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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP MENTORING CHARACTERISTICS IN AN ERA OF
SIGNIFICANT EDUCATIONAL REFORM

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ABSTRACT

The state of Indiana is undergoing substantial educational reform, as is the nation. Educational leaders are in great need of support as they address reform initiatives. The support that educational leaders receive from mentors/coaches may be a determining factor in how they embrace the latest reform and work with their school communities. The primary purpose of this study was to understand the role of experienced superintendents/district leaders as mentors and coaches to new superintendents/district leaders in times of stressful educational reform. Four experienced district leaders were interviewed using the research method of qualitative inquiry.

Based on the perceptions of four experienced district leaders in response to interview questions involving leadership skills outlined by the National Association of Secondary School Principals: Mentoring and Coaching-Developing Educational Leaders, the following conclusions were made:

1. The mentor's leadership style is significant in the mentoring of new district leaders. Each participant described his or her leadership styles differently, yet there is a connection of high involvement in their organizations and the need to adapt their leadership to each unique situation.
2. Legislative agendas are directly impacting district leadership. Both *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a) and *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b) clearly focus on district leaders.

3. Stress defines educational leadership and is a persistent topic between mentors and mentees.
4. Stress is a positive factor in leading. However, the stress from current educational reform is viewed as a positive factor in leading amidst the negative stressors.
5. Successful mentoring practices in education among participants are more informal than formal.
6. The reasons for mentoring in an educational setting are grounded in feelings of moral accountability regarding mentoring and giving back to the craft of leading.

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You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. . .

Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.

(Lee, 1960)

The advice from Atticus Finch to his young daughter has always been my leadership motto, which I learned with my students while reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, 1960). Each student I taught I tried to understand his or her “story” and be compassionate toward his or her needs. The motto has continuously been modeled by each of the outstanding leaders I have had the opportunity to know, and therefore, where do I start with my heartfelt appreciation?

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Educational reform in the United States has undergone many changes in the last two centuries. The changes include the nineteenth century shift from a religious foundation to a labor-ready focus followed by a twentieth century movement calling for programs that address problems caused by desegregation and included direct funding of programs for children of low-income families. The reform initiatives of late have migrated to a student-learning outcomes focus and increased involvement of local school communities in decision making. These reforms are evident at both the state and federal levels and generally enjoy bipartisan support. The recent reform initiatives include continuous school improvement, a focus on student achievement, heightened expectations for teachers and school leaders, and a variety of standards-based instructional and curricular models and projects (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000). As public school leaders face current reform initiatives, their experience or lack of experience become a major factor in the way they confront the required changes; therefore, the decisions leaders must make in times of reform are often directly associated with funding.

The United States' current economic plight has affected school districts' financial decisions, especially as new reform initiatives are mandated. Some reforms are tied to financial support based on government criteria. According to *The Leadership Conference: Funding of Federal, State, and Local Programs* (2007), school districts receive educational funding from a

result of data provided by state, federal, and district government agencies. The agencies allocate funding based on benchmarks that evaluate the effectiveness of policies that affect the well-being of the children of the school district.

Educational reform asks school communities to embrace and implement new programs, practices, and instructional strategies. An article written by Paulsen and Khadaroo (August 30, 2010), entitled “Education Secretary Arne Duncan: Headmaster of US School Reform” discusses the financial ties of education reform and funding:

Perhaps most empowering for Duncan is the unprecedented money he has been able to dangle as incentive. One of his first jobs as Education Secretary was to distribute \$100 billion of economic stimulus money. President Obama wanted competition in which a select few states will win a share of \$4.3 billion. The money represents less than 1% of annual federal, state, and local education spending, but the leverage for an Education Secretary is unprecedented. Dozens of states have fallen into line with reform criteria—such as lifting caps on charter schools and tying teacher evaluations to student achievement—to improve their chances of winning. (p. 2)

The reform initiatives are not only focusing on charter schools and tying teacher evaluations to student achievement, but the initiatives also include discussion of the re-configuration of staff of failing schools, starting with the building leader. The problem is educational leaders are expected to do more with less. District leaders are facing unprecedented educational and economic times.

Even the president of the United States is focusing on educational reform. The most recent educational reform issues include “higher standards,” “charter schools,” “merit pay,” and “alternative teacher certification” (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

United States President Obama stated on September 27, 2010,

On the other hand, money without reform will not fix the problem, and what we've got to do is combine a very vigorous reform agenda that increases standards, helps make sure that we've got the best possible teachers inside the classroom, makes sure that we're clearing away some of the bureaucratic underbrush that is preventing kids from learning. We've got to combine that with deploying resources effectively. (CNN Wire Staff, 2010)

Not only are these federal initiatives being discussed by the Obama administration, but also at the state level in Indiana by Governor Daniels and State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Bennett. Both Daniels and Bennett are supporters of the Obama Administration reform entitled, "*A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*" (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Yet it appears that the solutions sought by government officials are not yet available as educators are forced to adapt to initiatives without much help from those imposing the initiatives.

Key elected officials and policy stakeholders persistently seek to address educational problems with an emphasis on reform; however, solutions to these complex reforms are not readily available to district leaders in ways that impact their day-to-day practice within their districts. In the absence of appropriate solutions for such complex reform issues, district school leaders are left to identify solution priorities that they believe will sufficiently address their educational challenges, relying on leadership styles to implement a successful reform agenda. Waters and Grubb (2004) suggested that any change within an educational organization is a significant and wholesale departure from the status quo for some and nothing more than business-as-usual for others. Faced with significant reform and the vastly different ways in which educational stakeholders react to change, leadership style becomes increasingly important.

According to Waters and Grubb (2004),

The existing education system must be changed radically in order for all students to meet challenging standards. To make the kind of changes needed in education today, however, school leaders must have a sophisticated understanding of change and know how to effectively initiate, lead, and sustain changes that have varying implications for different stakeholders. (p. 6)

Educational leaders have a need to understand the process of organizational change to help work with their schools toward effective change. To effectively attempt organizational change, educational leaders need to learn the process associated with organization development:

Organization development plays a key role in helping organizations change themselves. It helps organizations assess themselves and their environments and revitalize and rebuild strategies, structures, and processes. Organization development helps organization members go beyond surface changes to transform the underlying assumptions and values governing their behaviors. (Cummings & Worley, 2008, p. 4)

To ensure the success of organizational change during times of educational reform, the knowledge and support of experienced leaders for inexperienced leaders “are especially important at the beginning of people’s careers or at crucial turning points in their professional lives” (Daloz, 1999, p. 21). Whether formal or informal, the support from a mentor who has experienced issues and has an understanding of leadership skills and key behaviors and who can share knowledge and information that will foster new administrator productivity and effectiveness is invaluable. The act of mentoring is a practice that can help sustain the longevity of inexperienced district leaders, especially in times of educational reform. A document developed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP; 1997), entitled

Mentoring and Coaching: Developing Educational Leaders, includes 18 skills each with examples of key behaviors associated with successful mentoring and coaching self-development skills.

The skills include:

1. Leadership
2. Problem Analysis
3. Judgment
4. Sensitivity
5. Organizational Ability
6. Delegation
7. Planning
8. Implementing
9. Evaluating
10. Written Communication
11. Self-Development
12. Handling Resistance to Change
13. Giving Feedback
14. Creating New Ideas
15. Team Building
16. Dyadic Interaction Key Behaviors
17. Small Group Communication Key Behaviors
18. Large Group Communication Key Behaviors

These skills were used as part of the interview instrument for this dissertation and discussion which sought to examine the perceptions of experienced district leaders who have practiced mentoring and/or coaching for inexperienced district leaders in times of reform. The interview questions were directed toward both past and current educational reform initiatives in association with the 18 mentoring and coaching self-development skills from the NAASP.

Statement of the Problem

With the vast amount of change involved in educational reform, leadership roles are transforming as more leaders are expected to operate schools as if they were a for-profit business and as if students were a product with a bottom-line profit. Bolman and Deal (2008) explained the major difference between managing and leading: “managers focus on execution, leaders on purpose” (p. 343). Part of the problem of leading is understanding the differences between management and leadership. The popular saying suggested by Bennis and Nanus (2007), “Managers do things right, and leaders do the right thing” (p. 21), strongly supports the management–leadership dilemma.

Educational leaders are in great need of support as they address reform initiatives. The support educational leaders receive from mentors/coaches may be the determining factor in how they embrace the latest reform and work with their school communities.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the role of experienced superintendents/district leaders as mentors and coaches to new superintendents/district leaders in times of stressful educational reform.

Research Question

What is the role of an experienced district leader as mentor and coach for inexperienced district leaders in times of stressful educational reform?

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been defined for clarification in understanding this study:

Coaching

For the purposes of this study, coaching is the process used by the mentor as he or she works with the mentee examining the behavior of the protégé for the purpose of gaining insights what lead to improved performance. Coaching involves the skills of observing and recording behavior, giving feedback, probing, listening, analyzing, and asking clarifying questions in a non-threatening environment (NASSP, 1997).

Experienced Superintendent/District Leader

For the purposes of this study, an experienced Superintendent/District Leader is defined as a veteran, retired, or practicing superintendent who has at least ten years of practicing experience.

Inexperienced Superintendent/District Leader

For the purposes of this study, an inexperienced Superintendent/District Leader is defined as a licensed district Superintendent who has two years or less of practicing experience.

Mentee

For the purpose of this study, a mentee is one who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence, or influence.

Mentor/mentoring

For the purposes of this study, a mentor is defined as an experienced role model who guides the professional development of a less experienced individual through coaching. The mentoring relationship is a rewarding endeavor that enhances each person's career. Both the mentor and the mentee learn more about themselves, improve their skills, and gain professional recognition (NASSP, 1997).

Limitations

1. The results of this study are limited to the experiences of selected public school leaders in the Indiana region of the United States.
2. Levels of stress are unique to different people.
3. The subjects' ability to identify reform as being stressful could be a limitation.
4. The bias and objectivity of the researcher may also be a limitation.
5. The subjects' ability to answer a question to expose sufficient mentee information.

Delimitations

1. This study focused on a specific phenomenon. The research centered on the experiences of experienced superintendents/district leaders.
2. The interview time frame in which data was collected as of August 2011 may be a delimitation.
3. Out of over 290 public school superintendents in Indiana, only nine were identified as eligible for research.

Summary

District leaders are facing reform initiatives that have an impact on their leadership abilities. The coaching and mentoring of experienced district leaders should aid in the abilities

and effectiveness of the inexperienced superintendents during stressful reform times.

Interventions and strategies by district leaders should support and empower inexperienced superintendents. Chapter 1 provided an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research question, definition of terms, limitations, and delimitations. Building on the elements, Chapter 2 presents current literature regarding educational reform in relationship to school leadership characteristics.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Educational reform has had a major impact on public education over the last five decades. There has been an increase in research regarding educational reform and the role of educational leaders. The discussion of educational reform and the impact it has on organizational change and educational leaders provides insight and support for leaders facing current and future reform. A review of the literature is presented in the following sections: history of educational reform, elements of organizational change, leadership, and mentoring and coaching practices.

History of Educational Reform

Reform in public education in the United States is not new for educators and leaders. Public education in the United States has undergone numerous changes since the first public elementary school, Boston Latin School, which was founded in 1635 (Boston Latin School, n.d.). Upon the inception of the first public school, a myriad of federal education legislative acts and laws have been signed into action. This discussion focuses on the most prominent national educational reforms implemented over the last half of this century.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

According to The Dirksen Congressional Center (2006), *The Civil Rights Act of 1964* is a historical reform movement involving public education as well as human right issues. *The Civil Rights Act of 1964* “authorized the Commissioner of Education to arrange for support for

institutions of higher education and school districts to provide in-service programs for assisting instructional staff in dealing with problems caused by desegregation” (U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Services, 2010, p. 411). However, *The Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960* were legislative precursors to the 1964 initiative. In the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954), the Supreme Court voted against the idea of “separate but equal.” As stated by Chief Justice Warren:

To separate black children from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way never to be undone . . . We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of separate but equal has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954, p. 1)

The 1954 Supreme Court ruling from *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, was a significant foundation for reform at the time and for many years to come. The ruling promoted an awareness of the need of equality of social conditions, specifically in the United States public school system. This “separate but equal” ruling of the Supreme Court was a major shift in the public school leadership paradigm. Public school leaders were now expected to promote the awareness and implementation associated with the philosophies of “separate but equal” education. The next major education reform passed only one year later, *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, focusing on the inequities of low-income students, as well as support for resources and materials to enhance the public educational system. However, this time funding accompanied this reform.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

The U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Service, *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) is a high profile education reform which authorized grant monies for elementary and secondary school programs for children of low-income families; school library resources, textbooks, and other instructional material for school children; supplementary educational centers and services; strengthening state education agencies; and educational research and research training. (p. 411)

The importance of the ESEA in the history of reform in public education began with the demand for the United States to be more competitive in the technology industry field. In addition, the ESEA was the first step of the federal government to become involved in the operational side of local school districts. With the Title initiatives, districts needing the funding to sustain the Title programs began accepting the funding along with the involvement of the federal government for the first time in history. Up until this time, school districts across the nation had been controlled by state and local governments. The involvement of the federal government became yet another new concern for public school leaders and their perceptions of how to lead districts.

A Nation At Risk

A Nation At Risk (U. S. Department of Education, 1983) is a document that surfaced less than two decades later in April of 1983. This document contained recommendations for school districts' accountability "for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms" (U. S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 5). The document states,

All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can

hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (U. S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 1)

The significance of the study focused on the “basic purposes of schooling.” Within the report, “the result of 18 months of study, seeks to generate reform of our educational system in fundamental ways and to renew the Nation’s commitment to schools and colleges of high quality throughout the length and breadth of land” (U. S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 1). The study had been widely publicized emphasizing the need for the United States citizens to join in the “fight” as a society of reform for public education, “we must dedicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system for the benefit of all—old and young alike, affluent and poor, majority and minority” (U. S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 2). This report began prompting public school leaders to be on the defensive regarding the public’s perception and the media attention brought about by the report.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) became the next act of Congress to significantly impact educators. NCLB (2001) “provides for the comprehensive reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, incorporating specific proposals in such areas as testing, accountability, parental choice, and early reading” (p. 418).

The purpose of the NCLB Act initiated a focus for public schools to “review and synthesize the data and scholarly literature on the quality of learning and teaching in the nation’s schools, colleges, and universities, both public and private, with special concern for the educational experience of teen-age youth” (The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, p. 2). The reform initiative of NCLB focused on four aspects of the educational process:

- Curriculum Content
- Expectations
- Time
- Teaching

The four focal points of the reform initiatives of NCLB were and remain valid; however, the accountability system, proposed timeline, and implementation have proven to be unrealistic.

A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

The U.S. Department of Education is *The Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (2010) is the most recent educational reform initiative of the 21st century. The plan materialized in March of 2010, and includes the following accountability criteria:

- College- and Career- Ready Students
- Great Teachers and Leaders in every School
- Equity and Opportunity for All Students
- Raise the Bar and Reward Excellence
- Promote Innovation and Continuous Improvement (U. S. Department of Education, 2010, p. 3).

The process of improving the public school system involves school reform. Marzano (2003) mentioned that the United States school reform movement is entering a new phase, or one which builds on previous phases of reform. According to Marzano, there are three specific principles associated with reform. The three principles for the new era of school reform are

Principle 1. The new era of school reform is based on the realization that reform is a highly contextualized phenomenon.

Principle 2. The new era of school reform is characterized by a heavy emphasis on data.

Principle 3. In the new era of school reform, change is approached on an incremental basis (Marzano, 2003, p. 174).

The three principles involve a different way of looking at reform in the 21st century.

Fullan (1982) emphasized that “understanding of the nature of change is paramount to implementing the school effective research” (p. 102). Fullan described the reform process as follows:

Most change theorists and practitioners agree that significant changes should be attempted, but they should be carried out in a more incremental, development way. . . . Large plans and vague ideas make a lethal combination. . . . Significant change can be accomplished by taking a developmental approach, building in more and more components of the change over time. Complex changes can be pursued incrementally by developing one or two steps at a time. (p. 102)

The Indiana Senate Bills No. 1 and 575

The *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (SB 1), effective July 1, 2011, is a reform document which focuses on Indiana teacher evaluations and licensing (Teacher Evaluations and Licensing Act, 2011b). The teacher evaluation portion of the bill requires school districts to conduct annual evaluations of all teachers that reflect the following indicators: highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, and ineffective. The indicators will be the determining factor in teachers receiving a raise or increment in pay. In addition, a component of the *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* requires 50% of Indiana charter schools teaching staff be licensed teachers.

Indiana Senate Bill No. 575 (SB 575), also effective July 1, 2011, is a reform document involving collective bargaining for teachers of Indiana (Teacher Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a). The bill provides that the statutory procedures for school districts refusing to continue or canceling a teacher contract may no longer be a collective bargaining agreement. *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* also addresses the agreement that prohibits certain subjects from being bargained collectively, and any subjects that could lead to deficit financing may not be included in an agreement. *Indiana Senate Bill 575* also canceled any provisions that concerns minimum salary and salary increments for teachers. District leaders in Indiana need to become very familiar with both *SB 1* and *SB 575*. In addition, leaders need to also gain the knowledge and resources to educate and train their school communities about the reform initiatives.

With the mention of reforms from the 21st century, a recent publication commented specifically on the process of the creation of NCLB. Ravitch (2010), author of *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, discussed reform and her views on the reform of *The No Child Left Behind Act*:

NCLB fueled a growing demand for accountability as “reformers.” These reformers, the new breed of corporate-style superintendents, were hailed for their willingness to crack down on teachers and principals and to close schools if their students’ scores did not go up. Some states and districts introduced merit pay plans, which tied teacher compensation to their students’ test scores. (p. 162)

Ravitch (2010) mentioned the problem with these reform examples is not holding all stakeholders involved in students’ education accountable. She indicated that the United States’s current accountability system does not address the numerous factors associated with student

performance. The one factor being measured is what the teachers are doing in the classroom for an hour daily, not all the other contributing factors of the student life.

