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A FOCUS ON THE LEARNING THAT OCCURS WITHIN A FORMAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR MENTORING PROGRAM

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

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This work is dedicated to my parents, Donald Legner and Edith Zumwalt. They laid the foundation for who I am and everything I do. I am forever indebted to them.

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Abstract

The focus of this study was on examining the role of mentoring relationships established in formal mentoring programs in building strong leaders for schools, and investigated the types of learning that occur within a formal mentoring program designed to assist and support novice administrators in dealing with work-related challenges. As the primary researcher, I sought to contribute to the body of mentoring research by identifying the types of learning that take place for novice school administrators in a formal mentoring program, as well as the perceived benefits and drawbacks experienced through a mentoring relationship, therefore highlighting the importance of mentoring programs and how they might be improved for future establishment in districts and states that currently do not have mentoring programs in place.

I sought to gain an understanding of the learning that takes place in mentoring relationships through obtaining in-depth, detailed, thick description of novice administrators' experiences and perspectives. For this purpose, I conducted an empirical investigation using qualitative-naturalistic inquiry methods. I collected data primarily through in-depth, focused participant interviews.

Drawing together the findings of this study revealed both the "what" and "how" of learning within formal mentoring relationships under the direction of a state-wide programmatic initiative. Participants reported that mentees learned to communicate more effectively with colleagues, parents and community members. Managing time more effectively was also identified as a learning outcome. Mentees developed a better

understanding of their new role as an administrator and believed they learned to be better leaders. Participants also reported learning occurred involving situational problem solving involving policy and procedure.

Throughout the mentoring process, ongoing, supportive dialogue between the mentor and mentee established a level of trust, which laid the foundation for a meaningful learning experience. Much of the learning was experienced as the result of critical reflection on the part of the mentee regarding day-to-day actions and experiences. Job-embedded, authentic, and interactive learning experiences such as observations or participating in walkthroughs together were instrumental in developing new knowledge and skills of novice administrators. Often new learning happened as a result of conversations between mentees and mentors in which mentors shared ideas, interpretations of situations, and best practices.

Participants in the study identified benefits of participating in a mentoring program, such as developing a meaningful professional relationship. All mentees and mentors in the study indicated that professional learning was a significant benefit of their involvement in the program. They were unanimous in their belief that a mentoring relationship served as a catalyst for professional learning and recommended participation in a mentoring program.

Preface

Just prior to the 2007-2008 school year I accepted my first position as an assistant administrator at the middle school where I was previously working as a school counselor. I immediately found myself juggling the multiple demands on my time while trying to remain focused on learning as much as possible about how to be successful in my new position as fast as I could possibly manage. This led me to begin reflecting on my experience as a new first grade teacher several years earlier. At that time I was brand new to the education profession and in much the same position as I was as a new administrator, learning as much as possible as fast as I could, all in an effort to do my job well. The mentor I worked with as a resident teacher in Oklahoma was instrumental in my success during my first year as an educator. She provided timely answers to my questions and a lifeline of ongoing support.

As a new public school administrator already involved in a doctoral program, I began to ask questions. How do new administrators manage the challenges and demands of their positions? How do they learn what they need to know to be successful? Why was there not a form of mentoring support for new administrators in Oklahoma similar to the support mandated by the state for new teachers?

Although the positive benefits of mentoring programs have been well documented in past and current literature, I found much less information specifically focused on the learning that occurs within the context of a mentoring program. This line of thought ultimately motivated me to seek a clearer understanding of what administrators learn as a result of participation in a formal mentoring program.

I carried out the research outlined in this dissertation in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Oklahoma. This dissertation is the outcome of my work and includes no information that is the outcome of research done in collaboration with others. I was the primary investigator, responsible for all major areas of concept formation, data collection and analysis, as well as manuscript composition.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the problem

There is a nationally recognized demand to improve school leadership in the United States. Higher education institutions, local school districts, as well as professional associations continue to make great contributions toward this goal. Even so, there is much work to be done. The quest for improved school leadership forces stakeholders to assess administrator preparation programs and whether school leaders are truly prepared when they accept their first administrative position. In reality, new principals are often unprepared to assume their role as administrator (Daresh, 1986). Mitgang (2012) notes, as the role of the principal has evolved, training has failed to keep pace. According to Mendels and Mitgang (2013), "Principal training at the majority of university-based programs has long been upbraided for being out of touch with district needs and leaving graduates ill-prepared to lead" (p. 23). Critics of leadership preparation programs argue this lack of preparedness stems from a disconnect between theory and the practical on-the-job experiences of school leaders (Clayton, Sanzo & Myran, 2013; Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr & Cohen, 2007). Over the past ten years the profession has responded to criticisms of university-based leadership programs (Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Robey & Bauer, 2013). A handful of universities have made great strides in developing exemplary programs, although these efforts remain the exception (Mitgang, 2012).

The improvement of school leadership also forces us to look at the types of support administrators receive once they obtain a leadership position in a school or

district. Unfortunately, very little happens. In the past, the professional development of school administrators has been described in the literature as a wasteland, meager, neglected, poverty stricken, one of the worst slums, and deplorable (Brown, Anfara, Hartman, Mahar, & Mills, 2001). Over the past ten years a growing handful of urban school districts have focused efforts on moving away from occasional professional development for principals to supporting school leaders through prioritized, ongoing, intensive, job-embedded support, all in an effort to improve classroom instruction (Honig, 2012). They have done this by elevating principal support to an executive-level responsibility (Honig, 2012). Even so, there continues to be a lack of systematic, comprehensive support for administrators (Aycock, 2006; Burkhart, et. al, 2007; Villani, 2006, Wardlow, 2008).

Accentuating the lack of professional development is the reality of the complex and demanding role of new administrators. New policy mandates, standards, demands for accountability and increasing complexity of the job characterize the principalship today (Bodger, 2011). One could argue that being a school administrator is one of the most demanding jobs in public education and in many other sectors as well. Brave new recruits can find the first few years as an administrator to be both rewarding and challenging, but the transition to being a school administrator is often difficult. New administrators may feel excited, but often find themselves feeling isolated, sometimes even questioning whether the decision to become an administrator was a wise one (Bauer & Brazer, 2009; Bauer & Stephenson, 2010; Howard & Mallory, 2008) .

Too often new school leaders are shocked by differences between job expectations and job realities (Anderson, 1989; Ricciardi, 2000; Spillane & Lee, 2013).

Portner (1997) points out that the first year is marked by surprising workplace realities including often overwhelming work demands and lack of performance feedback. Leading a highly complex organization such as a school requires that an administrator face a dizzying array of demands with a lack of time to accomplish everything that needs to be done (Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010; Spillane & Lee, 2013). Clayton, Sanzo and Myran (2013) report that new administrators feel a sense of time pressure and conflicting priorities centered on accountability.

The multitude of demands a new administrator faces on a daily basis includes making decisions, solving problems, planning for the future, communicating successfully, using time efficiently, facilitating change, improving instruction, creating a positive school culture, increasing test scores and motivating students, teachers and staff (Blaydes, 2004; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010; Spillane & Lee, 2013). School administrators are also responsible for curriculum development, special education issues, teacher observations and evaluations, public relations, personnel issues, busing, student discipline and maintaining a safe school. New principals find themselves supervising others, exercising formal power and authority given to them by law and policy, and managing large sums of money, detailed budgets and various accounts (Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010; Spillane & Lee, 2013; Wright Brumage, 2000).

On top of all of these challenges, demand is growing for improved academic standards, school reform and increased accountability. The wave of reforms and state mandates requires an administrator who can not only oversee the implementation of regulations but address internal issues such as school safety, integrating technology into instruction and sexual harassment (Reitzug, 1997). School leaders must also promote

continuous learning and development of teachers who are challenged to teach students to higher standards of accountability (Zepeda, 2007). As instructional leaders, principals also need to know how to function in the political world of organizations (Playko, 1991). With the continuous focus on accountability and increased expectations for student achievement school leaders are charged with creating schools that embrace the highest standards in teaching and even higher levels of student learning.

Ferrandino (2001) gives the following synopsis of the challenges faced by school leaders:

> The principalship today is a much more demanding job than it used to be. For example, the typical elementary school principal today puts in longer hours (an average of nine hours a day and fifty-four hours a week), leads a larger school (an average of 425 students), and supervises more people (an average of thirty teachers and fourteen other staff members) than typical principals in past decades…Yet even as we try to prepare principals for all the challenges they face today, the vast and continuing changes going on in education and in society as a whole could present an entirely different set of challenges in the years ahead. The principalship of the 21st century requires something more than a compendium of skills. It requires the ability to lead others and to stand for important ideas and values that make life meaningful for others. It requires never losing sight of vision, even when making the hard day-to-day decisions. These attributes are what tomorrow's principals will need – and what today's outstanding school leaders already possess. (p. 440)

New administrators can be disadvantaged when they confront high-pressured job demands while struggling to understand their new roles (Anderson, 1989; Ricciardi, 2000). Crossing over into the role of school leader represents a sizable shift for most newcomers and new administrators often struggle to manage the transition to this new role (Spillane & Lee 2013).

Filling this multifaceted role means that many administrators are stressed and burned out as a result of the pressure put on their time, energy and resources. New school leaders often experience stress related to the large number of tasks in a new

environment, with the added pressure to assimilate quickly to a new culture (Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, Ikemoto, 2012). In a Colorado study, researchers found that stress for first time administrators manifests itself in three major concerns: 1) absorbing volumes of information, 2) working for change despite resistance, and 3) proving oneself to others (Lovely, 2004). First year principals also report stress due to shifts in relationships with family, friends, colleagues and their superiors (Ginty, 1995).

In an era when demands are increasing, recruitment for formal school leadership roles is becoming more difficult (Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho, & Doughty, 2002). Problems contributing to the challenge of recruiting strong principals include attracting sufficient numbers of high-potential candidates to commit to administrator preparation programs, working conditions, especially in high-poverty urban areas, and the perception of aspiring principals of being ill-prepared and inadequately supported to take on the challenging work of instructional leadership and school improvement (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Knapp, Copland, & Talbert, 2003). As stated earlier, the multitude of demands such as district expectations, federal guidelines, complex budgeting processes, meeting the needs of at-risk students and dysfunctional families, increased violence, drugs, teen pregnancies, and weapons on campus, a litigious society, and the demands and expectations of federally-driven schooling policy such as *No Child Left Behind* and now *Race to the Top* RttT make the principalship an exceptionally challenging office to fill (Weingartner, 2009). Many candidates do not see the school leader’s job, in it’s current configuration in many districts, as doable or adequately supported (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007).

To compound the recruitment problem, studies report that up to half of the nation's principals will be eligible for retirement in the next ten years (Reedy, 2005). Militello, Gajda, & Bowers (2009) report the number of school leader positions that need to be filled because of administrators leaving the profession and a difficulty to find willing, qualified candidates will grow 20% in the next five years. This trend of eligible school leader retirees is expected to continue (Reames, Kochan, & Zhu, 2014). For example, Reames, Kochan, & Zhu (2014) found that by the year 2015, 82% of the principals in Alabama would be eligible for retirement and 75% of them plan to retire. State and school systems with high concentrations of poverty, limited resources and persistently low-performing schools may see the greatest demand to fill empty school leader positions (Reames, Kochan, & Zhu, 2014; Roza, 2003). As increasing numbers of school leaders leave the profession we will find ourselves turning to their successors, a new generation of novice administrators, for leadership.

To assist this new generation of administrators in addressing the demands and challenges they face, educators and policymakers must consider providing them with the necessary information and support needed to be successful in their new role. Browne-Ferrigo & Muth (2006) suggest that novice principals, in order to grow in their practice, require professional development based on professional practice expectations through mentoring, peer sharing, critique and systematic induction. Mentoring for novice administrators may be helpful in the acquisition of practical competencies related to leadership practice (Mohn & Machell, 2005).

In what is hopefully a trend toward filling the gap in professional development for administrators, the practice of cultivating mentoring relationships between school

administrators is increasing in popularity across the nation (Daresh & Playko, 1989a). The Wallace Foundation (2007) suggests principal mentoring has gained acceptance among states and urban districts since 2000. Accordingly, the Wallace Foundation (2007) recently reported that "roughly half of the nation's states have now adopted mentoring requirements for new principals – a striking turnabout considering how rare acceptance of or funding for such mentoring was prior to 2000" (p. 3).

Although the notion of mentoring as a form of professional development for administrators is increasing in popularity, in some states there continues to be a noticeable lack of mentoring programs available to administrators. For example, in Oklahoma there was until very recently a state-mandated residency program that incorporates mentoring for first year teachers, but there is no such state-mandated program for novice administrators. Currently the Oklahoma Teacher Residency Program has been suspended due to budgeting issues (Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act, 70 O.S. 3-167).

Although there are quarterly meetings for novice principals in Oklahoma through the Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration (a professional association with lobbying interests), participation is voluntary and limited to a specific number of participants. The result of a lack of comprehensive mentoring resources in Oklahoma is that many administrators in their first, second or third year face the challenges of their new position alone. For many states such as Oklahoma, the obstacles to establishing mentoring programs for administrators have included political and financial challenges, a "sink-or swim" mindset toward principals, and the scarcity of

data demonstrating the efficacy of mentoring programs for principals (Wallace Foundation, 2007).

Purpose

As educators who know how critical it is to have strong leadership in schools, it is important to seek out, evaluate and implement the most effective professional development models designed to achieve this goal. Mentoring is a form of professional development with great potential, as evidenced by increasing support across the United States (Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013; Honig, 2012; Skinner, 2010; The Wallace Foundation, 2011). But before the use of administrator mentoring becomes widespread, states must determine that it is a valuable form of professional development and if such programming promulgated at the SEA level is a viable layer of school governance for the work to be carried out. Do participants who complete these mentoring programs experience significant learning that impacts their practice in a positive way? This qualitative research will investigate whether or not, or to what extent, administrative mentoring programs are a valuable form of professional learning and development for novice administrators in their journey toward becoming highly effective leaders. Novice principals are emerging leaders who face unique challenges in their first few years as an administrator. This study, therefore will focus on examining the role of mentoring relationships established in formal mentoring programs in building strong leaders for schools, and will investigate the types of learning that occur within a formal mentoring program designed to assist and support novice administrators in dealing with work-related challenges.

Significance

Although several states in the U.S. have established formal school administrator mentoring programs, there is a notable absence of these programs in many states. The benefits of mentoring programs in general, and as a form of support for teachers as an education-specific occupational group, have been well documented in current education research (Hobson et al., 2009; Long, 2009; Mathur, Gehrke, & Kim, 2013; Menon, 2011). Less documented are the benefits of mentoring programs for school leaders. To add to this body of research, to promote the widespread use of administrator mentoring programs, and to encourage more states to implement mentoring programs for administrators, further research needs to be conducted in this area. Intended benefactors of this study include state leaders responsible for improving school leadership in their states, higher education leaders responsible for preparing school leaders, and novice administrators, who are responsible for fulfilling the day-to-day leadership roles in schools. This study seeks to contribute to the body of research by identifying the types of learning that take place for novice school administrators in a formal mentoring program, as well as the perceived benefits and drawbacks experienced through a mentoring relationship, therefore highlighting the importance of mentoring programs and how they might be improved for future establishment in districts and states that currently do not have mentoring programs in place.

Definition of Terms

Mentoring has existed for thousands of years and in Western civilization has its roots in Greek mythology. Homer's *Odyssey* tells the story of Odysseus, upon leaving to fight the Trojans, entrusting the education of his son, Telemachus, to a wise man

named Mentor. During Odysseus' twenty year absence Mentor served as the prince's role model, trusted advisor, counselor, guardian and guide. He did not replace Odysseus in the parental role, but with the help of the goddess Athena, helped Telemachus understand and embrace the difficulties that awaited him (Malone, 2001). Mentor was responsible for providing help and guidance to Telemachus, as well as teaching him to think and act for himself (Crow & Matthews, 1998). Telemachus was accompanied and guided by Mentor on the journey in search of his father. As a result of the journey, Telemachus developed a new and fuller identity. The relationship between Mentor and Telemachus in *The Odyssey* helped formulate some understanding of the process of mentoring (Wright Brumage, 2000). Because Mentor intentionally carried out his responsibilities to Telemachus, he fostered Telemachus' growth and development towards full maturity. This was the beginning of the classic mentoring relationship (Summer-Ewing, 1994). Three thousand years later the name Mentor is still attached to a more experienced person guiding or counseling a less experienced person. Although mentoring has existed for thousands of years, it is only in the last thirty years that mentor-protégé relationships have received increasing academic and professional interest (Malone, 2001).

Mentor

Difficulty arises when discussing exactly how to define the term "mentor." In education and other professions mentors and mentoring have been defined in many different ways, providing no universal definition of the term. Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran (2013) note that the definition of a mentor varies in the literature, but typically refers to how an individual works with a protégé, assisting that person on their career path and

providing professional development as needed. Semeniuk and Worrall (2000) list these synonyms used by researchers when clarifying the term mentor: developer of talent, coach, opener of doors, sponsor, protector, confidant, supporter, patron, guide, counselor, advisor, encourager, befriender, preceptor, role model, facilitator, symbolizer of experience, teacher, parent substitute, friend, guru, successful leader, professional colleague, anthropologist. More specifically, Webster's dictionary defines mentor as a wise advisor, teacher, or coach. Other popular definitions focus on the career advancement or professional development of a protégé by someone in a position of authority within the professional context (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Gaskill, 1991; Kanter, 1977; Mertz, 2004; Ragins & Cotton, 1991). Ragins and McFarlin (1990) define a mentor as "a high-ranking, influential member of your organization who has advanced experience and knowledge and who is committed to providing upward mobility and support to your career" (p. 321). Crosby (1999) asserts a mentor is "a trusted and experienced supervisor or advisor who by mutual consent takes an active interest in the development and education of a younger, less experienced individual" (p. 13). McCarthy and Mangione (2004) note that a mentor is someone whose advice you seek and value, or someone who offers you advice and suggestions which you believe are beneficial to your academic, career or personal life.

