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**An investigation of the curricular and instructional leadership  
roles of elementary principals**

Owen, Jean Davis, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1988

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL  
LEADERSHIP ROLES OF ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS

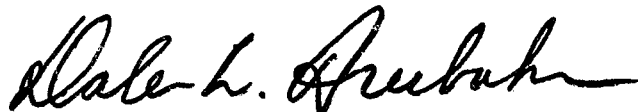
by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION

In a sense, completion of this doctoral study represents the end of a journey, which had its genesis nearly a half century ago. It is a journey that led me on many strange roads. Sometimes the way was scary and unclear, but always it led me in search of answers to questions about leadership issues, a topic of numerous family discussions during my growing-up years. For those early influences and for their continuing support, I wish to acknowledge and thank my parents, Rollo and Alinda Davis. Secondly, I wish to acknowledge the influence of my 4-H leaders, mentors, and friends Kenneth and Ethel Pickett, whose leadership serves as a model for me to this day. To my daughters, Susan and Kate, thanks for reminding me that even during graduate studies, being a "real mother" remains job number one.

To Dr. Owen Phillips, superintendent of the High Point Public Schools, thank you for the professional courage and personal confidence you displayed by entrusting me with the principalship of an elementary school.

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OWEN, JEAN DAVIS, Ed. D. An Investigation of the Curricular and Instructional Leadership Roles of Elementary Principals. (1988) Directed by Dr. Dale H. Brubaker. 107 pp.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the curricular and instructional leadership of elementary principals.

The case study was based on a series of interviews held with five principals and one backreader, a former principal. The principals selected for this study were from a single urban school district in North Carolina. All principals/participants had undergone extensive in-service training for instructional supervision and/or were cited for being strong curricular and instructional leaders by their associate superintendent.

The interview questions centered on five areas: (1) curricular and instructional leadership, (2) evolution in the principalship role, (3) conflict around the principalship role, (4) definition of the curriculum, and (5) power and influence.

Five assumptions, drawn from related research, served as check points for the interview analysis. Assumption One: The principalship role continues to search for definition, now evolving into a greater implementation of a curricular and instructional leadership role.

Assumption Two: Teachers are in conflict with the curricular and instructional leadership role of the principal; but, where they have a positive perception of their workplace, they are more productive.

Assumption Three: Curriculum is what each person experiences in the learning setting and the principal is the leader of that interpretation.

Assumption Four: Successful principals function with a vision of what their

school should be. Assumption Five: The school principal position is one of power and influence.

In the analysis of the interviews, thirty-one common themes were identified and grouped around the five assumptions. The themes encompassed the daily actions, curricular leadership functions, administrative skills, and personal values of the principals/participants.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
APPROVAL PAGE .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Background of the Study .....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	9
Methodology.....	10
Definition of Key Terms.....	16
Organization of the Remainder of the Study.....	16
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	17
Introduction.....	17
Historical Origins of the Principalship .....	18
Present Challenges to the Principalship .....	32
Summary .....	38
III. ANALYSIS OF SIX CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRINCIPALS' WORK .....	39
Assumption One .....	41
Assumption Two.....	63
Assumption Three.....	68
Assumption Four .....	70
Assumption Five.....	71
IV. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS.....	73

Summary.....	73
Conclusion.....	78
Implications for Further Study .....	79
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>APPENDIX A. Vitae of the Participants of the Investigation.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>APPENDIX B. Interview Guide.....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>APPENDIX C. Assumptions about the Elementary Principalship.....</b>	<b>107</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table	
1. Participant Profile	40

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

When I was a teacher and watched my principal walk down the hall, I often wondered what he did. I knew he made the schedules, assigned the students, and kept track of the books, but I believed his secretary did most of that. He monitored the buses and helped us with disciplining the students. He greeted us each morning. Occasionally, he walked through our classrooms. Once a year he called me into his office to sign my evaluation. There was little to no conversation about my work. What did he do? At one point I was convinced that he was not needed. I thought we "good teachers" could run the school.

Yet, it is common belief among non-teachers that the principal determines the direction and personality of the school. Community people say you can tell when a new principal comes. The school changes! Superintendents say the most critical thing they can do when a school is in trouble is to change the principal. The effective school studies say schools are best when the principal plays an assertive instructional leadership role (North Carolina Teacher Performance Appraisal System, 1984). Andrew's (1987) investigation into the teachers' perceptions of the leadership of their principal says that "where teachers have very positive perceptions of the

quality of their workplace, they are more productive ... we see incremental growth in student achievement" (p. 9).

There are many facets to the principalship role. Teachers have their own perceptions about what principals should do and go about shaping the person into a role based on those expectations. One prominent North Carolina superintendent's advice to new principals was to find out who the powerful and good teachers were and take their advice.

Community people see it another way. One frame of reference may be the good or bad memory they carry with them about the principal of their own school days. The words of admonition, admiration, or fear they express to their children about their former principal reflect their perceptions of those school experiences. Other reference points are the values and hopes they have for their children. Community people expect the principal to create a school environment that will nurture and promote their values and beliefs.

School improvement forces, be they superintendents, university professors of education, researchers, or legislators, see it in yet another way. They see the need to increase student academic achievement and to improve the learning climate in the school, and they believe that principals are the key to those improvements (Berman, 1975).

These points of view represent divergence in the perception of the role of the principal and what it should be. Andrews (1987) said, "We've known for a long time that good schools had good principals, but we didn't know what that really meant." In the interview with Ron Brandt for Educational Leadership (September 1987) he said,

We have some examples where a principal is regarded as a strong instructional leader, moves to another school, and is reported as a strong instructional leader by the teachers in the new school ... That tells me...that the school was unable to achieve excellence without that principal (p. 16).

Finding out what the "good principal" means is a critical question if there is to be any hope for developing more schools that are considered good schools. Who the "good principal" is and what the "good principal" does must be explored from many angles.

Andrews (1987) explored the "good principal" from the perceptions the teachers had about their principal's leadership. Wolcott (1973) explored the role in an ethnographic study of the person who was principal. Barth (1980) reflected on his own eight years of experience as an elementary principal, and Sarason, (1971) a community psychologist, examined the principalship from the perspective of the culture of the school setting. Expanding that concept, Brubaker and Simon (1986) propose that the principal defines the school setting as the curriculum.

What each person experiences cooperatively creating the learning setting is the curriculum. Administration and instruction are part of the setting and hence part of the curriculum, not to be considered "administrivia" and apart (p. 19).

Evolution in the Principalship Role: The present study acknowledged that the principalship has been evolutionary. Brubaker and Simon (1984) traced the characteristics of school leaders from the earliest days of public education to the present. Their groupings of beliefs and



actions of the principal made up recognizable patterns, linked roughly to eras of time in our school histories. They used such descriptors as Principal Teacher, (1647 - 1850); General Manager, (1850 - 1920); Professional and Scientific Manager, (1920 - 1970); Administrator and Instructional Leaders, (1970 to the present); and Curricular Leader, (present until a time in the future). While they found no clear beginnings and endings for the different belief frameworks of the school leaders, there is evidence of a philosophical shift in the conception of the role the school principal plays (Brubaker and Simon, 1986, pp 3-24).

The present study acknowledged that while there are increased signs that point to the principal becoming an Instructional or Curricular Leader, the broad-based implementation of that role is neither universally practiced nor universally accepted. In many cases it is not part of the conceptual thinking of those in the school setting. Brubaker and Simon (1986) asked North Carolina principals to classify themselves according to the same five levels of conceptions of the principalship (1984). Their study indicated that 71% of the North Carolina principals perceive themselves as Administrators and Instructional Leaders while 13% see themselves as General Managers. When asked what role they would like to assume, 64% wanted to keep the same role. The principals' second choice was a tie between the role of Curricular Leader and the role of Scientific Manager. Significant to the study was the fact that 60% of the respondents categorized their colleagues, other North Carolina principals, as General Managers. Few principals viewed themselves (7%) or others (2%) as Curricular Leaders (Brubaker and Simon, 1986, pp 4-6).

In yet another study using the Brubaker and Simon conceptions of the principalship, Williams (1987) examined North Carolina teachers' perception of the principal's role. Her findings showed that a majority (57%) of the teachers surveyed perceive their principal to be functioning in the role of an Administrator and Instructional Leader. A strong minority (33%) perceive their principal functioning as a General Manager. Three per cent perceive their principal functioning as a Curricular Leader. However, nearly 85% of the teachers said they preferred for their principal to function as an Administrator and Instructional Leader or as a Curricular Leader.

Robinson (1986) aligned eras of learning expectancy for students to the roles principals played during a given period of time. In Robinson's Era I, approximately 1837 - 1900, little learning was expected from many students. The role of the principal during that period was overseer. In Era II, approximately 1910 - 1975, much learning was expected from some students while very little learning was expected from other students (Robinson, 1986, p. 8). The role of the principal during that time was administrator of the prescribed curriculum, enforcer of the rules and regulations, and rater of teachers (p. 20).

Robinson says that education is now in the dawn of Era III in which much learning will be expected from all students (p. 14). Robinson's theory does not acknowledge that there have been some school administrators who always functioned in an "Era III" mode. Instead his theory describes the general trend of the masses rather than examines the work of individuals.

Robinson's views in his Era III are similar to those Adler (1982) espoused in The Paidea Proposal. Adler believes we are on the verge of a new era in our national life. The country, he says, is at last ready for the long needed educational reform in which all children will have not only an equal opportunity for an education but an equal opportunity for the same quality of education. Adler reminded his readers that this was the revolutionary message of Dewey's book Democracy and Education (1917) and also the belief of Robert Maynard Hutchins, who stated the fundamental principle, "The best education for the best is the best education for all" (Adler, p. 6). Like Dewey and Hutchins, Adler ties the importance of this equal quality of education for all people, regardless of sex, race, or ethnic origin, to the survival of the democracy. To provide less than the best education, he says, is a

failure on the part of society--a failure of parents, of teachers, of administrators--not a failure on the part of the children. There are no unteachable children. There are only schools and teachers and parents who fail to teach them (Adler, 1982, p. 3-8).

Ambivalent Perspectives: The present study acknowledged that there is ambivalence in what teachers think the principal should do. Both the autonomy and the dependence, which historically characterizes the teachers' role, present conflicts for the school leader. Gertrude McPherson, in her 1972 ethnographic study of an elementary faculty in a small New England town, found teachers ambivalent in their reactions to the principal who gave their faculty much leverage, saying they knew more about elementary school and teaching than he did. This refusal to take

charge might seem to be ideal for independent teachers. Instead, the teachers complained loudly about the principal's laissez-faire attitude. Then when he did act like a boss, as he occasionally did, they complained even more loudly (pp. 163-179).

For the teacher there is the clash of idealism and realism. Teachers struggle daily to put into practice good learning and teaching theory as they understand it. The complex realities of competition for time and curricular priorities, the shift in the cultural values and morals of the students, and the limits of their own pedagogical understandings are present minute-by-minute in the classroom. These conflicts, if not dealt with, find their way to the principal's office in the form of teachers' behavior that is negative, cynical and sometimes fraught with discouragement. Those realities have yet another influence on the role of the principal.

The present study acknowledged the strength in the position of the principalship. Even though the role of the principal continues to fluctuate in its real and perceived powers and influence, historically and universally the role is seen as the key to the direction of the school. In 1884, Chicago's Superintendent Howe said, "a prime factor in the success of the individual school is the principal" (Pellicer, p. 3). Barth (1976) said,

It is not the teachers, or the central office people, or the university people who are causing schools to be the way they are or changing the way they might be. It is whoever lives in the principal's office (p. 21).

Edmond's (1979) research pointed out that one characteristic of good schools was principals who were strong instructional leaders. Principals in

effective schools have defined goals; a safe environment conducive to learning; high teacher expectations; and an emphasis on the basic skills. As critical as principals are, they are not the only initiators and supporters of change, Lieberman and Miller (1984) believe. "Leadership is interactive. A school shapes a principal much as a principal shapes a school" (p. 79).

Blumberg and Greenfield (1986) applaud the current importance being placed on strong school leadership. In tongue-in-cheek fashion, they call the new emphasis, "rediscovering the obvious," but hasten to add that just because something is obvious doesn't mean people understand it or give it the attention it deserves. The title of the final chapter of their book summarizes their conclusions: "As the principal goes, so goes the school."

Lastly, the present study acknowledged that the perceived role of the school principal appears to continue teetering on a point of definition. Wolcott's ethnographic study of The Man in the Principal's Office (1973) noted that while the principal enjoyed the power, thrill and consequence of administration, and was highly motivated by the altruistic purpose of public education (p. 310), he was continually exploring the actuality of the role. Wolcott's study found that things were not done because principals wanted to do them, but because other people expected them to be done. The principal's role is limited, he said, because he or she has to meet the expectations of a multitude of others. Principals were hampered and burdened by traditions that had grown up around the role (p. 318).

Most principals seemed to let the school run them. They seemed neither able to identify what the school needed nor had plans under way to improve it. While principals were very interested, even eager, to find out

about promising practices in various parts of the country, they were inarticulate regarding the implications of these ideas for their own schools (p. 314).