There is not an abundance of literature regarding best practices during times of reform eras. However, there is recent literature mentioning educational reform and best practices which focuses on the U.S. Department of Education *The Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (2010) Obama administration initiative, *Race to the Top*. As stated by Johnston and Polis (2010), “*Race to the Top* has inspired more education-reform legislation in the past 18 months than most states saw in the last twenty years” (p. B-11).

In their editorial “Don’t Gut Education Reform,” Johnston and Polis (2010) addressed the importance of best practices in Colorado; they discussed *The Teacher Incentive Fund*, which provides funding for teachers and principals who have demonstrated proven student results. Johnston and Polis stated, “This focus on identifying and rewarding best practices is at the heart of many successful reforms across Colorado. By slashing funding by half, these cuts will severely limit progress in this critical area of reform” (p. B-11). Johnston and Polis ended by suggesting, “We must rethink and reinvent our approach to education by moving forward with bold reforms. Unfortunately, the proposed cuts represent a major step backwards” (p. B-11). This is one example of a political figure who supports the incentive pay initiative suggested by the Obama administration. It should be noted that Senator Johnston discussed his concerns with the reform being a success, but he was concerned with losing the success due to funding issues.

Berliner and Biddle (1997) discussed the political focus on public education in the United States during the Reagan and Bush administrations. “Both administrations had reasons for diverting America’s attention from federal failures to deal with domestic problems, and one way to do this was to blame those problems on educators and the schools” (Berliner & Biddle, 1997,

p. 148). The current state of political issues focus on education and its faults, which is very similar to the eras of the Reagan and Bush administrations.

Reforms require a change within the system: sometimes small changes, sometimes larger. The literature on school change is robust. The following summarizes some of the major writings in the organizational change field of study.

Elements of Organizational Change

There is a myriad of literature discussing organizational reform which addresses the differences of leadership, management, and authority. The following literature discusses the elements of organizational change: leading and managing, leadership, district leadership stress, reform, and culture.

It is important for a leader of organizational change to understand the diversity of relationships within his or her organization. Goffee and Jones (2000) posed the question, “Why should anyone be led?” (p. 55). The answer is that we should be led by those who inspire us by

Selectively showing their weaknesses—revealing humanity and vulnerability; Relying on intuition—interpreting emergent data; Managing with tough empathy—caring intensely about employees and the work they do; and Revealing their differences—showing what is unique about themselves. (Goffee & Jones, 2000, p. 55)

Leading and Managing

One controversial topic of the 21st century in education is the comparison of business and education. There is ample literature supporting both ideas. One point of contention between industry and education is the different characteristics of leading and managing. “Kotter (1996) sees management as being primarily about structural nuts and bolts: planning, organizing, and

controlling. He views leadership as a change-oriented process of visioning, networking, and building relationships” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 343).

The stated difference between leading and managing puts a great deal of emphasis on those being led and the projected outcome and objectives of the organization. Leaders build relationships with those they lead to make a connection and build on the purpose of the objectives. The manager utilizes a more top-down approach with the outcome in mind, making the manager’s action less personal.

Leadership

Another aspect of leadership is the idea of authority automatically involving leadership. Bolman and Deal (2008) discussed the position of leadership, which defines the roles of the organization’s member. Within the different roles of the organization, the leadership role can cause leaders to take on more responsibility than they can successfully complete.

In contrast, “leadership does not come automatically with high position; conversely, it is possible to be a leader without a position of formal authority (teacher leaders). In fact, good organizations encourage leadership from many quarters” Barnes and Krieger, 1986.

Whereas Heifetz (1994) believed

authority constrains leadership because in times of distress, people expect too much.

They form inappropriate dependencies that isolate their authorities behind a mask of knowing. [The leadership role] is played badly if authorities reinforce dependency and delude themselves into thinking they have the answers when they do not. Feeling pressured to know, they will surely come up with an answer, even if poorly tests, misleading, and wrong. (p. 180)

This leads to ineffective and dangerous leadership. However, the authority position is seen as a leadership position, especially today where not only the federal government, but also the states are beginning to restructure the educational system.

As stated by Bolman and Deal (2008),

Leadership is thus a subtle process of mutual influence fusing thought, feeling, and action. It produces cooperative effort in the service of purposes embraced by both leader and led. Single-frame managers are unlikely to understand and attend to the intricacies of this lively process. (p. 345)

District Leadership Stress

During times of reform, stressful situations can lead to increased time demands, increased accountability, and ever-changing leadership roles. All of these sources can lead to stress in administrative practices and beliefs. The understanding of stress must be acknowledged if its effects are to be reduced and minimized for district leaders.

Cox and Malone (2003) referred to the superintendency as a cornerstone of district leadership. They believed district leaders have one of the toughest jobs in the nation. In addition, Cox and Malone discussed the urgency for school reform and the need to have a clear accountability focus, which has allowed district leaders to be easy targets for criticism.

In a study conducted by Balch (2004) regarding stress and district-level leadership, three reasons were discussed why perceived stress in an education environment may be lower than other professions. The first reason is that stress in an educational setting is not a new phenomenon; education professionals have adapted and coped with stress as a factor of the profession. The second reason involves the self-selection of the profession. Generally, those educators who go into administration may perceive their jobs as challenging rather than stressful.

The third reason stress may be perceived differently in the education profession is stress that is experienced may be deflected by turning to sources other than the job for needs fulfillment, which could include peers and mentors.

Balch (2004) concluded stress existed in district leaders' work environment but is reported as particularly high among those newest to the job. Therefore, there is a need for the support of mentoring and coaching initiatives for the inexperienced district leaders.

The stresses of being a district leader in the 21st century are increasing and can carry over into personal lives. There are two ways district leaders can perceive tensions caused by growing demands, either by positively accepting the demands or by viewing the demands as leadership barriers (Sternberg, 2001). Hooper (2001) defined the two types of stress as positive, in which a challenge was successfully met, and negative, in which nothing tried seems to work.

Reform

In order to lead reform, a leader must understand and have a purpose for change. To create change in any organization, it is vital to understand the culture that exists in the organization. Once the culture is truly understood, a leader needs to understand what to focus on, what to measure, and what to control within the organization. This understanding takes time.

As a new leader entering an organization, it is imperative to know oneself and one's leadership beliefs. Fullan (2001) discussed five components of leadership that aid in the reinforcement for positive change. The five components include acting with moral purpose; understanding the change process and culture; building relationships; creating and sharing knowledge collectively; and making and sustaining coherence.

These five components are important in organizational change. The first, moral purpose, begins with understanding if there is a need for urgency within the organization. For positive

change to occur, there must be a sense that change is needed. In order to create a sense of urgency, good leadership skills and strategies involve taking risks. If a leader is new to the organization, the task of creating a sense of urgency is more difficult, but not impossible. One way to create a sense of urgency is to begin honest discussions of where the organization is, and where the stakeholders envision the organization in five years. After the honest discussions begin, bringing in data that cannot be refuted and presenting that data to stakeholders is important to see if the data aid or further the vision of the organization. The task of educating the stakeholders with the data should be presented through collective leadership. A great leader empowers those with leadership skills and quickly learns their strengths to help the organization.

The second component of leadership that aids in the reinforcement of positive change is culture. In addition to understanding the changing culture, leaders must be aware that the first major transformation of culture begins with an organization's values and norms. The leader's success will depend on understanding of the organization's values and norms, which is the culture of the organization.

The third component of change involves culture, but focuses specifically on the building of relationships within the culture. Fullan (2001) discussed the description Kouzes and Posner believe to be the difference between effective leaders and ineffective is the action that they "care about the people [they] lead" (p. 55). When discussing relationships it is important to also discuss trust. Von Krogh, Ichijo, and Nonaka (2000) described trust as the knowledge people share: "Knowledge creation puts particular demands on organizational relationships" (p. 45). The knowledge people share becomes personal within relationships in order for others to listen and react to thoughts and ideas. The relationship aspect of being open is instrumental in building the foundation for others to comfortably share insights and concerns. Good relationships create a

safe environment to take risks that involve education initiatives, relationships with stakeholders, research and data, and technology. When a leader gains trust, the vision not only seems achievable but also creates common purpose for the organization to work toward together.

The creation and sharing of knowledge within an organization is the fourth component of change. Knowledge building and sharing requires the understanding that “knowledge is people” (Fullan, 2001, p. 78). In order to build an organizations knowledge base, communication and collaboration need to be present. The design of the U.S. public school system consists of egg-crate classrooms, which contribute to little or no opportunity for the sharing of knowledge. Brown and Duguid (2000) explained the building and sharing of knowledge becomes information only when it takes on a “social life” (as cited in Fullan, 2001, p. 78). This social life, Fullan (2001) indicated, means that “change does not mean placing changed individuals into unchanged environments. Rather, change leaders work on changing the context, helping create new settings conducive to learning and sharing that learning” (p. 79).

The fifth component of change in leadership is coherence-making and sustaining, which focused on the outcomes. To achieve coherence making and sustainability, the organization requires a commitment from the majority of its members. Those individuals who do not make the commitment will stand out. When members are not contributing to the process their inability to participate will be noticed. Many times then, peer pressure of the majority will take over. Those members who do not contribute will then begin to contribute to be a part of the majority.

To promote positive change, a leader needs to understand the five components discussed and the specific qualities required for the success of the entire organization. Each component builds on the next. Moral purpose is the foundation for leaders to promote change. The understanding of change and the process requires a focused leader who exhibits moral purpose.

The building and fostering of relationships within an organization is vital for change, and those who accept change have acquired a trusting relationship with the leader.

“Turning information into knowledge is a social process, and for that you need good relationships” (Fullan, 2001, p. 6). The social process of building and sharing knowledge is the fourth component, which again is built on the foundation from the framework of change. The fifth component of leadership, making and sustaining coherence promotes a sustainable and coherent plan for successful change.

Culture

Kotter (1996) discussed culture transformation process entitled “Anchoring Change in a Culture” and outlined five actions to change culture:

1. Comes last, not first: Most alterations in norms and shared values come at the end of the transformation process.
2. Depends on results: New approaches usually sink into a culture only after it's very clear that they work and are superior to old methods.
3. Requires a lot of talk: Without verbal instruction and support, people are often reluctant to admit the validity of new practices.
4. May involve turnover: Sometimes the only way to change a culture is to change key people.
5. Makes decisions on succession crucial: If promotion processes are not changed to be compatible with the new practices, the old culture will reassert itself. (p. 157)

The leader who begins the change process needs to understand that change is a process and it will take time. Fullan (2001) identified five specific elements of understanding change:

1. The goal is not to innovate the most—the goal is to collect positive and negative feedback from all stakeholders and reflect.
2. It is not to have the best ideas—but to have collective ideas of the organization.
3. Appreciate the implementation dip—because learning comes from being uncomfortable with performance and confidence.
4. Redefine resistance—we learn more from those we don't agree with, than those we do. Reculturing is the name of the game—a culture within which one realizes that sometimes being off balance is a learning moment.
5. Never a checklist, always complexity—effective leaders must cultivate their knowledge, understanding, and skills. (p. 34)

There is a second feature associated with coherence-making and sustainability, which is the sharing of knowledge creation. If a collective idea is going to be sustained, the organization and its members will design a sorting vehicle to keep ideas, which is the process of coherence-making.

Leadership

What is leadership? There are many definitions and ideologies regarding leadership that many in both business and educational organizations believe and practice. One definition of leadership reads, “Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers” (Gardner, 1989, p. 3).

There are several theories on leadership and the elements that define it. A definition of leadership that describes a more personal perception of a leader was defined by Burns (1978), a leader of modern leadership theory:

I define leadership as leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivation—the wants and the needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and their follower’s values and motivations. (p. 19)

Both Gardner’s and Burns’s definitions are similar, but Burns mentioned the “genius” of a leader to make a connection between what the leader values and reflective motivations with those of his followers. School leadership is one of the most important factors for school effective school reform. Leadership is a necessary condition for effective reform relative to the school-level, the teacher-level, and the student-level factors.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership

There is a vast literary base of leadership theories in today’s literature, but two theories are the most prominent. Two of the leadership theories as defined by Burns (1978) are transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership is a form of leadership that trades personal needs and wants in a negotiation style format: you give me this—I will give you that. The other example Burns described is transformational leadership, in which leaders form “a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents” (p. 4).

In the arena of educational leadership, Bass and Avolio (1994) and Leithwood (1994) used the leadership theories from Burns and created a transformational model for leadership. According to Bass and Avolio, and Leithwood, there are four skills identified in effective transformational leaders (as cited in Marzano, 2005):

1. The first involves the leader who must attend to the needs and of the school-individual consideration.

2. The second skill deals with the leader helping staff think of old issues in a new light-intellectual stimulation.
3. The third skill shows the leader as a powerful presence who can communicate high expectations to the school community-inspirational motivation.
4. And the last skill requires the leader to model positive behaviors through character and accomplishment for the school community-idealized influence. (p. 15)

All of these skills involve the leader as a part of the team leading the transformation of the school community.

Total Quality Management Model

Yet another model of educational leadership comes from Deming (1986) who is the founder of total quality management (TQM). TQM was originally created to be a model to improve quality of product but has since had a strong impact on leadership influences in education. Deming described 14 points of focus for an organization to improve quality, however, Waldman (1993), reorganized them into five actions for an effective leader (as cited in Marzano, 2005):

- Change agency
- Teamwork
- Continuous improvement
- Trust building
- Eradication of short-term goals (p. 15).

Servant Leadership

One theory on leadership originates from the idea that effective leadership should involve the desire to help others. Greenleaf (1970, 1977) stated that servant leadership places the leader

at the center of the organization, not the top. He believed an effective leader must be involved in all aspects of the organization. The following are servant leadership skills (as cited in Marzano, 2005):

- Understanding the personal needs of those within the organization;
- Healing wounds caused by conflict within the organization;
- Being a steward of resources of the organization;
- Developing the skills of those within the organization; and
- Being an effective listener. (p. 16)

Situational Leadership

Blanchard, Hersey, and Johnson (2001) are associated with situational leadership.

Situational leadership is defined as leaders adjusting their behaviors to the situations at hand with specific tasks. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) described situational leadership as four styles for leaders to follow. The styles are ranked from low-to-high task abilities:

1. When followers are unable and unwilling to perform a given task, the leader directs the follower's actions without much concern for personal relationships. This style is referred to as a high task-low relationship focus, or the "telling" style.
2. When followers are unable but willing to perform the task, the leader interacts with followers in a friendly manner but still provides concrete direction and guidance. This style is referred to as high task-high relationship focus, or the "participating" style.
3. When followers are able but unwilling to perform the task, the leader does not have to provide much direction or guidance but must persuade followers to engage in the task. This style is referred to as low task-low-relationship focus, or the "selling" style.

4. When followers are able and willing to perform the task, the leader leaves the execution of the task to the followers with little or no interference, basically trusting followers to accomplish the task on their own. This style is referred to as low task-high relationship focus, or the “delegating” style. (Marzano, Waters, and McNulty, 2005, p. 17)

Within the theory of situational leadership, the leader understands the leadership approach will change depending on the situation and the relationship.

Leadership Frames

Bolman and Deal (2008) discussed four leadership frames that summarize leadership behavior regarding opportunities and the process used. The four organization leadership behavior frames described include structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Each of these frames can be described in leadership effectiveness in the following processes:

1. Structural behavior—the leader is an analyst or architect using the process of analysis and design.
2. Human resource behavior—the leader is a catalyst or servant using the process of support and empowerment.
3. Political behavior—the leader is an advocate and negotiator using the process of advocacy and coalition building.
4. Symbolic behavior—the leader is a prophet or poet using the process of inspiration and meaning-making. (Bolman and Deal, 2008, p. 356)

Within the four leadership behavior frames Bolman and Deal (2008) acknowledged that, “depending on leader and circumstance, each turn of the kaleidoscope can reveal compelling and constructive leadership opportunities, even though no one image (frame) is right for all times and seasons” (p. 355).

In the realm of public education, there is a hierarchy of leadership that involves the student leader and teacher leader, to the superintendent of the school district and even state officials. The path to leadership begins as student leaders are empowered and become teachers. The teachers are then empowered and become teacher leaders. They in turn seek graduate education and certification in leadership to become leaders of schools and districts.

Experienced/Inexperienced District Leaders

According to Marzano et al., (2005), there are two distinctive levels of the differential impact experienced and inexperienced district leaders have on school districts. The first level involves the focus of the district leader. If the focus of the district leader is not on improving student achievement, the district leader will have limited impact of student success.

The second level encompasses the focus also being on district goals of student achievement, but also centers on the magnitude of change for all stakeholders implied. An experienced district leader understands all the implications involved in change initiatives and carefully leads the district while always being aware of all stakeholders needs.

School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement, written by Waters and Marzano (2006), identified six leadership responsibilities of superintendents/district leaders:

1. Goal-setting process: the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.
2. Non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction: goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.
3. Board alignment and support of district goals: board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.

4. Monitoring goals for achievement and instruction: the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of the instruction on achievement, and impact of the implementation on implementers.
5. Use of resources to support the goals for achievement and instruction: resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.
6. Defined autonomy and superintendent relationship with schools: the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development. (p. 15)

Each responsibility has a direct effect on the differential impact of leadership as a district leader. Experienced district leaders will have a better understanding of responsibilities associated with change initiatives and understand the importance of coaching and mentoring inexperienced leaders toward successful behavior practices.

Experienced leaders can also be described as having *craft* knowledge. According to Blumberg (1989), craft knowledge is a unique way of describing the connection between the mind, heart and head of successful teachers and leaders. Blumberg identified craft as the *art of the leaders* or “the exercise in individual fashion of practical wisdom toward the end of making things in a school or school system ‘look’ like one wants them to look” (p. 46).

