely,

  
 Anita M. Kleppe, MSW  
 IRB Administrator

Cc: Robert Decker, Advisor