Whether the need for strong leadership in schools is an emerging phenomenon or a rediscovered truth, there is clearly more attention being given now to the importance of the role. While there are examples of success formulas in the educational literature, most of the writings tend to be normative in approach, that is they speak of what ought to be done and remain unaware of what actually is going on (Wolcott p. xi). There remain, still unidentified and undefined, the day-to-day activities that positively or negatively influence the principal's function as a school leader. These workplace realities present an unresolved conflict to the school principal. What does the principal do to balance the roles of administering and leading, of serving and facilitating, of supporting and improving, or of conserving and changing? What does the principal do to positively influence the school?

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the curricular and instructional leadership of elementary principals. Evidence from the literature presented in the introduction of this study showed that the role of the elementary principal was neither well-defined nor well-understood. Evidence showed that it was changing and also undergoing a philosophical shift. Evidence showed that teachers and principals themselves were

experiencing conflict with the role changes. Given that information, it followed that descriptions of what elementary principals actually did were needed.

The specific focus of this study was an investigation into the work lives of five elementary principals who interpreted their role as curricular and instructional leaders. The descriptions of their work focused on the following areas: (1) curricular and instructional leadership, (2) evolution in the principalship role, (3) conflict surrounding the role, (4) definition of the curriculum, (5) power and influence.

The study did not intend to present conclusive evidence to prove or disprove theories, but rather to present a "portrait" of an elementary principal, a "composite portrait" of those beliefs, visions, drives, activities, and pains that are part of the curricular and instructional leadership role of the elementary principal.

## Methodology

The Participants: The study was based on interviews held with each of five elementary school principals who were selected from a North Carolina urban school district of 8,000 students and fifteen schools, ten of which are elementary schools. Since the focus of the study was on how principals defined their role as curricular and instructional leaders, the five participants for this study were selected because all had undergone the same extensive in-service training in instructional supervision and curriculum development and/or their names were recommended by the school system's

associate superintendent when this investigator asked, "Who, among the principals, see themselves as curricular and instructional leaders?" (See Appendix A for vitae of the six participants, including the backreader, of this investigation.)

At the beginning of this investigation three of the subjects were involved in an institute for instructional supervision following the Madeline Hunter model (Hunter, 1967). The other three had had the same training at an earlier time. In addition the school district had provided each participant extensive and continuous leadership training over a period of several years that included in-service training on goal setting, program implementation and evaluation, instructional supervision, change strategies, group decision making, excellence in organizations (Peters and Waterman), and wellness in the workplace.

The Data Collection: Data were gathered for this case study through a major interview held with each principal during the fall semester and a follow-up interview held four-to-six weeks later. This investigator recorded the interviews, transcribing them later into hard copy. A third interview was held after the data were organized into a first draft essay at which time all the participants as a group read the essay. The purpose of the third interview was to clarify perceptions and confirm quotations. During the group interview, other behaviors began to emerge as the participants conversed with each other about the data, asking, "Who said that?" or wanting to know more about ideas presented in the analysis. One participant said, "This in itself (the interview process) has been an



enjoyable experience because we rarely get to talk about what we do with each other. It has been like staff development for me."

The initial interview began with the open-ended question, "What do you do?" and was followed by additional questions centered in eight areas. These question areas were drawn from this investigator's reading and observations and from theories discussed in a survey of the literature. The eight areas included: (1) career choices, (2) principal's daily work, (3) administrative and instructional leadership, (4) curriculum, (5) vision, (6) power, (7) changing role of the principal, (8) descriptors of the work. (See Appendix B for the question guide.)

All the principals' responses to the questions were probed in order to have them define more clearly the realities of their workplace or capture more richness in their descriptions. This method allowed the investigator not only to probe for data on how the subjects spent time in the role, but for descriptions of their attitudes and opinions about the role of principal and about the myriad of school problems and events (Gay, 1976, p. 12). The investigator was able to collect descriptive data that reported the way things were in each school, data that went beyond the kind of responses that are pre-shaped by forced-choice responses. The data began to expose complex human interactions found in schools and revealed the school leaders' responses to those interactions.

Precedents for the Research Design: The design for this study was adapted from procedures used by Blumberg and Greenfield and Lightfoot. As in the Blumberg and Greenfield study (1980) The Effective Principal, this investigator used open-ended questions and the small number of

participants. This method allowed each principal to talk long and deeply about his or her work and to share insights and feelings about his or her role. The data included more than statements telling how it is supposed to be. It included the backstage stories and situations that often make or break the work and life of an elementary school principal. The investigation looked deeply into the work lives of five principals. It explored the human experience of the principalship (Shapiro, 1987 Lecture, January 21). The method involved time and trust. Like Lightfoot's (1982) study, The Good High School, the investigator entered into a relationship with the subjects giving them critical attention and empathetic regard while investigating their interpretation of the role of the principal.

The Analysis: The interviews were analyzed for patterns of thought and behavior as well as for the idiosyncratic views of the participants. These patterns and views were then discussed in the context of five assumptions about the role of the principal. Summaries of the discussions were written for each assumption. The assumptions were based on external theories taken from educational leadership history and literature. The following assumptions served as check points for the analysis.

Assumption One: The principalship role continues to search for definition, now evolving into a greater implementation of a curricular and instructional leadership role. (Pierce, 1935; Wolcott, 1973; Brubaker and Simon, 1986).

Assumption Two: Teachers are in conflict with the curricular and instructional leadership role of the principal; but, where they have a

positive perception of their workplace, they are more productive (Mc Pherson, 1972; Andrews, 1987).

Assumption Three: Curriculum is what each person experiences in the learning setting, and the principal is the leader of that interpretation (Brubaker and Simon, 1986).

Assumption Four: Successful principals function with a vision of what their school should be (Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986; Peters and Austin, 1985).

Assumption Five: The school principal position is one of power and influence (Barth, 1986; Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986).

Internal and External Validity: Validity, for this qualitative study is subjective because the data is made up of "stories" told by five principals about their work. To insure internal validity, and/or to reduce the influence the participants might have on each other, the principals were first interviewed separately. The external validity had several components. The first validation was the response of the participants themselves when they met as a group to review the data. A second validation came in the response of a backreader who read the analysis after the principals/participants had reviewed it. (The backreader was one of the original participants who, during the planning stages of this investigation, resigned from her principalship to become the system's elementary supervisor. She withdrew her name as one of the original participants and subsequently became the "backreader.") She read the draft of the analysis and reacted to it. Reading the data triggered many feelings and stories from her. At midpoint in

reading the analysis, she stopped and said, "I am enjoying reading this dissertation. Maybe it's because so much of me is in here." This investigator recorded her spontaneous comments, then incorporated them into the analysis. They were referenced as the backreader's responses. The backreader's identity with the "stories" provided the kind of external validation this investigator expects will come, as future people read the dissertation and find the "stories" real to them. The power of the study will be in the reader's response to the "stories." The "shock of recognition" or intersubjective validity will emerge as the persons reading the "stories" take on new thoughts and insights for their own lives (Shapiro, 1987, Lecture, January 21).

Confidentiality: The data carried no surprises or "scoop-type" information that might prove uncomfortable to the participants. However, there is always sensitiveness when one sees his or her feelings and "backstage stories" in print. To protect for this uncomfortableness, the analysis did not identify the principals by name or by school. Instead, the analysis referred to them as the participants, principals, principal(s)/participant(s) or backreader. Nonetheless, part of the validity of such an investigation lies in the authenticity of the participants who were interviewed. To substantiate that and to serve as a record for this dissertation, vitae of the five principals/participants and the backreader were included in Appendix A.

## Definition of Key Terms

The following words and phrases are defined to give the reader more clarification and/or consistency in the manner they are used in this study.

Principal--the designated leader of an elementary school

Role--patterns of behavior

Curricular and Instructional Leader--a principal's role that focuses time and activities on the curricular and instructional activities of the school

Evolution--the gradual shift in the patterns of thought and behavior

Conflict--tension, competing values, resistance and complaints that accompany change

Curriculum--all that students experience in the school setting

Formal curriculum--the required academic learnings

Informal curriculum--the setting, relationships, activities and organization that students experience

## Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of the study is divided into three chapters. Chapter two is devoted to a review of the literature regarding the leadership role of the principal, the evolution of the focus of the principalship, and the effect school cultures and settings have on the work of the principal. Chapter three contains the analysis of the data. Chapter four, the final chapter, summarizes the findings and includes recommendations for further study. A selected bibliography and appendices conclude this paper.

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Searching for a role definition of the principalship is a continuing saga. Pierce (1935) in his dissertation on the "Origin and Development of the Public School Principalship" noted that the position of the principal has not always been so significant. The duties and powers have evolved over a long period of development (p. 1). Wolcott's (1973) ethnographic study of the elementary principal noted that the in-group conversations of principals were about their day-to-day problems and the lack of an adequate role definition. The principals in the Wolcott study remarked that the responsibilities of the principalship had changed dramatically within their career span (pp. 296-297). The studies of Brubaker and Simon (1986) and Williams (1987) showed that perceptions of the role continue to be divergent and evolving. Further, Brubaker and Simon found a reluctance on the part of principals to change the role they were currently playing (pp. 4-6).

Reviewing the evolution of the principalship role brought into focus a clearer understanding of the constraints principals experience. Many of the attitudes about the principalship held by teachers, students, patrons, and principals themselves have their roots in the way the role was conceived

originally, in some instances as long ago as three centuries. Conversely, some principalship practices widely accepted today are less than three decades old.

Leonard Pellicer and others (1981) from the University of South Carolina found, in their study of The Evolution and Training of School Principals, that the role of principal had evolved haltingly and sporadically. Great differences existed in its development, varying in definition from region to region and from urban to rural. In some regions the principalship became a recognized position for which one trained while in others it was decades before the position was recognized as needed.

### Historical Origins of the Principalship

In the Beginning: In 1647 when the Massachusetts law required that an elementary school be built for every fifty or more families, the town Selectmen were responsible for the management of the schools. When they found themselves surrounded with too many problems to manage, they appointed special committees to oversee the administration of the schools. These committees eventually developed separate identities and evolved into boards of education (Pellicer, 1981, p.7).

From the beginning it was recognized that teaching and administration competed for time and focus. Someone had to be in charge. Whenever schools had more than one teacher, a head teacher or teaching principal was named. The position was known by many titles: head master, rector, preceptor, provost and occasionally principal. Later on, the principal of the high school was referred to as "Professor" and was

accorded more respect than either the elementary principal or the superintendent. The high school principal was considered highly cultured and scholarly and was looked to as the intellectual leader of the community (Pellicer, 1981, p. 2). The principalship was established in the secondary school before it became part of the elementary system. Many times a single principal served both the elementary and secondary schools, a practice continued today in many rural areas of the United States.

In these early times the person named teaching principal was said to have possessed strong teaching skills and continued to teach classes. The duties they carried out as principal were considered simply routine and mundane. These early teaching principals "represented an administrative convenience rather than a position of recognized leadership" (Spair, Drummond, Goodland, 1956, p. 24). The teaching principal was to determine the opening and closing times of school, schedule classes, secure supplies and equipment, care for and manage the building, communicate with parents and patrons, serve as a liaison between the teachers and the board of education and even act as clerk of the board of education. This early principal was, in fact, a prototype of a superintendent of schools (Pellicer, 1981, p. 2). The early principal was not a student of administration in any sense but performed the duties from a purely technical point of view. Because no special training was required in the early stages of school leadership, it came to be assumed that any well organized teacher could perform these ordinary clerical tasks (Brubaker, p. 6). It was implicit that the teaching principal maintain the status quo.



"Teaching was paramount and no changes needed to be made with regard to the basic organizational structure of the school" (p. 6).

While school districts remained small, the supervision and evaluation of the schools could be done by the boards of education. Designated visiting committees would periodically visit the schools and sample the efficiency of the instruction by examining the scholars (Pierce, p. 57).

As Urbanization Came: By the mid 1800's, urban areas grew and schools became more complex. Principals spent less time in classroom instruction themselves and more time managing the school. This shift presented its own role crisis, for now the person who was known to be the best teacher, the person who held the highly respected, scholarly role of intellectual leader in the community, was doing that which the profession itself considered mundane and ordinary.

But the need for administrative leadership was growing tremendously as the crowded conditions of the schools increased. The number of minimally qualified teachers was increasing. Many held grammar grade certificates only. Their inexperience and lack of training presented a serious supervisory problem to the principal. Normal Schools were just coming into vogue and were not yet producing enough trained teachers to fill the demands. With so many teachers having little to no training, how could principals assure the district superintendent and the public that all students were learning adequately under the same general plan? "Grading and placing" students became the organizational strategy of the day. "Possibly this situation accounted for some of the emphasis on lock-step progress, since the supervision of large numbers of poorly

qualified teachers would be facilitated by adherence to a uniform plan" (Pierce, p. 214).

In addition, supervising the classroom instructional program was not a widely accepted role of the principal. Teachers had strong reservations about the teaching principal being both colleague and supervisor. In 1859, discomfort with this dual role took a group of teachers to the Cincinnati, Ohio, Board of Education requesting that they "determine the relative duties of principal and assistant teachers, especially when they occupied different school rooms" (Pierce, p. 11). That discomfort has a familiar ring for the 1980's, one hundred thirty years later. Teachers today continue to ask, "How can my work be evaluated when the evaluator is not in the room but short periods of time?"