Sergiovanni (1991) described the craft of a leader as possessing and utilizing the knowledge of theory and practice. “The hallmark of the artisan is ability to reflect on practice” (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 8), which describes the ability of experienced leaders to practice and model the art of reflection for inexperienced leaders.

Leadership Standards

In November of 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC) adopted a set of standards for educational leadership. The standards were derived through the research between educational leadership and productive schools as measured by outcomes of students, and through the current trends in society and education associated with leadership. The purpose of the creation of the standards was to “help link leadership more forcefully to productive schools and enhanced educational outcomes” (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 1996, p. 97).

The seven standards include:

1. Standard #1--Educational Vision--A District Administrator is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the success of all learners by developing, articulating, implementing, and evaluating an educational vision that is shared and supported by the greater school community.
2. Standard #2--School Culture--A District Administrators is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the success of all learners by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture that is shared and supported by the greater school community.
3. Standard #3--Management--A District Administrator is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the success of all learners by managing operations and resources to provide a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Standard #4--Communication and Collaboration with Communities--A District Administrator is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the

success of all learners by practicing open, two-way communication and using collaboration strategies that respond to diverse community interests and needs.

5. Standard #5--Acting with Honesty, Fairness, and Professional Ethics--A District Administrator is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the success of all learners by personally demonstrating and promoting honesty, fairness, and professional ethics.
6. Standard #6--The Political, Social, Legal, Economic, and Cultural Environments--A District Administrator is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the success of all learners by understanding, responding to, and influencing larger political, social, legal, economic, and cultural environments.
7. Standard #7--Instructional Program--A District Administrator is an educational leader who guides, facilitates, and supports the success of all learners by providing leadership in curriculum development, learning assessment, instructional supervision, and program evaluation conducive to student learning, staff professional growth, and district accountability.

<http://www.doe.in.gov/educatorlicensing/DistrictAdminContStds.html>). In addition, to clarify an understanding of effective leadership, the ISLLC also states: Formal leadership in schools and school districts is a complex, multifaceted task. The ISLLC standards honor that reality. At the same time, they acknowledge that effective leaders often espouse different patterns of beliefs and act differently from the norm in the profession. Effective school leaders are strong educators, anchoring their work on central issues of learning and teaching and school improvement. They are moral agents and social advocates for the children and the communities they serve. Finally,

they make strong connections with other people, valuing and caring for others as individuals and as members of the educational community. (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 1996, p. 99)

AdvancED (2010), in association with Indiana's North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA-CASI), identified the seven leadership standards and directly aligned them with leverage points from research to provide important information for building leaders which will directly impact the instructional core.

1. Vision and Purpose. Leverage Point 1.1-Ensure stakeholder engagement by facilitating meaningful conversations among small groups of committed stakeholders (Block, 2008). Leverage Point 1. 2-Offer strategic guidance such that vision and purpose impact everyone (Curtis & City, 2009).
2. Governance and Leadership. Leverage Point 2.1- Provide appropriate oversight that encourages reform using a “loose coupling” method as a means to make system-wide decisions about instruction (Elmore, 2004). Leverage Point 2.2 – Focus on inside rather than outside leadership (Kegan, 1994).
3. Teaching and Learning. Leverage Point 3.1 – Offer clearly defined expectations (Supovitz, 2006). Leverage Point 3.2 – Support research-based instruction (Marzano & Waters, 2009).
4. Documenting and Using Results. Leverage Point 4.1 – Share comprehensive assessments throughout the system (Marzano, 2008). Leverage Point 4.2 – Use data to inform organizational effectiveness (Bernhardt, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2010).

5. Resources and Support Systems. Leverage Point 5.1 – Provide strategic resource management (Miles & Frank, 2008). Leverage Point 5.2 – Provide powerful professional development (DuFour, 1998).
6. Stakeholder Communications and Relationships. Leverage Point 6.1 – Employ system-wide, two-way communication strategies (Fullan, 2005). Leverage Point 6.2 – Involve stakeholders in meaningful ways (Fullan, 2005).
7. Commitment to Continuous Improvement. Leverage Point 7.1 – Support a formal, disciplined structure for improvement (Fullan, 2005). Leverage Point 7.2 – Provide active monitoring and evaluation (Lezotte & Jacoby, 1992).

The purpose of the alignment of standards with leverage points was to provide appropriate tools and resources for instructional leaders to use for support, especially during challenging reform times.

Mentoring and Coaching Practices

The purpose of coaching and mentoring new district leaders is to develop and support educational leaders and to provide opportunities for success. During reform initiatives, inexperienced district leaders may not possess the knowledge and experiences needed to successfully lead a district. Mentoring and coaching by experienced district leaders is important for the success of new district leaders.

The new district leader can gain knowledge from the mentor/coach as well as observe successful practices during times of challenging and stressful educational reform. Daloz (1999) stated, “Mentors are especially important at the beginning of people’s careers or at crucial turning points in their professional lives” (p. 21). Support from a mentor who has experienced issues and has an understanding of leadership skills and key behaviors and who can share

knowledge and information that will foster new leader productivity and effectiveness is a practice that can help sustain the longevity of inexperienced district leaders.

Both formal and informal mentoring is associated with the relationship between the mentor and mentee. In a study conducted by Lankau, Riordan, and Thomas (2005), it was stated that the relationship between mentees and mentors does not necessarily involve a high level of “liking.” “Liking” within a mentor and mentee relationship was defined by Lankau et al. as, “support for the importance of liking can be drawn from the leader–member–exchange literature. Several studies found that a supervisor’s liking of subordinates related positively to relationship exchange quality” (p. 255).

As stated by Lankau et al. 2005,

Liking played a very limited role in the mentoring process for protégés and was not a mediator between similarity and mentoring functions for mentors or protégés in this formal program. It appears that mentors may fulfill the obligations outlined for them regardless of whether they develop liking for their formal protégés. A sense of duty or desire to meet role expectations may prompt mentors to provide functions in formal assignments. In short, liking may not be an important variable in the mentoring process within formally defined programs. This is contrary to the role that liking or mutual attraction plays within informal mentoring relationships. (p. 263)

A document developed by the NASSP in 1997, entitled *Mentoring and Coaching: Developing Educational Leaders*, includes 18 skills with examples of key behaviors associated with successful mentoring and coaching self-development skills. However, only the first 15 skills were included as a foundation for the interview questions. Dyadic Interaction Key Behaviors, Small Group Communication Key Behaviors, and Large Group Communication Key Behaviors

were not included in the foundation of the interview questions due to their specific group oriented focus.

Leadership

The leadership skill is the “ability to motivate and guide people to accomplish a task or goal” (NASSP, 1997, p. 26). The leadership skill discusses key behaviors for educational leaders to have the ability to recognize when a group has the need for direction and the ability to set and maintain the direction. A leader needs to be able to build commitment to a common purpose and facilitate the course of action to achieve the purpose. A leader must also be able to create and support professional development, supported by coaching and rewards.

Problem Analysis

Problem analysis skill is the “ability to identify the important elements of a problem situation and seek relevant information to determine possible causes and solutions” (NASSP, 1997, p. 27). Analyzing a problem situation will require a leader to not only focus on the key issues of the problem, but also to determine if additional information is required and then begin to use resources to acquire the needed information. The key behaviors a leader will need to act upon are to verify all information associated with the problem and identify possible causes and solutions.

Judgment

Possessing the skill of judgment encompasses the “ability to reach logical conclusions and make high quality decisions based on available information” (NASSP, 1997, p. 28). Leaders should use appropriate judgment while making all decisions. The key behaviors for using appropriate judgment are to constantly make decisions that “establish who and what will be affected” (NASSP, 1997, p. 28) and foresee what impact decisions will have on the organization.

Key elements of aiding good decisions include prioritizing, analyzing information, and developing decisions that have logical conclusions.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity skill is the “ability to perceive the needs and concerns of others; resolving and diverting conflicts; dealing tactfully with persons from different backgrounds” (NASSP, 1997, p. 29). Leaders may show understanding of sensitivity by acknowledging individuals’ perceptions, feelings, and needs. A leader must communicate and reflect the feelings and thoughts of those in the organization and be sensitive to the diversity of each member.

Organizational

Organizational ability skill is the “ability to use time and resources effectively to accomplish short and long-term goals” (NASSP, 1997, p. 30). Setting work priorities, monitoring work, and delegating specific jobs to those best suited should aid the leader in establishing a continued commitment from members of the organization toward a purpose/goal.

Delegation

Delegation is “the ability to effectively assign projects and tasks to the appropriate people giving the clear authority to accomplish them and responsibility for their timely and acceptable completion” (NASSP, 1997, p. 31). Specific behaviors associated with the action include deciding what to delegate, to whom to delegate, and establishing clear instructions for the task. During the process of delegating, the leader should consistently communicate, monitor tasks, and require feedback from members.

Planning

Planning is “the ability to clarify a goal or objective and develop a strategy to accomplish the desired results” (NASSP, 1997, p. 32). The ability to plan according to the organizations goal

should include getting relevant and clear information, identifying specific resources needed as well as those individuals who will be involved. A plan will need a communicated measurable outcome as well as a flexible alternative plan.

Implementation

The implementation skill of leadership involves “the ability to carry out programs and plans to successful completion” (NASSP, 1997, p. 33). A key behavior for the successful implementation of a plan is communication and following through with the plan. A leader should foresee issues and try to alleviate conflict during the implementation. The celebration segment of the implementation is as important as the planning of the process.

Evaluation

Evaluation skills are an important skill for a leader to possess. The skills require “the ability to examine how outcomes compare with previously defined standards, goals, and priorities” (NASSP, 1997, p. 34). There are two genres of the evaluation process; objective and subjective. A leader should be aware of the differences by establishing policies for evaluations that are communicated to all involved and are measured by both pre- and post- evaluation models.

Express Clear Ideas

Acquiring and maintaining the skill of expressing clear ideas effectively is a leadership skill that requires the “ability to express ideas clearly in writing, to write appropriately for different audiences” (NASSP, 1997, p. 35). Leaders should be able to communicate in a professional manner with a variety of audiences in order to share pertinent information.

Self-Development

A leadership skill that can be a personal and professional quality is mastering self-development. Self-development is “the ability to identify and create a set of Key Behaviors to build a desired skill” (NASSP, 1997, p. 36). The first step of self-development is to become aware of what you need to develop. A component of self-development is the ability to be self-reflective through actions and behaviors associated with your needs and identifying those that best fit you. Identify specific key behaviors and share those with peers and coaches for feedback.

Handling Resistance to Change

Confronting change is a leadership skill that is a necessity in today’s educational world. Handling resistance to change is defined as “the ability to bring about change in a school through anticipating problems, meeting needs, and sharing decision making” (NASSP, 1997, p. 37). The four basic work needs of people include “need for clear expectations; need for future certainty; need for social interaction; and need for control over work environment” (NASSP, 1997, p. 37). Each need must be met by the leader in order to move forward toward sustainable change. It is important for a leader to invite feedback from all stakeholders, especially those who do not agree with the change. Leaders should emphasize change with involvement by all members toward a common goal.

Giving Feedback

The process of effectively providing feedback is defined as “the ability to give clear, specific feedback” (NASSP, 1997, p. 38). Key behaviors of successfully giving feedback involve understanding perceptions of those who requested the feedback and stating exactly what was done well. Feedback is also the process of giving suggestions of approaches a person could

practice to change behaviors and outcomes in the future. It is important for a leader to focus on the behaviors of the individual, not the individual himself or herself.

Creation of New Ideas

The aptitude to create new ideas is “the ability to get a group to suggest multiple solutions to a problem or opportunity and select the best idea for implementation” (NASSP, 1997, p. 39). An educational leader is the vehicle to create and introduce new ideas. First, the leader must see a need for a new idea and then develop opportunities to present the idea to stakeholders. With comments and input from the stakeholders, the leader then leads planning procedure to develop a plan. The leader will also cite any unfavorable scenarios associated with the new idea.

Team Building

A leader’s potential to create and lead a team in an organization is team building and defined as “the ability to create and maintain a high performing team” (NASSP, 1997, p. 40). Building a successful, effective team requires a leader to enlist members who have complementary skills. The team should first establish a guiding purpose with goals. The team’s members should have shared responsibility and ownership of the outcomes.

The purpose of mentoring and coaching during stressful reform efforts can improve the quality of leadership in school districts, as well as develop highly qualified leaders. Utilizing the experiences and proficiencies of experienced district leaders will provide professional development opportunities for leaders, creating a connection between leadership theory and practice.

Ample opportunities will materialize during the mentoring process to develop the mentee’s administrative perspectives and abilities to deal with challenging responsibilities. The

relationship between the mentee and mentor/coach provides ongoing support and encouragement with constructive feedback. The experience will increase the mentee's self-confidence and can inspire the mentee to become a mentor in the future.

The organization will also benefit from the collegiality between mentor/coach and mentee. The leader will improve the quality of school leadership, which in turn can create collegial working environments for staff, which can then enhance learning environments for students.

Conclusion

The educational reform initiatives in the United States over the last two centuries have created an evolving job description of responsibilities for district leaders. The responsibilities continue to grow into a demanding accountable and professional adventure. In order for district leaders to be effective, they need to understand the processes of organizational change within their school districts. District leaders must embrace the dynamics of leadership and distinguish which model best suits their personality. Each of these initiatives can be challenging for inexperienced district leaders. The coaching and mentoring relationship opportunities provided by experienced district leaders will assist inexperienced leaders in gaining proficiency in the position.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to investigate educational reform in the United States to better understand the roles of experienced district leaders as mentors and coaches to new district leaders in times of stressful educational reform. The reform initiatives of late have not only involved local school communities, but are also evident at both the state and federal levels. The reform initiatives include the school improvement movement, focus on student achievement, a variety of instructional models and projects facing reform and school choice (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000). Educational leaders are in great need of support as they address reform initiatives. The support that educational leaders receive from mentors/coaches may be the determining factor on how they embrace the latest reform and work with their school communities.

The focus of this study was driven by the following research question: What is the role of an experienced district leader as mentor and coach for inexperienced district leaders in times of stressful educational reform?

This study sought to better understand the roles of experienced district leaders as mentors and coaches to new district leaders in times of stressful educational reform and also discover certain patterns of educational reform that necessitates mentoring and coaching interventions. Four experienced district leaders were interviewed using the research method of qualitative

inquiry. This chapter is organized by describing the research method of inquiry: the strategy of inquiry; the role of the researcher; instrumentation, the data collection and analysis; the establishment of validity and reliability; and conclusion.

Qualitative Inquiry

According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research “is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 4). The analysis of qualitative research is a “process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1). I chose the qualitative research method due to the humanistic characteristics associated with the issues of educational reform and leadership.

A theoretical lens is a lens which “becomes an advocacy perspective that shapes the types of questions asked, informs how data are collected and analyzed, and provides a call for action or change” (Creswell, 2009, p. 62). There are several theoretical lens in qualitative research; however, the social constructivist lens was used to interpret the knowledge sought in this study. Creswell (2007) described the social constructivist lens of research as follows:

In the worldview, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experience. . . . These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of view. . . . Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others (hence social constructivism) and through historical and cultural norms operate in individual’s lives. (pp. 20-21)

The use of the social constructivist lens provided a snapshot of the participants' views of both past and current educational reform. The information gained from the interviews represented lived experiences of the participants and how they perceived the educational reform, and most importantly, how they faced it.

Strategy of Inquiry

This qualitative study focused on case study research design. According to Merriam (2009), "The case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon" (p. 50). Due to the distinctiveness of the purpose of the research, a case study seeks the following knowledge:

1. More concrete—case study knowledge resonates with our own experiences because it is more vivid, concrete, and sensory than abstract.
2. More contextual—our experiences are rooted in context, as is knowledge in case studies. This knowledge is distinguishable from the abstract, formal knowledge derived from other research designs.
3. More developed by reader interpretation—readers bring to a case study their own experience and understanding, which lead to generalizations when new data for the case are added to old data.
4. Based more on reference populations determined by the reader—in generalizing as described above, readers have some population in mind. Thus, unlike traditional research, the reader participates in extending generalization to reference populations.

(Stake, 1981, pp. 35-36)

I chose the case study design because I believe the lived experiences of participants will determine significant human characteristic behavior during educational reform and the attendant

stressors. Further, I believe with district leadership there is a bias of role confusion. It is my bias that no one has the vocation of district leadership completely figured out. The feelings of role confusion can inhibit collaboration and thwart efforts to gain membership in a variety of social networks. I am seeking “insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing” (Merriam, 2009, p. 42) from the participants’ lived experiences.

Role of Researcher

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), “Bias and assumptions are often so deeply ingrained and cultural in nature that analysts often are unaware of their influence during analysis” (p. 85). I am aware of my biases and assumptions as they relate to the participants’ perceptions. Therefore, I intend to remain aware of my biases and assumptions while conducting the interviews and the decoding of information.

According to Merriam (2009), “investigators need to explain their biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken” (p. 219). The understanding and clarification of my biases, dispositions, and assumptions in relation to my experiences, worldviews, and theoretical orientation allows the reader to grasp the implications of my interpretations of the data.

A bias I feel I possess is that I believe the role of new district school leaders involves solitary feelings and role confusion, especially those in smaller districts. According to Cox and Malone (2003),

The adventure of a new place, new people, new procedures to follow, and a different work environment may add up to just what a new superintendent needs. While the new environs help to create motivation, expectations are generally very high for a new

superintendent. With a change in leadership, chances are that the local participants have high hopes for different directions. (p. 8)

These changes and new expectations can cause additional stress to the new leader; however, I believe that stress can be lessened if there is mentoring and/or coaching through the transition. Communication and observations of experienced district leaders during the transition period, as well as new reform initiatives, can lead to a decrease in feelings of isolation.