Kram (1985) suggests that a mentor is defined as an individual with advanced experience and knowledge who is committed to providing upward mobility and career support to their protégé. Kram (1980) further suggests that mentors provide career support and psychosocial support to their protégés. Career support comes in the form of coaching, promoting exposure and/or visibility, as well as opportunities for challenging

assignments. Psychosocial supports such as counseling, role modeling, and friendship add a second layer to the mentoring relationship. Altmeyer, Prather and Thombs (1994) describe a mentor as a “role model, teacher, a sounding board, a cheerleader, and a friend who facilitates open communication, provides information, and offers access to both official and unofficial networks” (p. 387). Serving merely as a role model does not require any direct exchange, but a mentor assumes active responsibility for the development of the protégé (Rogers, 1986; Yoder, Adams, Grove & Priest, 1985). Samier (2000) suggests that the task of a mentor is to establish a unique relationship with his or her protégé and fulfill a need unmet in any other relationship.

Mentoring

Just as there are many definitions of the term mentor, there are multiple descriptions of mentoring relationships. Healy and Welchert (1990) add their definition of mentoring as “a dynamic, reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé) aimed at promoting the career development of both” (p. 17). Whitely, Dougherty, and Dreher (1991) describe mentoring as a particular interpersonal relationship that can influence career progress. Higgins and Kram (2001) indicate that a mentoring relationship exists when a senior person working in the protégé’s organization assists with the protégé’s personal and professional development. Friday, Friday, and Green (2004) offer the following universal definitions of mentor, mentoring and mentorships, “A mentor is a wise and trusted counselor or teacher.... Mentoring is the guidance process that takes place between a mentor and a protégé.... A mentorship is a mentoring relationship between a mentor and a protégé (p 637).”

Smith (2005) suggests that mentoring is a relationship characterized by a caring and more experienced professional reaching into the life and practice of a generally younger and less experienced colleague, offering to assist that person in the development of a range of professional skills and personal behaviors. Raabe and Beehr (2003) describe mentoring as consisting of three behaviors making up relationships between mentors and mentees: career development, social support, and role modeling. Mentoring has even been defined as a state of mind which creates a mutually supportive dyadic cultural space that encourages sharing of ideas and norms, allowing experienced personnel to lead and openly and nonjudgmentally create interpersonal communications resulting in a faster and more constructive start-up for a new employee entering an organization (Leidman, 2006). Mentoring has also been described as a process that embraces change and collaboration in decision-making, while fostering creative leadership (Wright Brumage, 2000).

Traditionally mentoring has been studied as a dyadic relationship between a more experienced individual and a younger, less experienced mentee. Mentoring relationships generally fall into two categories: informal and formal mentorships. The level of involvement of the organization and whether it is recognized and embraced as an official practice determines whether the mentoring relationship is considered a formal or informal relationship among peers.

Informal Mentoring

Inzer and Crawford (2005) assert informal mentoring is "a natural component of relationships that occurs throughout society, in the workplace, as well as in social, professional, and family activities" (p. 35). Informal mentoring relationships commonly

form by mutual agreement, often times between co-workers in close proximity. Because informal mentoring typically occurs in a relationship that is voluntarily formed by both persons, it commonly begins as a friendship first, then evolves to include a learning and career component (Inzer & Crawford, 2005). These types of relationships typically do not benefit from any assistance or support from the organization. These arrangements are based on mutuality and intrinsic rewards with both parties benefitting from the relationship (Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1996). The informal mentoring relationship is shaped by the individual needs of the mentee and success depends upon the mentee finding a mentor who is skilled, as well as willing to develop a mentoring relationship.

Formal Mentoring

Hansford and Ehrich (2006) provide the following definition of formal mentoring:

> Formal mentoring is a structured and coordinated approach to mentoring where individuals (usually novices – mentees, and more experienced persons – mentors) agree to engage in a personal and confidential relationship that aims to provide professional development, growth, and varying degrees of personal support. (p. 39)

A formal mentorship is one that is assisted or facilitated by an organization (Inzer & Crawford, 2005) and differs from informal mentoring in that the organization develops a program with formal processes – rules, policies, procedures – for mentoring to take place (Inzer & Crawford, 2005). Formal mentoring relationships are shaped by the needs of the individual, as well as the organization. When an organization functions within a human resources framework, they remain focused on the relationship between people and the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2008). These people-centered organizations tend to place a high priority on hiring the right people, then focusing on

keeping them by investing in learning and development opportunities, empowering them and promoting diversity (Bolman & Deal, 2008). When the fit between people and organizations is a good one, Bolman & Deal (2008) assert, "individuals find meaningful and satisfying work, and organizations get the talent and energy they need to succeed" (p. 137). The relationship may also facilitate increased productivity for both mentors and mentees, and improved organizational communication and understanding (Lacey, 1999; Murray & Owen, 1991).

These formal, face-to-face mentoring programs, in which mentors and mentees interact with each other at a certain time and place, arose from the realization that early support for mentees assisted in their socialization and enculturation (Boyle & Boice, 1998a; Chao, 1998) and informal or naturally occurring mentoring relationships were not always available in an equitable fashion (Boice, 1993; Hamilton & Scandura, 2002; Ragins & Cotton, 1991; Single & Single, 2005; Turner & Thompson, 1993).

E-Mentoring

In addition to face-to-face mentoring, electronic mentoring, also called e-mentoring, telementoring or cybermentoring, is gaining popularity for its convenience and accessibility to timely interaction. Single and Muller (2001) have defined e-mentoring as:

> A relationship that is established between a more senior individual (mentor) and lesser skilled or experienced individual (protégé), primarily using electronic communications, and that is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the protégé to help him or her succeed, while also assisting in the development of the mentor. (p. 108)

In the U.S., e-mentoring can be traced back to the first large-scale school mentoring program, the Electronic Emissary Project in 1993 (Harris, Rotenberg, &

O'Bryan, 1997; Single & Single, 2005). Although the focus of this first education-based program was to match K-12 public school students working on subject-specific projects with adult experts in their area of interest, e-mentoring has come to include the establishment of e-mentoring relationships in adult professions such as business, law, medicine and education. E-mentoring is structured much the same as a traditional mentoring relationship, with a more experienced, knowledgeable person providing guidance and advice to a less experienced colleague. With the growth in information technology, e-mentoring allows opportunities for communication between mentors and protégés that are not possible with a face-to-face mentoring relationship. Probably the biggest advantage of e-mentoring is the flexibility it provides for communication. In an e-mentoring relationship mentors and protégés are no longer tied to meeting at a certain time or at a certain place. This flexible relationship may be just the learning environment that many of our new young school leaders are most comfortable with.

Mentoring versus Coaching

Although coaching and mentoring may sometimes viewed as the same support system, Burk (2012), Drago-Severson (2009) and Grissom & Harrington (2010) note some distinct differences in coaching. While mentoring typically takes place over an extended period of time, coaching may encompass a shorter time period (Burk, 2012; Drago-Severson, 2009; Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Coaching relationships may become less personal than in a mentoring relationship (Burk, 2012; Drago-Severson, 2009).

The Ohio Department of Education (2012), in their Beginning Principal Mentoring Program Framework, has identified some of the research-based distinctions between mentoring and coaching:

Table 1

Mentoring vs. Coaching

Mentoring	Coaching
Mentoring focuses on individual growth.	Coaching is performance oriented with specific performance objectives.
Mentors provide extended support to help new principals learn the requisite knowledge, skills, behaviors and values needed for school leadership positions.	Coaches provide deliberate support to another individual to help him/her clarify and/or to achieve goals and achieve high levels of performance.
A mentor is an advisor, critical friend, guide, listener, role model, sounding board, strategist, and supporter.	Coaches are change agents who work with people to unlock their hidden potential.
A mentor asks questions, challenges productively, encourages risk taking, offers encouragement, provides feedback, promotes independence, and shares critical knowledge.	Coaches model, observe learner performance, and provide encouragement, diagnosis, directions, and feedback.
Outcomes for mentoring include providing support and empathy, counseling, sharing ideas, problem solving, guiding professional development and improving confidence	Coaches encourage action oriented initiative focused on problem solving.
Mentors cultivate leadership skills and help bridge the gap between scholarship and practice.	Coaches have high levels of knowledge in specific skill areas and focus on learning and growth.

Coaching is often implemented as a district-based intervention and can be described as a form of professional development that is school embedded and therefore close to instructional practice (Resnick, 2010).

Novice Administrator

Novice principals are administrators who are at the beginning of their career as a school leader. For the purpose of this study, novice principals are defined by the Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program as those principals with 1-2 years of experience as a school administrator (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012).

Data Collection

Qualitative designs are naturalistic to the extent that the research takes place in real world settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002, p. 39). For this study I worked from a naturalistic social science research orientation that explored in depth the adult learning that does and does not take place in school systems and how a mentoring program might or might not be conducive to that learning and the experiences of the participants. My intent was to collect data in real world settings under conditions that were comfortable and familiar to study participants. I do not seek to make specific generalizations based on findings from the study but rather focused on a constructivist qualitative research tradition that was primarily exploratory in nature in order to build and further develop theoretical understanding about the role of mentoring in the support of novice principals. Some aspects of this research are clearly pragmatic and align with a qualitative tradition that seeks to understand, clarify, and give evidence to specific educational practices (Creswell, 2009).

Data for this naturalistic study were collected primarily through individual audiotaped interviews that were later transcribed. Prior to each interview participants

were given a brief explanation of the purpose of the study, background of the researcher and focus on the topic. During the interviews, that lasted approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, participants were asked general open-ended, probing questions focused on their understanding and perceptions of their own learning that was occurring or had occurred within a structured mentoring relationship. The inquiry centered on general and specific issues related to the kinds of professional learning that takes place, the commonalities and differences in learning among novice administrators, and the perceived benefits and drawbacks related to participation in a structured mentoring program. In addition to interviews, data collection included documents and researcher observations.

Data were analyzed using the major theme of identifying what kind of professional learning takes place for novice administrators because of their involvement in a formal mentoring program. Each data set was coded relative to this theme and to identify other emergent themes within an ongoing process of data categorization. Data were coded a second time to ensure a thorough examination of the data and the credibility of analysis categories. Member checks were used to establish the trustworthiness of transcript data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participants were given an opportunity to review interview transcripts, respond to statements and make additional comments. To further promote trustworthiness in the analysis and categorization of data, a final copy of the write up of the study was made available to each participant to provide the opportunity to contribute feedback. Corrections and clarifications were made based on participant comments.

Research Questions

This study sought to gain perspectives from novice and veteran administrators regarding their learning experiences in mentoring relationships through participation in a formal administrator mentoring program. The following questions guided the study:

1. What kind of professional learning occurs for novice administrators and their mentors because of their involvement with a formal mentoring program?
2. What are the most salient commonalities and differences in learning among novice administrators?
3. What are the perceived benefits and drawbacks to being involved in a formal mentoring program for administrators?

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides a statement of the problem, as well as the purpose and significance of the study in the field of educational administration at the district and state level. This chapter also addresses the definitions of various terms connected to mentoring. Chapter 2 provides and in-depth review of pertinent empirical and conceptual literature and presents the theoretical framework informing the study. Additionally, the demands and challenges of novice administrators, the effects and influences of mentoring relationships, along with components of formal administrator mentoring programs are addressed. Chapter 3 reports on the research design and methodology for this study including a description of analytical techniques and procedures used with acquired data. Chapter 4 presents the research findings. Chapter 5 is a discussion of study findings including conclusions and implications.

Conclusion

As the nation continues to seek improved leadership in schools it is increasingly important to address the various forms of support administrators receive as they begin their careers. The role of an administrator encompasses many responsibilities and fulfilling this role on a daily basis can be complicated at times. Promoting improved school leadership, as well as protecting principals from becoming overly stressed, burned out, and/or exiting the work are issues that can be addressed by the establishment of mentoring programs for administrators. Increasing the number of principal mentoring programs in the United States is important, not only for administrators personally, but for the continued improvement of leadership in the nation's schools (Leithwood, Lewis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Lewis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Knapp, Copland, Honig, Plecki, & Portin, 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2011). This study serves to support and promote improved school leadership through systematically examining the learning dimensions of formal mentorship for both the mentee and mentor and ultimately the viability of developing, implementing and faithfully carrying out formal administrator mentoring programs as a form of development, support and learning for novice administrators.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Theoretical Lens

Whether the format is face-to-face mentoring or the electronic version, mentoring as a form of professional development is supported by much of what is currently known about how individuals learn, including the socially constructed nature of learning and the importance of experiential, situated learning experiences (Kerka, 2002). Bandura (1977) and other social learning theorists support the idea that adults benefit from direct and observational learning experiences. Bandura's social learning theory explains human behavior in the context of continuous interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental influences. Social learning includes the basic concepts of observational insight and understanding, imitation, and modeling commonly found in the context of mentoring relationships.

While social learning theory advocates that individuals imitate or copy modeled behavior from personally observing others, the environment, and mass media, social constructivism is a learning theory which emphasizes the importance of learners actively constructing meaning and knowledge from personal experience. Constructivist theory, originally proposed by Jean Piaget (1977), emphasizes the internal mental processes by which people learn in connection with personal experiences. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) state, "…a constructivist stance maintains that learning is a process of constructing meaning; it is how people make sense of their experience" (p. 261). Implications for learning include actively engaging students and creating a learning

environment rich with opportunities for meaningful experiences. Indeed, the role of the instructor is seen as a facilitator (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998).

Vygotsky (1978) points out that collaboration and conversations among learners is crucial to the learning process, with its roots in an offshoot of constructivism: social constructivism, which emphasizes the social and collaborative nature of learning. In contrast to Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, social constructivism stresses interaction over observation. From a social constructivist view, knowledge is "constructed when individuals engage in talk and activity about shared problems or tasks. Making meaning is thus a dialogic process involving persons-in-conversation, and learning is seen as the process by which individuals are introduced to a culture by more skilled members" (Driver, Asoko, Leach, Mortimer, & Scott, 1994, p. 7). Thus, the role of a teacher is to enter into dialogue with the learner, helping him or her to make meaning of mutually constructed knowledge. Social constructivists view learning as a social process whereby people make sense of their world by interacting with other people, with mediation as a key element in the learning process (Dozier, 2004).

Aspects of social constructivism can be seen in Knowles (1984) model of adult learning, known as andragogy. The term andragogy was introduced to the American culture in 1967 by a Yugoslavian adult educator, Dusan Savicevic (Knowles et. al., 2005). Later, Knowles used the term to contrast the learning between adults and children. Knowles et. al (2005) andragogical model includes the following precepts: 1) Adults need to know why they need to learn something; 2) Adults maintain the concept of responsibility for their own decisions; 3) Adults enter the educational activity with a greater volume and more varied experiences; 4) Adults have a readiness to learn

those things they need to know in order to cope effectively with real-life situations; 5) Adults are life-centered in their orientation to learning; 6) Adults are more responsive to internal motivators than external (p. 72).

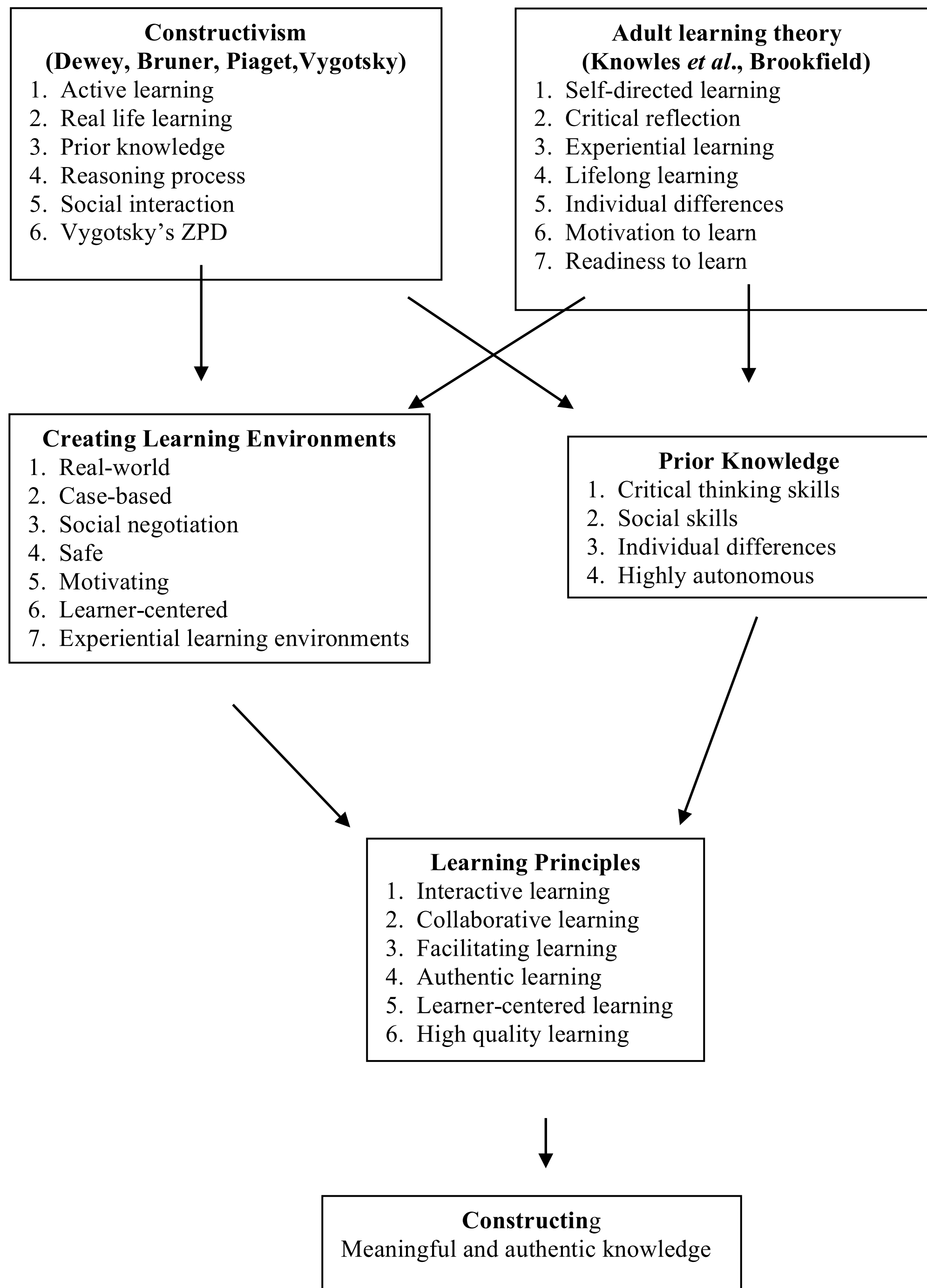
Similarly, Anthony and Kritsonis (2007) believe Adult Learning Theory makes the following assumptions about the design of learning: 1) adults need to know why they need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction, 2) experiences (including mistakes) provide the basis for learning activities, 3) adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance to their job or personal life, and 4) adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented (p. 4).