As schools consolidated into districts and systems, instructional supervision alternately became the responsibility of the principals, district supervisors, or helping teachers. Supervision techniques were rudimentary. There were few guidelines other than those of the current superintendent. The style and effectiveness depended upon the wishes of the district superintendent or the competence of the principals themselves. Evaluation, when it occurred, often was perfunctory. With the issue of who was supervising whom in flux, most curricular and instructional decisions stayed in the domain of each classroom teacher. Most times supervision was crisis centered, intervening only when the classroom was in trouble. As long as there were no major problems, principals were content to let teachers manage their own classes. During this time principals were more

concerned about the welfare of their position than of the school's instructional program (Pellicer, p. 3).

"Lack of dynamic supervision and programs for school improvement on the part of the main body of principals was undoubtedly due to conservatism and professional inertia" (Pierce, p. 214). Principals as a group were slow to

take advantage of the opportunities for professional leadership that were granted them. Except for sporadic cases, they did very little to study their work, experiment with administrative procedures, or publish articles on local administrative procedures and supervision. The large body of them were satisfied to attend to clerical and petty routine, administering their schools on a policy of laissez-faire. They were generally entrenched behind their tenure rights, and they usually hesitated to show vigorous leadership to their teachers who often were as reactionary, professionally, as the principals themselves (Pierce, p. 21).

A century later, in the late 1950's, a similar concern for supervising the instruction intensified. Schools were experiencing a twofold crisis. First, the baby boomers, those children born in the aftermath of World War II, were coming of school age. There were insufficient numbers of qualified teachers. People with high school diplomas only were in the classrooms. Secondly, towards the middle 1960's, the court-forced desegregation of school faculties raised many questions about the quality of teaching skills of the minority teachers. These factors may well have been part of the impetus for accountability, basic and uniform curricula, and the trend toward more curricular leadership from the principal that were to become the educational issues of the late 1970's and 1980's.

As urbanization increased, schools became larger and the schools' clerical needs increased. Teachers were assigned administrative work. Later this work was done by substitute teachers, then by teacher clerks, and then, as today, school secretaries. With the assignment of a clerical person to each school came the implication that the principal could spend more time developing the instructional program. That did not happen necessarily. That it continues not to happen begs further investigation. Different assumptions about why principals hesitate to assert instructional leadership need to be explored.

By 1867, New York City had removed classroom instruction from their principals' role (Pellicer, pp. 1-3). Nationally, however, teaching principals continued to exist on a large scale for another century. It was the late 1960's before many of the small rural schools consolidated and became large enough to have the financial justification for non-teaching principals. Today teaching principals continue to exist in the small towns and sparsely populated regions of our country.

As smaller school districts consolidated into larger school districts, and as district boards of education were formed and district superintendents were hired or elected, a new role for the principal evolved. For now the principals were not only accountable to the local school patrons, their students, and to the staff, but also to an authority above them, an authority between them and the board of education. "This was the genesis of the longstanding and uncomfortable political role of the principal serving two constituencies: a local audience, including the teaching staff, and central office leaders" (Brubaker, p. 7).

Regional unevenness in the development of the principalship role was most evident during the early part of the 1900's. While principals in the larger school districts and urban schools were hiring the teachers, boards of education in the rural areas continued to hire the teachers directly for their schools. Well into the mid 1900's, oral accounts tell of teachers hired to teach in rural schools and boarding in the homes of the school board chairmen. In November 1959, this investigator signed a teaching contract on the dining-room table in the home of the board of education chairman.

By the 1920's, a number of events began to unfold. A national organization of elementary principals had formed. Journals were carrying articles highlighting the principals' activities. Studies were done on how principals spent their time, noting "the large portion of time the average principal was devoting to routine administration" (Pierce, p. 24). This attention greatly influenced the principal toward more professional interests and abilities. The new education leaders were planting seeds that led principals into school improvement programs.

A strong influence came when departments of education began building curricula for school administration training. By the 1920's superintendents began noting that their principal's supervision of the instructional programs was becoming more scientific. They began voicing desire for the principals in their districts to move away from the routine and purely housekeeping factors of their work and more into the control of the instructional programs (Pierce, pp. 22-24). However, principals continued to lack the knowledge and the skills necessary for instructional supervision. Many carried only a few years of classroom experience with

them to the principalship. This created a barrier, which accounted for the lack of instructional and curricular leadership of many principals at that time. The barrier remained an issue in many elementary schools well into the 1980's.

In 1928, more than half of the supervising elementary principals had less than a bachelor's degree. By the late 1960's over 80% had at least a master's degree (Cooper, 1967, pp. 6-7). In the late 1980's a growing cadre of principals had or were working toward doctoral-level study in school administration.

Between the mid 1940's and the 1970's, the role of the principal became ambiguous. Wayne Wayson, in writing his "View of the Leadership Shortage," describes the time during which "school systems did not want principals to be leaders." Principals, still employed, remember early drafts of job descriptions that included chief tenets hardly conducive to bold leadership actions:

1. following the rules, doing what you are told; seeing that centralized decisions are carried out;
2. not rocking the boat, not thinking of better ways to do things;
3. keeping conflict down; keeping students, teachers, and parents calm;
4. disciplining (controlling) students and staff;
5. protecting teachers from the consequences of their own actions;
6. backing up the system regardless of its questionability; and
7. getting records in on time. (Erickson, pp. 58-59).

Another incidence of the same kind of conceptual thinking is

illustrated by a statement from a member of the Ohio State Board of Education in 1973. The person reminded those in a public hearing that "most of us around this table are employers and we want schools that will produce employees who will do what employers want" (p. 59).

This conceptual framework held by superintendents and boards of education, coupled with the charges that "no people in the United States are exhorted to be leaders as much as school principals and probably no group has been excoriated so much for lacking the qualities of leadership" (p. 55), have brought about a self-consciousness and even, perhaps, a perception by principals themselves that they have few-to-no opportunities to lead.

The fluctuating state of school leadership training itself further clouded the role definition. While the departments of school administration were struggling for more prestige and power within their colleges of education, they turned to

the social sciences, and to some vaguely conveyed 'theories' as their basis for preparing educational administrators ... not a misguided move, for educational administration had for some years operated on the basis of successful practices and armchair retrospect (p. 57).

The principalship, a powerful, respected position during the first half of the century, now suffered ill effects that were not readily recognized as such, though some observers "sensed the probability that the principalship was not keeping pace with the field" and held the position in low esteem (p. 58).

As Women Became Principals: Another factor remained unresolved. It was the factor that centered around men versus women in the principalship. For several decades, the issue focused on sex-role stereotyping rather than competence needed for the role. Early on teachers were men. Then as administrative leadership positions developed in the schools, those jobs were given to men. Women became the teachers who were supervised by men.

In 1915, John Franklin Brown reflects the predominant feelings of the period: "Generally speaking men make better principals than women, especially in large schools." He went on to support his view citing physical strength, greater executive ability and an ability to command full respect and confidence of male students and male citizens. Men were more judicial and less likely to be personal in their view. Most important, they were likely to be better supported by subordinates (Pollicer, 1981, p. 4).

The view that women were inferior for leadership continued through the era of women gaining suffrage. While more women were becoming school principals and occasionally assistant superintendents, their salaries often were equal to half the men's salaries. See chart following:



## Maximum Salaries Paid to Male and Female

### Principals in Large Cities, 1855

City	Male Principal	Female Principal
Boston	\$1800	\$450
Cincinnati	1020	504
New York	1500	700
Philadelphia	1200	600

(Pierce, p. 180)

During the 1930's, 1940's, and early 1950's women held the majority of the principalships. The aftermath of World War II had yet another influence on schools. Veterans were returning from the war to the promise of a college education through the GI Bill of Rights. Great numbers of men were going to college as the first in their families to do so. Many veterans majored in education. They were ready for the workplace by the late 1940's and early 1950s. They became the force of a major shift in American education (Ravitch, 1983, p. 6-12).

So it is no surprise that during the 1950's and 1960's, the female enclave of elementary and secondary teaching was invaded by men. A public sympathy that included educators, most of whom were women, welcomed men who entered the teaching profession. There were many who were critical of the "over-supply" of women and their feminine attitude toward teaching (Fitzgerald, 1986, p. 10).

The advent of more men going into teaching and the prevailing attitude that men held superior leadership skills naturally led to the

replacement of women in principalship roles by men. In 1951 the Salisbury, North Carolina, Board of Education began a policy of hiring no women for their principalships. That decision held for the next twenty-four years until Elizabeth Detty was named principal of the new elementary school (The Salisbury Post, July 3, 1975). The Salisbury decision reflected national sentiments. Palmier and Shakeshaft show the same trends. Their figures show the decline in numbers of women in principalship positions during a fifty year period.

#### Percent of Women in Principalships

1928 - 55%
1948 - 41%
1958 - 38%
1968 - 22%
1978 - 18%

As 1988 approaches, there are signs that the trend may be turning around. One superintendent in a major North Carolina metropolitan school district said he succeeded in placing women in more than half of the administrative positions that came available in his system during his eight-year tenure (Fitzgerald, 1986, p. 2). But the fact remains that three-fourths of the educational middle-management positions are still held by men (Fitzgerald, 1986 p. 13).

A Role in Transition: Brubaker and Simon (1986) document the transition of the role of the principal, noting the overtime shift in the

conceptualization of the role the school principal has been playing from the role of teaching principal to the role of instructional leader of the school. A brief description of the framework follows:

#### **The Principal Teacher (1647-1850)**

Routinely engages in classroom teaching for a portion of each school day; also responsible for daily school routines and clerical duties; does not believe special training is needed to be an effective principal.

#### **The Principal as General Manager (1850-1920)**

Is the official liaison between school and the central office; spends the majority of time on clerical duties; relies upon common sense and reacts to problems as they arise; has the right to give and enforce orders to teachers; implements the curriculum as mandated by the state and local school board.

#### **The Principal as Professional and Scientific Manager (1920-1970)**

Spends more time in classroom supervision than routine administrative duties; uses test data as a basis for planning, implementing and evaluating instruction; is accustomed to the bureaucratic command-compliance organizational system; is interested in efficiency and the use of time to meet management goals and objectives.

#### **The Principal as Administrator and Instructional Leader (1970-Present)**

Recognizes that the role encompasses both governance functions through the bureaucratic organizational structure; handles instructional leadership functions through a collegial organizational structure; expects and accepts some friction between governance and instructional leadership

functions; treats teachers as professionals; gives them significant input into staff hiring, scheduling, evaluation, procurement of materials, selection of objectives and methods.

#### The Principal as Curriculum Leader (Present - sometime in the future)

Views the curriculum in very broad terms to mean more than a course of study and what each person experiences in cooperatively creating learning settings; believes that the role of the principal is too complex to reduce to simple technical procedures; does not attempt to dichotomize administrative and instructional functions, realizing that all tasks impact on what is learned; believes that the learning of adult educators is as important as the learning of children and youth (pp. 3-24).

In Summary: The Long View From History: "Only the study of historical development permits the weighing and evaluation of interrelationships among the components of present-day society" (Levi-Strauss, 1967, p. 13).

Only the study of historical developments permits the observation of actual shifts in behaviors. British critic Williams (1961) says,

It seems to me we are living through a long revolution which our best descriptions only in part interpret. It is a genuine revolution, transforming men and institutions, continually extended and deepened by the actions of millions, continually and variously opposed by explicit reactions and the pressure of having forms and ideas. Yet it is a difficult revolution to define, and its uneven action is taking place over so long a period that it is almost impossible not to get lost in its exceptionally complicated process. It is a threefold revolution that includes a democratic revolution, an industrial

revolution, and a cultural revolution. The last, which embraces teaching and schooling (p. x).

### Present Challenges to the Principalship

Introduction: The exceptionally complicated process of the long revolution is not lost on the schools nor on the principal's role in particular. The records of the general attitude and behavioral shifts that have taken place with the definition of the principalship are there amidst stories of individual school principals, who, regardless of the constraints or the styles of the times, managed to give instructional and curricular leadership to the teaching and learning processes in their school. These leaders and their schools served as lighthouses for the current research. Put another way, the effective school leaders, who for decades knew what good schools were, are now serving as the challenge to emerging principalships.

From the Effective Schools Research: Challenges to the principalship have come from studies on effective schools done in the 1970's. Whenever the researchers looked into what made schools good schools, they repeatedly found incidences that pointed to the importance of strong instructional and curricular leadership. Edmonds (1979), reflecting on his findings, said that the principal was the key figure in determining the positive direction for a school's improvement in producing higher achievement among poor students. Those schools, he said, had leaders who showed strong instructional leadership, clearly defined goals, safe environments conducive to learning, high teacher expectations, and an emphasis in the basic skills (pp. 21-25).

Brookover's (1979) ethnographic study of two improving schools and two declining schools found in the improving schools an emphasis on strong leadership from the principal. In improving schools, the principal was more likely to be an academic leader, more assertive in a scholarship role, more of a disciplinarian, and more responsible for the achievement of basic school objectives (p. 25).

Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) found that while the eight principals of their study held idiosyncratic perspectives about their work, they were: (1) eager to make the school over in their own image; (2) proactive and quick to take the initiative and (3) resourceful (p. 176).