I had a negative experience with a new district leader and may associate that experience with the inability of those inexperienced district leaders to accept support from a mentor or coach. I feel the need to discuss the assumption that a negative experience with a district leader can tarnish the perception of individuals with negative experiences and the perceived ability of successful coaching and/or mentoring. I understand the need of leadership skills that are a balance of both “change agents and calm-but-steady builders” (Buller, 2010, p. 5). According to Buller,

We sometimes overlook how effective serene and confident leadership can be because we assume that a leader’s vision must always be for something radically different from what we already have that passion for a cause is a necessary prerequisite for principled guidance. (p. 5)

I must disclose a list of potential problems in mentoring/coaching relationships which were identified by Muse, Wasden, and Thomas (1988):

1. Mentor is too protective and controlling.
2. Mentor has a personal agenda to fulfill.
3. Mentor is a good principal but is not a good mentor.
4. Mentee gets only limited perspective from the mentor.

5. Mentee becomes too dependent on the mentor.
6. Mentor does not want to let go.
7. Mentor/mentee's reputations reflect on one another, good and bad.
8. Mentee becomes a carbon copy of mentor in the eyes of others.
9. Mentor is reluctant to commit time to the relationship.
10. Mentoring program promotes favoritism.
11. Everyone expects too much of a mentoring relationship.
12. Societal stereotypes inhibit cross-gender mentoring relationships.
13. The mentoring relationship just doesn't work. (p. 84)

I investigated potential problems as part of the question protocol mentioned.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data in this study were qualitatively analyzed, which allowed for data collection and data interpretation to possibly occur simultaneously (Creswell, 2003). The data collected were coded by established patterns and trends of informational categories. Upon the completion of the coded data, thematic codes were assigned to developing categories. The literature review sections were studied in correlation with the thematic codes identified. The four literature review sections include:

1. History of Educational Reform
2. Organizational Change
3. Leadership
4. Mentoring and Coaching

Participants

This study examined the perceptions of four experienced district leaders who have engaged in mentoring and/or coaching for inexperienced district leaders since the enactment of the NCLB Act (2008). I contacted the Indiana Department of Education to acquire a list of participants of the 2002 Mentoring and Coaching training. I was told the list of participants had been destroyed by the current administration. It was suggested I contact the former director of licensing to see if she had either saved a copy of the list or knew anyone who might have procured a copy of the participants. I contacted the former director, who is currently in a faculty position of higher education at a university in Indiana. She gave me a list of nine names. I then entered the nine names into the database of Random.org to randomize the names. I cross-checked the four names with the following criteria:

- Two men and two women;
- More than ten years of district leadership experience;
- One urban/metropolitan leader and one suburban/rural leader;
- Received Indiana Rules 2002 Mentor Training.

I had to randomize the list twice to match the criteria above. I then looked on the Indiana Department of Education website to find the participants. I contacted the four via phone and established times and locations for interviews. The interviews were conducted to provide information specifically related to this case, yet such a small sample does not permit generalizations (Patton, 2002).

Procedure

I interviewed four experienced district leaders who have acted or are currently acting as a mentor/coach to inexperienced district leaders. I focused specifically on interview questions

involving leadership skills outlined by the NASSP (1997). The interview questions were directed toward both past and current educational reform initiatives, what leadership skills were utilized, and the impact this has or had on mentoring (Appendix A).

The interviews were approximately one hour in length. The location of the interviews was at either the participant's school site or a neutral location of the participant's choice. The participants were notified of potential risks and/or discomforts; therefore, participants could decline to answer questions. In addition, participants were notified that the study was of a voluntary nature and at any time they could withdraw without consequences

The participants were notified of the potential benefits of the study, which is to increase awareness of the need for mentoring/coaching during times of educational reform. Each participant understood there was no direct benefit for participating.

Participants were notified of the confidentiality of responses through coded data only accessible by me. Participants were notified that the data collected will be stored in my office in a locked filing cabinet for the required three year period. At the end of the required storage period, all data collected, including audiotapes, will be shredded and destroyed. Participants were notified of their right to review material prior to the final oral defense of the study by filing a written request.

At the conclusion of the notifications, participants acknowledged receipt of this information by signing an Institutional Review Board consent form. All participants signed the form, which will be stored in my office in a locked filing cabinet for the required three year period.

Instrumentation

The district leaders were interviewed in their district offices, one at a public library, and one at a hotel (Appendix B). I took elaborate notes during the interviews to analyze afterwards. The interviews were tape recorded for analysis after interviews are conducted. I asked questions that were developed, in part, from the leadership skills from a 1997 study (i.e., *NASSP: Mentoring and Coaching-Developing Educational Leaders*, see Appendix A). Content validity of the question protocol was established by sharing the questions and soliciting feedback from five experienced district leaders who were not considered as study participants. Minor editing suggestions were made and incorporated.

Establishing Validity and Reliability

“All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner” (Merriam, 2009, p. 209). Merriam made the statement that “being able to trust research results is especially important . . . because practitioners intervene in people’s lives” (p. 209). My aim is to share valid and reliable results in an ethical fashion.

“Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects” (Gibbs, 2007, p. 190).

I used the following reliability procedures as suggested by Gibbs (2007):

1. Check transcripts to make sure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription.
2. Make sure that there is not a drift in the definition of codes, a shift in the meaning of the codes during the process of coding.

3. Cross-check codes developed by different researchers by comparing results that are independently derived. (p. 190)

“Reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated” (Merriam, 2009, p. 220). Further, Merriam (2009) noted that “reliability is problematic in the social sciences simply because human behavior is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences” (p. 221). Merriam also suggested that “the more important question for qualitative research is whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (p. 222), but also stated “if the findings of a study are consistent with the data presented, the study can be considered dependable” (p. 222).

“Validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research, and it is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers account” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 191).

I used the following validity strategies:

1. Triangulate different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes. If themes are established based on converging several sources of data or perspectives from participants, then this process can be claimed as adding to the validity of the study. (Creswell, 2009, p. 191)
2. Use member checking to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to the participants and determining whether these participants felt that they are accurate. This procedure can involve conducting a follow-up interview with participants in the study and providing an opportunity for them to comment on the findings. (Creswell, 2009, p. 191)

3. Use rich, thick descriptions to convey findings. This description may transport readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences. When qualitative researchers provide detailed descriptions of the setting, for example, or provide many perspectives about a theme, the results become more realistic and richer. This procedure can add to the validity of the findings. (Creswell, 2009, pp. 191-192)
4. Clarify the bias the researcher brings to the study. This self-reflection creates an open and honest narrative that will resonate well with readers. Reflectivity has been mentioned as a core characteristic of qualitative research. Good qualitative research contains comments by the researchers about how their interpretation of the findings is shaped by their background, such as gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic origin. (Creswell, 2009, p. 192)

Merriam (2009) discussed internal validity: “Internal validity deals with the question of how research findings match reality” (p. 213). My intent is to report valid and reliable results in an ethical manner. My approach to ensure validity and reliability was to conduct interviews and follow the reliability procedures of checking transcripts, check-coding the process, and cross-checking the coding. In addition, I completed the following validity strategies through data triangulation: member checking, use of rich, thick description; and clarification of my biases and assumptions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter presented the methodology to identify the purpose of the role of experienced district leaders as mentors and coaches to new district leaders in times of stressful educational reform. The study also sought to discover certain patterns of educational reform that

necessitates mentoring and coaching interventions. The methodology was qualitative. I looked for reoccurring patterns and trends of specific leadership skills found in the participants' responses. Chapter 4 will include an introduction of the participants and themes which emerged. Chapter 5 will discuss the discovered findings of the study and relate conclusions to be used and studied by other educational researchers in future K-12 studies pertaining to educational reform.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the role of experienced superintendents/district leaders as mentors and coaches to new superintendents/district leaders in times of stressful educational reform. This was attempted by interviewing four experienced superintendents/district leaders from Indiana who met the following criteria:

- Two men and two women;
- More than ten years of district leadership experience;
- One urban/metropolitan leader and one suburban/rural leader;
- Received Indiana Rules 2002 Mentor Training.

Educational leaders are in great need of support as they address reform initiatives. The support that educational leaders receive from mentors/coaches may be the determining factor in how they embrace and sustain success with the latest reforms and continue to work with their school communities.

Chapter 4 presents findings from interviews with four experienced superintendents/district leaders focusing on educational reform and their experiences as mentors to new superintendent/district leaders. The four participants will be identified as Participant (P). A number will be added to clarify the four individual participants. Participant 1 will be identified as (P1), the next participant will be (P2), and so on. The (P) will be identified through the

interview questions as found in Appendix A. The other identifiers will include the criteria listed above.

Of the 28 questions asked during the interview, the first seven are transcribed in narrative form as an introduction for the participants. The participant responses of the remaining questions can be found in Appendix E.

Participant 1 (P1) is a man who is currently an assistant professor for a college of education in Indiana. He has held his current position for five years. His superintendent/district leader experience includes ten years as a district leader in a rural county-wide setting, 18 years as a building leader, and four years as a teacher, with two of the first years of teaching in a rural school district. The district level personnel included a superintendent, assistant superintendent, business manager, and director of technology.

As stated in an article by Budge (2010), *Why Shouldn't Rural Kids Have It All?*, "Rural scholars critique standards-based reform as the latest urbanized, one-size-fits-all approach to improvement that has been at best unresponsive to, and at worst counterproductive for, rural places" (p. 4). The unique experiences of district leadership for P1 reflect the idea that the one-size-fits-all approach adds to the challenges of reform, especially in a rural setting. In addition, "urbanized, one-size-fits-all approaches to rural school improvement have given little consideration to contextual factors that shape the beliefs and actions of rural stakeholders . . . Porter, 2001 . . . and the challenges and strengths found in rural contexts" (Budge, 2010, p. 4). P1 mentioned the importance of understanding the needs and challenges of rural community members and what a huge impact those challenges can have for a rural setting.

Participant 2 (P2) is a woman who is currently assistant superintendent in a metropolitan school district in Indiana. She is responsible for K-12 curriculum and supervision of a program

director and district media coordinator. She has held her current position for six years and was assistant superintendent for a neighboring district for nine years. She has been in education for 38 years. The district level personnel included a superintendent, assistant superintendent, program director, transportation director, and media technology director. She had the Rules 2002 mentor training, as well as conducting mentor training workshops for the two different district service centers, which included a large portion of the state of Indiana.

The interview with P2 proved to be a rich reflection of her experiences in her current district and former experience in a neighboring district. She emphasized the awareness of the issues associated with leading a metropolitan/urban district, as supported in an essay by Cuban (2001), *Leadership for Student Learning: Urban School Leadership-Different in Kind and Degree*, which states:

Our nation's urban schools, particularly those in need, are poorly matched to current popular reforms and leadership formulas packaged like brand-name products for schools across the country. For those who lead urban schools, different expectations, different obligations, and different histories require far more moxie, skills, and political finesse than for their colleagues in middle- and upper-class, racially isolated suburbs. The all-purpose reform solution now treats all schools the same while neglecting the vital linkages between cities, their schools, and the country's economic and social well-being.

(p. 2)

P2 not only mentioned the trials and tribulations of leading an urban district, but also expanded on the fact that her school was very close to being taken over by state officials in the last twelve months, and that the sense of urgency for her district grew very quickly.

Participant 3 (P3) is a man who is currently a superintendent in a metropolitan school district in Indiana. He has held the position in his current district for three years and served as an assistant superintendent and principal for the last 16 years in a neighboring district. His current district level personnel include a superintendent, assistant superintendent, a part-time personnel director, a primary K-4 director, and a business manager.

The essay by Cuban (2001) addressed the responsibilities and expectations of a leader to successfully support and sustain an urban school district, which is a concern for P3:

Leading urban districts have demanded from superintendents a keener sensitivity to inequalities and a well-developed capacity to deal with racial isolation, ethnic conflict, and economic disparities as they affect academic achievement both in the schools and the city itself. Yet no urban superintendent can afford to ignore the current wisdom, forged by corporate executives and public officials that high academic standards and improved test scores lead directly to well-paying jobs, even when the concentration on tests produces winners and losers in the academic sweepstakes. (p. 5)

P3 is in tune with the expectations of the current accountability reform initiatives and is keenly aware of the need to create a district that is not only competitive, but he also holds the responsibility to provide a complex mission that promotes a better and enhanced life for his students as well as his community. As supported by Cuban (2001),

these differences counter the prevailing assumption buried within standards-based reform that school leadership is the same across districts. Leading urban schools, unlike leading other districts, is intimately tied to a unique and complex mission: Through improved schooling, reduce the dire consequences of racial and ethnic isolation and the impact of poverty on academic achievement, while increasing the life chances of families and their

children to success economically and to contribute to their communities. An unfortunate by-product of this distinct mission is the nourishing of the pervasive myth that schools alone can improve the life chances of poor children. (p. 6)

Participant 4 (P4) is a woman who has been retired from her superintendent position for three months. She held her position as superintendent for 12 years and had been in education for 46 years. The district where she served as superintendent is a rural setting. The district level personnel included a non-certified treasurer, an administrative assistant who also served as the food service director, a technology coordinator, maintenance director, and transportation director who also served as bus driver.

During the interview with P4, the sharing of district responsibilities surfaced as P4 focused on a “sense of place” being of vital importance while leading a rural district. As supported in the article by Budge (2010), *Why Shouldn't Rural Kids Have It All?*,

finally, a shared sense of place cultivated by the leaders in a community might serve as medium advocacy and activism. By virtue of their socialization and professional training, educators act from perspectives that are universal rather than particular. They act within a “zone of tolerance” . . . , a compromise between professional expertise and dispositions, on the one hand, and locally-held beliefs and values perceived as nonprofessional and non-expert, on the other. (p. 18)

According to P4, leading a rural district does in fact rationalize a leadership team to “act from perspectives that are universal rather than particular,” requiring the team to have a wider realm of responsibilities, being a “jack of all trades.”

Themes

After reviewing the transcripts and field notes of the four participants' interview responses, six themes were identified:

1. The mentor's leadership style is significant in the mentoring of new district leaders. Each participant described his or her leadership styles differently, yet there is a connection of high involvement in their organization and the need to adapt their leadership to each unique situations dictated by situational context;
2. Legislative agendas are directly impacting district leadership. Both *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a) and *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b) clearly focus on district leaders;
3. Stress defines educational leadership and is a persistent topic between mentors and mentees;
4. Stress is a positive factor in leading. However, the stress from current educational reform is viewed as a positive factor in leading amidst the negative stressors;
5. Successful mentoring practices in education among participants are more informal than formal; and
6. The reasons for mentoring in an educational setting are grounded in feelings of moral accountability regarding mentoring and giving back to the craft of leading.

The Significance of the Mentors' Leadership Styles During Mentoring

The mentor's leadership style is significant in the mentoring of new district leaders. Each participant described his or her leadership styles differently, yet there is a connection of high involvement of the organization and the need to adapt their leadership to each unique situation. P1 identified his leadership style as transformational and added, "I have an eclectic leadership

style. I tend to adopt my leadership style to needs of the time.” This statement aligns with all four skills of being an effective transformational leader: individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood, 1994).

The mentor’s ability to translate and offer advice and counseling regarding the four skills of transformational leadership can promote the awareness of the needs of the organization and the individuals being led, which is significant for the mentee/mentor relationship. In addition to transformational, P1 also displayed characteristics of being a situational leader, which enables the leader’s understanding and approach to change depending on the situation and the relationship.

P2 identified her leadership style as “extremely participatory.” This leadership style is also in alignment in possessing the four skills of transformational leadership. Each skill specifically places the leader in the center of the organization, participating in the daily decisions of the organization side by side with the organizations members. P2 also exhibited characteristics of servant leadership, in that servant leadership places the leaders at the center of the organization (Greenleaf, 1970, 1977).

As stated by P3,

There are times when I want to share information, but I know I want to use the data and the research to say this is what we are going to do, and there are other times I want to be a lot more collaborative, so it’s like it depends on what it is.

He described his leadership style as changing with the situation, which is transformational and situational leadership. P3 is aware of the need for inspirational motivation, yet contributes to the organization by fostering individual consideration and

intellectual stimulation. He also remains cognizant of the need to adjust his behaviors to the specific tasks of behaviors.

P4 described her leadership style as very collaborative: “I gave people responsibility to carry on their perspective tasks, and even the principals had to do things for the district; like a director, I wanted them to have the whole K-12 vision.” P4 expressed her leadership focus being for the “whole” district as opposed to territorial. Her focus aligns with the four skills of transformational leadership as well as the definition from Burns (1978): “a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents” (p. 4). In addition, P4’s response to her predominant leadership style can be viewed more of a leader style in relation to a managing style, because leading is “a change-oriented process of visioning, networking, and building relationships” (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 343).

Each participant’s leadership style discussed involves a degree of changing and transforming for each unique situation. The leadership styles of the participants can be correlated to Burns’s (1978) definition of leadership: “Leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivation—the wants and the needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers” (p. 4). The term “inducing” in the definition requires the leader to change or transform their leadership behaviors to the goals of the entire organization, a theme that is prevalent of the four participants. In addition, the leadership styles of the mentor is modeled within the relationships and may be assumed by mentees as the significant leadership style for effective leadership.

Legislative Agendas are Directly Impacting the Mentor-Mentee Relationships

Of the four participants' responses, two of the four specifically mentioned the *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a), as being a focus of current educational reform. One participant indirectly referred to the *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* and specifically *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b), and one participant did not specifically mention any current educational reforms other than NCLB Act from 2001.

As shared by P1, there was specific mention of both Indiana Senate bills and the impact both have on his teaching and mentoring of district leaders.

Right now the changes of legislature that are affecting my leadership are collective bargaining, the evaluation system, [and] the opportunity for choice in charter schools is really affecting how I lead my class work. And my advising has changed drastically with all that has come forward. Political leadership in the state has really affected my leadership. It is not really reform, but the leadership that has been so anti-public education [that] I have needed to adapt my teaching at the collegiate level.