Additionally, Brookfield (1995) proposed four processes that are exclusive to adult learning: 1) self-directed learning focuses on the process by which adults take control of their learning; 2) critical reflection is a form and process of learning how adults think contextually and critically; 3) experiential learning is such that adult teaching should be based on adults' experiences; 4) learning to learn is crucial for adult development.

Huang (2002) depicts the connection between constructivism and adult learning theory. Figure 1 is a synthesis of Huang's work.

Figure 1

Depiction of the tenets of constructivism as applied in adult learning (Huang, 2002).



In addition to studying how individuals learn, it is also important to pay attention to how learning is supported within education organizations. The terms human capital and social capital are organizational features to consider when guiding policy design in educational settings. Human capital refers to what people in an organization know and know how to do (Harbison & Hanushek, 1992; Resnick, 2010). It is typically measured by credentials, performance observations, and individual outputs (Resnick, 2010). In education, human capital can be expressed as "teacher knowledge and skills," "teacher beliefs," and "instructional leadership" (Resnick, 2010, p. 190). Resnick (2010) notes that knowledge comes from multiple sources and is often public. Knowledge is exploding every day, and that knowledge is emergent from the complex interactions in which people engage (Resnick, 2010). Thus the issue to address is how to create human capital within education organizations.

One way to build human capital within education organizations is to focus on the development of social capital. Introduced by sociologists, the term social capital refers to resources for action that inhere in the relations or interactions among people – the opportunities that some people have, and that organizations can create, for acquiring knowledge and other resources through interactions with others (Becker, 1964; Coleman, 1988; Resnick, 2010). Social capital refers to the social ties, trustful relationships, and the ways in which people in an organization share what they know. By focusing on the development of forms of social capital, such as leadership activity, norms of trust and collaboration, collaborative routines, and structures of interactions, organizations promote the growth of human capital.

Because of its interactive, socially constructed nature, mentoring as a form of adult learning in education organizations addresses the issue of how to best support novice administrators as they learn to deal with the problems and challenges they face on a daily basis (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Alsbury and Hackman (2006) believe that developing effective mentoring programs will provide valuable opportunities for novice administrators to socialize into the field. Brown-Ferrigno and Muth (2006) suggest that novice administrators, in order to grow in their practice, require professional development based on professional practice expectations through mentoring, peer sharing, critique and systematic induction. With the aforementioned emphasis on the social and collaborative nature of learning, operating from principles of social constructivism, as well as the organizational advancement of human capital through the development of social capital, a coherent conceptual framework informs the use of mentoring as a form of professional development for novice administrators. In this study I sought to explore the perceived learning that takes place as a result of participation in the social and collaborative experiences within a mentoring program.

Descriptive and Empirical Research on Mentoring

Mentoring in Other Professions

However the term mentoring is defined and understood, a review of the literature shows mentoring is a vital part of the developmental processes associated with the preparation, induction and ongoing education of individuals in many different professions. In an effort to gain an accurate understanding of how mentoring is situated in the professional world, it is important to review literature that reports findings from empirical investigations, as well as literature produced by organizations that promote

mentoring. Appendix A provides an outline of empirical and advocacy literature regarding mentoring in the field of education and in other professions, such as business, medicine and law. The concept of mentoring dates back to the earliest stages of human civilization, with the pioneering qualitative work of Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978) and Kram (1983) suggesting that mentoring is a powerful influence on success in organizational environments (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008). For many professions, the use of mentoring relationships to facilitate and sustain professional development is an age-old tradition (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006). Professions such as medicine, law, religion and business use mentoring relationships as an integral part of helping colleagues grow personally and professionally (Daloz, 1986). Disciplines such as sociology, social psychology, management, social work and health care management have also seen the emergence of mentoring (Friday, Friday, & Green, 2004). Mentoring has evolved from an apprenticeship-based system of training and education to now include an organizational human resources component (Bolam & Deal, 2008).

Mentoring has been the relationship of choice for professional development in the business sector for many years (Cunningham, 1999). Faced with issues such as downsizing, teamwork, increased diversity and individual responsibility for career development, the business community has embraced the concept of mentoring (Kerka, 1998). Mentoring has been thought to be highly effective as a career development and management training tool, so much that many companies have invested in formal mentoring programs with the intent of fostering mentoring relationships among their employees (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lenz, & Lima, 2004; Burke, McKeen & McKenna,

1994; Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng., & Dubois, 2008; Kammeyer-Meuller & Judge, 2008; Klauss, 1981; Kram, 1985; Singh, Ragins, & Tharenou, 2009; Underhill, 2006). It has been studied widely and has been reported to be effective in enhancing career development in private industry (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006). Individuals with mentors report more positive career outcomes than those lacking a mentor (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lenz, & Lima, 2004; Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & Dubois, 2008; Kammeyer-Meuller & Judge, 2008; Singh, Ragins, & Tharenou, 2009; Underhill, 2006). Singh, Ragins, & Tharenou (2009) found that mentoring added value in predicting promotion, advancement expectations and turnover intentions and confirmed a key principle of mentoring theory (Kram, 1985) that mentors help their protégés advance. Mentoring has been found to be related to protégés career mobility, promotions, compensation, and career and job satisfaction (Ragins & Scandura, 1999). Bryant and Terborg (2008) found that firms that were able to raise their employees level of peer mentoring through training were able to increase knowledge creation and sharing in their organizations.

Additionally, mentoring programs in business have been used to address the needs of women and minorities. Texas Instruments, Coopers and Lybrand, and Cabletron Systems are just a few major companies who have developed aggressive mentoring programs in order to support and retain women and minorities. Mentees in these programs have noted the fairly risk-free environment, as well as ongoing contact with senior management, that has allowed them to be assertive and competent in their positions (DiDio, 1997).

Although studies are limited in the legal profession, they document substantial benefits from mentoring relationships (Kay & Wallace, 2009), including reduction of

employee turnover (Laband & Lentz, 1995) and increased work satisfaction and retention (Higgins & Thomas, 2001). Kay and Wallace (2009) found that protégés benefitted through direct contact with mentors. Interestingly, Kay and Wallace (2009) found that benefits to men were primarily extrinsic or objective (e.g., earnings, advancement), while benefits for women were more often intrinsic or subjective (e.g., work satisfaction and perceived fairness).

As an understanding of the importance of mentoring has evolved, many academic medical centers have developed, supported and promoted mentoring programs (Varkey, et al, 2012). Mentoring has been an important component related to career advancement within academic medicine and other disciplines (Straus, Chatur, & Taylor, 2009; Varkey, et al, 2012). Varkey, et al (2012) found that participants in their study reported improvements in career satisfaction, a higher level of engagement in academic pursuits, and progress in formulating specific plans relevant to achieving career goals.

Mentoring in Education

The field of education has adapted the concept of mentoring from the business sector to fit the needs of new practitioners. Mentoring and peer relationships in the areas of teacher education (Johnson, 2002; Showers, 1985) and teacher professional growth (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; McCann & Radford, 1993; Wilkin, 1992; Zimpher & Rieger, 1998) have been well established for several years. Teacher mentors began to be used as a support mechanism for new teachers in the early 1980's (Wang & Odell, 2002). Tillman (2003) suggests that mentoring programs were typically designed to reduce the attrition rate of novice teachers, provide novice teachers with a smooth and

efficient transition into a teaching culture, train mentors to support new teachers' instructional practices, and transform the culture and profession of teaching.

Despite the significant presence of mentoring efforts in education dating back to the early 1980's, there was little research conducted specifically addressing the mentor-protégé relationship until well into the 1990's. During that period and since then researchers have documented the support provided to beginning teachers through mentoring relationships and the characteristics of effective mentoring relationships. Feiman-Nemser (1996) conducted research that led to a theory of teacher mentoring. Little (1990) noted that researchers found startling differences in the way mentor teachers conceived of and carried out their work with beginning teachers. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) found that after decades of assuming that teachers teach alone and get better only through their own individual trial-and-error, there is an increasing commitment to the idea that all teachers are more effective when they can learn from and be supported by a strong community of colleagues.

Mentoring (and Preparing) Pre-Service Teachers

For many young educators their first experience with mentoring in the education setting happens as they begin work as a pre-service student intern. Nearly every employed teacher worked through a university-sanctioned, unpaid student teaching experience in the home classroom of a master teacher (Hall, 2008). In the past there has been much criticism of teacher preparation programs. A renewed focus on these programs has led universities to revamp their programs to include more emphasis on students gaining much needed practical experience.

Michigan State University, one such school to call for reform in teacher education, launched a five-year program that includes a bachelor's degree and a post-baccalaureate internship. Students spend more than 100 hours in the field in undergraduate courses, as well as completing a fifth-year internship. Additionally, graduates participate in a three-year new teacher induction program in which they meet weekly with trained mentors (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2008).

The highly ranked University of Virginia's Curry School of Education also features a five-year program combining extensive subject-area knowledge, fieldwork, and pedagogy. Most students enter the teaching sequence in their second year, making observations in classrooms and other school settings. In their third year, students focus on individual learners, tutoring children one-on-one. Fourth-year students complete major coursework while studying and using whole-classroom management, instruction and assessment techniques. Students in their fifth year teach the entire fall semester, complete their coursework and an education-research project in the spring (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2008).

At the University of Texas at Austin the teacher preparation program is geared toward increasing the number of high-quality math, science and computer science teachers in K-12 schools through a partnership with the University's College of Natural Sciences and its College of Education. Courses and field experiences are aligned with benchmarks for technology integration and learner-centered instruction. Students spend 15-20 hours in the field prior to formal placement in a school. The next step is fourteen weeks of student teaching at a single site (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2008).

Other programs emphasize internships as well. Kansas' Emporia University has a teacher preparation program that is centered on a full year in professional-development schools, as well as a uniform assessment system (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2008). At Stanford University the Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP) is a twelve-month master's degree program with a close integration of theory and practice and field work in professional development schools beginning on the first day of pre-service preparation. By the end of the program students have logged forty weeks in the classroom (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2008). The University of Oklahoma's teacher education program, TE-PLUS, is designed to facilitate excellence in the areas of: 1) teacher as educator, 2) teacher as communicator, 3) teacher as decision-maker, 4) teacher as scholar, 5) teacher as researcher, and 6) teacher as leader. It features coursework tied to three formal field experiences where students are placed in educational environments representing rural, urban and suburban experiences (University of Oklahoma, 2014).

Mentoring In-Service Novice Teachers

Although effective pre-service preparation for beginning teachers is important, it is just the beginning of a new teacher's need to engage in lifelong professional development (Playko, 1995). Even with the experience gained from a good teacher preparation program, the transition from student teacher to first year teacher can be a traumatic experience, on that has been labeled "reality shock" (Emrick, 1989). In fact, teaching has been described as the one profession that "eats its young" (Easton, 2004; Halford, 1998). Easton (2004) notes, "a third of newcomers leave teaching within the first few years, citing lack of assistance and support as the key reason" (p. 150).

Empirical research supports Easton's claims, with current studies estimating that between 40% and 50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into teaching (Ingersol, 2012; Ingersol & Perda, in press)

The challenges faced by new teachers are many. Most beginning teachers enter their first classroom experience with idealistic and unrealistic expectations. New teachers are in the midst of learning how to teach, and the experiences they have in their early years can affect the trajectory of their future learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). New teachers struggle with constructing approaches to classroom management, images of themselves as teachers, ideas about students, and ways of teaching specific subject matter (Borko & Putnam, 1996; McDiarmid, Ball & Anderson, 1989; Wilson, Shulman & Richert, 1987). In particular, these teachers worry about classroom control, their own competence as teachers, and how they might fit into the overall school structure (Grossman & Thompson, 2004). Beginning teachers walk into classrooms that may have been cleared of essential resources such as books, bulletin board materials, and basic classroom supplies. In addition to organizing their new classrooms, "rookie" teachers must spend time learning the curriculum, developing new ideas related to discipline and classroom management, writing lesson plans, as well as finding their place within the social context of the school. For many new teachers, the immediate goal is survival (Trubowitz, 2004).

Mentors can be an important factor in providing support for new teachers as they enter the real world of the classroom (Alliance for Excellent Educators, 2005). Mentoring intended to provide newcomers with guidance, problem solving resources, modeling, support, and feedback can offer beginning teachers, as well as teachers who

are new to the district, a professional lifeline (Easton, 2004). Mentors can help new teachers navigate through the first days of school, learn routine procedures, and offer a safe place to stop by for a word of encouragement. Traditional patterns of mentoring involving adults have focused on the training of professional development skills (Merriam, 1983). Research supports the underlying assumption that providing the guidance of a mentor through all levels of socialization enhances the teacher's ability to collaboratively reach the critical thinking skills, knowledge and competency levels necessary to positively impact student learning (Reedy, 2005).

Mentoring can be described as a means to a larger end: that of creating a strong, improvement-oriented profession in schools, professional associations and teacher unions (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000). Mentoring among teachers has been characterized as,

> …an intentional, confidential process through which an experienced teacher or professional provides a newcomer with information, support, resources, guidance, feedback, and assistance to help the newcomer refine his or her present skills, develop new ones, and enhance problem solving and decision making in a way that leaves its mark on knowledge and practice related to student learning (Easton, 2004, p. This is quoted directly from Handout 1 on the CD-ROM that accompanies the book. How do I cite correctly?).

This job-embedded form of professional development offers many forms of assistance to a new teacher, including guidance, resources for problem-solving, modeling, support, and much needed feedback. It is a powerful form of support for new teachers because it offers newcomers a "nonjudgmental, professional colleague who can familiarize him or her with the culture of the building, its policies, procedures and practices" (Easton, 2004, p. 153). Organizations that offer mentoring programs send a strong message to new teachers. They quickly recognize that as beginning teachers they are valued, that

they will be offered help to become master teachers, and that the system hopes they will stay (Easton, 2004).

Recognition of the need for close guidance for new teachers has promoted the growth of mentoring programs for new teachers. More than 30 states have implemented some form of mentoring for new teachers at the elementary and secondary levels, and some states even require teachers in training to intern with a mentor teacher prior to obtaining their teacher licenses (Education Alliance at Brown University and NAESP, 2003). In California, for example, in a nine-year period between 1992 and 2000, the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA) grew in size from 1,700 participants to providing mentors for 26,500 new teachers, (Olebe, 2001).

In Oklahoma the Resident Teacher Program was established as a result of the Teacher Reform Act of 1980. Initially called the Entry Year Assistance Program, the name was changed in 1995 to Resident Teacher Program and was terminated several years ago under new administration. New teachers in Oklahoma were required to participate in their first year of teaching under the guidance and assistance of a Resident Teacher Committee. The committee consisted of a mentor teacher, a principal or assistant principal at the teacher's school and a representative from the preparing institution of higher education. Teacher mentors worked closely with new teachers during the school year to provide professional support. Observations by committee members are part of the evaluation process for teacher certification. Currently, due to budget constraints, the Oklahoma Resident Teacher Program has been suspended indefinitely.

Researchers have studied the effectiveness of these teacher mentor programs. A comparison study by Evertson and Smith (2000) of mentored vs. non-mentored elementary teachers found mentees with higher ratings in nearly all aspects of classroom instruction including managing instruction, establishing rules and procedures, motivating students and managing student behavior. Studies also show that teacher mentoring is financially effective. Even though the cost of mentoring teachers in California is approximately $5,000 per teacher, attrition rates have been reduced (Easton, 2004). In contrast, a study of schools who participate in comprehensive induction programs that include a mentoring component reported no significant impacts on student achievement, job satisfaction or teacher retention (Isenberg, Glazerman, Bleeker, Johnson, Lugo-Gill, Grider, & Dolfin, 2009).

Mentoring New Administrators

Just as new teachers need support from other, more experienced teachers, new school administrators need the same support from experienced administrators. The concept of mentoring is a relatively recent phenomenon in the field of educational administration, as evidenced when calls for administrator in-service programs began to emerge in the mid-1980's (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; Daresh, 2004). While there is growing support for administrator mentoring programs as a support for future and current school leaders, "serious attention has not been paid to this issue in the scholarly community" (Daresh, 1995, p. 9).

Historically, administrative mentoring programs have been used sporadically as a way to support both aspiring and practicing school administrators (Reedy, 2005). Alsbury and Hackman (2006) note,

> Mentoring models for novice principals and superintendents began to be created in the late 1980's and early 1990's by university-based administrator preparation programs and state policymakers as a vehicle for stimulating reflective practice and providing technical expertise, role clarification, and socialization in a more authentic context (p.169).