Challenges for strong leadership are pervasive and extend beyond the schoolhouse door. Peters and Austin (1985) found in their study of leaders that leadership traits called successful in good businesses were similar to leadership traits called successful in good schools. That the leadership traits of businessmen were appropriate for school leaders came as "a blinding flash of the obvious." Leaders in both organizations were functioning with visions and symbols of what their school or business should be; had techniques for staying in touch with the day-to-day activity of their organization and for staying "close to the customer" (the student); used styles that supported autonomy, experimentation, and failure; and held an intensity, enthusiasm and a passion for the organization they were leading (pp. 395-411).

From the Perspective of Teachers: Andrews (1987) found in the schools he called "high profile schools" teachers who perceived their principals to be strong instructional leaders, to have high expectations, to

monitor student progress frequently, to create positive learning climates and set clear goals (p. 10). Principals in these schools were visible in classrooms. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers in these schools wanted the principal in their classrooms. In fact they went to their principals when they had questions about instruction and curriculum (p. 13-15).

McPherson (1972) concluded her ethnographic study of a small town school faculty with thoughts of depression and encouragement, both of which pose a challenge to current school leaders.

As long as the goals of our educational system are unclearly defined, often internally inconsistent, as well as inconsistent with dominant and often themselves inconsistent values in our larger society, it is going to be hard to measure the influence of teacher morale and job satisfaction on producing positive or deleterious effects (p. 215).

But Mc Pherson goes on to note:

When I was most discouraged in contemplating what my colleagues and I were doing and failing to do as teachers for the children ... I would recall what one teacher said, "It is wonderful when everyone is working toward the same goal. You feel the group working in the same direction, everyone participating, they learning, and you learning, too. It doesn't happen every day, but it can, and it is exciting. It makes all the unpleasant parts of the job less important. Then it is worth it, being a teacher" (p. 215).

From the Principal's Perspective: Barth (1980) asserts that

people who want to influence what happens in schools are beginning to discover that one has to live under the roof of a school to have an influence on it. Those who are concerned about the quality of public education want to be close to it and to teachers. And it is

becoming evident that the principal is extraordinarily close to the educational epicenter. They see what principals have known all along--that it is not the critics or the central office people or the university people who really make schools what they are. It is whoever occupies the principal's office. Serving as a school principal is becoming recognized as a legitimate occupation for capable people (p. 216).

Barth (1980) goes on to state,

I have found an unmistakable correlation between the way a person works with faculty and the way teachers work with students ... the relation between principal and teacher seems crucial to the educational process (p. 215).

McCall (1986) writes that

being a principal hurts too much. The essence of the discipline of balancing is "giving up." It is very painful to give up parts of oneself, but every emotionally mature person arrived at that place precisely through a long series of "giving up" experiences ... personality traits, well-established patterns of behavior, ideologies, lifestyles, some dreams, and pet likes and dislikes ... Principals are called on to give up ... their fantasy of omnipotence ... the freedom to be carefree and footloose ... their desire to be loved by everyone at all times ... time with their families ... the agility of their youth ... and vacation time (pp. 72-73).

From the Perspective of the School Culture: Sergiovanni talks of school leadership as a cultural expression.

Recognizing that organizations often resemble multicultural societies and that subgroups must of necessity maintain individual and cherished identities, the domestication process seeks minimally to build a cultural federation of compatibility which provides enough common identity, for the organization to function in spirited concert (1984, p. 137).



Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) note that

the principalship is embedded within a school culture and that schools themselves are rooted in a larger historical and community context. While we suggest that effective principals often find themselves running "counter" to the existing culture (this after all is what fundamental change requires), internal constraints in terms of the ethos of teachers and external constraints in terms of the community context place limits on what is possible (p. 229).

Sergiovanni (1984) speaks of the cultural perspective of school leadership as the most recent view of leadership in a setting of the political view that dawned in the 1950's, the human view that dominated the 1930's and a scientific view in the early 1920's (p. 3). Underlying the cultural perspective is the concept of community and the importance of shared meanings and shared values (p. 8).

Barth (1980) said that

only recently have educational policy makers come to realize ... that the school principal has an extraordinary influence over the quality of education and the quality of life under the roof of the schoolhouse. The principal stands at the intersection, mediating between the resources of the school system and the needs of children. The principal influences and is influenced by all the participants of the educational enterprise. The school principal has the opportunity to make it work--or not" (p. xvi).

Barth goes on to say that principals matter a great deal more to the health of schools than people outside the schools realize. To change schools, we need to build grass roots coalitions among the three key groups of adults concerned with schools: teachers, parents, and principals. Principals need

to know school's relationship to society. Schools may be the last place in our society where people of different values, philosophies, backgrounds, races, and income levels are expected and compelled by law to work closely together for long periods of time (pp. xvi-xvii).

It is my firm belief that life within a public elementary school can reflect and celebrate the pluralism of our society and that schools can be productive, viable, and valuable. How the balance between diversity and uniformity is determined and by whom is as complex and important a process as public education itself (p. xvii).

Phillip Jackson (1986) wrote convincingly in his book on the Practice of Teaching that "these movements for change within our schools are not isolated phenomena." They are part of a major shift in thinking going on in the greater Western society; perhaps throughout the whole world (p. 108).

### Summary

"We are learning about what makes an effective leader" says the 1986 Governors' Report on Education (p. 52). Strong leaders create strong schools. Research and common sense suggest that administrators can do a great deal to advance school reform" (Clinton, p. 50).

Research in the 1980's acknowledged that strong curricular and instructional leadership make a positive difference in schools and that the traits of "good principals" can be described. But to use the principal as the scapegoat for the ills of the system, Sarason (1971) cautions, oversimplifies reality, however common the tendency may be to do so by those who seek to effect change. The job of principal is most complex (p. 150). During the

two decades following Sarason's observations, attention became focused on the role. Researchers began to define the role. Universities began developing training models for people going into those jobs. Understanding the role in a new conception is just beginning.

Reflecting on the thoughts of Thomas Kuhn, Brubaker and Simon said that "patterns of thinking are not static but are rather part of larger change and conservation processes." All patterns of thought produce anomalies to which one can ignore, challenge, set aside, or deny their existence. When "critical masses" of irregularities appear, new concepts are promoted, explored and adopted. During the "transition there is resistance to change, often in the form of a return to the basics. Out of all of this emerges the most acceptable new conception complete with its own potential anomalies" (pp. 3-4). Thus it seems to be with the emerging role of the elementary principalship.

## Chapter III

### ANALYSIS OF SIX CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRINCIPALS' WORK

#### The Participants

The purpose of this study was to investigate how six elementary principals interpreted their role as principal, focusing on curricular and instructional leadership. Other than the common attribute of having undergone inservice training for instructional supervision, the participant profile reveals diversity in areas of age, experience, education, sex and race.

Participant Profile: Table I gives an overview of each participant's attributes.

#### The Analysis

The interview data was analyzed for patterns of thought and behavior and idiosyncratic views. These in turn were discussed in the context of five assumptions about the role of the principal.

Table I  
Participant Profile

Name	Age	Sex/Race	Career	Years Per Position	Number of Systems Worked In	Degrees	Certification Area	Number of Weeks in Supervision Training
#1	37	M/W	Teacher Adm. Intern Principal	13 1 2	2	BA MEd.	Math/Sci. Sup/Adm.	2
#2	42	F/W	Teacher Supervisor Principal	9 8 4	2	BS MA Ed.D.(can.)	Elem. Early Child. Supervision Admin.	6
#3	45	M/W	Teacher Curr.Spec. Supervisor Principal	8 9 4 2	3	BA MEd. Ed.D.	Elem. Supervision Admin.	4
#4	38	F/W	Teacher Supervisor Principal	5 3 2	2	BA MA Ed.Spec.	Elem. Supervision Admin.	8
#5	52	F/W	Teacher Director Principal	15 4 11	2	BS MEd. Ed.Spec.	Elem. Supervision Admin.	12
#6	42	F/B	Teacher Supervisor Principal Supervisor	13 4 3 1	6	BS MA Ed.Spec. Ed.D.(can.)	Home Ec. Supervision Admin. Admin.	2

Assumption One: The principalship continues to search for a role definition. It is now evolving into an implementation of a curricular and instructional leadership role (Pierce, 1935; Wolcott, 1972; Brubaker and Simon, 1986).

The fact that the principalship continues to search for a role definition is borne out in this investigation and manifests itself in a number of areas.

#### CHOOSING THE PRINCIPALSHIP CAREER

Career Motivation: The first area concerns the motivation for choosing a principalship career by each of the five principals/participants. Not one of the participants entered the education profession intending to become a principal. One became tired of the classroom routine and wanted to try something else. While the principalship was not a life's goal, she had gotten to the point in her career where she was just burned out and wanted to do something else. Another said his desire all along had not been to get out of the classroom, but rather, he said candidly, "I needed a twelve-month job." There were times during his first year in the principalship that he wanted to be back in the classroom because he had enjoyed the classroom. He thought that enjoying the classroom made him a better principal. The backreader had seen herself as a career teacher, but her talents had been noticed by her supervisor. He identified for her what leadership involved when he said, "You would make a super administrator because you can accomplish things. You know how to get teachers to rally around to get the

job done, and that is what administration is all about." Four participants came to the principalship from central office supervisory positions. Two expressed frustration in their feelings of a lack of efficacy in the supervisory roles.

I felt neither fish nor fowl in the supervisor's role. I would work with teachers but when I left what happened depended upon who was principal of the school and not what could have happened. That left me feeling unsatisfied with the influence of my work.

Another participant spoke of having similar frustrations about some things happening in schools. As a supervisor she did not like the feeling of being unable to make the changes she thought were needed. Two others felt their view of the principalship was lopsided from the vantage point of their central office positions even though their work kept them in close touch with principals. One said, "A little voice in me kept saying, 'Do you really know what principals do and what they don't do?'" Both participants now feel that unless you have had the experience of being a principal and feel the many competing demands on that position, you cannot appreciate it fully. Three participants said while in supervisory work they missed the classroom and teaching and saw the principalship as a way to get back to the children.

The backreader, once a principal and now an elementary supervisor, believed that having the principalship experience has given her a perspective on what principals need from supervisors. The supervisory work is a behind-the-scenes job, and "I know now the things to do that will

make an impact on the curriculum. I know now what will help the principals in their instructional role."

Mentors: All participants responded, without hesitation, when asked who first mentioned their becoming a principal. Four people were named: two former principals and two current superintendents. One participant said that her superintendent believed principals of schools needed to be curriculum people.

When asked who were their mentors, one of this study's participants was mentioned by three people. Several participants had done internships with her and had seen the things she did in her school. She had been someone aspiring principals could talk to. Other people named a superintendent, a university professor, and a designated mentor through the Springfield Development Project (1978-88). One participant spoke of her mentor, the superintendent, as a person with whom she could discuss things. He had had the patience to answer questions and to help her work through a lot of her ideas and philosophies. She had learned from him.

Modeling: The idea of modeling brought both positive and negative examples from the participants. While most participants mentioned specific principals whose school leadership they admired, one said that she wasn't like any of the principals she ever worked under because they had not been strong role models. Then she said, "On second thought, maybe they were because I saw some things that I thought should have been done differently." The backreader noted a non-academic but strong leadership trait, which she admired in a former principal and in her current superintendent: both



leaders dressed in a business-like manner. "That gave the school a pleasant and professional atmosphere," she added.

Women's Careers in the Principalship: The issue of women in the principalship, while not a major question in this study, was investigated because of the critical issues raised about women principals in the review of literature. While there were no controls to insure sexual balance, the participant group itself included three women and two men. The backreader was female. In the responses to the interview questions about mentors and models, a balance of men and women were named.

Specific responses to the question, "What is the place of women in the principalship?" ranged from how the principalship affected them as women to generalizations about women's leadership skills and commitment issues. Two participants spoke in a personal way of the dilemma and guilt they felt as women trying to balance a profession and a family. One said,

The most painful part of the job is the time that it has taken away from my family. I have been so involved. My family has been understanding and supportive, but I think I'll look back someday and say I gave up too much time for my teachers and that's something I can't get back.

A second participant spoke in a similar way when she talked about the difficulty in balancing her many demands as a working mother. She regretted that the person who came out on the short end of her time was herself. Her children were a priority not to be left out simply because she had chosen a career. A male participant, too, expressed similar concerns over the great amount of time the job was taking away from his time with

the family. Another spoke of the added loneliness of the job when you are a single parent.

One principal/participant talked of the reaction of her teachers to her, their first female principal. They told her a male principal was easier to work for. In another situation the teachers said to their first female principal, "It is a different experience working for a female." One participant understood the teachers' feelings and gave the explanation that many teachers had come not to expect their principals to be involved in the classrooms. In the past many of the elementary principals were male and had never taught in elementary school so the teachers did not lean on them for instructional support. Rather, "they looked to them as the boss and as the person who made all the decisions."