In addition, P1 specially refers to the state leadership and the adaptations he must make to prepare both new leaders, as well as mentor practicing leaders. He also discussed the issues with staying current with new legislation.

P2 discussed the positive benefits that will be reflected by the new state reforms. She specifically mentioned the freedom districts now have when dealing with bargaining agreements. She also mentioned the RISE model of teacher evaluations, which will be utilized by her district. As a formal and informal mentor, the reform initiatives are at the focus of her leadership.

“Rock on” 575 [collective bargaining]. When I took the job another colleague shared with me that [her current district] has one of the most restrictive bargaining agreements in

the state. [Indiana Senate Bill] 575 is freeing us up to do so many things. I could not even ask teachers to stay after school for teachers meetings without paying them. It is just incredible. I have sympathy for them. I was on our bargaining team when I was teaching. The teachers are whipped. They know it's over. They are still trying to bargain, but they are very humble. Discussion groups are busy. We are going to use the RISE model of teacher evaluation. Our teachers turned down TAP last year, and we tried to warn them that would have to do it anyway and not get paid. And we have already aligned the walk through with the rubric. And all we have to figure out now is how we have to get the merit pay to fit into the picture. We are getting there. The merit pay is the only thing that can be bargained.

P3 focused on the voucher program as a concern for his district. He specifically mentioned that the teachers in his district were concerned with collective bargaining, and he suggested they focus more on the voucher program, which has taken funding from his district. He explained that he emphasized to the teachers that the voucher program is a threat and that they need to figure out why the district lost 42 students to neighboring districts.

He mentioned the health plan and that he supports a statewide health plan which is more equitable for all who participate in the state. He mentioned the term "Cadillac health plan," which he felt the teachers were adamant about keeping. As a district leader and mentor for his administrative staff, the voucher program is at the forefront of his focus.

I think the voucher program is the one that concerns me the most. I told our teacher leadership committee to quit worrying about collective bargaining last year, and they were worried about it because the new superintendent keeps telling them to quit worrying about it because I wanted it to go away so I could strip them of all their power, but they

want to dig in their heels. And they say we have this Cadillac health plan and we don't want it to change and it's a negotiated item and no thank you. The legislators heard that and said we are going to fix this for everybody. We are going to pass a law that the public employees aren't getting so much of a better health plan than people who are actually paying for it. But I told the teachers then that this voucher thing is the threat to us. Of the 190 students we lost this year, about 76 were by design because we had an enrichment program in 2 of our parochial schools that we took away, so we had some cost savings associated with those 76 students. They were partial students. The other 120 though, 42 of them moved out of state. Those are natural transients. The other ones we need to figure out who did we lose them to.

P4 took a completely different approach than the other participants. She did not specifically mention either of the two Indiana Senate bills that the others mentioned, but did mention NCLB. The reasoning could be because she is retired and no longer dealing directly with the state mandates.

She focused more on the district specific reforms, such as technology, educational curriculum, and teaching strategies. She emphasized the need for everyone in the district to see the "big vision" and to work together, not in isolation.

She also mentioned the ultimate goal of reform for her district was student-centered teaching and to make sure teachers had training and support groups for the initiative.

Reforming how teachers teach is something we worked on pretty consistently, how they work with kids. When I came there we had pretty much a senior staff . . . [and that] came along also with technology, so we were trying to keep the technology up to date. We had planned to refresh [the technology] every four years. So I think reforming how teachers

teach, how they work with kids, I think, is the most critical piece. And it's not an easy piece because teachers have been used to [it], especially those senior teachers [being] in charge of their room and not seeing themselves as working together with the high school people, or with the elementary people, and vice versa. And so trying to get them to see that big vision that everyone was responsible for those kids. Educational curriculum, teaching strategies was the biggest reform that I think has effected education. There was so much going on with effective teaching, we got all of our people to get trained in effective teaching. I am trying to think of . . . It was a program that the DOE was supporting. It was student-centered teaching. It was at the state department. We had the leader come for some of our staff development, but prior to that we had sent several groups to her workshop to be trained- it was effective teaching. It was about the same time as NCLB.

Educational Reforms are Discussed on a Regular Basis Between Mentors and Mentees

Another theme that surfaced included how and when reforms were discussed among the mentors and mentees. Two participants specifically mentioned that reforms were discussed daily with mentees. All participants elaborated on the importance of being aware of current reforms to promote the success of leading a district and that was discussed with mentees.

The three principles associated with reform as mentioned by Marzano (2003) align with the discussions between mentees and mentors regarding reforms, and they are: (a) the new era of school reform is based on the realization that reform is a highly contextualized phenomenon, (b) the new era of school reform is characterized by a heavy emphasis on data, and (c) in the new era of school reform, change is approached on an incremental basis. (Marzano, 2003, p. 174)

P1 specifically addressed the third principle:

How do you stay current with information as a mentor when the rules keep changing?

Sometimes you have to give your best educated hypothesis, here's what I can tell you, so work within those boundaries. I think reform is critical. Things have changed so fast that nobody has the answers.

The change associated with the reforms is happening at such a fast pace, it has become difficult to know enough about the current initiatives to give mentees advice. If the change had been approached incrementally, advising current initiatives would be manageable.

P2's response involved two different mentees. The first knew nothing about current initiatives regarding reform. The second mentee works very closely with P2 and is responsible for several programs within the district in which she must be aware of current reforms due to the direct funding of the programs she leads. Marzano (2003), "The first principle, the new era of school reform is based on the realization that reform is a highly contextualized phenomenon," (p. 174), supports the second mentee of P2 in that the programs she leads could be directly affected by funding from the reforms and she must be proactive and creative if there is a need for program restructuring.

P3 described the relationship between his mentees and himself in a diverse way. First, he stated, "So I think it has helped us in some ways we are now just heading up that learning curve. But I think over time our teachers will understand what that means." That statement addresses Marzano's (2003) first principle in that he and his mentees understand that change is a highly contextualized phenomenon and it requires leaders to think and lead teachers toward the phenomenon of change. The statement also aligns well to Marzano's second principle ensuring reform is approached in incremental stages.

He also addressed the second principle regarding an emphasis on data in the following comment:

There are times when I want to share information, but I know I want to use the data and the research to say this is what we are going to do, and there are other times I want to be a lot more collaborative, so it's like it depends on what it is, but I will tell you with a district our size, I have to let go certain things and trust the people that I have surrounded myself with.

P4 shared that she and one of her mentees discussed reforms at length due to his interim position as a superintendent and his district's need to address test scores.

Yes, very much, especially the second one [discussed reforms at length]. Because he had a superintendent vacancy and he filled in for a few months and so their test scores were really down, and he was interested in how to get those test scores up. He had stress from the board, very much so.

Stress is a Positive Factor in Leading

I will address two associated themes relating to reform as a stressor for educational leaders. The first will be testimony that educational reform is, in fact, a stressor for educational leaders. The second will be a theme surfaced from each participant's affirmation of stress as a positive factor in leading.

As the theme involving stress emerged in the interviews, there was a need for additional literature review regarding the source of stress in educational leadership positions. There is no doubt that district school leaders are faced with enormous challenges daily. According to Holloman, Rouse, and Farrington (2006), "educational leaders must be equipped with the tools

necessary to ‘attack incoherence’ (Bryk et al, 1998) and the significant burnout and stress dynamics with the school environment” (p. 2)

Seyle (1977) defined stress as “the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it” (p. 7). During times of educational reform, district leaders have additional demands which can prove to be stressful. As stated in *What Educational Leaders Need to Know About Stress and Burnout: Both for Themselves and their Teachers*, Holloman et al. (2006) cited Jacobson when referring to possible techniques to utilize during stressful situations:

He observed muscle tension as a symptomatic disorder that was the result of one’s experiences. He felt that if individuals could avoid tense situations, and use relaxation techniques, then they could prevent or postpone the onset of this muscle tension. (p. 3)

There are two ways district leaders can perceive tensions caused by growing demands, either by positively accepting the demands or by viewing the demands as leadership barriers (Sternberg, 2001). In this theme, all participants accepted the challenges and demands of the stress associated with reforms as positive.

In addition, Holloman (1998) discussed the fact that “district administrators must make every effort to provide adequate mentoring programs for both teachers and administrators” (p. 8). Holloman also addresses the relationship between mentor and a first-year administrators burnout level is statistically significant. Holloman’s dissertation study revealed that “poor mentors had higher levels of burnout than those individuals with no mentor. Such a comparison seems to indicate that having no mentor is better than having a poor one” (p. 8).

P1 elaborated on specific stressors associated with reform issues and emphasized that stress of collective bargaining was at the forefront of district leaders stress in the creation of teacher contracts, which is at the heart of leading a district,

Yes, those two reform issues were biggies [referring to NCLB and ISTEP mentioned in question four] . . . , another is collective bargaining as a whole. . . . Collective bargaining starting in January 1974 and morphed into a situation where districts had lost so much power. . . . The districts . . . became a big stressor because the school leaders did not have a lot of power in the creation of contracts. It became such a big stressor in trying to negotiate a calendar and the contract with your teachers and at the same time to have a contract that was good for the district and students.

P2 addressed the stresses of leading a district while drawing attention to how stress can affect the leaders physically:

Yes, physical stress, we are all a wreck. The last year here being on probation and being threatened to lose our high school, honestly, damn near killed us all. We have every stress related illness you can think of. We are now getting good press because New Tech and the ECA scores at the high school went up, 10% in English, 12% in math, and 18% in biology. The success is attributed to New Tech and the 8 Step Model-K-12, and remapping curriculum.

Clearly, P2 and her district leaders, including her mentee, accepted the sense of urgency of improving the district and successfully met the challenges and demands.

P3 viewed the educational reforms as a teachable moment. He stated he purposely dedicated time to be proactive and read each day about current issues of education and tried to educate his leadership team and teachers. He described the ways he not only tried to educate his district on their responsibilities of being aware of current issues, but he also gave suggestions of ways to react in a professional manner.

As the superintendent I tried to dedicate a little bit of time each day to read, whether it's morning or I take it home, it's important to pay attention. I feel in many ways our teacher leadership isn't paying close enough attention and so they want to lash out and (I want to) say could you do something different than just reacting to the situation? Such as go fight this change, go tell somebody, you need to be lobbying at the state house, you can lobby into state house as well. But I said we are still short in our central office and that means there is regular work that used to be done by some other personnel that I still do. So there isn't time for everything that it's a problem. We sit down and negotiate all spring, every time we sat down I was educating them they should already be paying attention to. They could never respond to anything I was saying because it was the first time they heard it, which is almost shameful in my opinion that they are paid as union leaders. And even if they weren't, they have taken on that role and should be paying attention to what's going on in our world, and they are still not doing good a job of it, and they are still angry as we make some changes.

P4 did not see the reforms as a source of stress, but a focus for the district. She described the fact that her district saw reforms as a motivation to help push the active engagement of students:

They [reforms] were a focus. It was motivating, It was a push to engage students and active engagement of students. We also did differentiated instruction. We were very much committed to on-going professional development and I hope they don't lose that.

All four participants viewed stress in a positive light, rather than negative. Hooper (2001) defined the two types of stress as positive, in which a challenge was successfully met, and negative, in which nothing tried seems to work.

The manner in which the participants embraced the changes involved in the reforms discussed were described positively, which can lead to the successful implementation of strategies as supported by the following excerpt: “Positive stress is also an excellent way of initiating the invention and problem solving process by providing more creative solutions. As a result, positive stress has been linked to many scientific discoveries, technological advances and creative designs” (stressfocus.com, n.d., p. 1).

P1 made the statement that he views the latest collective bargaining reform in the state of Indiana as positive: “I see the collective bargaining reform as a positive for school leaders.” He also elaborated that district leaders need to understand that the current reform is critical.

When P2 was asked if she thought significant educational reforms create negative or positive stress her response was, “Yes.” This was after she had elaborated on the toll that the stress was physically affecting her and the other leaders of her district. In the following statement one can conclude that the stress was negative, but the outcome for her district was positive:

We are now getting good press because New Tech and the ECA scores at the high school went up, 10% in English, 12% in math, and 18% in biology. The success is attributed to New Tech and the 8 Step Model-K-12, and remapping curriculum.

P3 described the stress he is feeling as a district leader in a personal way, fully understanding why those in his district are frustrated with him and that the frustration may be misdirected. He stated he understands the need for everyone to “digest” the changes and to understand the changes are not just in their district.

So it’s caused stress because I feel that people are frustrated with me and it is probably misdirected, but I have to understand that until they have time to digest it that that’s just where we are going to be. I really believe that some of the things that have been opened

up will give us the opportunity to look at doing things better and forcing people to say the education we got is not what the current kids need, we need something different and at the same time take money out of the public school isn't the answer. Especially ones that are high performing and that's the frustrating part for me.

P3 did make the following statement associated with reforms, "I think some of what we are doing is going to be a positive."

P4 again sees reforms as an opportunity to bring a district together, "Positive because we were all working together, to get those test scores up and increase student learning. We saw it as improving instruction was the key."

Successful Mentoring Practices in Education are More Informal than Formal

Within the interview questions regarding the mentor/mentee relationships and how the relationship began, two themes emerged. One theme, the closeness of the relationship between mentors and mentees, and the second, how the relationships was initiated. I will address the two connected themes in relationship to the mentoring practices.

Daloz (1999) stated, "Mentors are especially important at the beginning of people's careers or at crucial turning points in their professional lives" (p. 21). Support from a mentor who has experienced issues and has an understanding of leadership skills and key behaviors, and who can share knowledge and information that will foster new leader productivity and effectiveness, is a practice that can help sustain the longevity of inexperienced district leaders.

P1 discussed the process of the official mentoring. He stated the process changed from the time of the training in 2002. At the onset of the 2002 training, the mentors could not be in the mentee's district and one had to be asked to participate. In addition, he elaborated on the fact that many times mentors were chosen by mentees who knew them in the field.

[Both] unofficial or informal [mentors] that you mentor your administrative friends, and other administrators in the field. They would seek someone out that they felt would give them what they needed. The unofficial comes the same way. I think it is not a formal process, but it comes through knowing that you had those experiences and involves people who know you and respect you.

P2 shared that she is currently mentoring two mentees. She described one of the mentees is an entirely formal relationship, in contrast with the second mentee who is involved in both a formal and informal relationship. This could be attributed to the fact that she works with the latter mentee daily, and the other mentee meetings are on a sporadic meeting schedule.

The mentoring relationships of P2 with her mentees was initiated in two different ways, “M1-I think she wanted the superintendent, but the superintendent asked me to mentor her due to an illness. M2-She is getting an administrator’s license needed a mentor-trained her as a mentor. I have mentored her twice.”

As P3 described his relationship with his mentees, he specifically mentioned that he empowers them to welcome change and find effective ways to deal with change within their leadership roles:

So as we meet with them, we find some that are more receptive than others. I think one thing that I have done for them is that I have empowered them, I have told them I will support them. But I think the relationship started slowly and now as they understand the way we are operating I think we are little more forward in the changes we want them to make.

P3 also mentioned the manner in which he is mentoring those in his district was an informal process.

P4 and P2 are very similar in their mentoring experiences. Very similar to P2, P4 was involved in mentoring two individuals. Both individuals were formally arranged, yet the personal relationship of each two were uniquely different:

The first one was part of the training program. They assigned us someone to work with. We were being trained as part of what was going to be the new program. I think she was in a situation that she was acting superintendent, she had a network already in her study group. She did not want to be bothered with all the assignments. The second one, it was then part of the law, he had no problem coming up with a growth plan, or analyzing, this was helpful. The training was very helpful. We identified areas that he wanted to work on and then we corresponded through email and I would give him feedback.

The Reasons for Mentoring are Similar Among Mentors Interviewed and Grounded in Feelings of Moral Accountability

All four participants shared a common theme throughout the interviews. The theme that I perceived as I interviewed each was a rich awareness of his or her responsibility of sharing his or her experiences of leading. Each viewed and portrayed his or her professional careers in education as a way of life, not just a job. Throughout the interviews, each of the participants shared a genuine quality of simulating a distinctive feeling regarding the importance of mentoring and giving back to the craft of leading.

The response P1 shared when asked about the reasons he mentors could be viewed as a global response. He described the process of mentoring new leaders was to empower those they lead, like a circle of leadership:

Part of your nature of being an educator, why did we become educators? It is not about

the money, it's not about the glory, it's not about trying to get out of work. . . . It is because we want to help people. If you are a good teacher, you go into teaching to make a difference in kids' lives. And if you want to become a teacher, and this is why I strongly believe that strong leadership has to come from within the educational field, if you become an educational leader, it's the same thing, you are there to help people, and it is only natural that you want to teach and mentor, just as you teach and mentor little kids. That's one of the problems we have in education right now. It's not all about ISTEP scores, it's not about meeting student achievement levels, it's really about making the best citizens in the world and helping them prepare for a life as a future citizen and a future leader. I want people to take care of Social Security, keeping cars running, keeping my plumbing going, and teaching in our schools in the future. You know that's what you do, you go out and mentor with those individuals so they are prepared to handle life.

P2 answered the question very quickly, without hesitation by stating, "Because I need to pass the torch." I viewed her non-hesitant response as a rich, heartfelt answer to a question she implied all leaders should feel. During her interview, she displayed a passion for moral leading and caring about her craft. Throughout the interview, I felt her passion for education was an intrinsic part of her being.

"Paying it forward" was the underlying theme P3 described in his response to why he mentors. He also mentioned his gratitude for the opportunities he received from his mentoring experiences.