The increasing interest in administrator mentoring programs can be connected to a heightened appreciation of the critical role school leaders play in facilitating improvements in student learning and the realization that the professional development of school administrators is a worthwhile public investment (Wallace Foundation, 2007).

Traditionally, aspiring administrators acquire knowledge and skills in administrator preparation programs that purportedly deliver what is considered necessary for success as a school leader. Novice aspirants are then deemed ready to accept the leadership role of an administrator and sent into schools to apply what they have learned. Any further professional development as a school leader is typically then left up to the administrator.

The need for mentoring relationships has become even more evident as studies show that graduate training alone does not necessarily translate into better-led schools (Malone, 2001). School administrators consistently report that the university education they received as gradate students did not adequately prepare them for their new role and the demands it places on them (Ashby, 1991; Bridges, 1977; Murphy & Hallinger, 1987). A recent Public Agenda survey of school administrators found that 69 percent of principals and 80 percent of superintendents believe that typical leadership programs are out of touch with the realities of what it takes to run today's schools (Farkas, Johnson, Duffett, Foleno & Foley, 2001; Lashway, 2003). In fact, in her research, Reis (2003) found "most leadership professional development programs focus on external issues that

affect a district – scheduling, curriculum, instruction and assessment. They're critically important – however, they don't deal with the internal issues of leadership – who you are and how you think and act" (p. 17).

Traditional approaches have been characterized as "bankrupt" (Murphy, 2001). Furthermore, change at the university level in terms of redefining administrator preparation programs has been viewed as slow, with a perception that faculty are not always as well-connected as they should be with the field and are sometimes complacent about adopting standards (Norton, 2002). Of notable interest is a recent four-year study conducted by Arthur Levine, then president of Teachers College at Columbia University. Levine (2005) concluded that "the majority of [educational administration] programs range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the country's leading universities" (p. 24).

Some, but not all, university administrative programs include an internship program that consists of a more experienced administrator mentoring an aspiring administrator. Few administrator preparation programs require a full semester experience, much less a full year internship, and unfortunately are limited in scope and depth (Fleck, 2007).

Recent research conducted by the Southern Regional Education Board (2007) specifically analyzed the characteristics of mentoring provided in university-based principal preparation programs in the 16-state SREB region. In *Good Principals Aren't Born - They're Mentored* (SREB, 2007) survey data from veteran principals serving as mentors to aspiring principals in a formal internship experience characterized the present

condition of mentoring for aspiring principals as "far from satisfactory" (p. 5). More specifically the study found:

> 1) Choosing the right mentor and internship site is in the wrong hands. 62 percent of survey respondents indicated that a criterion for matching mentors and interns was simply the intern's choice. Consequently, principal interns experience a narrow range of school environments and ways to solve problems in the school setting; 2) When it comes to mentoring, we get what we pay for – and that is not much. Just 38 percent of survey respondents received any training; 3) Mentoring focuses on the wrong things. Less than half of the mentors reported creating opportunities for interns to lead activities that would demonstrate essential knowledge and leadership skills; 4) School districts have not claimed ownership of the mentor selection process – are not capitalizing on mentoring as a means of securing a reliable supply of well-prepared new principals. Only 20 percent of mentors indicated that school districts were involved in their selection, while only 13 percent indicated they discussed interns' strengths and weaknesses with district leadership; 5) Experienced practitioners' judgments about aspiring principals' competencies little weight. While a majority of mentors (64 percent) provided feedback directly to their interns, only 55 percent completed a formal evaluation for the university or district (pp. 13-17).

Other research from SREB (2007) reported the following findings:

> 1) More than two-thirds of the department heads indicated that their universities had not established working relationships with local school districts; 2) Only one-third of surveyed programs placed interns in situations where they could gain a comprehensive understanding of how to lead change in school and classroom practices that might lead to higher achievement; 3) Less than half of surveyed programs provide interns a developmental continuum of practice that begins with observing, followed by participation and finally, taking the lead in school improvement efforts; 4) Many aspiring principals are under-supported during their mentorship; 5) More than half of the department heads rated their evaluations of interns' performance as having either an average or a small degree of rigor (p.18).

Opportunities for aspiring leaders to gain knowledge through working with practicing principals are essential (Lumsden, 1992; Milstein & Krueger, 1997). Strong internships are associated with increased role clarification and technical expertise (Daresh, 1987; Daresh & Playko, 1997), changed conceptions of the principalship (Milstein & Krueger, 1997; White & Crow, 1993), and the development of important

skills and professional behaviors (Cordeiro & Smith-Sloan, 1995; Lumsden, 1992). Continued attention must be given toward improving university principal preparation programs in order to provide internships that are meaningful and purposeful in preparing future generations of school administrators.

Clearly, the profession can no longer rely solely on certificates, credentials or degrees. Preparation for the administrator leadership role must be ongoing, continuous, and supportive throughout the career of the principal (Zellner & Erlandson, 1997). Research on mentoring suggests it can be a valuable aid for administrators who must continuously adapt to changes as they lead (Daresh, 1995; Kraus & Cordeiro, 1995; Seay & Chance, 1995). Mentoring relationships provide knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values that are identified as important for new principals (Crow & Matthews, 1998). Malone (2001) reports "increasing evidence that shows school leaders, throughout all stages of their careers, can benefit from a mentoring system in which a seasoned leader helps the protégé place theory and practice into the context of experience" (p.1). An important finding in the research of Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran (2013) was that mentoring relationships had a positive impact on the leadership development of mentees, as well as mentors. Additionally, Grissom and Harrington (2010) found that principals who engage in mentoring opportunities perform better.

New principals find it takes hard work to learn the art, science, and craft of educational administration (Daresh & Playko, 1992). The first few months of the principalship are critical in the process of shaping school leaders, and what happens during an individual's first year as an administrator exerts a major influence on subsequent performance (Duke, 1987; Elsberry & Bishop, 1993). The complex role of

the school leader is best learned and developed by observing, doing, commenting and questioning, rather than simply listening (Walker & Stott, 1994) under the guidance of experienced exemplary principals who serve as mentors and guides. Ricciardi (2000) agrees that due to the complex nature of school leadership, the success of entry-level administrators may lie in their ability to engage in relevant developmental activities early in their administrative careers. In fact, mentoring is almost universally seen as a potent mechanism to help new administrators “get their sea-legs” in a fast-changing, complicated system (Wallace Foundation, 2007), as well as an effective tool for supporting principals at different developmental stages of their administrative careers (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Chapman, 2005). Providing support for beginning leaders who are making the transition into administration can promote growth beyond survival.

Mentoring Novice Administrators

In what is hopefully a trend toward filling the gap in professional development for principals, the practice of cultivating mentoring relationships between school administrators is increasing in popularity in school systems across the nation (Daresh & Playko, 1989a). Mentoring of aspiring and new administrators is also established as a recommended approach in a number of other countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Singapore (Thody, 1993; Walker & Stott, 1994; Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho & Doughty, 2002). Both the National Association for Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National association for Secondary School Principals (NASSP) advocate mentoring for school leaders in the U.S. as a vehicle to convert knowledge of theory, research and content in practice (Saunders, 2008). It has been noted by the Wallace Foundation (2007) that administrator mentoring

has gained acceptance among states and urban districts in the U.S. since 2000. Accordingly, the Wallace Foundation (2007) recently reported that "roughly half of the nation's states have now adopted mentoring requirements for new principals – a striking turnabout considering how rare acceptance of or funding for such mentoring was prior to 2000" (p. 3). It is important to note that, even with the increase in principal mentoring, few principals have participated in formal mentoring programs as part of their leadership training. In 2010 there were approximately 210,000 school principals working in all U.S. schools both public and private (Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Chung, & Ross, 2013) and likely only a fraction have been formally in-service mentored into the profession. Fewer than half of the superintendents interviewed for a 1998 Educational Research Service (ERS) survey indicated that their districts had a formal induction or mentoring program for new principals (Education Alliance at Brown University, NAESP, 2003).

Although administrator mentoring models are not as widespread and in use as teacher mentoring models, they do exist at the district, regional, state and national level. One example of a district model is the New Administrator Induction Program in Bridgeport, Connecticut. In Connecticut mentoring is not state mandated, nor is it part of certification or licensure for administrators. However, participation in the mentoring program is Bridgeport is mandated by the school district. All assistant principals, new principals, curriculum leaders and special education leaders are expected to participate in the New Administrator Induction Program, where the purpose is to provide a professional network to new administrators consisting of professional development, mentoring and coaching (Mossman, 2007). The goals of the program also include providing professional development for new administrators, providing mentoring and

coaching, supporting the Bridgeport Administrator Evaluation Plan, and to train and retrain urban educators (Mossman, 2007; Villani, 2006).

The Leadership Initiative for Transformation (LIFT) was established in Chicago Public Schools in 1995 (Villani, 2006). As in Connecticut, mentoring is not mandated by the state of Illinois, nor is it a part of the certification or licensure process for administrators. The LIFT program was designed as a collaborative effort between five organizations in Chicago (Mossman, 2007). The established goals of the program are to support novice administrators in their first year as instructional and administrative leaders of their schools, identify and train experienced principals to serve as coaches/mentors for beginning administrators, and to foster a culture within Chicago Public Schools where school leaders feel nurtured and encouraged to strive for excellence and have high expectations for the staff and students in their charge (Mossman, 2007; Villani, 2006).

Created in 1995, Extra Support for Principals (ESP) is a mentor program established to provide support for beginning principals in Albuquerque Public Schools (Weingartner, 2009). The program's primary purpose is to provide an unencumbered support system for new principals, with a conscious effort to avoid a pattern of creating stress and instead, encouraging growth. The goals of the program are to mentor administrators into a positive leadership role, provide advocacy and consultation in support of effective school leadership, and to utilize the expertise and experience of practiced administrators in a supportive relationship with new school leaders (Weingartner, 2009; Villani, 2006).

Although mentoring of new administrators is not mandated in the state of Colorado, Sheridan School District in Englewood, Colorado has established a New Principal Induction Program. In this program, leadership training happens twice a month and new principals are mentored by the superintendent and the director of curriculum and instruction. The goals of the program are to provide a broad array of support on a variety of issues that administrators will encounter so they get what they need in a timely manner (Villani, 2006).

There are also examples of university models of in-service mentoring. At the University of California in Santa Cruz, the Coaching Leaders to Attain Student Success (CLASS) program in conjunction with the New Teacher Center (NTC) is the only state-approved mentoring-based pathway to a professional credential and, in fact, the CLASS model has been embraced nationwide (New Teacher Center, 2014). The goal of the program is to support site administrators in their first years of service. Program components include one-on-coaching, weekly communication via telephone and email, observations, networking sessions and workshops (New Teacher Center, 2014; Villani, 2006).

The University of North Carolina has established the Leadership Program for New Principals. Started over twenty years ago and organized around the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, the program is eighteen days long, beginning in September and ending in March. The program is designed to strengthen leadership behaviors and management skills through a variety of support processes including mentoring (UNC Center for School Leadership Development; 2008; Villani, 2006).

Many states, including Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania are providing coaching and training to support beginning administrators, (Archer, 2006). The Arkansas Beginning Administrator Induction Program was established to fulfill state requirements for mentoring new principals in Arkansas (Arkansas Department of Education, 2014; Villani, 2006) and based on the Standards for School Leaders and developed by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (Arkansas Department of Education, 2014). The Arkansas mentoring program is a part of certification and licensure for new administrators. This program is state funded and serves all beginning administrators from the building level to the district level. The purpose of the program is to produce highly qualified instructional leaders possessing the knowledge, skills, and disposition as they relate to everyday leadership of teachers and students, ultimately leading to greater student achievement (Arkansas Department of Education, 2014; Villani, 2006).

In 2003, mentoring became a mandate for state certification and licensure in Indiana (Mossman, 2007). The Indiana Principal Leadership Academy was established as a way to offer professional development to principals, with the goal of improved student achievement. The goals of the program are to identify and select school leaders who have demonstrated potential for professional self-growth and to develop that potential, create a self-perpetuating cadre of school administrators to serve as facilitators and trainers for other administrators and teachers, create an excitement for continuous growth of academy graduates, ensure school effectiveness by developing leaders of instruction as well as managerial technicians, and to strengthen leadership skills (Villani, 2006). The program is a two-year commitment with an emphasis on orientation,

professional development and networking, including two years with a mentor from outside the district (Indiana Department of Education, 2014; Villani, 2006).

Led by the Governor's Congress on School Leadership and the State Board of Education, Alabama launched the New Principal Mentoring Program. The goals include providing support for new principals through modeling, guidance, coaching, and encouragement in a one-on-one relationship, in order to inspire new principals and build skills and confidence (Alabama State Department of Education, 2010).

Ohio is another state that has developed a support system for new administrators. The Ohio Department of Education has developed the Beginning Principal Mentorship Program based on the Ohio Standards for Principals. The program is open for newly appointed school principals, assistant principals, or other administrators in charge of school sites. The purpose of the program is to provide a framework for beginning administrators to accelerate their development as school leaders with a focus on impacting student achievement. (Ohio Department of Education, 2012).

There are several mentoring models established by professional associations. On a national level, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has established the National Principal Mentor Program. Since its inception in 2003, the NAESP National Principal Mentor Program has focused on empowering school districts from around the country to develop outstanding programs that enhance their leadership succession plans for the recruitment and retention of highly qualified principals and other school leaders. In this program NAESP provides training for principals to act as mentors. Mentors also coach new administrators in developing leadership skills

(NAESP, 2014). Mentors who complete the entire program may earn a National Principals Mentoring Certification (NAESP, 2014; Villani, 2006).

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has also established a program, Selecting and Developing the 21st Century Principal. The goal of the program is to develop school leaders who have the skills and attributes required to lead their schools successfully and ensure student success. The program is based on a diagnostic assessment tool that can help identify and/or develop effective school leaders. NASSP works with sponsoring organization to build their capacity to develop and implement mentoring programs (NASSP, 2014). The mentoring and coaching program involves a day and a half for mentor and coaching training, leaving the duration of the mentoring relationship up to the sponsoring organization and the individuals involved (NASSP, 2014; Villani, 2006).

At the state level the Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association (MESPA) has established The New Principal Seminar Program. Mentors and new principals will meet at the MESPA New Principal seminar in the fall. New principals and their mentors have monthly contact with a minimum of three (3) face-to-face meetings during the year—at the New Principal seminar, MESPA Institute, and a time determined by the new principal and mentor at the conclusion of the school year. Mentors and mentees address areas of interest and need, such as: observation/evaluation of staff, budget, scheduling, instructional leadership, professional development (Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association, 2014).

Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TESPA) has established a mentoring program through its First-Time Campus Administrators

Academy. The academy requires that mentors have at least five years of experience, provides formal training for both mentors and mentees, requires that mentors and mentee meet at least once a month, and facilitates standards-based professional training for mentor/mentee cohorts three times per year. New administrators participate in a professional growth process through a cohort based learning structure that includes a mentoring component (Education Service Center Region XIII, 2012). The goal is to create a quality induction support system for new campus administrators (Villani, 2006).

New Jersey has developed a state-approved comprehensive mentoring program, New Jersey Leaders to Leaders, that provides trained mentors intensive and sustained mentoring support through a standards-based, job-embedded leadership development program (New Jersey Leaders to Leaders, 2014). Year one of the program provides forty-five mentoring hours, while year two provides a minimum of thirty mentoring contact hours. Mentoring consists of school visits, observation, conferences and peer-support group meetings. (New Jersey Leaders to Leaders, 2014; Villani, 2006).

There are also some noteworthy collaborative models. The state mandated Arkansas Leadership Academy was created in 1991 to "raise the skill and knowledge base of principals, superintendents, board members, other administrators and teachers" (Villani, 2006, p. 187). The Master Principal Program, the newest program of the Arkansas Leadership Academy, is an extension of the Arkansas Beginning Administrator Induction Program and serves to heighten the leadership effectiveness across the state. The purpose of the program is to provide training programs and professional development opportunities that will expand the knowledge base and leadership skill of public school leaders (Arkansas Leadership Academy, 2014).

New administrators progress through three phases, with a performance assessment at the end of each phase (Arkansas Leadership Academy, 2014; Villani, 2006.)

The New York City Leadership Academy's has created a School Leadership Coaching Program to work with school systems to develop and strengthen coaching and mentoring programs. The program seeks to develop highly-skilled coaches and mentors who will help aspiring and current school leaders achieve their leadership and school improvement goals. Using the Coaching for Success model the School Leadership Coaching Program focuses on aligning the work of coaches and mentors with the school system's leadership competencies and development priorities (New York Leadership Academy, 2014).

The Principals' Leadership Academy of Nashville (PLAN) was launched in 2001 to respond to escalating demands on principals and others on the front line of school administration (Vanderbilt University, 2014). The program, which lasts one year, includes a two-week intensive summer program and monthly meetings for new administrator cohorts focused on challenged-based learning. Telephone and online coaching are an important component. Program directors hope to prepare twenty-five leaders each year for five years (Vanderbilt University, 2014; Villani, 2006). As this program and other mentoring opportunities continue to grow and expand it will be important for new administrators to take advantage of these supportive networks.

Much like the idea that teachers are supported through connection to a strong community of colleagues, administrators can learn and be supported through a strong community of colleagues (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Communities of practice are a means of professional support and evolve around shared concerns,

problems or passions. They serve to deepen knowledge and should be intentionally cultivated (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

Mentoring Research

Programs such as the ones described in the previous section increasingly appear to be supported by emerging research. In their research of a regional program created to support new administrators in southeast Ohio, Howley, Chadwick, and Howley (2002) found that new school leaders were asked to complete a portfolio based on ISSLC standards and that approximately 70% of participants ranked mentors as the most crucial component of the program.

In a study of how assistant principals perceived their mentoring relationships, Robinson (2004) found that 74% of assistant principals surveyed believed that mentoring has been valuable and has prepared them for a promotion to become a principal. Assistant principals did not perceive a mentor's age or gender as a significant factor in the effectiveness of their mentoring relationships. This is important to note as more mentoring programs are being designed.