Two other participants treated the women's question almost as if there were no issue involved. One said, "I followed a woman principal" and the other noted that the High Point schools were good examples of places where women were in all levels of the principalship except at the high school and that a woman was an assistant superintendent. He noted further that the City of High Point had a woman mayor (Judy Mendenhall, 1985 to 1987) and that the Guilford County Commissioners were led by a woman (Dorothy Kearns, 1985 to present). "I don't think about sex when I think about the principalship," he said, "I think about the job." Another participant included a reflection on his own experience.

I have worked for four principals. A male and a female principal were excellent. They had a sense of openness and involvement in their relationships with their faculties. I have had two other male principals who were more concerned with the

administrivia kinds of things than with actually being able to get into the classroom or helping with the instructional part of the school. I had the feeling it was just a job to them. They seemed preoccupied with the details of attendance or of the bus routes. We (teachers) felt there was no leadership in the building. The quality of the existence in the building didn't seem to matter.

The woman principal I had was, in my perception, more on top of the instructional program. She had a sense of drive I did not experience with the male principals. In terms of professionalism, she was more professional as exemplified by patience, involvement of the faculty in making decisions, in valuing the importance of relationships among the faculty and in her skills for coaching. I remember her as a coaching person. When you needed help, she was there to give you some ideas, not to tell you exactly what would work, but to give you some possibilities to weigh and consider. She was an advocate for you.

## HOW PRINCIPALS SPEND TIME

A major area of discussion involved how the principals/ participants spent their days, how they set priorities and how they felt about what they did. There was a striking similarity in how these participants spent their time during a school day. Schedules varied, depending upon the administrative style of the participant or the kind of interruptions indigenous to each school.

The Daily Schedule: Each participant's day began around 7:00 or 7:30 a. m. and ended at 5:30 or 6:00 p. m. This ten to eleven hour day was supplemented by evening and weekend paper work and planning. Each participant expressed the need to find time during the day to do paper work, writing, reading or just plain thinking. They spoke of constantly looking for ways to become more efficient, more organized and more disciplined so that the workday could be shortened. Two had scheduled times during the

day for writing and thinking and had found out-of-the-way conference rooms in which to do it. Another principal closed the door to eat lunch alone. It was a time to reflect. The backreader spoke of eating alone being a point of conflict in her school. Teachers had wanted her to come eat with them in the cafeteria and had pressured her to do so. Further investigation of their motivation found that the former principal had always eaten with a certain group of teachers. Having his ear during this time led the teachers to believe they could influence the principal's decisions.

Two participants began their days before 7:00 a. m. thus taking thirty minutes or so before teachers arrived to plan, write memos or review their calendars for the day. All participants used the late afternoons, after the students and teachers left, to go over the mail, return calls, do correspondence and think. One noted this was the only time he could work with the school secretary. Another said that between 5:00 and 6:00 she went over what had happened during that day or "Sometimes," she said, "I just sit and reflect."

Walking the Halls: A consistent behavior of all the principals/participants happened each day when the teachers and students began to arrive. Each participant described doing a monitoring-type activity. One called it "welcoming the buses," another called it "bus duty," another, "morning supervision," and yet another referred to it as "circulating the building." Regardless of what the activity was called, all the participants did it and were consistently clear about the purpose for the activity. All spoke of the need to greet the students as they arrived each morning by bus, car, or bike. They wanted to get a feel for the type of

morning the students had had before coming to school. Many of the students brought with them problems from home or from the school bus. Morning monitoring gave principals a chance to diffuse these problems before the students took them into the classrooms. Most problems, each participant felt, could be solved "right then." Two participants talked about getting personal gratification from greeting the students at the beginning of each day. One said, "Greeting the students gives me a very good beginning each day. Youngsters come to the school day with a lot of enthusiasm. That is contagious."

Further, two participants talked of liking time with the students; of liking to see them as they came in; of liking the moments for talking with them and of hearing their stories. One spoke of the many times that her days turned into negatives and if she didn't have that nice positive time in the morning, she missed it.

Each principal repeated this monitoring behavior at lunchtime. They said this was another opportunity to be with the students and help with the supervision. They found it an excellent way to get to know the students and to get to know what's going on. Whether the participants went to the cafeteria daily, sporadically or on designated days, together they were all consistent and clear about their purpose for the activity.

Classroom Observations: Each participant took time to carry out the state-mandated system of teacher appraisal. While they felt the weight of a schedule that included three observations with three post conferences per teacher, they were, nonetheless, committed to the process. Participants saw the three observations as a chance to get to know and influence what was

happening instructionally in their schools. Most participants said they spent from 8:15 to 11:00 each morning in the classrooms and again after lunch each afternoon. One used the afternoons to do what he called mini observations. He popped in and popped out of the classrooms. Another went to the classrooms in the afternoon when there was a specific lesson she wanted to see.

Working with Teachers: Two participants expressed feelings of conflict or guilt at not being available at all times for the teachers or the students. However, while availability was important, one participant felt she must guard against the time being abused saying that "being available can waste time." However, she felt she could close her door when she was writing classroom observations and feel okay. Being available or having an open-door policy oftentimes was interpreted as an invitation from the principal to talk. "That became a problem," the backreader noted, "when teachers wanted to chat about personal matters. I found myself becoming a counselor until I learned how to let them know politely it was time to end the conversation."

Working with Parents: Each participant took time to meet with parents. In one school the principal worked with a very active PTA group that was preparing for a school fund drive. Conversely, in another school, the principal ran the fund drive activity herself because the PTA membership there was small and too inexperienced to lead this kind of activity. In one school the principal held many impromptu parent conferences on their children's academic progress or behavior. Parents did not make appointments in this school but came in as they had time between

their work shifts. In another school, the principal talked with many parents on the pros and cons of public versus private education.

Time for these activities, regardless of the thrust, was taken during the same morning or afternoon time each participant spoke of wanting to be in classrooms observing or working with students.

Competition for time use: While all participants said their goal was to be in classrooms, they consistently described activities that threatened that goal. Many mornings, planned for classroom observations, were interrupted by what had happened the day before, or a few minutes before. One participant spoke of trying to be organized but found each day not organized at all. Her agenda seemed planned by everyone else. She said,

There's no way to know when I come in the morning what my day is going to look like. Invariably except for a few scheduled conferences, my mornings are open. No one would believe what has taken place by 6:00 when I go home.

Another spoke of having no specific plan for the day after 8:15 a. m. By mid-October he found that his time had been taken up by many things other than going into the classrooms. Only after he blocked off his calendar for classroom visits did his time in classrooms increase. One participant had had to work through administrative time users and had made some strong decisions. Two spoke of holding the observations and teacher conferences sacred. If observations are written on the calendar, "then nothing short of a real disaster interrupts that." One observed that by making classroom observations and teacher conferences a priority, the number of petty discipline problems sent to the office diminished. One

participant talked about how easily one's day could become consumed by handling student discipline, attendance problems, the budget and building maintenance functions. He acknowledged that while it was difficult to dismiss those activities, it was necessary to do so in order to balance the day with instructional leadership work. When he found his day unbalanced, he would decide simply not to let that happen again for the rest of the week. He would concentrate, instead, on instruction. "There have been days," he said, "when I left school totally exhausted because I had dealt with so many gripes and complaints."

When asked specifically what were the time users or the blocks to their working on curricular or instructional leadership activities, the participants listed a range of activities: checking roof leaks and other building maintenance concerns; meeting with PTA committees and organizing PTA fund drives; checking children for head lice and checking the immunization records (one principal spent fifty hours on the immunization process); counseling student discipline problems; working with the buses: reorganizing routes, helping drivers work with the discipline, or following through on a discipline problem; going through the mail and making decisions about each piece of paper; doing central office reports; thinking through and organizing the cafeteria lunch money system and then doing it again when the regulations were revised; following through on communications and requests from the teachers; overseeing the proper procedures for dealing with an injured child; talking with parents about their children whose problems stemmed from the neighborhood or the bus stop; dealing with families who were experiencing pathology as



abuse, alcoholism, murder and mental illness; planning faculty meetings and in-service training and talking or conferring with individual staff members about personal issues apart from the instructional process.

All agreed that this extensive range of activities, skills and control was the job of the elementary principal and one that took each of them from sixty to seventy hours weekly to do. Therefore, given their conviction that the principal's job was to be primarily one of instructional leadership, how they spent their time in the job was of major concern to them. They struggled daily to protect time for working in the classrooms, because instructional leadership and the subsequent activities that developed the role were a primary goal for each participant. All participants and the backreader repeatedly expressed concern about being the only administrator in their elementary schools to handle the growing demands on their time and their schools. Two spoke of the professional loneliness of the job. There was no one with whom to talk over ideas or to share the load of details.

## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Preconceived Perceptions: Discussion of the preconceived perceptions of the participants supported the notion that the role of the principal is evolving. Each participant was surprised at the complexity of the job. None had been prepared for the role as they found it.

One participant said she was doing a lot more than she thought she'd be doing. Another spoke of not anticipating all the things that go with administration, such as the extensive detail it takes to make sure everybody

knows everything they need to know to do their jobs. Yet another said she found the elementary principalship extremely demanding with requests coming all the time from parents, PTA, central office, teachers and the youngsters themselves. "I find it amazing when I stop to realize how many different areas I'm tugged at during the day." Another participant expressed surprise over the kinds of people skills she has had to use. One surprise came in the way she needed to work with the non-professional people on her staff. She acted as family to her custodian when his wife died. She helped him pick out the most economical funeral and advised him on the way things were done. That kind of task is not in a job description; but she said, "Because we are in the people business, we do those things. We may be the most significant person in their lives." Another surprise came with the supervision required in helping teachers work with other adults, namely their teacher assistants. But participants found that even though teachers had long wanted classroom assistance, they had not been trained to supervise adults who work for them.

Yet another participant said he had not had an accurate picture of the magnitude of what was involved in running a school. He spoke of the constant barrage of questions that require decisions and linked to that the realization that all decisions are directly related to people's value systems--his and others. Some decisions he found simple and could be made quickly and directly. Other decisions he found needed to use the longer process that involved the people directly affected. Knowing when to make which decision was, perhaps, the most important decision of all. He was surprised that some decisions, while seeming minor in scope, needed to take a lot of

time and involvement. For example, he had made an administrative decision that he hoped would lessen the confusion in the office. It included asking teachers to use a second door when entering the office, leaving the first door to be used by parents and visitors who needed immediate attention from the secretary. That decision caused a great amount of tension within the faculty. Upon digging into the matter, he discovered a perception that the change had implied to the teachers second-class citizenship, likened to going to the back of the bus.

No participant was prepared for the time it took to bring about change. Several mentioned being frustrated by how much they wanted to do and how long it took to do it. There was just so much time during the year. The backreader spoke of wanting to make changes in the school faster, but knew that if her ideas did not go through the faculty, they would not be successfully implemented.

Other surprises came with the realization of how much work needed to be done in the area of building teacher self- image.

I was surprised how much the teachers' mental health affected the climate of the school. The way they perceive themselves and the students is linked directly to the way they teach and that translates into student performance.

It took an enormous amount of time to help a troubled teacher work through some things, and this participant spoke of the need for more training to deal with this kind of problem. Yet another surprise came in finding the great amount of group skill training faculty members need on how to discuss all sides of an issue and how to make group decisions.

While the instructional leadership activities to be done had not come as a surprise, one participant observed that the instructional role for the principalship has not been articulated clearly or extensively enough. He observed that "instructional leadership means that you spend your time doing instructional things." He elaborated further noting that in addition to the daily observations and work in the classrooms, the instructional principal helps the faculty make the critical decisions about choosing the right textbooks; helps them understand all that's involved in curriculum; guides them in their continual search for instructional ways to help all students be successful learners; and helps them assess their professional effectiveness with students, parents, and colleagues. These areas are not left to chance decisions or to the concept that teachers' years of experience will guide them to the best decision for the most people. The instructional principal stays on top of the program by developing monitoring and reporting systems to keep everyone focused on the school's instructional mission. "This kind of leadership," he said, "is more comprehensive work than it seems on the surface."

Administrating with an Instructional Focus: Another area that spoke to evolving instructional leadership concerned the participants' rationale for their organizational patterns.

While these participants' administrative activities were not unlike any school administrator's, each participant spoke to the belief that their job was to do all the things they could so that "the teacher can get in the classroom, concentrate on the job of teaching and enjoy it." To that end, two participants acknowledged that they had carried out that belief to their own

detriment. One participant, whose ideal it was to do all those things considered "outside the classroom" for the teachers so they could make their first priority the children, found by midyear that he could not continue. So gradually he began to find other ways and other people to help. Another participant acknowledged that the thing she did least well was to delegate and she was working on that. However, her strong belief that teachers needed every minute possible for planning instruction and working in classrooms complicated her chances for improving that leadership trait. A new principal who wanted to establish different norms and set different precedents also found it difficult to delegate authority. The backreader spoke of needing to make sure her programs were carried out in the manner she believed appropriate. Until she had retrained the personnel to do that, she found herself delegating very little.

Each participant spoke of working long and hard on developing daily schedules that would preserve instructional time. Some had devised schedules for the curriculum specialists' time so that classroom teachers had longer blocks of teaching time. Another had designated certain times during the week for speakers, informal activities and assemblies.

Pull-out programs for the remedial, learning disabled or academically gifted students continued to be a problem, for they diffused the continuity of uninterrupted learning time for the designated students. Potential solutions for this scheduling problem were under continued study.