I think everybody needs somebody to give them a chance. Everybody needs somebody to tell them how it really is and be candid with them. I have had people help me, many, for that I am grateful and so if I have the opportunity to help somebody else do better for

themselves, for society, for their school community then I will. I enjoy doing that. I think it is like any other civic activity that you are involved in, if you like doing things for the good of the group, you know it is time well spent. People appreciate it too and so it is a lot easier to continue to do that stuff extra when you know the people you are helping really do appreciate it.

P4 followed the theme of the other three participants by stating, “But I saw it as a way, that yes we all have responsibility to give back and to be part of that network. And so it wasn’t hard for me to say yes to the training.” However, she also compared the differences of the collaboration between building leaders and district leaders:

I saw the superintendency as a very collaborative, helpful network, more so than at any other level of administration. When you are at the building level, especially the high school level, you are almost in competition, you are in an atmosphere of playing games on Friday night and you are always competing. You compete whether it is athletics or test scores, and I didn’t see that as much at the superintendent level. But I saw it as a way that, yes, we all have responsibility to give back and to be part of that network. And so it wasn’t hard for me to say yes to the training.

Chapter 4 provided a rich discussion of the following themes that were identified after I reviewed the transcripts and field notes:

1. The mentor’s leadership style is significant in the mentoring of new district leaders. Each participant described his or her leadership styles differently, yet there is a connection of high involvement in his or her organization and the need to adapt his or her leadership to each unique situations.

2. Legislative agendas are directly impacting district leadership. Both Indiana Senate Bill No. 575 (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a) and Indiana Senate Bill No. 1 (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b) clearly focus on district leaders.
3. Stress defines educational leadership and is a persistent topic between mentors and mentees.
4. Stress is a positive factor in leading. However, the stress from current educational reform is viewed as a positive factor in leading amidst the negative stressors.
5. Successful mentoring practices in education among participants are more informal than formal.
6. The reasons for mentoring in an educational setting are grounded in feelings of moral accountability regarding mentoring and giving back to the craft of leading.

Chapter 5 will discuss the implications of the research, suggestions of related future research, and a conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With the vast amount of change involved in educational reform, leadership roles are transforming as more leaders are expected to become instructional leaders, which is very different from 20 years ago. The days of leaders' responsibility involving "supervision of instruction, textbook selection, facilities management, the examination of pupils and school visitations" (Norton, 1996, p. 2) have vanished. Educational leaders are now directly responsible for student achievement. With all of the new educational initiatives, leaders must evolve into change agents for the schools they serve. The uncharted waters have created a need for resources and support for newly assigned leaders.

Educational leaders are in great need of support as they address reform initiatives. The support that educational leaders receive from mentors/coaches may be the determining factor in how they embrace the latest reform and work with their school communities. District leaders are facing reform initiatives which have an impact on their leadership abilities. The coaching and mentoring of experienced district leaders should aid in the abilities and effectiveness of the inexperienced superintendents during stressful reform times.

To ensure the success of organizational change during times of educational reform, the knowledge and support of experienced leaders for inexperienced leaders "are especially important at the beginning of people's careers or at crucial turning points in their professional

lives” (Daloz, 1999, p. 21). The support from a mentor who has experienced issues and has an understanding of leadership skills and key behaviors and who can share knowledge and information that will foster new administrator productivity and effectiveness is invaluable. The act of mentoring is a practice that can help sustain the longevity of inexperienced district leaders, especially in times of educational reform.

This study sought to better understand the roles of experienced district leaders as mentors and coaches to new district leaders in times of stressful educational reform and also discover certain patterns of educational reform that necessitates mentoring and coaching interventions.

This study examined the perceptions of four experienced district leaders who have engaged in mentoring and/or coaching for inexperienced district leaders. I interviewed four experienced district leaders who have or are currently acting as a mentor/coach to inexperienced district leaders.

I wanted to prove that mentoring and coaching involvement for inexperienced district leaders not only supported, but also enhanced the leadership abilities of inexperienced district leaders. Throughout the interview data found in Appendix E, experienced superintendents/district leaders indicated mentoring as a positive form of support and aided in enhanced success through both their current mentoring practices, as well as the mentoring they received as new leaders.

Results

This study examined the perceptions of four experienced district leaders who have engaged in mentoring and/or coaching for inexperienced district leaders since the enactment of the NCLB Act. I focused specifically on interview questions involving leadership skills outlined by the NASSP (1997): *Mentoring and Coaching-Developing Educational Leaders*. The

interview questions were directed toward both past and current educational reform initiatives, what leadership skills were utilized, and the impact this has or had on mentoring (Appendix A).

After reviewing the transcripts and field notes of the four participants' interview responses, six themes were identified:

1. The mentor's leadership style is significant in the mentoring of new district leaders. Each participant described their leadership styles differently, yet there is a connection of high involvement in their organization and the need to adapt their leadership to each unique situations dictated by situational context.
2. Legislative agendas are directly impacting district leadership. Both Indiana Senate Bill No. 575 (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a) and Indiana Senate Bill No. 1 (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b) clearly focus on district leaders.
3. Educational reforms are discussed on a regular basis between mentees and mentors. In current district leadership positions, being aware of and understanding current educational reform initiatives is vital for successful leadership.
4. Stress is a positive factor in leading. However, the stress from current educational reform is viewed as a positive factor in leading amidst the negative stressors.
5. Successful mentoring practices in education among participants are more informal than formal.
6. The reasons for mentoring in an educational setting are grounded in feelings of moral accountability regarding mentoring and giving back to the craft of leading.

To ensure internal validity and reliability, I solicited feedback from each participant regarding the key themes that emerged. According to Maxwell (2005),

This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstanding of what you observed. (p. 111)

Each participant received the key themes that emerged via email from the interviews and were asked to provide feedback that supported the findings, additional information regarding the themes, or identify key themes that were not listed.

Table 1 reflects of the participants' feedback to the findings of the research:

Table 1

Member Check Comments

Name	Comments
Participant 1	<p>Upon reviewing the reoccurring themes I find the conclusion drawn to be concurrent with the interviews conducted. I have great anticipation that you will expound on each of the key themes.</p> <p>I look forward to reading your concluding remarks.</p>
Participant 2	<p>a) The significance of the mentors' leadership styles during mentoring. This is absolutely key, not only to the learning experience itself, but also to the developing leadership style of the mentee. If a budding administrator is trained in a top-down, dictatorial management style, the outcome could go a number of ways. The mentee may adopt that leadership style or, hopefully, will see that leadership style as antiquated and ineffective.</p> <p>b) Specific educational reforms that are currently the focus of mentors and mentees.</p> <p>Since we spoke changes in teachers' bargaining rights and incentive pay have come about. These changes have radically changed the way I budget grants, organize professional development and even what I am able to require teachers to do. I no longer have to pay teachers for out-of-school PD or meetings if the funds are not available and I can require teachers to attend PD activities that they might not have otherwise attended. The new evaluation system (We are using RISE.) has changed the face of accountability.</p> <p>c) How and when do these specific reforms enter into current mentor-mentee relationships.</p> <p>I'm not sure that these reforms have changed the nature of the relationship. We will be training peer coaches to mentor teachers who receive</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Name	Comments
	<p>Improvement Needed and Ineffective on their evaluations.</p> <p>d) Educational reform is a source of stress for educational leaders, both positively and negatively.</p> <p>No kidding! The positive is that most of the restrictive bargaining issues have been lifted, and it will be easier to “get the job done.” The negative is that, since the game has changed, we are all in learning mode in addition to the ongoing battle to increase student achievement.</p> <p>e) Mentoring practices in education are more informal than formal.</p> <p>Depends. As a former IMAP mentor trainer, our mentoring program for beginning teachers has been more formal. I have to admit that the formality lessened as time went by. With the end of the portfolio requirement, mentoring for beginning teachers and administrators has become informal.</p> <p>f) The reasons for mentoring are similar among mentors interviewed.</p> <p>Research entirely supports the fact that mentoring increases success and the likelihood that the educator will remain in education.</p>
Participant 3	<p>Administrative mentoring will become more and more important as the demands of all administrators, especially building principals moves toward a much heavier emphasis on student achievement. I may have told you that we moved all head principals to year round contracts for this reason and we have pushed collaboration among developmental peers (informal mentoring) to ensure consistency across our ms and elementary buildings. At *****, I also strongly encourage all principals to join IASP and make sure that we are represented at the annual conference by all levels. Lately, we have been fortunate enough to be able to attract sitting principals to our vacant positions and I believe based on our compensation package and a willingness to recruit to some degree will not have to “break in” administrators in the role of Head Principal. We also have attempted to cultivate an atmosphere where we view the change as stressful but an opportunity to make things better for students. Our first underlying reason for every change we make is and will continue to be that they will lead to greater student achievement. Our high school principal recently initiated a hs principal roundtable through the service center that meets every other month. I believe inter-district mentoring/collaboration through these types of activities will become a trend as well.</p>
Participant 4	<p>I agree that the mentor’s leadership style is of great import during mentoring both in the relationship between the mentor and mentee and the effect on the mentee. The educational reforms do provide direction and focus for educators and are the focus of much interaction between the mentor and mentee. I would agree with the other themes also.</p> <p>Will be interested in your summaries when completed.</p>

A theme that surfaced almost immediately during each interview was the significance of the mentors' leadership styles during mentoring. Although each participant described his or her leadership styles differently, there is a connection of high involvement of the organization and the need to adapt his or her leadership to each unique situation. In addition, the leadership styles of the mentor is modeled within the relationships and may be assumed by mentees as the significant leadership style for effective leadership.

The current educational environment regarding reform for district leaders was specifically mentioned by three of the four participants. The second theme, legislative agendas that are currently the focus of mentors and mentees, included *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a) and *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b). Two of the four specifically mentioned the *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a), as being a focus of current educational reform. One participant indirectly referred to the *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* and specifically *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b), and one participant did not specifically mention any current educational reforms other than the *NCLB Act* from 2001.

The third theme, educational reforms being discussed on a regular basis between mentors and mentees, was introduced by each participant. Two participants specifically mentioned that reforms were discussed daily with mentees. All participants elaborated on the importance of being aware of current reforms to promote the success of leading a district which was discussed with mentees.

The fourth theme, stress is a positive factor in leading, evolved into two separate themes. First was that educational reform is in fact a stressor for educational leaders. The second was

each participant affirmed stress as a positive factor in leading, and each participant elaborated on the fact that change is stressful, but in a positive way.

A studied conducted by Balch (2004) identified two guiding principles regarding stress. One, stress is highly individualized; and the second, stress can have positive and negative implications for health, wellbeing, and performance. All four participants identified stress as being both positive and negative.

Regarding the fifth theme, mentoring practices in education are more informal than formal, two separate sub-themes evolved. One sub-theme, the closeness of the relationship between mentors and mentees, and the second sub-theme, how the relationships was initiated. The closeness of the relationship involves support from a mentor who has experienced issues and has an understanding of leadership skills and key behaviors, and who can share knowledge and information that will foster new leader productivity and effectiveness is a practice that can help sustain the longevity of inexperienced district leaders. Each participant discussed the effectiveness of mentoring relied heavily on the relationship between the mentee and mentor. In addition, each participant shared that the success of the mentee/mentor relationship was more successful and congenial when the relationships were informal, as opposed to formal.

The last theme which emerged was unanimous among the participants and was the reason for mentoring are grounded in feelings of moral accountability. All four participants shared a common theme of a passion for the craft of leading throughout the interviews. The theme was woven in each participant's response as a rich awareness of his or her responsibility for sharing his or her experiences and wisdom of leading. Each viewed his or her professional careers in education as a way of life, not just a job.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are a result of the six themes which emerged from of the qualitative research.

The Mentor's Leadership Style is Significant in the Mentoring of New District Leaders

Each participant described their leadership styles differently, yet there is a connection of high involvement of the organization and the need to adapt their leadership to each unique situation.

As cited in Marzano (2007, p. 19), Bennis (2003) discussed four critical characteristics associated with effective leadership. The characteristics describe how effective leaders adapt their styles to unique situations. The first characteristic states a leader must have the ability to engage others through a shared vision of the organization. Each participant shared specific ways they each engaged those they mentored, as well as those led.

The second characteristic discussed described effective leaders as having a clear voice centered with a sense of purpose and self-confidence. Each participant discussed the relationships they had with mentees, which not only promoted a positive relationship and self-confidence, but also modeled a sense of purpose for mentees.

Effective leaders lead by possessing a strong moral code which promotes a belief that decisions and actions are for the good of the organization, which is the third characteristic. Each participant described their leadership unselfishly, describing their roles as leaders as a great responsibility to education by mentoring and "paying it forward."

The fourth characteristic of effective leaders discusses the ability to adapt to the pressures of change. All participants described the change they experience as motivating, and mentioned they discussed the pressures of change with their mentees on a daily basis.

The Educational Reforms in Indiana, as well as the United States, are on the Brink of a Major Systems Change

Two of the biggest reforms which were signed into law during this study include the both *Indiana Senate Bill No. 575* (Collective Bargaining Act, 2011a) and *Indiana Senate Bill No. 1* (Teacher Evaluation and Licensing Act, 2011b). The Indiana House of Representatives passed *Senate Bill No. 575* on April 15, 2011, and *Senate Bill No. 1* on April 20, 2011. Three of the four participants specifically mentioned both laws during the interviews as a definite focus for current district leaders.

Indiana Senate Bill No. 575 focuses on the collective bargaining practices that historically have been in place in Indiana school systems. The law now focuses solely on teachers' contracts regarding salaries and wage-related benefits. In addition, the law will allow administrators more flexibility to hire needed teachers and the ability to place teachers where they feel is best for students. Upon the passing of the bill, Dr. Bennett, Indiana State Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated (Indiana Department of Education, 2011a):

With the House Education Committee voting today to send SB 575 on to the full House for second reading, Indiana is now one step closer to a system that gives school leaders the flexibility they need to build and lead their instructional staff and drive student performance. The bill protects teachers' rights to collectively bargain the issues that should be in contract—salaries, pay scales, and wage-related benefits—while making sure contracts aren't bogged down by provisions that distract from schools' core mission: teaching children. (Indiana Department of Education, Media Advisory, 2011a):

Indiana Senate Bill No. 1 will require each school district in Indiana to develop and

implement multi-faceted evaluations for both teachers and principals. In addition, there will be numerous evaluations required for each teacher and principal annually. The evaluations will now be a part of each individual's opportunity to receive a pay increase based on performance and responsibility, as well as the performance of students. Upon the passing of the bill Dr. Bennett, Indiana State Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated (Indiana Department of Education, 2011b):

Senate Bill 1 will empower local school districts to build innovative evaluation tools to identify and develop excellence in their teachers and principals, and it will let school leaders build professional ladders for their teachers that recognize their work and success in the classroom with increased responsibility and pay.

Both *Indiana Senate Bill 1* and *Indiana Senate Bill 575* have proven to be very controversial in the media and especially with the Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA). On August 17, 2011, the ISTA was granted a Preliminary Injunction on new regular teacher contract form which had been issued by Dr. Bennett and the Indiana Department of Education. The injunction requires Dr. Bennett to notify Indiana school districts to not use the new regular contract until further orders from the Court are issued. In addition, Dr. Bennett is required to forward a copy of the injunction to all Indiana school districts.

Educational Reforms are Discussed on a Regular Basis Between Mentees and Mentors

In current district leadership positions, being aware of current educational initiatives is vital to the success of leading. In an article from *Educational Leadership* entitled, "Staying Positive in Negative Times", Patterson and Patterson (2009) discussed strategies of dealing with adversity. One of the topics discussed includes "Don't Play the Lone Ranger" which stated,

“Resilient leaders draw on supports outside their school—mentors, colleagues who have survived comparable adversity, compassionate family members and friends, or professional networks—when adversity strikes. They aren't timid about turning to their base for help” (Patterson & Patterson, 2009, p.1).

In addition, Patterson and Patterson (2009) focused on three specific support base strategies: (a) What have I learned from others who faced similar circumstances? (b) Have I made myself vulnerable enough to involve those I trust in discussions about my doubts or fears? and (c) Have I actively sought to learn from role models who demonstrate a strong track record of resilience? (p. 1)

The three strategies mentioned correlate with the data from the participants perspectives regarding their relationships with mentees, especially during the current educational initiatives that are being implemented.

Stress is a Positive Factor in Leading.

The stress from current educational reform is viewed as a positive factor in leading. As stated in a study conducted by Balch (2004), stress is unavoidable in the dynamic and complex work environment of district school leaders. The study was designed to advance an understanding of stress as it relates to district school leaders.

Through literature research in the study, Balch acknowledged that Golembiewski, Munzenrider, and Stevenson (1986) argued that the presence of stress should not be confused with the absence of positive motivators such as autonomy, variety and significance, commitment and moral purpose in work, or organizational support. However, for district school leaders the absence of a motivator or presence of certain environmental and personal stressors can equate to stress.

Each participant made mention that the changes in the horizon for district school leaders were perceived as a positive. In addition, it was stated that the ability to use resources, such as mentors and peers, could help alleviate stress during times of change.

Each Participant Elaborated on the Fact that Successful Mentoring Practices they Experienced were more Informal than Formal

One of the criteria to be eligible to be a participant was that each must have attended the 2002 Mentoring and Coaching training which was developed by the NASSP in 1997.

In a study by Lankau et al. (2005), it was determined that in order to sustain a successful formal mentoring program, demographic and deep-level similarity impact mentoring. Lankau et al. stated,

Contrary to research on informal mentoring relationships, liking has very little impact on mentoring within formal programs. Finally, mentoring relationships change over time within a formal program. Thus, longitudinal designs are imperative to understanding and structuring the nature of formal mentoring relationships. (p. 263)

Each participant specifically stated that the successful mentor/mentee relationships they were involved in were informal because the mentee's sought out mentors who had similar beliefs and values.

The reasons for mentoring in an educational setting include specific characteristics of stimulating a feeling of moral accountability and giving back to the craft of leading. Each participant shared their beliefs of having a moral responsibility to mentor others. Examples were given of mentoring other district leaders, principals, and teacher leaders.