In their study on mentoring of 238 new head teachers (school administrators) and 303 experienced head teachers (school administrators) Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington, and Weindling (1995) found that the majority of participants in the mentoring program considered the assistance helpful in gaining insight on how to deal with the problems they faced. Bush and Coleman (1995) studied the experiences of mentors and new heads in two school systems in English East Midlands. They reported:

> Mentoring can be a significant element in the professional development of headteachers. The opportunity to receive support and guidance from a more experienced colleague may help to reduce the uncertainty experienced during the early stages of headship. Our findings suggest that effective mentoring

> reduces professional isolation, provides support and feedback on performance and gives confidence to new heads. The mentors also refer to their gains from the process, including reappraisal of their own practice prompted by the ideas of the new head. (p. 74)

In a study of new principals and the mentoring they received as assistant principals, Rhett (2004) found that new principals derived a sense of empowerment from the mentoring experiences. Practical experiences within the mentorship were identified as important to their success as new principals.

Upon completion of a structural analysis of more than 300 research-based articles on mentoring, Ehrich, Hansford, and Tennent (2004) found that mentoring has enormous potential to bring about learning, personal growth, and development for professionals). The most commonly cited positive outcome for mentees was related to support, empathy, encouragement, counseling and friendship (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). This finding was congruent with Bush and Coleman's (1995) study that stated "knowing that there is somebody in the background I can turn to is a great source of comfort" (p. 65). The most commonly cited positive outcome for mentors was collegiality and networking, which included collaboration and sharing of ideas with colleagues (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004). This finding was in line with the research of Brady (1993), whose qualitative study noted cross-fertilization of ideas as being a beneficial outcome of mentoring for school principals.

In a survey of 92 Massachusetts elementary principals that explored practitioners' perceptions on the benefits of principal mentoring programs, Rodriguez (2006) found that 90% of novice principals agreed that mentoring aided them in understanding their roles and responsibilities of their position, 98% of novice principals agreed that managerial support was a benefit of mentoring, 67% of novice principals

agreed that mentors help a mentee learn the culture of the school, 86% of mentored principals agreed that mentoring can help a novice principal become a more effective instructional leader, and 87% of novice principals agreed that mentoring can help alleviate feelings of anxiety.

Vladovic (2009) conducted a mixed-methods case study to determine the relationship between the EdisonLearning Mentor/Protégé (ELMP) model and effective urban school principal leadership practices. Findings indicated that working with an EdisonLearning mentor had positively impacted the leadership practices of an elementary school principal through providing guidance and support, assistance with problem-solving, and developing technical knowledge and skills (Vladovic, 2009). Furthermore, the findings indicated that the principal improved in the EdisonLeadership roles of Instructional Leader, Organizational Leader, and as a Culture building (Vladovic, 2009).

West (2002) conducted a qualitative case study that examined novice and veteran principals' experiences with a formal administrative mentoring program provided by their school district. Participants came from a large school district in a mid-Atlantic state. West found participants indicated that the formal mentoring experience provided them with a broader understanding of their role as instructional leader, school visionary, and team builder. Participants reported they developed the skills of reflective practice, including introspection and inflection, which helped them assess learn about their role as an administrator, and created a sense of growth and satisfaction.

McCrary Cramp (2006) conducted a quantitative study of 161 practicing public school principals and assistant principals in Virginia. Participants completed an online

survey that explored their opinions, beliefs, attitudes and perceived value toward mentoring for their job assignment. Ninety-two percent of respondents believed that mentoring is valuable and helpful and that there is a strong need for mentoring new administrators. Participants identified mentoring in the areas of supervision and evaluation, scheduling and special education as most important and helpful. Other topics participants indicated as important were working with parents, working with teachers, school management, finance and accounting, personnel decisions, discipline, and focusing on the big picture.

In a multiple case study qualitative investigation of principal support and induction practices, Bodger (2011) found that novice administrators welcomed the support they received from mentors. Specifically, mentees reported their mentoring relationship supported them in gaining confidence and providing opportunities to vent frustrations or obtain feedback. Furthermore, participants reported reduced stress, feeling less isolated and more effective in their jobs.

Collectively, these studies highlight the perceptions of new administrators that suggest mentoring can have a positive impact in the professional development of a school administrator. Participants in mentoring programs believed the mentoring relationship was valuable and promoted a better understanding of their job while supporting their future success as an administrator.

Effects and Influences of Mentoring Relationships

Mentoring as professional development/learning for practicing principals has proven to be universal in contributing to the success and adaptability of school leaders (Wright -Brumage, 2000). "Mentoring involves the creation and maintenance of a

mutually enhancing relationship in which both the mentor and the protégé can attain goals that are related to both personal development and career enhancement" (Daresh, 2001, p. 75). It can and should be a rich and continuing part of a school leader's professional life (Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho & Doughty, 2002). Research suggests that entry year experiences such as internships and mentoring can help administrators succeed in the early years (Ricciardi, 2000). New administrators appear to recognize the advantages of mentoring as a form of professional support.

Brown, Anfara, Hartman, Mahar, and Mills (2001) conducted a study to investigate the learning processes of new administrators. In the study 98 principals were surveyed, while 44 of them were interviewed. Their research confirmed that on-the-job training is how many new principals learn to be an administrator. When beginning school leaders were asked in a survey what methods would help them adjust to their new role more effectively the survey participants cited sharing experiences with colleagues as a preferred activity.

A study of mentors, mentees, and program supervisors in an administrator mentoring program in New York City schools found program participants who were interviewed indicated that having someone to discuss issues with and consult for advice as being very beneficial to their success as education leaders (Dukess, 2001). Experienced administrators reported an increase in their knowledge of teaching and learning as a benefit of participation in the program.

Researchers with the New Teacher's Center (NTC) New Administrators Program interviewed administrators and found that participants confirmed the need for mentoring as well as the benefits of the program model. Mentoring was identified to be especially

beneficial in helping administrators deal with feelings of isolation that often accompany the principalship (NTC, 2008).

In a study of 25 New England administrators, Kraus and Cordeiro (1995) found that practicing principals valued mentoring relationships. NAESP and NASSP (2000) reported that principals identified good on-the job training under an effective principal mentor as a valuable benefit.

Daresh and Playko (1991) outlined an educational administration training model which involved principals who were mentored formally by other principals. The utilization of this model resulted in the participants not only improving their understanding of the mentoring process, but they reported an increased understanding of their roles as principals (Wright Brumage, 2000). Kling and Brookhart (1991), in a national study of secondary principals, revealed that 90% of the 337 participants believed that mentoring was both helpful and important for new principals. In fact, mentoring has been identified by many scholars that support programs for novice school leaders as a critical element to their success (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; Barth, 2003; Daresh, 2004; Daresh & LaPlant, 1985; Thody, 1993). Clearly, research supports the notion that mentoring relationships significantly influence the development of novice administrators and contributes to their success as defined in different ways.

Following the trend in the private sector, Reedy (2005) notes school personnel have begun "to see the benefits of mentoring as a critical component for providing accountability in the way that new administrators are trained, inducted, and hired" (p.5). Alsbury and Hackman (2006) further note, "as new principals and superintendents enter the profession, the development of effective mentoring/induction programming provides

an invaluable opportunity to socialize novices into the challenging landscape of the field" (p. 169).

The advantages of formal mentoring relationships have been documented by research. Fagenson (1988) conducted a quantitative investigation of 518 men and women working in a large health care company in the United States. Compared to their non-mentored colleagues, new employees in formal mentorships reported greater job satisfaction, greater productivity, increased professionalism, reduced turnover rates, greater organizational power and superior managerial skills (Fagenson, 1988).

Mentoring research gives us insight into benefits gained by protégés. Hansford and Ehrich (2006) reviewed 40 research articles identifying the advantages and disadvantages of principal mentoring programs. The most frequently recurring advantages of mentoring programs for novice principals included support, empathy, counseling, sharing ideas and problem solving, professional development, improved confidence, opportunity to reflect, opportunity to network, feedback and positive reinforcement, decrease in feelings of loneliness and isolation, and career affirmation (Hansford & Ehrich, 2006). Hansford and Ehrich (2006) conclude, "mentoring programs are an important type of professional development activity for enhancing the learning and growth of potential novices and more experienced principals (p. 49)."

Riccirdi (2000) and Kram (1985) suggest mentoring experiences benefit individuals by providing two primary assistance functions which include career and psychosocial. More specifically protégés gain confidence, self-awareness and management competence, and broaden their understanding about political contexts of schools and districts via interactions with mentors (Playko, 1990; Ricciardi, 2000).

Mentoring has been found to be related to protégés career mobility (Scandura, 1992), promotions (Dreher & Ash, 1990), compensation (Whitely, Dougherty & Dreher, 1991) and career and job satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989; Koberg, Boss, Chappell and Ringer, 1994; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). Research also indicates that protégés receive knowledge, skills, support and inspiration (Heller & Sindelar, 1991). Other benefits associated with mentoring include the opportunity to discuss problems in a "safe" situation, one that is non-threatening and non-judgmental, as well as the alleviation of stress that may arise, in part, from the isolation often felt by new principals (Coleman, Low, Bush & Chew, 1996). Dukess (2001) also states that one of the greatest benefits to having a mentor that is it lessens the feelings of isolation often held by new principals.

Hean (2009), in his review of educational research on leadership mentoring in Singapore, found "learning relationships formed in structured mentoring help in the development of creative ways to anticipate or create change, as the principals continually relate and learn with one another (p. 169). One of the investigations he reviewed was conducted by Chong, Low and Walker (1989), who studied a full-time program of one academic year in duration, Diploma in Educational Administration (DEA). The DEA program served to formally prepare vice-principals in Singapore for leadership positions. DEA participants were paired with a school principal who served as a mentor to the participant. Chong, Low and Walker (1989) noted that one of the greatest benefits of mentoring for protégés is the development of a learning relationship and the learning that takes place. Furthermore, they reported the benefit of mutual learning and that each encounter with a protégé is a learning experience. Another noteworthy investigation reviewed by Hean (2009) was conducted by Coleman, Low,

Bush, and Chew (1996). At the time of the study mentoring of principals in Singapore had been established since 1984, while mentoring of principals in England began in 1991. The Singapore program was largely a skills-based program, while the English program was more focused on a more general discussion format. In a follow up study that compared mentors and protégés in Singapore and England, Coleman, Low, Bush, and Chew (1996) found the most commonly perceived benefit in England was the confidentiality of the process, with opportunities to discuss problems in a safe situation, while the mostly commonly perceived benefit for participants in Singapore was the learning that took place. The most learning for Singapore mentees occurred in problem analysis, perceptual skills and leadership skills.

For protégés, other benefits include increased confidence about their professional competence, the ability to see theory translated into practice, the creation of a collegial support system, and a sense of belonging (Daresh, 2001). In fact, protégés learn more about their professional lives and gain more insight into their personal needs, vision, and values from mentoring than through any other kind of learning experience (Daresh, 2001). The Wallace Foundation (2007) suggests important benefits include guidance and support during initiation, increased self-confidence, encouragement to take risks to achieve goals, opportunities to discuss professional issues with a veteran, and the promotion of networking. Mentoring relationships may also decrease stress felt by the protégé by increasing the protégés self-confidence, forewarning her of career stress and suggesting ways to deal with it (Burke & McKeen, 1990).

Mentors become a critical partner in working toward the success of a new administrator. The mentor shares the responsibilities for the new administrator's

(mentees) developmental journey by providing support, advice and vision (Weingartner, 2009). Mentors work toward establishing a climate of trust in which experiences are shared, concerns are addressed, intellectual freedom, creativity, experimentation and risk-taking are encouraged, self-confidence is developed, professional growth is promoted, on-the-job issues and conflicts are resolved, and constructive feedback and encouragement is provided (Weingartner, 2009).

Research conducted by Aslbury and Hackmann (2006) and Chapman (2005) suggests that mentoring is an effective tool for supporting school leaders at different developmental stages of their administrative careers. Their research supports the idea that administrators in the position of mentoring novice administrators gain significant benefits as a result of participating in a reciprocal mentoring relationship. Mentoring has also been found to be highly valued by administrators who have years of practical experience as building administrators (Crow & Matthews, 1998). Ragins and Scandura (1999) believe the primary benefit of being a mentor is the sense of satisfaction and fulfillment received from fostering the development of an inexperienced protégé. An added potential benefit is the recognition from peers and superiors for developing talent in an organization (Ragins & Scandura, 1999). Mentors report greater overall job satisfaction, increased recognition from their peers, greater opportunities for career advancement, and renewed enthusiasm for the profession (Daresh, 2001). Coleman, et al. (1996) note the benefits for mentors include gaining satisfaction from supporting and contributing to the development of a new colleague, as well as a boost in their own self-esteem and confidence. Heller and Sindelar (1991) add, "the mentor derives satisfaction, professional fulfillment, loyalty, and prestige" (p.7).

Taking on the role of mentor can breathe life into the career of a long-time educator. As with the protégé, mentors experience opportunities for reflection on their own behaviors, attitudes and values which may serve to strengthen leadership ability (Playko, 1995). Mentoring relationships may also reduce feelings of isolation felt by mentors by promoting the feeling of being a member of a productive and cohesive team (Playko, 1995). Additionally, it has been suggested by the Wallace Foundation (2007) that a mentoring relationship allows a mentor opportunities to strengthen their learning and improve communication, teaching and coaching skills, promotes greater collegiality among new and veteran principals, gives satisfaction from helping newcomers to a field, as well as enhancing the mentor's professional reputation for commitment. Many mentors say they get more from mentoring than they give (Haack, 2006). Dukess (2001) suggests mentor benefits include recognition of success (derived from being chosen as a mentor), increased reflective and critical thinking about one's own practice, as well as improvement in practice.

Zachary (2005) identifies a process called "Reverse Mentoring" which outlines benefits that mentors receive by participating in a mentor relationship. He believes these benefits include mentors feeling enthusiasm that helps them become rejuvenated, mentees providing fresh ideas and approaches to current issues, mentors reevaluating their own practices, mentors revisiting issues that have not surfaced recently, mentors providing the opportunity for sharing, problem solving and venting, and mentors gaining satisfaction that he or she has gained professional respect (Zachary, 2005).

There is also some evidence of benefits to the school organization as a result of mentoring relationships. Schools and districts may experience increased productivity,

more effective instruction, and reduced turnover because the mentorship has provided a systematic induction into the organization (Heller & Sindelar, 1991). School districts report higher motivation levels and job satisfaction among staff members, increased productivity and an attitude of lifelong learning among administrators (Daresh, 2001). Haack (2006) agrees that teaching effort and effectiveness are demonstrated outcomes of a mentoring relationship as well as enhanced communication and increasing understanding of the school system. Additional benefits to organizations include the promotion of a positive organizational climate, clarification of roles and expectations, increased satisfaction, as well as the suggestion of commitment and loyalty to employees (Wallace Foundation, 2007). Wilson and Elman (1990) note one long term benefit to the health of an organization as a social system is the structured system mentoring provides for strengthening and assuring the continuity of organizational culture. An increased spirit or culture of collegiality may also emerge in the organization. This change of culture typically results in more effective overall performance across a school system when individual talents are brought together to address complex problems (Playko, 1995).

Conclusion

In recognition of the benefits associated with mentoring relationships, increasing numbers of organizations are taking measures to develop potential mentors (Burke & McKeen, 1989; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). These organizations represent many disciplines, including business, law, medicine and education (Daloz, 1986; Friday, Friday, & Green, 2004). Existing and future research must guide the development of mentoring programs.

The empirical research related to mentoring serves to inform the research questions identified in this study. Research addressing the perceptions of mentors and mentees involved in mentoring programs indicates mentoring is viewed as valuable to the success of school leaders. Much of the research identifies the effects, influences and benefits of participation in mentoring programs. Mentees and mentors report the mentoring relationship provides support and guidance and increased self-confidence, while helping to decrease stress and feelings of isolation. A better understanding of the new roles and responsibilities of novice administrators was a common finding. New administrators believed they acquired a better understanding of their role as instructional leader, organizational leader and team builder. Within these studies, a few mentioned the insight, learning and/or personal growth and development gained from being a participant in a mentor program.

Although there are a handful of studies that address learning for administrators who have participated in a mentoring relationship, there is not enough research focused on learning within the mentoring relationship for leadership development in schools. Is the main function of a mentoring relationship to provide guidance and support for mentees or does the learning that takes place within the context of a mentoring relationship figure prominently in the outcomes of said relationship? If learning is a significant outcome of a mentoring relationship for novice administrators, what are the specific types of learning that occur? This study seeks to address these gaps in knowledge related to the prevalence and types of learning experienced by administrators who have participated in a mentoring relationship. By answering the earlier cited research questions this study will contribute to the body of research related to mentoring

among principals, as well as provide practical information for novice administrators as they experience their first years as a school leader.

Chapter III

Methodology

Previous research on mentoring has illuminated the benefits of mentoring relationships in fields such as business, medicine and law. In the field of education mentoring has been adapted to fit the needs of teachers and, consequently, many U.S. teachers benefit from a mentoring relationship as they begin their new career. As the use of mentoring relationships as a type of professional support for new principals gains popularity, more research is needed to document the perceived outcomes that principals identify regarding their involvement in mentoring programs. This empirical investigation focused specifically on the kinds of professional learning that take place within district-sponsored mentoring programs that help novice principals navigate the challenges placed before them in their first few years as a school leader.

As noted earlier, the present study sought to advance deeper understanding of protégé learning by addressing the following research questions:

1. What kind of professional learning occurs for novice administrators and their mentors because of their involvement with a formal mentoring program?
2. What are the most salient commonalities and differences in learning among novice administrators?
3. What are the perceived benefits and drawbacks to being involved in a formal administrator mentoring program?