Protecting the instructional time took much planning. Each participant spoke of devising systems whereby reports could be completed with a minimum of paperwork required of teachers. Many principals were

computerizing attendance reports, streamlining the textbook inventory and record-keeping system, and eliminating lunch money collection from classroom time.

Another area of streamlining came with faculty meetings. Two principals had worked with their faculties to make sure the meeting agenda included instructional substance as well as some of their issues. The frequency and duration of the meetings was an issue with two faculties.

Implementing Instructional Leadership: It is in the area of instructional leadership activities that the participants presented the most definitive interpretations for the changing principalship roles. One participant noted that instructional leadership is more comprehensive than it seems on the surface. Each participant spoke of organizing the school setting so that student learning was the primary focus. This meant there were continual formal and informal discussions on how to help students be successful. The curriculum was defined to include the formal academic learning and the informal social and emotional development of the students. Lastly, the governance activities were designed so that teachers were involved in decisions pertaining to the school that they became empowered and involved with a greater commitment for keeping the school's focus on teaching and learning.

(1). **Focusing on Children**: When asked how they helped teachers stay focused on student learning, four participants responded without hesitation, "Modeling." "It's amazing how powerful modeling is," one said. She spoke of how modeling different methods for disciplining students had

all but eliminated the yelling and paddling of students that went on when she first came to the school.

Another participant said that he let teachers know during conferences about his philosophy that schools were to focus on making children successful learners.

(2). Improving Instruction: Each participant used the state-mandated observation process to help teachers improve, supplementing the process with the skills gained from their in-service training with the Madeline Hunter model. The key to improving the instructional process came in the conference between the principal and the teacher and the subsequent follow-up plans.

The observation process was at first very threatening to teachers. Many participants spoke of tension on the faculty when observation times came, particularly during the first years of the process or when there was a new principal. Central office supervisors or board of education members often were called during observation times to be told of "morale problems" at the school. The backreader remembered one teacher saying, "I didn't like your coming into my class because you were always writing that stuff down." Later, when she found out the "written stuff" was affirming and helpful, she became one of the strongest advocates of the process.

During a post-observation conference, one participant spoke of having the teacher identify what she considered the lesson's strengths. He had her describe the entire lesson from her point of view, from the difficulties in putting it together to the response of the students to the lesson. Then the principal gave his views. Together they listed the strengths. The

teacher then selected the area she needed to work on; the principal confirmed her needs and added to the list. Together they made a plan to address those needs that would be worked on for the remainder of the year.

Conferring with teachers about instructional improvements, three participants cautioned, was better if the teachers felt you understood their situation and empathized with why it was happening. One participant said, "I try to direct the conversation so that they come up with the idea. If they see that something is not working, then it makes my job easier." The backreader spoke of working with an experienced teacher who had always perceived herself as being a good teacher but said, "You have helped me understand why I am a good teacher."

(3). Governance: Another participant reflected on the history of the elementary school organization when typically the teacher had very little opportunity or expectation to interact with other adults. In many cases that meant the teachers' only interaction experiences were confined to a certain age group or developmental level. The risk then was, to both faculty members and the principal, that their interactions with adults took on the characteristics of the age level of students with whom they worked. Another point in the history of elementary organizations involves the governance of the school and the classroom. If the school and the classrooms are dictatorial, the risk then followed that the students, teachers and principal working there might begin to perceive the world in that framework. The backreader added observations of teachers doing things themselves for which they would punish children. Blowing bubblegum and



talking during faculty meetings would have been unacceptable behavior of children in their classrooms.

Comprehensive Leadership: Observing direct teaching was only a part of supervising the instructional process, one participant noted, adding that he looked at the lesson plans to see if they were complimentary to the North Carolina Teacher Handbook (Basic Education Plan, 1985); looked at the needs of students to see if there were provisions made for the students' learning differences; looked at the classroom atmosphere to see if there was a good relationship between the teacher and students; and looked to see if there was a sense of mutual support and classroom community. "Improving the teaching and learning of students is what principals are accountable for," he said, "and that takes the complex process of developing an atmosphere in the schools in which all the students and teachers there are learning." He listed three issues that needed to be addressed if the instructional environment of schools is going to be improved. Those are the issues of relationships, of governance and of curriculum and instruction. As an instructional leader, I am "constantly thinking about those issues, planning in-service training to address them and thinking of ways to blend them together."

## EVOLUTION OF THE ROLE

Another area that added perspective to the evolving role of the principal came from the participants' memories of principals from their pasts. While all participants described their own work as being focused on curricular and instructional leadership, only three described their work as

more focused in this area than those of principals past. The principalship has always been concerned with the learning of the students, they said, but the role was changing. "The role is growing." The things that a principal needs to know about and be involved in are growing. "It's almost growing to the point where I think I can't do the job adequately because of the many little things I have to do." One mentioned worry over not having time to read all that she needed in order to keep herself knowledgeable and current. The backreader reflected that a few years ago, the principal needed only to administer the resources. Now curricular and instructional components have been added, but administration has not been dropped. She believed that principals had to be competent in both areas. Another participant expressed the same concern in different words: "With all the things that are required, a principal cannot give proper leadership to the development of curriculum and instruction." She further expressed both joy and caution in the proposed plan to put assistant principals in elementary schools. The joy comes in the advent of help to do the myriad of jobs, and the caution comes in giving an assistant principal responsibility for the curriculum and instruction. She feared "that action may change the focus of the school again, away from instruction being the most important function."

Three participants saw the job as significantly different from how they perceived it as teachers, one saying that she saw tremendous changes in the role.

As I look back on the principals I had as a classroom teacher, I remembered them as nice, gentle men, but they were not instructional leaders. I got very little feedback from them about my

teaching. I think I was probably a strong teacher although I just sort of slid by and never really had an opportunity to grow.

She speculated that her principals had seemed to handle stress better than she was doing, but then noted that probably they didn't have as much stress to handle. "They simply did not take on some things," she remembered. They were not concerned about the instructional program nor were they concerned about having teachers become involved with decisions. They did not make classroom observations or have conferences with teachers about instruction and curriculum. Despite the stress the instructional component places on the job, she remained committed to that leadership role saying, "I cannot remain a principal unless I am the instructional leader. I believe what I do has an enormous impact here every day."

Another participant saw the role as being more of an instructional leader than it once was. She recalled that she never remembered being evaluated or if she were, she never knew her status. Secondly, she noted that the role of the principal has changed because we now know more. While the teaching/learning process is the same, we now know much more about the process of teaching and learning from research. At one point the job was more administrative, that is doing the paperwork and taking care of the discipline. Now she saw much more diversity and complexity in what principals do.

All participants spoke of knowing they made a difference in their schools and of not realizing how really significant their role was. One said, "The principal makes a difference in the building, and I believe they need to

be accountable for that. It is a heavy burden, but I believe the principal is responsible."

Assumption Two: Teachers are in conflict over the role of the principal, but where they have positive perceptions of their workplace and their role in it, they are productive (Mc Pherson, 1972; Andrews, 1987).

The participants of this investigation gave their perceptions of the phenomenon of teachers' conflict over the role of the principal. They discussed how they worked with the issue of governance and authority within their faculties to influence teachers' perceptions of the principal's role and of the workplace.

## TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL'S WORK

Of Their Daily Work: This year a couple of teachers were working in the office of one of the principal participants. They had some time to help because they had practice teachers. While there, they saw angry parents come in. They saw the principal confer with many of their colleagues. They saw the paperwork going in and out. They assisted in doing research for each of those papers. They saw that the office was driven by problems rather than by a plan. Later they commented to the principal that they had had no realization of all that she did in a day. This principal participant hoped those teachers would be ambassadors for the work of a principal to the rest of the faculty. The backreader commented on her own perceptions of what her principal did, noting that they weren't

very favorable. She said at one point she thought, "Didn't he have anything better to do than to walk the halls?" She had no concept of the hours of work it took to make sure the textbook orders were correct, to make sure the scheduling was efficient, and to organize activities so they moved easily. She said, "I took all that for granted. Maybe if my principal had taken time to tell us what he did, I might have been empathetic earlier."

The other participants believed, too, that teachers were not aware of all that goes on in the administrative office to make their days run smoothly and to give them the optimum time to teach. A classroom tends to give teachers a myopic perspective, so they do not see the big picture. They tend to think of themselves as a single entity. They do not hold the concept that they are but one piece in a long continuum for the student. Teachers see the single piece. The principal sees the whole continuum. One participant, recalling his days as a teacher, said that he remembered believing what he did and wanted was the most important thing and that he did not stop to think that there were thirty or forty other teachers who had important things, too. One participant questioned how much teachers really needed to be aware of all a principal does. "When a teacher tells me, "I'm glad you're here," I believe she knows to some degree what I do and that I am working to keep things going on so that she and others can teach more effectively. Most participants commented that they believed that teachers knew what was involved in the classroom observation and conferences because they were part of that, but that they had no concept of the behind-the-scenes work of planning, of working with parents, of keeping records or of completing the paper work that goes with disciplining.

Of the Teacher-Principal Relationship: Some participants perceived that their teachers wanted them to be there to do things for them and to take care of them. Changing principal roles from one that follows a paternalistic pattern to one that follows an instructional leadership pattern, created a point of conflict with the teachers who had experienced the former kind of principalship role. The backreader commented on the growing pains that occurred when the principal held teachers accountable for their actions and did not smooth things over or cover for them. Teachers who had experienced the paternalistic principalship roles were slow to understand or accept the idea that the curricular and instructional principal was to involve them in instructional decisions, was going to be in their classrooms, was going to give ideas and suggestions and was going to urge them continually to seek ways to help all students learn.

A big area of conflict came in the expectations teachers often hold for how the principal should handle student discipline. Most teachers, the participants believed, wanted the principal to punish students sent from their classrooms, regardless of the offense or the reason behind the offense. One participant said she had been told, "I'm not sending students down to your office so you can pet them!" One participant speculated that the change in the interpretation of the role of principal produced conflict in this area. The paternalistic principal, on one hand, took care of the discipline for the teachers. It was visible. Teachers designed it to involve fear and the paternal principal fulfilled that image. The participants, on the other hand, more often saw discipline as another area of instruction. The backreader said, "If I could get the students to understand why what they did was

wrong, then they had a better chance of correcting the behavior." Several participants mentioned seeing discipline as a misfire of the instructional plan, or disorganization and poor planning on the part of the teacher. These more instructional, less punitive views, one participant believed, have not been internalized by most of the teachers. Because discipline represents another area of change in how things are done under a curricular and instructional leadership style, it is important one participant said, "for the teachers to know up front what your beliefs and expectations are." Several said they have had to use the statement, "Teachers, when you bring a student to me for discipline, you are implying that you can not handle this problem. Therefore, you must leave the child with me and accept what I do."

Effects of Autonomy: One participant talked about what happens to teachers who have worked for several years without instructional support or those who have had no expectation for working as a faculty team.

Another spoke about the problems that arose when a teacher became entrenched in doing something one way, and began to look toward expedient solutions rather than child-centered solutions; or the lack of self-confidence that developed when a teacher had not changed any part of his or her job in several years.

Yet another spoke of teachers who felt like failures when something did not work. Instead of learning from the failure and moving on, they became defensive and generalized with the statement, "It just won't work with these kids."

The backreader spoke of working hard to encourage teachers to take risks and teach students using different methods.

Implementing Change: In bringing about change in teachers' negative or rigid behavior, four principal participants used a joint decision-making model for identifying problems and working out solutions. Teachers developed "We Agree" statements about the issues. From the statements, the principals drew up the schools' yearly goals and objectives. One participant had each teacher sign the "We Agree" statements as a symbol of their taking ownership.

Our statements work because we all work at it or it fails if any one or more of us decides we don't want to make it work. It's not just my (principal) commitment, but the teachers have a commitment, too. Then as the year progresses and something comes up that needs to be addressed, I bring it to the faculty. It may be that a decision the whole group made is not working. They, along with me, take the responsibility for what happens. If I see a problem creeping in, then I gently remind them of "Our Agree" statements.

Developing a Sense of Efficacy: One participant spoke of the sense of potency his faculty had after they participated in joint decision-making activities. They felt able to solve problems that heretofore they had believed were "just the way it had to be." He said they began to have a sense of feeling capable of making changes in the instructional program and in the curriculum, of initiating changes within the governance of the staff and in the quality of their relationships with their colleagues. "Involving teachers in problem solving is at once very healthy and very professional. It is how you maintain the vitality of your staff."

One participant believed that while teachers did not need to run the school, they did need to feel ownership and to be a part of the decision-



making process. When staff members see that their ideas are used, they know someone is listening to them and they are valued. The backreader added that teachers had to learn skills for thinking about problem solving; for identifying the problem; for looking at alternatives; for evaluating possibilities; for prioritizing; and for working within a consensus decision. When teachers don't have these skills, she found they worked from a framework of power and personality. "In some cases when I didn't use their exact ideas, they were upset and thought I wasn't listening to them." In a joint decision-making process, changes came to schools more smoothly, albeit more slowly. Several participants expressed frustration over the slowness. One participant expressed the belief that it took from five to seven years to make changes in a school. A principal has to build credibility and be known before he or she can make significant changes.