As discussed by Von Krogh et al. (2000), leadership focuses on reciprocity and the sharing of knowledge:

Allocate substantial time to think carefully through the types of knowledge you have in your business and where it resides. Is this critical knowledge for doing business kept in instructions, procedures, documents, and databases? Or is it tightly connected to the skills of individual professionals, deeply rooted in their years of experience? If the answer is yes to the second question, do these professionals operate according to care-based values, allowing younger members to acquire their skills through mentoring processes? If yes to this question, do you recognize the role of these people in the organization, and have you given them incentives to keep contributing to the company's overall knowledge? (p. 263).

The sharing of leadership knowledge by district leader mentors is deeply rooted in their years of experience, and other than the gratitude and relationships built, there is no official recognition for mentors presently in the state of Indiana.

Recommendations

To extend the findings of this study, I would recommend the following:

- District leaders should understand their sources of positive and negative stress during and after times of significant educational reform changes.
- District leaders should be aware of strategies to decrease and defuse stress.
- A follow-up study should be conducted to better understand the impact of informal and formal mentoring.
- A follow-up study should be conducted to better understand moral accountability as a responsibility of district leaders giving back to the profession.

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APPENDIX A: DISTRICT LEADER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your current position?
2. How many years have you served in your current position?
3. How many years have you served as a district administrator?
4. How many years have you been an educator?
5. Please describe your central office in terms of personnel and organization.
6. What is your district Average Daily Membership?
7. Would you consider you district as primarily urban, suburban, metropolitan, or rural?
8. Are you currently in mentor/mentee relationship?
9. Describe your predominant leadership style?
10. What do you consider to be the most significant educational reforms that impact your leadership?
11. Do these significant educational reforms serve as a source of stress in your leadership practice?
12. Do these significant educational reforms create negative or positive stress in your leadership practice?
13. Do you feel you are effectively dealing with the reforms you are faced with?
14. Are you currently in mentor/mentee relationship?
15. How many years have you served as a district-level mentor?
16. How many mentees have you served since becoming a district leader?
17. Why do you serve as a mentor?
18. Did you have a mentor during your first years of district leadership?
 - a. If so, do you think it helped contribute to your leadership successes?
 - b. If not, do you think it could have helped?
19. Describe your current relationship between your mentee and yourself.
20. How did the relationship with your mentor begin?
21. Would you describe your current mentor/mentee relationship as formal or informal?
22. Do issues of significant educational reform enter into your current mentor-mentee relationship?
23. Do significant educational reforms serve as a source of stress in your mentees leadership practice?
24. Do these significant educational reforms create negative or positive stress in your mentees leadership practice?
25. Which reforms serve as the greatest source of stress to your mentee?
26. Does your mentee's leadership style change according to the reform situations you face?
27. Does your mentee feel he/she is effectively dealing with the reforms he/she is faced with?
28. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we conclude?

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT FORM / SUPERINTENDENTS

Educational reform in the United States has undergone many changes in the last two centuries. The changes include the nineteenth century shift from a religious foundation to a labor-ready focus followed by a twentieth century movement calling for programs that address problems caused by desegregation and included direct funding of programs for children of low-income families. The reform initiatives of late have involved local school communities, and are evident at both the state and federal levels. As public school leaders face current reform initiatives, their experiences or lack of experience becomes a major factor in the way they confront the required changes. The decisions leaders must make in times of reform are often competing with no single solutions. Educational leaders are in great need of support as they address reform initiatives. The support that educational leaders receive from mentors/coaches may be the determining factor in how they embrace the latest reform and work with their school communities. The purpose of this study is to understand the role of experienced superintendents/district leaders as mentors and coaches to new superintendents/district leaders in times of stressful educational reform. Interviews will be tape recorded to ensure accurate analysis of data. We are requesting two hours of your time to assist with gathering information for a dissertation research project encompassing school leadership characteristics in times of significant educational reform. The interviews will occur on-site and will require no travel on your part.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Confidentiality of all participants, their school districts, or any information that could lead to identification of participants will be maintained. Data will be coded for use and accessed only by the researchers. All identifiers will be removed from the data in order to protect confidentiality.

If you would be willing to participate in this study, please contact me at (812) 237-2935 or at bmonahan@indstate.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request for assistance.

Sincerely,

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APPENDIX C: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

School Leadership Characteristics in an Era of Significant Educational Reform

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Bobbie Jo Monahan and Dr. Brad Balch from the Educational Leadership Department at Indiana State University. This research is being conducted for the completion of a doctoral dissertation. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate.

You have been asked to participate in this study because you have more than ten years of district leadership experience and received Indiana Rules 2002 Mentor Training.

- **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the role of experienced superintendents/district leaders as mentors and coaches to new superintendents/district leaders in times of stressful educational reform.

- **PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

1. You will be asked participate in one hour, one on one interview in person either at your school site, or a neutral location of your choice.
2. The interview will be audiotaped, in addition to notes recorded by the researcher.
3. You will be contacted via phone for a follow-up interview to review your transcripts and cross-check your responses.
4. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may decline to participate at any time during the process. You will not be contacted in the future if you choose not to participate in the study.

The interview questions will be directed toward both past and current educational reform initiatives, what leadership was utilized, and the impact this has or had on mentoring.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The anticipated risk from participating in this study is that not all participants will feel comfortable answering the questions. Participants may choose not to answer a question.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

This study will benefit the area of educational leadership by increasing the awareness of the need for mentoring/coaching during times of educational reform by experienced district leaders. No guarantee of direct benefits to you as a participant exists.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Your name will not be used, nor will you be identified personally in any way or at any time. Data will be coded for use and accessed only by the researchers. All identifiers will be removed from the data in order to protect confidentiality. However, the research will have a master code list to identify each subject for data analysis purposes.

Confidentiality of respondents will be protected by all means available by the researcher.

Participants will be requested to keep all information shared during the interview confidential.

Data collected in this study will be stored in the office of the researcher in a locked filing cabinet for the required three year period. At the end of the required storage period, all data collected, including audio-tapes, will be shredded and destroyed.

You have the right to review material prior to the final oral defense of the study by filing a written request to the researcher.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether or not to be in this study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

- **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact

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- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at Indiana State University, Office of

Sponsored Programs, Terre Haute, IN 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or e-mail the IRB at irb@indstate.edu. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with ISU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

Date of IRB Approval: 9/19/2011

IRB Number: 12-003

Project Expiration Date: 08/30/2012

APPENDIX D: IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact

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I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

APPENDIX E: DISTRICT LEADER INTERVIEW RESPONSES

The following information is divided by questions that were asked and are transcribed in narrative form as follows:

Question 1: Are you currently in mentor/mentee relationship?

P1: Yes, within the college of education, as well as with students in the three/five advisement leadership programs. And I work with three Ph.D. cohorts and many of these students I am their chair, so I do a lot of counseling with these students.

P2: Yes, a teacher from another district who is seeking an administrative license has a Ph.D., and has been a teacher for 42 years. In the past, I mentored a central office individual within her central office.

P3: I'm not. Although we talk a lot about people when we have questions few are local Superintendents Study Council we are able to talk to people.

P4: No.

Question 2: Describe your predominant leadership style?

P1: Transformational leadership, by all means. Beyond that I have an eclectic leadership style, I tend to adopt my leadership style to needs of the time, I have a responsibility at this level (collegiate) that is really a customer service model. So I am always looking at how I can help my students.

P2: Extremely participatory. Lots of committee involvement. I want input from absolutely everybody. I am not a top-down person, but when I have to. I will write somebody up with the best of them.

P3: There are times when I want to share information, but I know I want to use the data and the research to say this is what we are going to do, and there are other times I want to be a lot more collaborative, so it's like it depends on what it is, but I will tell you with a district our size, I have to let go certain things and trust the people that I have surrounded myself with.

P4: Hands-on, very collaborative, I gave people responsibility to carry on their perspective tasks, and even the principals had to do things for the district, like a director, I wanted them to have the whole K-12 vision. We worked to try and do professional development together so all schools were coordinated.

Question 3: What do you consider to be the most significant educational reforms that impact your leadership?

P1: Right now, currently, the changes of legislature that are affecting my leadership are collective bargaining, the evaluation system, and the opportunity for choice in charter schools is really affecting how I lead my class work. And my advising has changed drastically with all that has come forward. Political leadership in the state has really affected has affected my leadership. It is not really reform, but the leadership has been so anti-public education (that) I have needed to adapt my teaching at the collegiate level.

P2: 'Rock on' (Indiana Senate Bill) 575 (collective bargaining) When I took the job another colleague shared with me that (her current district) has one of the most restrictive bargaining agreements in the state...I had no idea, 575 is freeing us up to do so many

things. I could not even ask teachers to stay after school for teachers meetings without paying them. It is just incredible. I have sympathy for them. I was on our bargaining team when I was teaching. The teachers are whipped. They know it's over. They are still trying to bargain, but they are very humble. Discussion groups are busy. We are going to use the RISE model of teacher evaluation. Our teachers turned down TAP last year, and we tried to warn them that would have to do it anyway and not get paid. And we have already aligned the walk through with the rubric. And all we have to figure out now is how we have to get the merit pay to fit into the picture. We are getting there. The merit pay is the only thing that can be bargained.

P3: I think the voucher program is the one that concerns me the most. I told our teacher leadership committee to quit worrying about collective bargaining last year, and they were worried about it because the new superintendent keeps telling them to quit worrying about it because I wanted it to go away so I could strip them of all their power, but they want to dig in their heels. And they say we have this Cadillac health plan and we don't want it to change and it's a negotiated item and no thank you. The legislators heard that and said we are going to fix this for everybody. We are going to pass a law that the public employees aren't getting so much of a better health plan than people who are actually paying for it. But I told the teachers then that this voucher thing is the threat to us. Of the 190 students we lost this year, about 76 were by design because we had an enrichment program in 2 of our parochial schools that we took away, so we had some cost savings associated with those 76 students. They were partial students. The other 120 though, 42 of them moved out of state. Those are natural transients. The other ones we need to figure out who did we lose them to.

P4: Reforming how teachers teach is something we worked on pretty consistently, how they work with kids. When I came there we had pretty much a senior staff . . . (and that) came along also with technology, so we were trying to keep the technology up to date. We had planned to refresh (the technology) every four years. Everyone got new computers every four years . . . So I think reforming how teachers teach, how they work with kids, I think, is the most critical piece. And it's not an easy piece because teachers have been used to (it), especially those senior teachers (being) in charge of their room and not seeing themselves as working together with the high school people, or with the elementary people, and vice versa. And so trying to get them to see that big vision that everyone was responsible for those kids. Educational curriculum, teaching strategies was the biggest reform that I think has effected education. There was so much going on with effective teaching, we got all of our people to get trained in effective teaching. I am trying to think of . . . It was a program that the DOE was supporting. It was student-centered teaching. It was at the state department. We had the leader come for some of our staff development, but prior to that we had sent several groups to her workshop to be trained-it was effective teaching. It was about the same time as NCLB.

Question 4: Do these significant educational reforms serve as a source of stress in your leadership practice?

P1: Yes, all of the above, quite honestly I would say yes, but not all stress is not bad stress. As a district leader, the major stress was NCLB. I think most administrators are going to tell you that because of the accountability system . . . put all leaders in a stage of panic when we didn't meet the requirements set forth by that. Prior to that I would say

ISTEP became a big stressor. I so well remember when ISTEP was first done it was supposed to be a test of all test. ISTEP was to provide all the information to address the testing for Title 1 and Special Education, it was supposed to be the one test. Instead it became a piece the media picked up on to compare all schools. So now that we have the A, B, C, D, F grading system to compare schools, back in the 80's, the newspapers would come out with a list of all the schools ISTEP scores in the district, and unfortunately our district with low socio-economic district and we were always toward the bottom which was a great source of stress.

P2: Yes, physical stress, we are all a wreck. The last year here being on probation and being threatened to lose our high school, honestly, damn near killed us all. We have every stress related illness you can think of. We are now getting good press because New Tech and the ECA scores at the high school went up, 10% in English, 12% in math, and 18% in biology. The success is attributed to New Tech and the 8 Step Model-K-12, and remapping curriculum. (P2 then proceeded to share the districts' curriculum work with the researcher)

P3: Sure, because you know as the superintendent I tried to dedicate a little bit of time each day to read, whether it's morning or I take it home, it's important to pay attention. I feel in many ways our teacher leadership isn't paying close enough attention and so they want to lash out and (I want to) say could you do something different then just reacting to the situation. Such as go fight this change, go tell somebody, you need to be lobbying at the state house, but I said we are still short in our Central office and that means there is regular work that used to be done by some other personnel that I still do. So there isn't time for everything and that is a problem. We sit down and negotiate all spring. Every

time we sat down I was educating them to issues they should already be paying attention to. They could never respond to anything I was saying because it was the first time they heard it, which is almost shameful in my opinion that they are paid as union leaders. And even if they weren't, they have taken on that role and should be paying attention to what's going on in our world. And they are still not doing a good job of it, and they are still angry we make some changes.

P4: No, they (reforms) were a focus. It was motivating. It was a push to engage students and active engagement of students. We also did differentiated instruction. We were very much committed to on-going professional development and I hope they don't lose that.

Question 5: Do these significant educational reforms create negative or positive stress in your leadership practice?

P1: Yes, those two reform issues were biggies (referring to NCLB and ISTEP mentioned in question four . . . another is collective bargaining as a whole . . . collective bargaining starting in January 1974 and morphed into a situation where districts had lost so much power . . . the districts . . . became a big stressor because the school leaders did not have a lot of power in the creation of contracts. It became such a big stressor in trying to negotiate a calendar and the contract with your teachers and at the same time to have a contract that was good for the district and students. But because of the history of collective bargaining it was a great stressor. I see the collective bargaining reform as a positive for school leaders.

P2: Yes.

P3: Well, I think it created stress mainly because I like to look at myself as a problem solver, and I think teachers have viewed me in that role for a long time but I was able to

collect information and be very thorough, and sit back whether it is a student problem or teacher problem or transportation issue and worked through it and tried to have a win/win. Right now it is harder to have a win/win when people are already frustrated because their health benefits have gone down and their cost has gone up, they have been locked on their pay, and especially for the younger folks. Maybe it is not quite what they expected. So it's caused stress because I feel that people are frustrated with me and it is probably misdirected, but I have to understand that until they have time to digest it that that's just where we are going to be. I think some of what we are doing is going to be a positive. I really believe that some of the things have been opened up and will give us the opportunity to look at doing things better and forcing people to say the education we got is not what the current kids need, we need something different and at the same time take money out of the public school isn't the answer. Especially ones that are high performing and that's the frustrating part for me.

P4: Positive because we were all working together, to get those test scores up and increase student learning. We saw it as improving instruction was the key.

Question 6: Do you feel you are effectively dealing with the reforms you are faced with?

P1: Luckily, I am a situation now in higher ed. that I do not have to deal with reform efforts like those in the districts. If I were still a district leader at this point I think the reform efforts in some cases would be very difficult to try to work within.

P2: Yes, mention again of New Tech and PBS model, and our poverty level here is so low that we have a lot of behavior issues. (See answers from question four)

P3: Yeah, we spend a lot of time for instance in health care a lot, and I chair that committee because I told people from start that I know that benefits are a key for recruitment and retention for a quality staff. Especially teachers and so the default is to go for the state plan, which isn't terrible, but I think we can do something and design something that's better. That is going to take a lot of work and a lot of explaining, but I think our people deserve that. We had a high quality health care plan, and it is going to be less than that now, but it can still be really good and we need to make people understand what it is.

P4: As I said, we had senior staff and so getting people to buy-in and it is always easy to slip back. And you try to do more engaging work with students. And it is easy to slip back to those hand-outs and study guides, lectures and so forth. But our principals were supportive of teaching with the end in mind, and those kinds of things.

Question 7: Are you currently in mentor/mentee relationship?

P1: Not as an official mentor/mentee in terms of the state, but unofficially, yes I have lots of mentor/mentee situations. I just got off the phone with a mentee/mentor situation a few minutes ago. With my responsibilities now, I still mentor many people, and advise many people.

P2: Yes, one teacher in another district (M1=Mentee 1). I don't see her very often. And one central office administrator here in our office (M2=Mentee 2).

P3: I would say not formally, although I do have some people beneath me if I am the mentor. Some teachers who I am grooming to be principals. I always tell them whether it is for us or somebody else you shouldn't worry about that, I know some of our people

had a good experience so they really want to find a spot in our district. But sometimes you have to leave and come back.

P4: No, but sometimes the new superintendent will call for advice. He will need help with the management things, and maybe some personnel issues.

Question 8: How many years have you served as a district-level mentor?

P1: Trained in 2001/2002-state program-to mentor building administrators. Many more informal, than formal. When I first became a superintendent, it became very apparent that I would be a mentor unofficially for all my building level administrators. Having been one for 18 years, I had the experiences. I had quite a bit more experience than any building leader that I had, so I was constantly mentoring them. I hired many, so I served as a mentor for them. Each time we had a meeting it was more a mentoring teaching experience more than it was anything else. After I gained three years' experience as superintendent, I began mentoring other superintendents as well. Matter of fact there was an informal agreement from the Superintendent Association to match up new superintendents with experienced superintendents. So I know I dealt three or four new superintendents, again where I was their unofficial mentor through the Superintendents Association. And you would also discover at the superintendents' level we would all mentor each other. That is one of the responsibilities you had being a superintendent when you are in that position , people older or younger become a mentor for you in certain situations if you have dealt with situations that you have and they haven't.

P2: I am a trainer officially. I have served off and on for the last 32 years, both formally and informally. And I have had a couple administrators here in the buildings.

Probably my entire career.