The purpose of answering these questions was to focus on the different perceived learning experiences and outcomes that novice administrators have resulting from the involvement in a district-sponsored mentoring program. For this study, novice

administrators included administrators in their first and second year as a school leader in elementary, middle, and high schools in a Midwestern state. Mentors included administrators who have four or more years of experience as a school leader.

The Participants

All of the seven individuals included in the study met the participant criteria of being a public school administrator with previous or current participation in a formal mentoring program. Participants willingly agreed to take part in interviews designed to capture the experiences of each school administrator. I begin this chapter by providing a short narrative background for each of the participants. Out of the seven participants, four were mentees and three were mentors.

Novice Administrator Participants

At the time of our interview Sylvia was completing her first year as a high school administrator and was an active mentee participant in the Missouri AMP. Her prior experience included time as an elementary teacher, secondary special education teacher, and guidance counselor, all in another state. Situated in a rural farming community, her current district is comprised of one elementary, one middle school, and one high school. The district serves approximately 1100 mostly Caucasian students coming from a low socioeconomic background.

Carla has experience as a middle school special education teacher. She is in her third year as an elementary administrator in an affluent, suburban district made up of approximately 4500 mostly Caucasian students. Her position as an Area Coordinator allows her to work with six different elementary schools and a 6th grade center, as she

supervises administrators in those schools. She participated in the Missouri AMP as a mentee.

Amanda has a seventeen year background as a speech pathologist in multiple districts in two different states. During the time she participated in the Missouri AMP as a mentee, she was serving as a first and second year middle school/high school administrator in a district with an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse population. Amanda shared,

> In terms of socioeconomic status we have a little bit of everything here. It's a very diverse area. The population for the school consists of Caucasian, Asian, we have kids from different countries, but it's predominantly African American and we have lots of Jewish families in the community as well. So it encompasses a lot.

African American students make up the majority of the student population in the district.

Elizabeth has experience as an elementary teacher, junior high teacher, and high school grant coordinator. Similar to Sylvia, Elizabeth was completing her first year as a high school administrator in a small, rural district. The district serves approximately 650 students K-12. The student population is made up of primarily Caucasian students. Approximately 40% of students meet the qualification for free and reduced lunches. Elizabeth participated in the Missouri AMP as a mentee.

Veteran Administrator Participants

Evelyn has worked in the same school district for 23 years. During her time in the district she has held the title of speech pathologist, principal, Director of Special Education and Director of Student Services. Evelyn completed eight years as an elementary principal and currently serves as the Director of Student Services in her consolidated school district. Her direct supervisor is the superintendent of her district.

She supervises the special education and Title I department in her district, working mainly with principals and teachers. Her consolidated rural district serves approximately 900 PreK-12 students from four small towns, centrally located in the state. There is one elementary, one middle school and one high school, with three principals serving as building leaders. Students in this rural district are mainly white, with very few minorities. Approximately 44% of students received free/reduced lunch. Evelyn served as a mentor in the Missouri AMP program.

Robert is a recently retired administrator, completing 32 years in administration. His career includes 11 years experience as a high school teacher, 4 years as an assistant principal, 12 years as a junior high principal and 5 years as a superintendent in high poverty, rural districts. Robert currently serves as a mentor in the Missouri AMP.

Renee is a 31 year veteran in education currently serving as the Director of Special Education in a suburban district. She started as a special education teacher in middle and high school, then served as an area coordinator, which she described as a "roving principal." In her position of area coordinator she supervises staff at five elementary and a middle school. Previously she served as an elementary and middle school administrator. Renee describes the approximately 4000 students in her district as affluent, made up of mostly Caucasian students who come from a middle to upper class background. She participated in the Missouri AMP as a mentor.

Table 1 provides a summary of participants included in this study and highlights individual attributes as well as placing each in a corresponding setting.

Table 2

Demographic Information for Study Participants

Participant	Role	Years as Administrator	Level	Geographic Location
Amanda	Mentee	4	Secondary	Suburban
Carla	Mentee	3	Elementary	Suburban
Elizabeth	Mentee	1	Secondary	Rural
Evelyn	Mentor	19	District	Rural
Renee	Mentor	15	Elem/Sec	Suburban
Robert	Mentor	21	District	Rural
Sylvia	Mentee	1	Secondary	Rural

Each participant served as a primary source as I was focused on investigating their perceived learning resulting from participation in a formal mentoring program, specifically, participants in the Missouri's Administrator Mentoring Program (AMP). AMP is a two-year mentoring program for new administrators sponsored by The Missouri Partnership for Mentoring School Leaders (MPMSL) which meets an April 2005 Missouri certification rule requiring two years of district-sponsored mentoring for the renewal of an administrator certificates for principals, special education directors, and career education leaders (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). The program provides a minimum of ten hours per year of one-to-one mentor services and support to newly certified school leaders to assist them in successfully transitioning from preparation to practice (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). New school leaders register for the

program in the fall of each year and are matched with a successful administrator mentor. Mentors attend a training session and, after being matched with a mentee, meet with the new school leader on site for planned observations, discussion and feedback. Mentors also provide continuous availability by phone and e-mail for questions and consultation. Although not a requirement, mentees and mentors have access to NYC Leadership Academy Online Coaching Modules. Mentor services are directed toward issues and concerns identified by the new school leader and are documented on a mentoring log submitted to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). As a result of conversations with participants and careful analysis of data, I have been able to portray their experiences in a formal mentoring program through identified themes related to the central questions of the study.

Research Method

A review of the literature reveals that qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches have been used when studying mentoring programs in education. To enhance the literature regarding mentoring school administrators, and particularly studies focused on the learning aspects of mentoring, emergent quantitative and qualitative information must be generated. My focus, as a researcher, was not on making predictions, generalization, or finding correlations or making causal inference, all tenets of quantitative research. Rather, I sought to gain an understanding of the learning that takes place in mentoring relationships through obtaining in-depth, detailed, thick description of novice administrators' experiences and perspectives. For this

purpose, I conducted an empirical investigation using qualitative-naturalistic inquiry methods.

In his definition of qualitative research Creswell (1998) conveyed the following ideas:

> Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (p. 15).

Qualitative methods attempt to find out how people make meaning or interpret a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). According to Hatch (2002) and Patton (2002), qualitative research includes several characteristics including: a natural setting, participant perspective, researcher as a data instrument, extended firsthand engagement, centrality of meaning, wholeness and complexity, subjectivity, emergent design, inductive data analysis, and reflexivity. Qualitative research is essentially a study of relationships between people, therefore qualitative researchers are interested in the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world (Merriam, 1998). Or in other words, the researcher seeks to understand something from the perspectives of those living in it (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002).

Clandinin (2007, p. 4) points out, "Qualitative researchers are interested not in prediction and control, but in understanding." A qualitative research design provided the opportunity to obtain data that provides insight and understanding about new administrator's perceptions concerning the professional learning that takes place during their first few years as a school leader, when supported by a mentoring relationship.

My goal was to collect data that gives an accurate account and interpretation of the experiences of educational leaders related to the professional learning that takes

place within the context of a structured mentoring relationship. I sought to use naturalistic inquiry methods to obtain in-depth, detailed, thick description of novice principals' experiences and perspectives of the learning that takes place in a mentoring relationship. Naturalistic inquiry refers to research that "takes place in real world settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (e.g., group, event, program, community, relationship, or interaction)" (Patton, 2002, p. 39). Researching from a naturalistic inquiry perspective, I was "in the field studying the real world as it unfolds" (Patton, 2002, p. 39).

The phenomenological approach is primarily an attempt to understand empirical matters from the perspective of those being studied (Creswell, 1998. p. 275). As a tradition-informed method the approach requires a careful and thorough capturing and describing of how people experience some phenomenon – how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others (Patton, 2002, p. 104). The empirical phenomenological approach involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective analysis that portrays the essences of the experiences (Moustakas, 1994). To gather data through phenomenological-like research methods "one must undertake in-depth interviews with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest; that is, they have 'lived experience' as opposed to secondhand experience" (Patton, 2002, p. 104).

Understanding and appreciating the viability of the *generic inductive qualitative model* (GIQM) (Hood, 2007; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008; Maxwell, 2005;), for my research, I used a modified phenomenological *perspective*, adapted for research in an

educational context, to examine school administrators' lived experiences of professional learning that takes place, or does not take place, within a mentoring relationship, and the meanings ascribed to those experiences. This modified phenomenological *perspective* is based on the work of Husserl (1962), who first used phenomenology as a philosophical tradition in the development of rigorous science (Patton, 2002). In defining phenomenology, Husserl (1962) was speaking of the study of how people describe things and experience them through their senses. Patton (2002) purports a dimension that differentiates the phenomenological approach from other qualitative traditions: the assumption that shared experiences produce an essence or essences. As Patton (2002) states:

> These essences are the core meanings mutually understood through a phenomenon commonly experienced. The experiences of different people are bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon, for example, the essence of loneliness, the essence of being a mother, or the essence of being a particular participant in a particular program (p. 106).

My focus was on determining the essence of the shared experiences of novice principals in mentoring relationships and the meanings attached to their learning experiences, in particular, based on their perspectives. The goal of taking a modified phenomenological *perspective* by using phenomenological-like interviewing and other data sources was to "uncover the inherent meaning of human experience and faithfully articulate this understanding without distortion" (Frick, 2006, p. 83).

The methodological implications of using phenomenological interviewing indicate that "the only way for us to really know what another person experiences is to experience the phenomenon as directly as possible for ourselves" (Patton, 2002, p. 106). Participant observations and in-depth interviews become important tools in allowing the

researcher this experiential perspective. To capture the participants' experiences of mentoring relationships, I conducted in-depth interviews with seven participants. Seidman (2006) states, "At the heart of what it means to be human is the ability of people to symbolize their experiences through language" (p. 8). He goes on to say:

> The purpose of in-depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and not to 'evaluate' as the term is normally used. At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience (1998, p. 9).

Although not a traditionally pure empirical/transcendental phenomenology, for a study such as this, the methodological guidelines can be organized in terms of: Methods of Preparation, Methods of Collecting Data, and Methods of Organizing and Analyzing Data (Moustakas, 1994). Methods of Preparation consist of identifying a topic and question rooted in autobiographical meanings and values that have both social meaning and personal significance, and conducting a comprehensive review of the professional and research literature (Moustakas, 1994). Also included in preparation are constructing a set of criteria to identify and select study participants, providing participants with information regarding the nature and purpose of the research that includes an agreement obtaining informed consent, delineating the responsibilities of both the researcher and participants according to ethical principles of research, and developing questions and/or topics to guide the interview process (Moustakas, 1994). Methods of Collecting Data include conducting and recording lengthy, in-depth, person-to-person interviews (follow up interviews may also be included) focused on the previously identified topic and questions (Moustakas, 1994). Methods of Organizing and Analyzing Data involved the transcription of recorded interviews to allow the articulation of individual descriptions, composite descriptions, and a fusion of these descriptions to complete a depiction of the

meaning and essence of the experiences studied (Moustakas, 1994); and for this study the meaning and essence of learning within a professional mentoring relationship. Each audio recording of individual participant interviews was transcribed, read and studied, and the transcripts were divided into textual units that expressed self-contained meaning. Statements that expressed dominant meanings were coded relevant to the research topic and the meanings were then organized into common categories or themes that represented the words of participants. Textural descriptions were developed from thematically organized meaning units and then synthesized into a structural description, or composite portrait of the essence of the experience being investigated.

Research Strategy and Preparation

As the primary researcher, I applied to the University of Oklahoma's Institutional Review Board to gain approval for this research. This process was an important step. It involved submitting a proposal that included the central purpose of the study, the procedures to be used in data collection, safeguards outlining the protection of confidentiality of the participants, and identification of known risks and benefits to participants. This approval process was an important step in ensuring the rights of the human participants were protected and risks will be minimized (Creswell, 1998). After approval by the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix B) and authorization from the Office for Human Research Participation Protection all study participants were given an informed consent, which outlined the proposed study and addressed confidentiality issues.

I included the interview protocol in the study proposal. Carefully developing the interview protocol is important so that the end result is an intimate view of the participant's perspective of their experiences. Patton (2002) states:

> We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. The issue is not whether observational data are more desirable, valid, or meaningful than self-report data. The fact is that we cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observe. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people those things. The purpose of interviewing then, is to allow us to enter the other person's perspective (p. 340-341).

Developing the questions and topics to guide the one-on-one interviews entailed identifying questions structured to glean knowledge from participants about their perspectives of the learning that occurs within their mentoring relationship. To establish whether the interview questions accomplished this task I conducted a protocol test with three practicing school administrators who were involved in a mentoring program. Conducting the protocol test aided me in ascertaining whether the questions and topics I identified would provide the responses I needed to construct a true and accurate portrait of the learning that takes place for novice principals within a mentoring relationship. Additionally, it helped me identify time requirements for each interview and allowed for feedback about the interview process from the administrators who participated in the protocol test.

Data Collection

I collected data primarily through in-depth, focused participant interviews. Participants were Missouri public school administrators who were in their first or second year as an administrator, as well as mentor administrators who had four or more years of

administrative experience. The starting point for gaining access to participants was with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Contact was made with the Director of the Leadership Academy, who oversaw the Administrator Mentoring Program (AMP), to provide a list of administrators who met the state criteria.

It was the intent of this study to explore in-depth the phenomenon of the learning that takes place in a formal mentoring program, rather than to generalize the results of this study across the population. To select participants from the identified population of administrators, a sampling strategy was needed. Probability sampling and purposeful sampling are the two basic strategies for population sampling (Moller, 2004). Qualitative research relies on a small number of cases selected purposefully, not by random selection (Moller, 2004). Purposeful sampling can be described as the process of deliberately selecting a heterogeneous sample and observing commonalities in their experiences; it becomes useful when exploring abstract concepts such as the learning that happens in a principalship mentoring relationship and instrumental in facilitating the expansion and understanding of developing theory (Bogdon & Biklan, 1994; Patton, 2002; Reedy, 2005). Patton (2002) summarized the idea of purposeful sampling as follows:

> The logic and power of purposeful sampling derive from the emphasis on in-depth understanding. This leads to selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about the issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposeful sampling (p. 46).

Moustakas (1994) states:

> Essential criteria include: the research participant has experienced the phenomenon, is intensely interested in understanding its nature and meanings, is willing to participate in a lengthy interview and (perhaps a follow up interview), grants the investigator the right to tape-record, possibly videotape

> the interview, and publish the data in a dissertation and other publications (p. 107).

I selected study participant based on their willingness to participate and their experiences of being a school administrator involved in a mentoring relationship.

When setting the sample size for a qualitative study, the researcher deals with a trade off between breadth and depth (Moller, 2004). Merriam (1998) suggests:

> It always depends on the questions being asked, the data being gathered, the analysis in progress and the resources you have to support this study. What is needed is an adequate number of participants, sites or activities to answer the question posed at the beginning of the study (in the form of the purpose statement (p. 64).

A more intense study of fewer information-rich cases can provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, while a greater number of participants allows the researcher to explore diversity and variation (Moller, 2004; Patton, 2002). Although an in-depth knowledge may be gained from a single case, different aspects of a phenomenon may become more visible when multiple cases are studied (Ragin, 1994). Because of the smaller number of cases studied, qualitative researchers are concerned with establishing the "representativeness" of the sample (Moller, 2004; Ragin, 1994). I found it important to examine and explore the phenomenon of mentoring in a variety of settings, including schools and districts of various sizes and levels of complexity.

Once I obtained approval to conduct the study, I made contact with potential participants through an e-mail to K-12 administrators in Missouri from The Leadership Academy giving basic information, including the purpose of the study, procedures, and length of participation. From the initial e-mail I generated a list of potential participants who were willing to participate in the study. I contacted potential participants by phone to introduce myself, build rapport, provide additional information, and present a formal

request to participate in the study. I explained the parameters of the study, including time, location, actual questions, as well as the opportunity to decline the interview, to each school administrator. As Frick (2006) and Rossman and Rallis (2003) note, initial steps to establish trust with participants included communicating my own professional background as an administrator, reassuring them that I would strive to conduct interviews in a nonjudgmental manner, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity as predetermined in a formal research relationship, and maintaining flexibility and a cooperative approach when arranging interviews at the participants' convenience

Data collection in a qualitative study usually includes interview notes, field notes, artifacts or records, with the researcher herself being the primary data collection and analysis instrument (Clandinin, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Hatch, 2002; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). For this study, I collected data primarily through individual interviews, but also included relevant Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program documents. As recommended by Clandinin (2007), Johnson and Christensen (2004), and Patton (2002), interviews can be used to capture quotes about individual perceptions and experiences. For those novice and mentor administrators who agreed to participate in the study, I arranged an interview date, time and place that was convenient for them.

Interview Procedures

Because of scheduling issues and time constraints three of the interviews occurred in person and four via the telephone. The face-to-face interviews took place during regular school hours at a location chosen by the participant, which in most cases was the participant's office in the district they were employed. I conducted one face-to-

face interview with a retired administrator serving as a mentor in a public library, by his choice. Telephone interviews also occurred during regular school hours. Prior to each interview I briefly reviewed the parameters of the study, as well as the purpose of the study. Participants signed an Office of Research Protections Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research (see Appendix C). For those participants that I did not meet with face-to-face, I obtained signed consent by mail. I used semi-structured, in-depth interviews to gather the data. On average, interviews lasted 45 minutes to one hour. The interview questions focused on specific and general issues related to the learning that takes place within a structured mentoring relationship (see interview protocol in appendix D). I encouraged participants to be spontaneous and reflective in exploring their mentoring experiences. Based on interviewee responses, I included follow-up questions in the initial interview.