Assumption Three: Curriculum is what each person experiences in the learning settings, and the principal is the leader in that interpretation (Brubaker and Simon, 1986).

The participants of this investigation described the phenomena of what makes up the curriculum and how the principal influences that interpretation in a number of ways.

One principal/participant said, "The quality of living in the school building is where it's at--for the students, the teachers, and for me." The quality of life in a school, he went on to say, promotes the ultimate mission of schooling, and that quality is proportional to how much people in the school care for each other. The quality is perceived by the students when

they see teachers show warmth and caring. The participants spoke of "children learning what they see." If children do not see teachers respecting students or being kind to custodians and to other people, then they learn that that is the way you treat people. One participant went on to talk about children learning from the subtle but strong messages that come from the teachers' attitudes toward racial issues, patriotic things, the country, the government, the city leaders and the school administrators. The backreader commented, "Teachers forget, or perhaps they never really knew, what a powerful role model they are to children."

Two participants emphasized the importance of teachers' knowledge about the students and their development, their learning rates and styles. One said, "It's easy to see the sequence in reading and math, but it's equally important to recognize the sequential stages of children's character development." Too often she said she found that teachers tended to skip those steps and expect children to be at a point socially and emotionally for which they had not had a foundation.

Two principals saw the curriculum as both formal and informal. The formal curriculum is made up of academics. "It has to be in place because that is our foremost mission," one participant said, and "it is the principal's job to make sure those academics are being addressed." She continued that the curriculum must be broad-based to include activities for building character, getting along with others, accepting self and others, and accepting responsibility. Schooling, one participant said, can not divorce children from the total environment, so the curriculum has to address that if your school is to reach its goals. It follows, then, that the informal

curriculum involves all areas of the school experience: the way the school is organized, the way extra activities are supervised, the way students are treated, the way adults work with each other; and the way relationships and governance are handled within the classrooms.

Assumption Four: Successful principals function with a vision of what their school should be (Greenfield, 1986; Peters and Austin, 1985).

Each of the participants spoke of their visions for their schools. Their visions ranged from the more global thoughts of having school be a place that every child feels good about, to very specific plans for the ensuing years. The participants conveyed their visions through conversations, discussions, planning groups, shared professional articles and modeling. One participant interviewed prospective teachers with an eye on her vision for her school. Two participants spoke of having their faculties work on beliefs (their visions) and the consequent activities to carry out their visions. One participant spoke of staying in her school until she saw "excellent instruction going on in every classroom all day long." She said that her vision for the school was that it should be a place where each child could spend nine months that were not wasted or destructive. Her vision included goals for her teachers. They all would be able to work from the principles of teaching and learning, and that information was to become such a part of their knowledge base that all decisions would be based on some framework of research. She wanted to see students become more productive in their learning. She wanted to see fewer referrals for

special placement. She wanted to see a community of people--teachers and children alike--who really cared about each other.

Assumption Five: The school principalship is one of power and influence (Barth, 1986; Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986).

None of the participants were comfortable with saying they felt powerful in the position of principal. Instead, they said they felt awed by the position, by the responsibility and by the amount of influence they found they had.

One said, "It is sometimes scary to know that people will do and follow that which you endorse." Another said she felt powerful with what she could do to affect the life of a child. She went on to comment that in order to have the power to influence people, you had to earn people's respect and then they would give you the power. Power had to be handled very carefully, she said. "The important thing is not so much the power of the position but rather how the power of the position is used."

All principals expressed feelings of worthiness in their positions. One said, "Even though I go home some evenings wondering if I'll have the energy to go back, I wake up the next morning ready to go again." She went on to speculate that her energy came because she perceived herself as making a difference in her school. Two participants who had felt frustrated with supervisory work now felt more in control over the direction of their school and the changes they had been able to make. One said, "If you are patient and keep plugging at your goals, you will see the changes in the school you want. I am confident of that."

## In Conclusion

The principals of this study presented candid descriptions of their daily work lives as curricular and instructional leaders. While they differed in leadership style, they were alike in their purpose for being a principal. They functioned skillfully in multiple facets of leadership that included classroom instructional supervision, group processes for decision making, community action strategies, administrating, and facilitating groups to reach goals. A look at their vitae reveals extensive training and varied experience with curricular and instructional activities. They functioned as the professionals of their work!

A second attribute became evident during the interview process. The principals/participants held strong personal commitments for their work. When one spoke of a vision for the school, tears came to his eyes. Two others spoke of the energy that came from their feelings of efficacy. Each one had feelings of awe for the influence of the position.

The data of this investigation has described the role of the curricular and instructional principal. In the final chapter, the data will be summarized into twenty-nine themes, grouped by assumptions. The themes will extend current research by elaborating on what a principal does when he or she is a curricular and instructional principal.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

#### Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate the curricular and instructional leadership of elementary principals. More specifically, the purpose was to look at the work lives of six elementary principals and to describe the activities they carried out for curricular and instructional leadership.

The study was based on interviews held with five principals and one backreader. The interview questions focused on areas of (1) curricular and instructional leadership, (2) evolution in the principalship role, (3) conflict around the role, (4) definition of the curriculum, and (5) power and influence.

The study centered on five assumptions:

Assumption One: The principalship role continues to search for definition, now evolving into a greater implementation of a curricular and instructional leadership role. (Pierce, 1935; Wolcott, 1973; Brubaker and Simon, 1986).

Assumption Two: Teachers are in conflict with the curricular and instructional leadership role of the principal; however, where they

have a positive perception of their workplace, they are more productive (Mc Pherson, 1972; Andrews, 1987).

Assumption Three: Curriculum is what each person experiences in the learning setting, and the principal is the leader of that interpretation (Brubaker and Simon, 1986).

Assumption Four: Successful principals function with a vision of what their school should be (Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986; Peters and Austin, 1985);

Assumption Five: The school principal position is one of power and influence (Barth, 1986; Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986).

The six principals/participants were selected because of their known commitment to curricular and instructional leadership and because they had all undergone the same extensive in-service training.

As the interviews progressed, common themes began to emerge. These themes carried striking similarities in the way the six participants viewed the role and implemented curricular and instructional leadership. Yet there were specific activities that varied with each participant's administrative style and his or her unique school community. The themes illustrated how principals can develop the curricular and instructional leadership role. Further they helped clarify the definition of the role. The investigator grouped these common themes and unique activities around the five assumptions, which served as check points for the analysis. Summaries of the findings are as follows.

Assumption One: The themes that defined and described the elementary principal as a curricular and instructional leader present a composite portrait of a principal who:

- is committed philosophically to a curricular and instructional interpretation of the work;
- perceives that the principalship is changing to one of more curricular and instructional leadership; understands the conflict that accompanies change and knows how to manage that conflict;
- has had extensive classroom teaching experience;
- uses skills from instructional supervision to increase the effectiveness of the teaching process;
- demonstrates competence for using a performance appraisal process to bring about improved teaching practices;
- identifies barriers and enhancers to the role of curricular and instructional leadership;
- persists in managing the barriers and protecting the time for curricular and instructional practices; and
- believes he or she must be leaders for change--not managers of the status quo.

In addition, the portrait of the curricular and instructional principal includes themes about the central office administration that seem like "rediscovering the obvious." They are:



- commitments from the superintendent and his staff to recruit people into the principalship who are committed to working as curricular and instructional leaders;
- commitments from the superintendent and his staff to provide extensive in-service training and support for implementing the curricular and instructional role; and
- comprehensive program- and personnel-evaluation processes that are tied to curricular and instructional goals.

Assumption Two: The themes that illustrate the conflict that surrounds the curricular and instructional role and the management of that conflict present a composite portrait of a principal who:

- is both empathic and critical of classroom procedures for he or she has been there and knows the limitations and the potential of the classroom;
- uses instructional supervision skills to help teachers develop ownership in their own professional improvement;
- understands the dynamics of professional growth and believes that within discord and failure there is potential for growth;
- sees the role of the principal as changing from one of simply administration to one that includes curricular and instructional leadership;
- works at managing time and people to make curricular and instructional leadership the focus of the role;
- understands the dynamics of change;

- understands the concept of timing and background work needed to bring about change;
- works from a collegial framework: understands the power of modeling, mentoring, sharing, consensus building and shared decision making and possesses the skills to implement these processes;
- has a tolerance for diversity in value structures, personality traits, and teaching styles; and
- experiences the pains of school leadership--of giving up family and personal time, of losing freedom and autonomy, of feeling lonely and sometimes scared, and of being held accountable to the public for the education of the children.

Assumption Three: The themes that expand the definition of curriculum to encompass all the experiences within the school environment present a composite portrait of a principal who:

- believes the quality of the school setting is in direct relationship to the quality of the teaching and the learning;
- is accountable for the formal academic curriculum and has skills for developing a comprehensive instructional program;
- believes students learn from both the formal and the informal curriculum--that is they learn as much from what they experience and see as from what they do in academic subjects; and

- has knowledge of child growth and development, both academically and socially, and the skills to lead teachers to consider this knowledge as they plan instruction;

Assumption four: The themes that illustrate what visions an elementary school principal has present a composite portrait of a principal who:

- is articulate in what he or she wants the image of his or her school to project;
- is clear in the specifics of what has to be done to fulfill his or her vision; and
- is skilled in conveying his or her vision to others.

Assumption Five: The themes that describe the participants' feelings about influence and power present a composite portrait of a principal who:

- is awed by the influence and responsibility of the position;
- is cautious not to misuse or abuse the power of the position; and
- is confident that his or her principalship makes a difference in the direction of the school.

### Conclusion

The data of this investigation, or the "stories" five principals and one backreader told about their work, support the conclusion that curricular and instructional leadership can be described and defined; that curricular and instructional leadership can be put into practice; and that a curricular and instructional role is comprehensive in scope, complex in design, and dynamic in definition.

### Implications for Further Study

For years, even decades, the principal has been called the curricular and/or instructional leader of the school. Research, on the other hand, is showing us that the practice of curricular and instructional leadership is rare. This study of a small number of principals who were actually operating in the curricular and instructional leadership role shows that the practice can be a reality; however, to insure success, there are more questions to be investigated.

This study notes the role the district's superintendent plays in recruiting, training and evaluating curricular and instructional principals. Since that support system is cited as being important, further study is needed on how superintendents accomplish that.

While discrimination against women in principalship positions seemed hardly an issue in the data of this study, it is clear from the review of the related literature that a problem of discriminatory practices still exists. There is need for further study on the ways women have developed and managed school principalships and have overcome discrimination.

The concept of modeling and mentoring is discussed in this investigation. The concept needs to be explored further. How do these concepts relate to the "good ole boy" network? How effective is mentoring when it is formally organized?

Given data that support the diversity and the great amount of work required of the curricular and instructional elementary principal, more

study needs to follow on efficient management practices and responsive administrative organizations for the elementary school.

The data reveal that training for the principalship did not fully prepare the participants for what they found. Further study is needed as to what kind of training would better prepare principals for elementary school leadership.

This investigator found differences in the understandings and confidences of the experienced principals and the beginning principals. An interesting study could follow up those differences and their implications for principalship preparation.

The data present a strong case for elementary school principals needing group process skills for team building, consensus building and group decision making. More study is needed to confirm the need for these skills in developing school faculties.

While the focus of this study was not on teachers' perceptions of the principal's work, the data touched on the gap that exists between the curricular and instructional leadership of the principal and the perception of autonomy held by teachers. More study is needed in this area.

This data showed that "paternalistic" leadership styles, whether practiced by men or women, develop certain kinds of responses in teachers. More investigation is needed about that style and its effects on teachers.

While the participants of this study were uncomfortable with the idea of being powerful, they were articulate about being awed by the responsibility and influence of the position. This finding seems contrary to the general belief that principals know the power they have and guard it

jealously. Questions arise then about power and the principalship and preparing prospective principals to know its use and misuse. More study is needed concerning the concepts of power and influence as they relate to elementary schools.

The data of this study presented several interpretations of vision for schools. They included mission-like statements and very specific objectives projected on time lines. Research cited in the review of literature consistently presented vision as a key component of successful principalships. Where and how is vision acquired? Can potential principals learn to acquire and articulate a vision? More study is needed in this area.

This investigation studied the work lives of a small number of principals who defined their role as curricular and instructional leaders. At the same time the study cited descriptions from research in which principals did not interpret their role as curricular and instructional leaders. Current research and historical surveys suggest that curricular and instructional leadership has been advocated for decades but continues to be sparsely implemented. Why this is so begs further investigation.

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## APPENDIX A

## Vitae of the Participants of the Investigation

## Vita of

## LARRY D. ALLRED

## EDUCATION:

Elon College  
Elon College, North Carolina  
B. S. Elementary Education  
1961 - 1965

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
Master of Education--Language Arts  
1973

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
Doctor of Education--Curriculum and  
Instruction  
1983

Workshops

Administration and Supervision of Student  
Teaching Experience  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Continuous Progress and Nongrading in the  
Elementary School  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Organizing a Nongraded Curriculum  
Smith School, Burlington, North Carolina

Developmental Reading School  
Greensboro, North Carolina

Effective Teaching Model, Madeline Hunter  
Williamsbury, Virginia

Coaching as a Skill for Educators  
State Department of Public Instruction  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Literature and Middle Grade Readers  
Western Carolina Universtiy

Reading and Writing Connection for the Early  
Grades  
Dr. Pat Cunningham

Equity in Education  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Multi-Cultural Education  
Washington, D. C.