P3: I would say that, we in our first cut two years ago we cut our teacher mentor program out. We had kept it for a couple years after the state quit paying it because we valued it and ultimately it was not a big line item, but it was about \$15,000. Just to give you an idea where we are financially, we had to cut that even that small amount because it was going to be another classified or certified teacher trying to avoid that, so officially we stopped that two years ago but, unofficially I continued to talk to the teachers who are in programs and tried to help them get involve with things and convince them they need to consider some other opportunities when I see other opportunities in the area, especially when I think they are good, I will call people say you should think about this job because there are other good places to work, people get in the comfort zone, they fear what they don't know, but other superintendents and I just try to explain to them you make yourself valuable by continuing to stretch leadership and solve the problems for people and get the reputation of somebody who likes to work and I think there are still opportunities for people who want to work hard.

P4: Served as a mentor for a fellow who was getting a superintendents' license-2 year program. I had two mentors total.

Question 9: How many mentees have you served since becoming a district leader?

P1: Formally/Officially 8 to 12. Informally/Unofficially I can't even count.

P2: Could not even count.

P3: Well, the specific training you are talking about was back when the state was still running the leadership and I had two. So I only had two in the formal situation where I signed off and we were meeting and doing all the regularly scheduled things. I probably advise more on how to prepare for interviews and what you need in a cover letter, at least

what I look for in candidates and helping people be realistic about the whole process. So I think for me, a lot of that informal mentoring is helping people understand the process.

And I have to tell them my own failures for them to understand. That's the kind of stuff I try to help people understand.

P4: Just the two. And I don't know why I did not have more.

Question 10: Why do you serve as a mentor?

P1: Part of your nature of being an educator, why did we become educators? It is not about the money, it's not about the glory, it's not about trying to get out of work . . . it is because we want to help people. If you are a good teacher, you go into teaching to make a difference in kids' lives. And if you want to become a teacher, and this is why I strongly believe that strong leadership has to come from within the educational field, if you become an educational leader, it's the same thing, you are there to help people, and it is only natural that you want to teach and mentor, just as you teach and mentor little kids. That's one of the problems we have in education right now. It's not all about ISTEP scores, it's not about meeting student achievement levels, it's really about making the best citizens in the world and helping them prepare for life as a future citizen and a future leader. I want people to take care of Social Security, keeping cars running, keeping my plumbing going, and teaching in our schools in the future. You know that's what you do, you go out and mentor with those individuals so they are prepared to handle life.

P2: Because I need to pass the torch.

P3: I think everybody needs somebody to give them a chance. Everybody needs somebody to tell them how it really is and be candid with them. I have had people help me, many, for that I am grateful and so if I have the opportunity to help somebody else do

better for themselves, for society, for their school community than I will. I enjoy doing that. I think it is like any other civic activity that you are involved in, if you like doing things for the good of the group, you know it is time well spent. People appreciate it too and so it is a lot easier to continue to do that extra stuff when you know the people you are helping really do appreciate it.

P4: I saw the superintendency as a very collaborative, helpful network, more so than at any other level of administration. When you are at the building level, especially the high school level, you are almost in competition, you are in an atmosphere of playing games on Friday night and you are always competing. You compete whether it is athletics or test scores, and I didn't see that as much at the superintendent level. But I saw it as a way, that yes we all have responsibility to give back and to be part of that network. And so it wasn't hard for me to say yes to the training.

Question 11: Did you have a mentor during your first years of district leadership?

If so, do you think it helped contribute to your leadership successes? If not, do you think it could have helped?

P1: Yes, I did. Yes, oh yea.....the other neat thing you learn about mentoring...is how much you learn with your mentoring. We were talking last night about the 'over worked' phrase in my class. My comment was that I know it is an over worked phrase but is still an important phrase because every time you teach-you learn. I wanted my administrators to always know and understand, and I still try to teach that every experience after you go through it that's major, you stop and you reassess what you did, and see if you were a success, and say did I handle this in the best way I could? Could I go back and do it better for the next time. And if you do that time, or even when you are mentoring people it's the

same thing. It's kind of like going to church and listening to a minister and then coming out and saying o.k. I learned from that. You know you learn from everything you do so when you mentor you are actually helping yourself. You learn from the people and the responses. Sometimes when we are mentoring and sometimes we forget that we are not the experts and the person you are mentoring will have ideas that may help you.

P2: Yes, my current superintendent. And yes, it helped me to be successful.

P3: I did not the first year, I had a superintendent who was really good in terms of meeting with me regularly, advising me, thanking me, sometimes questioning me because I was doing some things then. She didn't tell me no to things like that, but obviously wanted me to know that I was probably going to get some pushback. That superintendent wanted me to be successful and I want people to be successful and that is why I am helping them.

P4: No, I came in before. But I had a network of people who were there to help you. The neighboring superintendents were right there and would help you any way they could, that is just the way the system operates.

Question 12: Describe your current relationship between your mentee and yourself.

P1: Oh, gosh, I had several some of them are colleagues at the same level that I am in my career and those that are not quite as far along as I am in my career so I am helping them understand the steps that they need to take to be successful in what they are doing. That is probably one of the most important to me, even right now, because we have new people and those new people need to know the steps in how to be successful and happy in what they are doing. Other administrators out in the field, anytime I can help them through situations that I might have more expertise than they do based on my experiences and my

knowledge. You know you always want to do that. That's mentoring in a sense and that is teaching also.

P2: M1: Ok. She is very busy. M2: Great we are very close and I am still her mentor.

P3: Well yeah, I mean we are working rather heavily with our tech director and our transportation director to have them to start attending more to the educational needs and embracing more of a customer service model. People expect to have service at a much higher level than what it was 20 years ago. I think we have some people who look at the world in black or white, and that is not really the world and we do need to try to meet the needs of our constituents as much as possible. We are in a competitive environment, we need to retain our students first and foremost, and if we are successful in our building projects I think we will be able to regroup and get new students because our buildings will be competitive. But for now, we need to make sure the customer service side is as good as it can be. In terms of mentoring, we try to have administrative meetings twice a week, or twice a month and try to tell them where we are heading. We try to meet with our classified directors regularly because we are a school district of 1200 employees. Nearly half of our employees are classified staff. They have a lot to do with the public perception of how operate too so there is a lot of interaction with classified staff, plus certified.

P4: P4 is not currently mentoring.

Question 13: How did the relationship with your mentor begin?

P1: Well, there is the Official/formal with IMAP which you have to be asked to be a part of. Originally you had to be on a list of possible mentors. There were rules like you couldn't be in the same district as your mentee. (Both) unofficial or informal (mentors)

that you mentor your administrative friends, and other administrators in the field. They would seek someone out that they felt would give them what they needed. The unofficial comes the same way. I think it is not a formal process, but it comes through knowing that you had those experiences and involves people who know you and respect you.

P2: M1-I think she wanted the superintendent, but the superintendent asked me to mentor her due to an illness. M2-She is getting an administrator's license needed a mentor-trained her as a mentor. I have mentored her twice.

P3: Well, in the 1st year we dealt with something that came up. We didn't want to be quick to judge, like the things at the service center, the local meetings of these groups and I want them to attend, because even though we think we are ahead of other districts in what we do, there is always a chance that somebody could be doing something better. We need to make sure we are doing that networking because that is how you come up with some good ideas, and you know you don't read them on the internet sometimes. Somebody is talking about it and you overhear it, you research it. That would have been the first thing, and then as we got to the evaluations of the first year we expressed in those evaluations, of course what they were doing well and more importantly things that we think we need to do better so we can move the district forward. So as we meet with them, we find some that are more receptive than others. I think one thing that I have done for them is that I have empowered them. I have told them I will support them. But I think that relationships started slowly and now as they understand the way we are operating I think we are little more forward in the changes we want them to make.

P4: The first one was part of the training program. They assigned us someone to work with. We were being trained as part of what was going to be the new program. I think she was in a situation that she was acting superintendent, she had a network already in her study group. She did not want to be bothered with all the assignments. The second one, it was then part of the law, he had no problem coming up with a growth plan, or analyzing, this was helpful. The training was very helpful. We identified areas that he wanted to work on and then we corresponded through email and I would give him feedback.

Question 14: Would you describe your current mentor/mentee relationship as formal or informal?

P1: Answered in question thirteen.

P2: M1-Formal, M 2-Formal and informal.

P3: Informal.

P3: Formal.

Question 15: Do issues of significant educational reform enter into your current mentor-mentee relationship?

P1: Every single day...those are the hot topics and things are so new that people are asking how to handle this and how would you handle that. It's kind of weird because I am supposed to be knowledgeable about these things, but quite honestly, all the new reform efforts are so new right now, people don't have the answers that even though you are trying to mentor new people, it is almost a guessing game and are you telling them the right things. Are you current with the last thing, or the state is telling individuals and are you up to date with the processes. How do you stay current with information as a mentor when the rules keep changing? Sometimes you have to give your best educated

hypothesis, here's what I can tell you, so work within those boundaries. I think reform is critical. Things have changed so fast that nobody has the answers.

P2: M1-No, she doesn't seem to know much about curriculum, or anything like House Bill 575 or 101. She comes here and asks me a few questions and has to a few board meetings, and she sat in on a couple curriculum meetings I had. M2-Yes, daily...she is our hearing officer, head start, afterschool program.

P3: Of course, I think the changes are driving what we do and in ways making it easier for us to be more progressive because it's not like it's just us coming up with ideas in a vacuum, it's the whole competitive nature of our business feels more like the private sector and if you are not doing things well, you are going to lose customers, and all parents and students are our customers. So I think it has helped us in some ways we are now just heading up that learning curve. But I think over time our teachers will understand what that means. And you know there will still be limitations to what we can do, we are not going to expect teachers to answer an e-mail when they are at home, but certainly the next day at school or the night before. Even if you just say I did receive your e-mail and I am working on an answer for you and I will get back to you in 48 hours. That's the kind of response we want our people to give.

P4: Yes, very much, especially the second one (discussed reforms at length). Because he had a superintendent vacancy and he filled in for a few months and so their test scores were really down, and he was interested in how to get those test scores up. He had stress from the board, very much so. That's another interesting topic, the governance of the school board.

Question 16: Do significant educational reforms serve as a source of stress in your mentees leadership practice?

P1: Oh my yes, one of my colleagues talk all the time about how busy we are...when I look at the building administrators from across Indiana and Illinois, and even other parts of the country, and I see how busy they are with discipline issues, budget issues, recession, and the economy, and then suddenly comes a political army across the United States right now with reforms, of teacher evaluation, collective bargaining, national standards, race to the top, how do they find time?

P2: M1-No. M2-Yes, absolutely... she's on the benefits committee and in charge of the afterschool program.

P3: Oh yeah, there are some folks and they are all are over the spectrum, but there are some who struggle with having to take ownership and saying we decided this and it wasn't their idea if it's something that originated with superintendent's office, or central office, we sit down as a group of principals and talk about things. Even if they like the old way it's important that they start recognizing that they are part of a leadership team, the eight hour days have been a conflict for some other principals because in our area no one else has done it.

P4: Yes, very much so.

Question 17: Do these significant educational reforms create negative or positive stress in your mentees leadership practice?

P1: Negative and positive, both, we tend to focus on the negative but there is some positive in there too. There is positive stuff in there as well. I will give a couple examples, for Indiana the new collective bargaining law, I think it is a positive stress. I

think in the end you are going to have to make a lot of changes, but in the end it is going to be better because school districts will have more flexibility in how they do things. The teacher evaluation instrument, oh what a pain to have to redo that, but in the end we will have a better teacher evaluation instrument to use. There are positives will lead to better education for students. I even look at school choice as a positive. The voucher and charter system, if we work it right it can be a real positive, even though it is really stressful. Let's use it as a positive. I teach my students they should look at this as an opportunity to create charter schools in their own schools. We are already in a competitive world. If we think positively, we can turn all these negatives into positives. It is all the way we think.

P2: M1-No. M2-Yes.

P3: I think they would probably say that it's negative stress because they have to listen to the front line complaining and so for them it's a lot worse. I hear rumors, but it's not direct from people who I have known from my prior work, but they hear a lot more of it, on the other hand they do admit that some of these changes have been healthy for their school and everyone is just saying that we hope over time that it will die down. If the change were coming without the pay freezes and all the job cuts, it would be easier to take. I mean people have described this as the perfect storm in Indiana and so that in those ways they are right if we were still giving people raises and just asking them to do more it would be a lot easier, especially at the building level for them to implement. So the fact that it feels like the worlds caving in on them. Teachers feel very unappreciated is the language they continue to use with me and it's like they never needed to be coddled so much in the past, but now all of a sudden they don't feel valued. And being asked to do more is not what is causing it, I think we are not going to pay any new money in the

future unless you do something spectacular or outstanding, and show leadership. I understand some of their frustration because certainly people at the lower end of that pay scale are going to have a hard time getting up to a decent wage.

P4: I think in a negative way. He felt pressure from the board and it affected how he behaved. That is my assessment. His analysis too.

Question 18: Which reforms serve as the greatest source of stress to your mentee?

P1: The current mentioned.

P2: M1-No, she doesn't know anything about reform. M2-Yes, budget cuts and the other educational programs. The reforms have made our lives so much easier, we have to get the merit pay plan in place but then it will be easier. It's not that much of a stressor, in fact it has made our lives easier. She is also involved in the districts insurance, and we are going to have to switch to the state plan, in fact we are going to try to do it in January, which is one of the reasons we are discussing this now in negotiations.

P3: Well, I think I want to think of high school for instance, I think they embraced the whole idea of challenging more kids at a higher level. I don't think that has been the problem. I think the problem is one, the impression that leaders especially, the governor and state superintendent of schools made early on. I think Dr. Bennett, has done better lately in being careful not to generalize so much and make statements that are insulting many people who have killed themselves to help kids for years, but early on there was a lot of rhetoric that there are lot of lazy people who are just collecting the check. And I think that was unfair and I think it really did a lot of damage. I think the biggest problem with reform is probably the way it was done, more than the people are actually asked to do more and in that other piece that it's done also at the same time we have had first

budget cut in 25 years so you have to react to that while you ask people to do whole lot more and the whole lot more isn't hard part to ask , it's that we are going to ask you to do it and take a pay cut. That's the struggle.

P4: Accountability, absolutely.

Question 19: Does your mentee's leadership style change according to the reform situations you face?

P1: Definitely, it changes with what the reform is, it changes with who the mentee is, it changes with the situations you have been through. When we go through bad situations we tend to generalize and that can be brought out in our mentoring practices.

P2: M1-No, she doesn't seem to know much at all about curriculum and doesn't have the background knowledge. M2-No, her leadership style is top down and leads to some clashes. She doesn't realize it and if you tell her she doesn't hear it.

P3: I think that they are all getting better based on having the drive change and so I think they are more transformational than ever before because they understand that the path to success is offering as much for as many children as you can. Our one principal has "every child, every day" at the end of his email, that is his mission statement. I think more people are recognizing that we have to challenge more kids, we have to bring more kids up to a level, and if we are intentional about it we can make it work and there is plenty of information out there indicating that the more kids you challenge at higher level it does pull other students along, naturally, that they challenge themselves because they see other kids doing things.

P4: I think it was moving, it was changing in a more proactive way. I think that was positive.

Question 20: Does your mentee feel he/she is effectively dealing with the reforms he/she is faced with?

P1: Yes, but I think it varies, just as individuals vary. I don't think we will ever get everyone to accept what we do. I think one thing we need to do as we mentor is to help those we mentor to keep an open mind and not a closed mind. And not make any quick judgments. I try to have people to think about reflecting on all parts of what is going on, rather than just their first reaction. There is a lot of gray area, it is not just black and white.

P2: M1-No. M2-Yes.

P3: I would say that our principals are paying attention and their keeping up with their reading and of course we are feeding them as much literature twice a month as we can to tell them where we are ahead and why, so I think they are fine. I think that most of our teaching staff is embracing it, I had a couple teachers who told me that technology drove them out of teaching. I am sorry to hear that but we all have to continue to change, expand our horizons and you did not want to do that probably it was a good thing but decided it's time to quit because a lot of what we the technology is supported by research and kids are more engaged by using it. But they are more engaged by using activities and that it does enhance learning. But, I would say overall our principals, the couple that talk to me a lot they are adjusting well, but again the correlation between them talking to me a lot is that they know I am paying attention to it and so they are also paying attention. We are like sounding boards to each other. I don't want to say that they are not my mentees because I am the boss but they come to the table with a lot of knowledge and experience

to where the ones I talk with the most probably can be central office people in the future if they decide they that route.

P4: He thought he was. But he thought he did not have the support of his board. And then the person they hired as superintendent. He thought that was his problem.

Question 21: Is there anything else you'd like to add before we conclude?

P1: No, but thank you for the opportunity to be interviewed.

P2: Not really.

P3: Just to say that reforms in education in Indiana have presented some pretty strong challenges for us but the people who are already doing some of it on their own and people who are already thinking if I had some more freedom in my contract I could do some better things for students. I think across the state there are embracing it sometimes quietly because their teacher base will think they are on the other team if they say some of the stuff is good. And some of the stuff is good. And you know, the truth is in the public sector you are supposed to be serving the public. In some ways teacher contracts got away from that, it was serving the teachers and so for us as we move forward I think we are still going to make sure that our place is good place to work, which means competitive salary, hopefully better than the average benefits. If we continue to do that and we continue to treat people with dignity and respect and yet still demand a lot of them I think we would be fine. For some of our folks it has just been a lot of change in short period of time. It's been lot easier for the new teachers to adjust certainly they already mastered the technology so that is the one less thing they have to be worried about. It's veterans who signed on for I might not get a raise, that's not what I signed on

for. I signed on for one dollar health cares and a raise and an increment every year. So it's just a different world it's going to be interesting to see how it plays out.

P4: I am concerned about continuing on with high standards for administrators, and you almost have to wonder if high quality people will continue to go into administration with accountability. I don't think anyone wants to back away from accountability, but it has to be reasonable. I worry that the support for administrators may not be there.