Monitoring and Management of Data

As stated earlier, I collected data through individual interviews and relevant Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program documents. With the permission of the participants, I audio-taped all interviews for the purpose of capturing rich data through transcription, transcribed interviews for comprehensive analysis of the data, and created electronic files to maintain transcripts and organize data by participant interview. I stored audio recordings and transcriptions in a secure location throughout the process of data collection and analysis, and made back-up copies of data, also stored in a secure location

Credibility and Trustworthiness of Data

When considering the credibility and trustworthiness of a qualitative study, Stake (1994) reminds us that knowledge gained in an investigation "faces hazardous passage from write to reader. The writer needs ways of safeguarding the trip" (p. 241). To address the issue of authenticity, transferability and replicability, careful consideration were given to the methodological design, research questions, population sampling, data collection through interview procedures, management of data and data analysis.

I addressed the issue of sample size through the careful consideration of participant representation from districts of various sizes, as well as location with a total of seven participants included in the study. As Patton (2002) points out, "meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than sample size" (p. 245).

Member checks, which involve taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible, were used with participants to establish the trustworthiness of the interview data (Merriam, 1998). Participants reviewed transcripts and made additional comments at their discretion. To further promote trustworthiness, each participant received a copy of the write up of the study to allow them the opportunity to provide further feedback. I made corrections and clarifications based on participant comments.

Credible qualitative studies present such faithful descriptions and interpretations of human experiences that the people living those experiences would immediately identify them as descriptions or interpretations of their own (Sandelowksi, 1986). To

provide these ‘faithful descriptions’ and to increase the credibility of this study I interviewed a range of participants to gather rich, descriptive data through a carefully constructed interview protocol. I reviewed and examined the transcript data to find emergent common themes (thematic categories) in the words and linguistic marks of participants. Transparency of data collection and analysis also allows for credibility (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). I paid close attention to outlining procedures for collecting, analyzing, and presenting data to ensure they were clear and understandable.

Data Coding and Analysis

Preliminary data analysis began with careful reading of the interview texts, relevant Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program documents, comments and ideas. Additional notes, including observations formed while reading through interview transcripts, were added to the data set, as well as the formation of initial codes. After thoroughly reading and studying the data, I performed the initial analysis.

Patton (2002) states,

> The challenge of qualitative analysis lies in making sense of massive amounts of data. This involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal (p. 432).

Marshall and Rossman (1995) describe the analytical process, “Through questioning the data and reflecting on the conceptual framework [guiding the study], the researcher engages the ideas and the data in significant intellectual work” (p. 114).

Organizing text in this manner allowed for the next step, which involved listing coded statements of meaning for participants and grouping these statements into

meaning units that constituted a theme and/or conceptual category. After carefully reading the interview transcripts, I separated them into segments that expressed meaning. My intent was to identify recurring thought patterns in participant records. I coded text using shorthand designations applied to various portions of the data so that specific pieces of data could be easily retrieved, thereby supporting a structured effort and organized process for interpreting data (Merriam, 1998). Organizing text in this manner allowed for the next step, which involved listing coded statements of meaning for participants and grouping these statements into meaning units that constituted a theme and/or conceptual category. See Appendix E for codes, themes and conceptual categories. The coding process consisted of searching for emergent themes or patterns such as conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, and feelings in order to find patterns that stood out in the data (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). As I analyzed data, I compared emerging themes and/or coding categories to determine whether there were common language threads or meanings embedded in participant records. Underlying similarities within the data allowed themes to be identified.

Analysis of data collected in this study employed the central theoretical construct that guided the study: the learning experiences that takes place within a structured mentoring relationship as viewed through the theoretical lens of adult learning theory. I coded data relative to this central theoretical construct while actively searching to identify other emergent themes that originated in the data. After all transcript data had been coded and themed, a cross-participant analysis of the seven individual cases identified processes and outcomes that were similar and dissimilar to participants in order to understand how experiences were qualified by local conditions and settings, and

thus to develop a more sophisticated description and more powerful explanation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Within the cross-participant analysis I explored the differences and similarities across the mentee administrator participants, as well as the mentor administrator participants. Patton (2002) notes that cross case analysis with individual participants,

> Means grouping together answers from different people to common questions, or analyzing different perspectives on central issues. If a standard open-ended interview has been used, it is fairly easy to do cross-case or cross-interview analysis for each question in the interview. With an interview guide approach, answers from different people can be group by topics from the guide, but the relevant data won't be found in the same place in each interview. An interview guide, if carefully conceived, actually constitutes a descriptive analytical framework for analysis (p. 440).

Next was the development of a modified textural description, "What happened," a modified structural description, "How" the phenomenon was experienced by participants, and an overall modified description of the experience, the "essence." A textural description emerged from thematically organized meaning units. I then synthesized the textural description into a structural description, constructing a composite portrait of the essence of the experience being investigated.

Limitations

Although participants were volunteers and data were gathered in confidence, various issues may play a role in obtaining a clear portrait of the mentoring relationship and the learning that took place place. Patton (2002) states,

> Interview data limitations include possibly distorted responses due to personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and simple lack of awareness since interviews can be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time of the interview. Interview data are also subject to recall error, reactivity of the interviewee to the interviewer, and self-serving responses (p. 306).

As a researcher, I made the assumption that participants were accurately and honestly representing their perceptions, with little distortion of their lived reality, regarding their experiences in the Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program.

Results of this study are not intended to be generalized to a larger population, as the goal of the research was to gather a truthful representation of various aspects of mentoring relationships and learning processes between novice and mentor principals. Consideration was given to limitations based on selectivity in the people who were sampled. Patton (2002) states, "Purposeful sampling involves studying information-rich cases in depth and detail to understand and illuminate important cases rather than generalizing from a sample to a population" (p. 563).

Additionally, this study was limited to novice and mentor administrators working in a public school setting in a particular place and time. A similar research study constructed in much the same way, but in an alternative setting or different time might yield different findings. For example, the Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program has been in place for four years at the time of this study. Similar mentoring programs in other states or that have been in place for longer periods of time may result in different processes and outcomes.

Researcher bias is a limitation of this study. Researcher bias "can be an investigator's intentional or unintentional favoritism that may distort data" (Charles & Mertler, 2002, p. 379). The experiences, knowledge, and perspective of the researcher affect the design, as well as data analysis. A different researcher might choose to use an alternative study design, and obtain similar or divergent findings and/or conclusions.

Chapter 4

Findings

I initiated this study based on the notion that participation in a formal mentoring program by school administrators would result in professional learning, either in an intentional or unintentional way, and within the confines of a formal mentoring program are inherent benefits and drawbacks. Qualitative inquiry is a study of how humans experience the world and consequently, was chosen as the most appropriate methodology, using a phenomenological-like approach. The lived experiences of novice and veteran school administrators were utilized as a source of evidence, as the study examined the phenomenon of learning when participating in a formal mentoring program. Interviews were guided by the following research questions:

1. What kind of professional learning occurs for novice administrators and their mentors because of their involvement with a formal mentoring program?
2. What are the most salient commonalities and differences in learning among novice administrators?
3. What are the perceived benefits and drawbacks to being involved in a formal mentoring program for administrators?

The themes established as a result of interviews with participants sought to make meaning of their mentoring experience, and particularly the aspects of learning through mentorship. I began the analysis process with identifying codes that were applied to interview transcripts. Looking at relationships among the codes helped to develop various categories and finally, to identify recurring themes that represented core concepts in the data. Chapter 4 presents the findings of data obtained from in-depth

interviews designed to gather insight into learning experiences of novice and veteran administrators as a result of their participation in a formal mentoring program.

Each participant served as a primary source as I was focused on investigating their perceived learning resulting from participation in a formal mentoring program, specifically, participants in the Missouri's Administrator Mentoring Program (AMP). AMP is a two-year mentoring program for new administrators sponsored by The Missouri Partnership for Mentoring School Leaders (MPMSL) which meets an April 2005 Missouri certification rule requiring two years of district-sponsored mentoring for the renewal of an administrator certificates for principals, special education directors, and career education leaders (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). The program provides a minimum of ten hours per year of one-to-one mentor services and support to newly certified school leaders to assist them in successfully transitioning from preparation to practice (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). New school leaders register for the program in the fall of each year and are matched with a successful administrator mentor. Mentors attend a training session and, after being matched with a mentee, meet with the new school leader on site for planned observations, discussion and feedback. Mentors also provide continuous availability by phone and e-mail for questions and consultation. Although not a requirement, mentees and mentors have access to NYC Leadership Academy Online Coaching Modules. Mentor services are directed toward issues and concerns identified by the new school leader and are documented on a mentoring log submitted to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2012). As a result of

conversations with participants and careful analysis of data, I have been able to portray their experiences in a formal mentoring program through identified themes related to the central questions of the study.

Perceived Learning of Mentees

Most administrators acknowledge there is much to learn when making the transition from the classroom to an administrative position. So, what forms of professional development are most helpful to new administrators as they work to quickly acquire new knowledge and skills? Although educators from past generations may have "closed their doors," today's educators realize that education is not a private practice (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010; Wilkins & Clift, 2007). Collaboration among educators is essential. Mentoring relationships take for granted that professionals must interact with each other around their practice. As professionals interact within these communities of practice, they share concerns, problems, and passion about a topic as they deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

Mentoring is a collaborative form of professional development rooted in a learning-focused relationship. This specialized kind of relationship provides a network of resources while helping new administrators instruct their craft, develop the professionalism they need and increase the collegiality that will advance and improve teacher practice. It is a relationship in which mentors are sometimes there to listen and provide support while at other times they may interact as a coach or consultant, providing mentees with an exemplary model of the profession. When working collaboratively the goal is to generate ideas together, to create a partnership. But

mentors are more than a model of professional excellence for mentees. Ostensibly, mentors can, and should become growth agents for the administrators they are supporting, assisting them in increasing their expertise through a learning process. To encourage growth, mentors provide continuous support, construct challenges and facilitate development of professional vision. Mentors have to be careful not to get drawn into feeling as if they must fix problems for their mentee. Rather, a balance must be developed between providing support and facilitating appropriate challenges for novice administrators. Learning cannot be an arbitrary pursuit, rather, it must be goal driven. Depending on the areas of focus for the mentee, learning may happen, both immediately and over time. Every participant in this study clearly indicated belief that participation in a formal mentoring program resulted in professional learning. As indicative of the unanimity of this view, as Amanda indicated, "It helps you to learn, as a new administrator."

As I analyzed data I began to identify several emergent themes related to the guiding questions. Emergent themes related to perceived learning were developed from careful review of the data and included communication, time, leadership, and problem solving involving policy and procedure (see Appendix E for linkages between codes, themes, and conceptual categories).

Communication

For beginning administrators, an important area of growth is the development of communication skills. This includes verbal and written communication skills. No matter what position you hold in education, being an effective communicator is critical to success. Whether it is communicating with students, parents, colleagues, community

members, or other stakeholders, a lack of skill in this area can overshadow other talents and hinder success. Sometimes the issue is not knowing the "common language" used in districts or schools. As a communication tool, utilizing terms and expressions related to essential concepts and practices that are constant within a school or district can facilitate effective communication about priority practices and goals. For school administrators, a deficiency in the area of communication can leave them unable to effectively lead their school. All of the novice administrators in the study noted their uncertainness in communicating effectively. The experienced, mentor administrators confirmed the idea of communicating effectively as an area of difficulty for novice administrators. Learning to communicate effectively was articulated by all study participants as an intentional outcome of their mentoring relationship. Because the study participants recognized their need to learn how to become better communicators, their learning in this area was self-directed, providing more motivation for learning and making it more meaningful for them. Interactive and authentic learning experiences occurred through one-on-one conversations based on real-world situations, as well as observations of effective communication practices in settings such as staff meetings and IEP meetings.

Elizabeth specifically chose improving communication with parents as one of her goals. Although she felt somewhat comfortable communicating with parents about various issues based on previous experience, she had not experienced making the particularly difficult phone calls that are necessary when dealing with student discipline. She described her learning in this way:

> I've learned about how important communication is and however small the incident might be, to contact the parent and just say hey, here's what happened,

> just wanted you to know. Whether it's a discipline issue, whether it's a good issue, bad issue, small issue, large issue, the more contact you make, when you do have to make that critical contact, they are much more supportive.

Like Elizabeth, Renee remembered spending a large amount of time working through situations that required strong communication skills with parents, such as "when you're dealing in a relationship with families and IEP's that are adversarial."

Communicating effectively with colleagues is of equal importance for a novice administrator. The way in which an administrator communicates with colleagues is a significant factor in setting the tone and developing the culture at a school or in the district. Learning how to "work with people" was an important lesson for her mentee, Evelyn recalled. In fact, she believed her mentee made significant growth in this area. "Working with people" means leaders in education are often faced with having challenging conversations with their colleagues. Developing expertise and building a comfort level involves practice and receiving guidance from more experienced administrators. Like Evelyn, Robert remembered working with one novice administrator on how to have difficult conversations with staff, specifically about expectations and potential teacher dismissal. When working through a particularly difficult scenario he recalled telling his mentee,

> If there is a deficiency in this teacher you need to identify it with the teacher. You need to sit down and say this is what I want. This is what you're not doing. This is what I expect you to do. Then if you want to not renew… you make that recommendation.

These are the types of specific conversations that both mentees and mentors believed were catalysts for learning how to be communicators.

Communicating with colleagues is often a tricky prospect. Inevitably administrators are faced with the difficulty of trying to figure out teacher personalities

and how best to communicate with them based on their individual needs. Sylvia reflected on her experience of learning how to communicate more effectively with staff about problematic situations. In her situation, not being from the community and not knowing the culture and prior history of the school, she felt it was more difficult to handle challenging situations with teachers. In other words, she did not know the most effective way to communicate so the situation would be resolved in a manner that both parties found satisfactory. Like Robert, she pointed out that being able to communicate clear expectations was very important. Once the common language of her district and school was learned, Sylvia was better able to communicate her expectations more clearly. She discussed how, through her mentoring relationship, she became better at "…having those difficult conversations with teachers, you know, moving the monkey from your back to theirs for accountability." Using the ethical paradigm of the profession as an underlying perspective (Gross, 2006) maintained Sylvia's focus on acting in the best interests of students, even when it meant having a difficult conversation with her staff. She added that she learned, "how to have those conversations with teachers and stand firm with my beliefs and always doing what's best for students."

Carla reflected on recognizing her inexperience with having difficult conversations with staff and knowing effective communication was a practice she wanted to intentionally learn about or "work on." Remembering her recent mentoring experience, Carla expressed, "We talked a lot about communication to staff, especially on difficult topics. That was something we really worked on. We really worked on that piece of it because just having those difficult conversations was a little foreign."

The success of a school or a district depends on a strong foundation of positive relationships with all stakeholders. Building these relationships can sometimes be a challenge for novice administrators. The ability to communicate effectively in order to develop important collaborative partnerships with colleagues, parents and community members was identified by many of the participants as learning that occurred through ongoing dialogue between mentors and mentees and authentic experiences facilitated within the context of the mentoring relationship. As a result of her mentoring relationship Amanda believes she learned, “how to build relationships with teachers, with administration, and with parents and the community as a whole.” Renee agreed, stating that she worked with her mentee on how to develop communication skills to better “partner and collaborate” with colleagues.

Time Management

When making the transition from being a teacher to an administrator, novices who participated in the study often struggled with anticipating their new responsibilities and planning ahead to accomplish newly acquired tasks. Because of the demands of the position, novice administrators often felt there was never enough time to accomplish everything that had to be accomplished. They often felt overwhelmed. Demands such as handling faculty and staff issues, custodial issues, cafeteria duty, and student discipline consumed much of the day. This left tasks such as required paperwork, curriculum planning and instructional leadership for after school, which began to cut into personal time. Many administrators expressed frustration at having to choose between staying at school to catch up on tasks or going home to spend time with family.

According to participants, balancing the tasks required of an administrator with family and personal needs continued to be a challenge.

Many administrators reported they learned how to be a better time manager as a result of participating in discussions and observations regarding effective time management practices. Discussion, implementing an idea and then further discussion to debrief how the implementation went was a practical way to construct new knowledge. Learning how to organize, prioritize and create action plans as ways to "work smarter, not harder" were areas of focus that many administrators reported to have helped them learn to be better time managers, which had led them to be more efficient in their job. An administrator who is not equipped to cope with the volume and range of diversified demands is ill suited as a school leader (Wolcott, 2003). Robert talking about helping new administrators prioritize school issues as a way to help manage their time more effectively, advised them, "I don't know if you really want to spend that much time (on this issue), you have so many other issues to deal with." When reflecting upon her learning, Elizabeth recalled that the mentoring relationship "helped me to learn to work smarter."

For Renee, the question was, "How do you manage that time and the volume of information that comes in?" This was a common concern among all of the participants. Without a doubt, they believe their mentors helped them learn how to manage their time more efficiently. As Amanda recalled,

> For me, one of the biggest things that I learned was prioritizing and making sure that I remained organized and setting up timelines to get things done, and creating action plans for things that need to be addressed. So I learned from that. That was a huge piece for me.

Similarly, Carla expressed, "I think she really helped me with the organizational piece and kind of targeting, ok we know that we're spread thin, target what were good ways to be efficient." Carla also discussed how learning to manage time more effectively helped her

> …to really balance, how to balance everything. And I mean, I don't think there is a magic key to that, but just knowing that other people can do it…and some of the systems they had in place to do it, I think were very helpful.

She recalled her mentor, "helped with compartmentalizing work and home and being ok with walking away at certain points with what's going on at work." This administrator felt that learning through supportive dialogue with her mentor, to better manage her time, really helped with her overall mental health.