The Middle School  
Drs. Paul George and Ken McEwen

**SKILLS:**

Teacher for Elementary, Intermediate, and  
Middle Schools

Curriculum Specialist for developing  
diagnostic teaching tools, learning activity  
packets, record-keeping systems, learning  
centers, individualized instruction, and  
evaluation techniques

Demonstration Teacher and Lecturer

Consultant and Lecturer for continuous  
progress organizations in early childhood

Curriculum Writer in Social Studies and  
Mathematics

Consultant for team teaching, and nongraded  
instruction

Author, Dynamics of Individualized  
Mathematics; "The Cool Connection: A  
Disciplinary Alternative"; "The Supervisor's  
Dilemmas"

Instructor, University level

Program Development Specialist

Project Director

Program Development Specialist

Supervisor, Middle Grades

Principal, Elementary School

**EXPERIENCE:**

Teacher  
Glenhope Elementary School  
Burlington, North Carolina  
1965 - 1968

Teacher  
Marvin D. Smith Elementary School  
Burlington, North Carolina  
1968 - 1971

Curriculum Specialist  
Appalachian State University/Watauga County  
1971 - 1975

Project Director  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1976 - 1977

Program Development Specialist  
Triad Teacher Corps  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro/  
A&T University/High Point Public Schools  
1977 - 1982

Middle Grades Supervisor  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1982 - 1986

Principal  
Parkview Elementary School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1986 - Present

**SPECIAL HONORS:** Outstanding Young Educator 1970

Terry Sanford Award for Creativity and  
Leadership in Education

Outstanding Leadership Award, North Carolina  
League of Middle Schools 1985

## Vita of

## JACQUELINE GARNER

## EDUCATION:

Marion College  
Marion, Indiana  
B. S. Elementary Education  
1954 - 1958

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
Master of Education  
1963

Appalachian State University  
Boone, North Carolina  
Education Specialist Degree  
1977

NDEA Institute  
Peabody College  
Nashville, Tennessee

## EXPERIENCE:

Teacher, Fourth Grade  
Allen Jay Elementary School  
Guilford County, North Carolina  
1958 - 1959

Teacher, Third and Fourth Grades  
Kirkman Park Elementary School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1963 - 1973

Teacher Consultant, SDPI  
Division of Mathematics  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
1968

Teacher Consultant, Individual Mathematics  
Regional Education Laboratory for  
Carolina and Virginia  
1969

Supervisor, Elementary Education  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1973 - 1978

Principal, Montlieu Elementary School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1978 - 1986

Principal, Johnson Street School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1986 - Present

**ORGANIZATIONS:**

International Reading Association

North Carolina Association of Educators

Association of Supervision and Curriculum  
Development

North Carolina Association of Supervision and  
Curriculum Development

National Association of Elementary Principals

Delta Kappa Gamma





Teacher, Biology  
Jupiter High School  
Jupiter, Florida

Chairperson, Science Department  
Jupiter High School  
Jupiter, Florida

Teacher, Advance Biology  
Dreher High School  
Columbia, South Carolina

Supervisor, Science  
Richland County School District I  
Columbia, South Carolina

Coordinator, Math/Science  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina

Principal, Griffin Middle School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina

Coordinator, Elementary and Chapter 1  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina

**HONORS:**

Salutatorian, High School: Highest academic average in chemistry, physics, and English

Scholarship for undergraduate study

Who's Who's in American Colleges and Universities

Crisco Award for Outstanding Home Economics Student; South Carolina State College

Nominated, "Outstanding Teacher of the Year,"  
Columbia, South Carolina

**ORGANIZATIONS:**

Association for Supervision and Curriculum  
Development

International Reading Association

North Carolina Association School  
Administrators

National Association for Negro Business and  
Professional Women

Human Relations Commission, High Point

Board Coalition for Adolescent Pregnancy

Challenge High Point

Delta Kappa Gamma Honor Sorority

Phi Delta Kappa

Teacher, Sunday School Class

Vita of

**JACKIE W. JONES**

**EDUCATION:**

East Carolina University  
Greenville, North Carolina  
1967 - 1969

Elon College  
 Elon College, North Carolina  
 B. S. Elementary Education  
 1969 - 1971

University of Tennessee  
 Knoxville, Tennessee  
 M. S. Elementary Education, Reading, Learning  
 Disabilities  
 1972 - 1974

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
 Supervision Certification  
 1981 - 1983

Appalachian State University  
 Boone, North Carolina  
 Certificated of Advanced Study  
 1984 - 1986

Greensboro College  
 Learning Disabilities Seminar  
 1975

University of California at Los Angeles  
 Clinical Supervision with Madeline Hunter  
 Three weeks  
 1985

Gesell Institute  
 1987

**SKILLS:**

Administration and Management  
 Facilitator, Demonstration Teaching Project,  
 ESEA-Math, ESEA-Title I

Consultant, Effective Teaching Project,  
 Learning Difficulties in Regular Classrooms,  
 Small Group Instruction, Integrated  
 Curriculum

Co-ordinator, Learning Disabilities Project

Principal, Elementary School and  
Demonstration Teaching School

Consultation and Instruction

Presenter, National and Regional IRA  
Conferences; North Carolina Social Studies  
Conference, Awareness Conferences, Davidson  
County Schools, Governor's Award  
Presentations

Staff Development Leader for Effective  
Teaching Skills, Integrated Curriculum,  
Language Experience Approach, High Risk  
Diagnosis, Working with Teacher Assistants,  
and Writing Across the Curriculum

Keynote Speaker, High Point College, Student  
NCAE Conference

Expertise and Special Interests in Effective  
Schooling, We Agree Planning, Teacher  
Evaluation, Clinical Supervision, High Risk  
Children, Screening Assessment for  
Kindergarten

Trainer, Effective Teaching

Teacher, Elementary School

**EXPERIENCE:**

Principal  
Brentwood Elementary In-Service School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1986 - 1988

Facilitator, Chapter I  
Demonstration Program for Effective Teaching  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1985 - 1986

Consultant to the Demonstration Program for  
Effective Teaching  
High Point Public Schools'  
High Point, North Carolina  
1984 - 1985

Facilitator, Elementary Programs  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1978 - 1979

Co-ordinator, Learning Disabilities Project  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1975 - 1976

Teacher, Third, Fourth Grades  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1976 - 1977, 1974 -1975

Teacher, Third Grade, Multiple-Handicapped  
Anderson County Schools  
Anderson, Tennessee  
1971 - 1974

## Vita of

## BETTY H. ROYAL

## INTERESTS:

Administration  
Supervision  
Teaching

## EDUCATION:

East Carolina University  
Greenville, North Carolina  
Elementary Education  
1963 - 1964

Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, North Carolina  
B. S. Elementary Education  
1964 - 1966

Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, North Carolina  
M. A. Early Childhood Education  
1966 - 1970

University of California  
Los Angeles, California  
Clinical Supervision, Dr. Madeline Hunter  
1979

University of Connecticut  
Storrs, Connecticut  
Confratute '82, Gifted and Talented, Dr.  
Joseph Rensulli

Vanderbilt University  
George Peabody College  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational  
Administration

**SKILLS:**

Administration and Management  
Supervised teachers, support staff,  
principals, student teachers, and interns

Planned staff development

Wrote and monitored federal grants:  
Chapter 1, 2; Title IV-C IV-B;  
Reading is Fundamental

Served on a negotiating team

Coordinated special programs: Art, Music,  
English As A Second Language, Reading Is  
Fundamental, Kindergarten, Primary Reading,  
Summer School, and Gifted/Talented Program

Screened and interviewed candidates for jobs  
of administrators, teachers, support staff,  
maintenance

Developed budgets: Elementary School, Summer  
School, Chapter I ESL, Gifted/Talented  
Program

Coordinated Standardized Testing Program

Evaluated principals, teachers, and support  
staff

Planned and implemented Adopt-A-School

Placed student teachers; served as a liaison  
with the colleges



**Instruction**

Taught self-contained classes, grades 2,3  
Reading lab, grades 1 - 6; selected classes,  
grades 10, 11, 12

Facilitated in grades K - 6

Worked with principals:  
Motivation/Reinforcement Techniques, Equity  
Issues, Using Test Scores Effectively

Taught workshops for teachers and aides:  
Strategies for Working with the Gifted;  
Language Experience Approach Developing  
Teacher-Made Materials; Working with Aides  
Effectively; Reduction of Stress

Chaired curriculum committees in science,  
social studies, and kindergarten

Served on curriculum committees in reading,  
math, science, composition and health

Chaired textbook selection committees for  
reading, math, and science

**Human Relations and Communications**

Met regularly with parents and community  
agencies (YMCA, Mental Health, Lions)

Made presentations to PTA, Boards of  
Education, Media

Met frequently with teachers and other staff  
regarding concerns

Served as mediator with parents and staff

Conducted faculty meetings, grade level  
meetings and PTA meetings

Chaired numerous committees ranging from  
policy changes to curriculum development

Communicated frequently orally and in writing  
to superiors and other pertinent personnel

**EXPERIENCE:**

Principal,  
Shadybrook Elementary School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1985 to Present

Principal, Bicentennial Elementary School  
Nashua, New Hampshire  
1984 - 1985

Teacher Consultant  
Nashua, New Hampshire  
1981 - 1984

Supervisor, Elementary Programs  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1978 - 1981

Facilitator, Elementary Programs  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1977 - 1978

Teacher, Grades 2,3,and Reading  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1970 - 1978

Classroom Teacher, Grade 2  
Haywood County Schools  
Waynesville, North Carolina  
1966 - 1969

**ORGANIZATIONS:** High Point Association of School  
Administrators

Delta Kappa Gamma - Beta Omricon

High Point Chapter of International Reading  
Association

Education Council - Wesley Memorial United  
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High Point YWCA

Vita of

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**EDUCATION:** David Lipscomb College  
Nashville, Tennessee  
BA Chemistry Education  
1968 - 1972

University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
MEd. Science Education  
Supervision Certification  
Principal's Certification  
1984 - 1986

Course Work taken at:  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Appalachian State University  
North Carolina A & T University  
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Georgia Technical Institute  
Atlanta, Georgia  
Seminar in Minorities in Engineering  
1979

Seminar with Anne Williams, Hunter Institute  
High Point Public Schools  
Focus on Teachers, 1985  
Focus on Administrators, 1986

Madeline Hunter Institute  
Williamsburg, Virginia  
1987

**EXPERIENCE:**

Teacher, Grades 6, 7, 8, Math/Science  
Mocksville Middle School  
Mocksville, North Carolina  
1972 - 1974

Teacher, Grades 7, 8, 9, Math/Science  
Ferndale Middle School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1974 - 1985

Director, Summer School, Grades 6 - 12  
Ferndale Middle School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1981 - 1985

Administrative Intern  
Northeast Middle, Andrews High School and  
Johnson Street Elementary Schools  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1985

Principal, Northwood Elementary School  
High Point Public Schools  
High Point, North Carolina  
1986 - Present

**ORGANIZATIONS:**

International Reading Association

North Carolina Teachers of Math

National Science Teachers Associaton

Association of Supervision and Curriculum  
Development

North Carolina Association of Supervision and  
Curriculum Development

Coach, Midget League Basketball

Deacon and Treasurer of Church

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Guide for an Investigation of the Elementary Principalship

The following questions were drawn from the investigator's readings from the literature on the role of the principal and were based on five assumptions about the elementary principalship.

- 1) What do you do in a day?
  - a. Are you doing what you thought you'd be doing?
  - b. Are you doing what teachers think you should do?
  - c. How do you get to know the students?
  - d. What tires you?
  - e. What exhilarates you?
  - f. What is most painful?
- 2) How do you administrate so teachers can teach?
- 3) How do you lead the instructional program?
  - a. How do you keep teachers focused on students?
  - b. How do you help teachers become learners?

- c. How do you balance administrating and leading?
    - serving and facilitating? supporting and improving?
    - conserving and changing?
  - d. How do you bring about change?
- 4) How do you define the curriculum in your school?
  - 5) What is your vision for your school?
  - 6) Do you feel powerful?
  - 7) Is the principalship changing?
  - 8) What is the role of women in the principalship?
  - 9) Why did you become a principal?
    - a. Who was your mentor? Who first mentioned your becoming a principal?
    - b. Who was your model?
  - 10) Give five descriptors for the principalship.

## APPENDIX C

### Assumptions About the Elementary Principalship

The following assumptions were based on the investigator's readings of the literature on the elementary principalship.

Assumption One: The principalship role continues to search for definition, now evolving into a greater implementation of a curricular and instructional leadership role.

Assumption Two: Teachers are in conflict with the curricular and instructional leadership role of the principal; but, where they have a positive perception of their workplace, they are more productive.

Assumption Three: Curriculum is what each person experiences in the learning setting and the principal is the leader of that interpretation.

Assumption Four: Successful principals function with a vision of what their school should be.

Assumption Five: The school principal position is one of power and influence.