Leadership

There is clearly documented research to support the positive impact of effective leadership skills as a catalyst for school reform in an effort to meet increasing standards and requirements (Honig, 2012; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Wallace Foundation, 2013; Yukl, 2006). All administrators in this study believed that participants in mentoring programs learn about the demands of their job and how to be better leaders. Much of this learning was experienced as the result of critical reflection on their day-to-day actions and experiences. Many described developing an increased repertoire of actions as a leader. Amanda described part of her mentoring experience as "learning about the expectations for an administrator." She talked about the many important aspects of her new position that she had learned about from her mentor through reflecting on conversations with students, teacher and parents. She pointed out that she had learned a multitude about her new responsibilities and "…getting an

understanding as an administrator, what that looks like" and "what it means to be an administrator." Understanding what it means to be an administrator, along with the tasks and responsibilities that must be accomplished, is an important part of role socialization for new administrators as they step into leadership roles.

Carla, who shared how the mentoring relationship helped her learn "the different aspects of leadership", echoed this. She thought one of the most important lessons she learned from the mentoring experience was, "…just a really good understanding of what the job entails." This new knowledge was formed through carefully constructed interactions with her mentor designed to promote introspection and reflection in order to promote a better understanding of the leadership role of an administrator.

Amanda observed that she was in a constant learning mode and that the mentoring relationship had helped her learn what she needed to know to be successful in her leadership position. Being in a constant learning mode indicated Amanda viewed her everyday experiences as learning opportunities. The collaborative nature of the mentoring relationship created a forum for dialogue about Amanda's experiences. Living these experiences and participating in discussions helped her to learn about:

> …just the basic day-to-day dealing with situations with teachers. Determining how I can say this, determining…well, choosing my battles. Not being so picky about certain things. Learning to live with certain things as long as they were ethically and morally ok and not always having it to be done my way…open to feedback from teachers.

Through deliberate discussions and reflection within the mentoring relationship, Amanda constructed new knowledge of how to be an effective leader. Like Amanda, Robert mentioned the importance of learning "…how to be fair and ethical" in situations with school stakeholders. He also commented that the mentoring relationship helps

administrators learn "…how to choose your battles."

Several participants discussed the specific leadership skills they learned about. Much of the learning that occurred was experiential, meaning it happened as participants worked through real-life situations on a day-to-day basis. Other learning occurred through dialogue about the day-to-day experiences. Carla shared, "We focused on a lot of management, like personnel type stuff, because until you get in it you don't really know how to handle personnel, like the HR topics, like moving staff. So we focused on that a lot." Amanda shared that she and her mentor spent time "looking at budgets and determining how to best spend money in terms of curriculum." She believed she learned how to make sound, research-based decision about curriculum through her interactions with her mentor. Robert reported discussions about leadership issues such as how to improve attendance, how to improve test scores.

Sylvia shared how she learned how to be a better instructional leader. Through participating in walkthroughs with her mentor, Sylvia learned the impact this leadership practice could have. Specifically she learned,

> ...the importance of being in the classroom. I didn't realize how critical, critical, critical it is to be in the classrooms at the very beginning of the year. I knew it was important to be visible, but I didn't really understand how important it was to be in the classroom.

Prior to her mentoring experience, Sylvia had not incorporated walkthroughs into her practice on a consistent basis. Because of this, she had lack of understanding of how walkthroughs, as a leadership practice would impact the culture of her school. Renee believed she helped her mentee learn "how to support teachers" and "how to grow teachers' learning skills." Renee further noted that she supported mentees in "learning

how to become an instructional leader, how to manage time, how to see the big picture and anticipate what is coming down the road."

For novice administrators it is often beneficial to see another's leadership style. Renee shared that she talked with her mentee about different leadership styles and finding the right fit. She shared, "…people tend to pick up your style because that's who they're with and who they spend time with and who they see." She further added, "…you need to be cautious, I believe, to not get stuck in learning one style. Because I think there are all kinds of styles out there in leadership and you need to find the one that works for you."

Bringing about meaningful change in a school setting is a difficult leadership task for an administrator. Sylvia expressed her thoughts about how her mentor affected her leadership skills in this area. She shared,

> He brought it right in my face, you know, that I'm not going to get teachers to meet my expectations unless they have, I guess, some research, some proof, some data, some foundation to say this is why we need to change.

With the job-embedded dimension of mentoring, Sylvia had this "in my face" experience that was a direct result of learning as an apprentice (Resnick, 1999). She felt understanding how to make data-based decisions was important learning to be able to be more effective at "getting the veteran teachers to be open to change." Similarly, Elizabeth shared that her mentoring relationship helped her know "how to deal with change" and "helping teachers and parents deal with change."

Situational Problem Solving Involving Policy and Procedure

Administrators are faced with a multitude of situations on a daily basis for which they must decide the "best" course of action. As mentors support administrators through

mentoring in context, mentees build their skills and ability to address the day-to-day challenges they face. During conversations a mentee might ask questions such as, “How do I handle this?” or “What would you do in this situation?” All study participants noted the learning that happened regarding various every day situations such as discipline, grading or dress code issues.

Evelyn reported her mentee learned about, “solving problems that come up in just your everyday situations.” Similarly, Amanda shared how beneficial it was to be able to learn about “…what to do, how to handle situations.” Sylvia agreed, sharing that she and her mentor discussed “lots of scenarios…what if…how to handle different situations,” especially, “how to handle difficult situations.” Amanda also reported learning, “how to handle difficult situations.” Amanda believed she learned about “…just the basis day to day dealing with situations with teachers.” Renee described it as “working through situations – hot, heavy situations.” Carla noted, “…we just did a lot of situational problem solving.”

Administrators face behavior and discipline situations on a daily basis. Carla noted, “…ever present are questions about behavior, behavior intervention plans, guiding behavioral instruction, you know, those types of things.” Elizabeth shared what she learned about dealing with student behavior and discipline,

> Well, because I deal with discipline and she is always helping me with discipline questions, I’ve really learned about teacher classroom discipline. I didn’t have the problems that some of the teachers are, and so in order to help me in my job of disciplining students I have learned to work with the teacher and their classroom management skills within the classroom, which helps change the number of items I get, which helps give them the ownership and the power to handle those situations and manage their classroom in a different format. And so, it was kind of like, oh wow, if I can train my teacher then I’ll have less write ups. That was a big ‘aha’.

Elizabeth's mentor, in an example of job-embedded learning, expertly assisted Elizabeth in this discovery, or 'aha moment,' through guided situational problem solving that was directly connected to her real-time work demands.

Many administrators reported learning about specific policies and procedures within the context of their mentoring relationship. They expressed the belief that the institutional support was very beneficial in helping them complete day-to-day tasks, such as asking a simple question, "Who do I contact?"

Robert believed learning occurred related to details of teacher evaluations and "teacher dismissal…the process to use and how to do it in a professional way." Sylvia who said she learned about "legal issues – teacher dismissal" echoed this. Elizabeth shared, "We talked about some policies and some, you know Facebook is out, so we talked about that quite a bit."

Amanda learned about special education issues, "…IEP compliance of teachers, the roles and responsibilities and what they should be doing and how it should be done, protocol basically." This was echoed by Evelyn who agreed that "special education process law" was a frequent topic of conversation, which led to learning how to better handle situations that involved special education issues.

Budgeting and finance issues were also topics that participants believed learning occurred. Amanda believed she learned about, "planning, understanding how to work a budget, when to use stimulus funds for things and which budget this might come out of and what budget that might come out of…things of that nature."

Benefits of Mentoring as Perceived by Mentees and Mentors

As I analyzed data I began to identify several emergent themes related to the guiding question: What are the perceived benefits and drawbacks to being involved in a district-sponsored principal mentoring program? These themes included: meaningful professional relationship, catalyst for professional learning, support, and self-reflection.

Meaningful Professional Relationship

Mentoring programs provide the foundation for creating learning-focused relationships. Life as an administrator is often a rocky road. Establishing a meaningful, learning-focused relationship helps administrators navigate the bumps, turns and potholes in the road. The mentoring relationship is intended to provide support, to produce growth and development, and to increase expertise in a novice's instructional practice. To produce the desired results of this specialized relationship a variety of interactions must occur within the relationship. The mentor's role as a growth agent is key in the accomplishment of desired outcomes. Trust and confidentiality are key. Evelyn commented on the importance of the relationship, "…the relationship, I think it's even maybe more developed than you have with people that you are just working with on staff. I think the relationship may become more important or closer."

In many schools and districts novice administrators do not feel comfortable asking questions to their immediate supervisors for fear of being perceived as not knowing how to do their job. A relationship in which administrators feel psychologically safe is a critical component in creating an environment that allows them to express their uncertainty, ask questions and think aloud. Unanimously, the study

participants believed the mentoring relationship produced a safe relational environment where they could freely ask questions and seek advice. As Carla shared,

> I think one, you're spending a lot of time with that individual, so it's just more comfortable. It's on a more personal level. Even if you're not friends with that individual, you still have a different, a more intimate relationship with that person, if that makes sense.

Sylvia, who felt she had built a trusting relationship with her mentor shared,

> I don't know anybody here. I'm not from here. So my trust is very thin. I haven't built those trusting relationships enough to know that if I ask a question, also is it going to show, is someone going to assume that I'm weak or that I'm, that I don't have the knowledge, or don't have the experience, or I don't know my job. So there are questions that I did ask him…that I have not presented to other people in the district.

Other participants echoed the benefit of having someone who you trust to talk to. Carla reported being appreciative of the mentoring relationship and in this way,

> I think one (benefit) is having someone to go to, to ask the questions that maybe you're afraid to ask other people. Because when you're new to an entity you never want to, you know, there are certain questions you may or may not be comfortable asking. I think it's nice to always have that go to person.

Trust was also reflected in the comments of Evelyn when she shared, "A lot of it boils down to that relationship you have with that person and they trust you as a mentor to be that person they can go to." Renee agreed, "It has helped to build a trusting relationship with one another. I think it does start out very forced and focused, but it can lead to a relationship that then becomes more of a personal relationship."

Most study participants ranked developing mentoring relationships as important and believed that developing a relationship allows for opportunities to sit and converse about any issues that arise. Part of building that relationship is respecting the vulnerability of the mentee and the confidence building that needs to take place. Developing a relationship allows the mentor and mentee to communicate openly and

honestly. It allows for the mentor to give helpful suggestions and allows the mentee to accept those suggestions, rather than interpreting them as judgment from the mentor. As Elizabeth expressed, "Just having someone that is going to stand by you, to help build your confidence when you start taking on these new responsibilities."

Elizabeth also believed that, "Having someone outside your district to, you know, bounce questions off of, reflect with, learn from" was definitely a benefit of the mentoring relationship. She reported that, "It's given me an outlet, somebody to ask questions to." Robert agreed that it was beneficial to have, "somebody to bounce ideas off of."

Evelyn emphasized the importance of confidentiality being in place within the mentoring relationship in order to facilitate learning. She shared,

> Number one, you have a person that is supposed to be a confidential person that you can go to and ask questions that perhaps you wouldn't ask your immediate supervisor for fear of looking like you don't know what you're doing or whatever the reason would be. So I think confidentiality with that person is important.

Renee emphasized the importance of the mentoring relationship as a resource that enabled her to develop increased competency as a new administrator. She shared, "I think the relationship has allowed for development of the skill set." This thought was echoed by Sylvia who shared that, "to have someone available to say, you know, what do I do when this happens, or how can you help me address difficult teachers, or something like that is definitely beneficial to a new administrator."

Catalyst for Professional Learning

All study participants identified the professional learning that takes place within a mentoring relationship as a significant benefit of participation in a mentoring program.

Mentors noted they supported mentees in learning how to become an instructional leader, how to manage time, how to see the big picture and how to anticipate what was coming down the road. As many participants pointed out, there is a very real, steep learning curve that happens with new administrators. Amanda shared, "…my mentor is a knowledgeable lady. So she brought to the table a lot of information that was helpful to me in my role, for my learning curve." Amanda further added, "... in terms of the learning curve ...they (mentors) can provide them with that much needed feedback and help to steer and guide them and coach them as we deal with what it encompasses."

Carla discussed the benefits of being in a mentoring relationship as a learning experience,

> …because when you walk into a new job, especially an administration job, you're overwhelmed and you don't know what you don't know. So I think doing it for a couple of years, by the second year you're starting to figure out what you don't know. You can ask the right questions and you can continue to refine your skills.

In this situation, active, real-life learning occurred because Carla had the opportunity, within her mentoring relationship, to reflect on her lived experiences over time. For Renee, the mentoring relationship promoted increased effort as a learner, tapping into her internal motivation for learning. As a mentor participant Renee shared,

> For me, it re-engages me in learning. I have always believed learning is lifelong. It causes me to have to go back and look something up or learn something or find those resources. I think it just pushes us. It just challenges me to keep going. So, I think it's a huge learning experience.

Constant dialogue focused on what occurs on a daily basis is a good way to facilitate learning within the mentoring relationship. This accountable talk is a feature of social constructivism, implying people do not learn unless they acquire cultural tools through discourse (Driver, Asoko, Leach, Mortimer, & Scott, 1994; Vgotsky, 1978).

Many participants talked about the benefit of the relationship as a focused learning opportunity, as well as a common learning experience. Elizabeth stated, "We picked an area and so when I'd have questions, especially on that type of situation, I would call her and that's how I am able to improve." Elizabeth shared how her mentor helped her learn how to handle various situations, "She is pretty good at questioning when I come up with a problem, and we find a solution. You know, let's check back in a couple of weeks and see if that solution worked." Similarly, Amanda shared, "I'll call and say, 'you know, I just dealt with this. How would you have handled it?' So that I can learn from some of those situations."

Amanda believed the mentoring experience was beneficial in helping her become a better administrator. Upon reflecting about her experience and the benefits she shared,

> I guess just the overall mentoring experience and helping you with being successful as an administrator (was a benefit). And I just think that getting the feedback and being analyzed and evaluated just kind of helps you to know where your strengths and weaknesses are and where you need to get better at, so things of that nature.

Within the context of mentoring, a fair and credible evaluation that is formative and not a bureaucratic job action can facilitate powerful learning. Amanda believed her mentor was a key factor in facilitating her learning. She

shared,

> When I would conduct a meeting there were times she would come as part of our time together. She would actually come to the meetings and watch me conduct these meetings and then provide me with feedback on how I did. "You might have wanted to add this. You could have left this out. You might want to talk more about this next time." And she watched me grow from that. So in terms of the learning curve and what a mentor can do for a person, they can provide them with that much needed feedback and help to steer and guide them and coach them as we deal with what it encompasses. It gives you that. It gives you the opportunity to learn from that person.

Sylvia noted the benefit of having the opportunity to learn from the experience of a seasoned veteran,

> The mentor himself has 27 years experience in education and 17 he was a high school principal, so that I think is a direct connection for me. Because all of his experience is directly related to my placement. So what he tells me is directly, you know, linked to high school situations. So I think that's a benefit; his background is where I need the most help in.

Evelyn agreed, "I think they [mentees] benefit from the experiences that a person that's been there and done that has."

Novice administrators noted that having the opportunity to view situations through the eyes of another, more experienced administrator was a valuable experience. This type of social learning occurs as vicarious learning, not necessarily by observing the mentor, but by the mentor explaining their interpretations of situations and events and the mentee coming to understand another point of view or perspective and likely adopting the mentor's reality. More than one participant validated the benefit of learning from another's viewpoint, discussing how important it was to get a different perspective. Amanda shared,

> I would say every person who is looking to pursue administrative work needs a mentor. It allows you to look at the views from another person's point of view or through their eyes. It allows you to get feedback. It gives you the opportunity to learn from that person.

Across the board, all participants recommended participation in a mentoring program as a way to become better administrators. Amanda shared,

> I would recommend to …participate in such an opportunity. The rationale for that is the notion that it allows you to really look at education policy standards, making sure that you are following those and that you know how to implement them and do that with fidelity. It helps you to learn who you are as an an administrator, what the best practices might be and how to overall, as a first year not being able to work through experiences, having someone to give you feedback and kind of coach you through it.

Sylvia shared, "…if the mentor is available and present and engaging and is able to give you feedback, then I think that helps us learn…" Similarly, Amanda expressed, "I just think that it's something that all administrators should experience because it really helps to keep you in line and teach you some things." Renee shared, "I just think it gives you the access to the individual you need to help develop your infrastructure to know where you're going." Evelyn added,

> Oh, I would definitely say to participate. Because when, I guess I'll speak from personal experience, when I became a principal, as well as Director of Special Ed., those (mentoring) programs weren't available to me and I think they would have been quite helpful. Being a first year and even second year principal is a daunting experience for anyone and having someone that you can talk to and ask advice of in a confidential manner would have been great.

Mentors in the study agreed that the mentoring relationship served as a learning experience for all involved. Renee expressed, "I just think it pushes us. So I learn all the time. I learn all the time." Renee also stated,

> I always felt when I had a student teacher it made me a more honest teacher because it kept me on my toes. I really feel the same way as an administrator mentoring. It's sometimes easy to, I think after you do it for a while, to become complacent, or become maybe sometimes, you lose your idealism sometimes, or at least I have sometimes, just because you have to work to pull everything together to help someone see the silver lining. And for me, when you have to work to pull everything together to help someone see the silver lining, it helps you see that again. For me, it re-engages me in learning. It causes me to go back and look something up or learn something or find those resources.

Renee maintained, "I think the benefit is…it helps my skills stay on level." Similarly, Robert added, "It keeps me up to date, keeps me thinking about things."

Framework for Support

Administrators in their early years should never be left alone to succeed or fail. But this is often the reality, causing many new administrators to leave the field in a few

short years (Militello, Gajda, & Bowers, 2009; Reames, Kochan, & Zhu, 2014). New administrators often lack confidence and are their own worst critics. They may become frustrated because there is so much to learn and they can't learn it fast enough. They may become overwhelmed with the volume of tasks there are to accomplish. Stress can overtake the life of an administrator. Mentoring novice administrators through these early years provides a vital resource and support system. With many administrators leaving the position in their first few years, mentoring provides a support system that keeps them in the field.

Among the many benefits of participation a mentoring relationship, all participants identified support. Administrators involved in the study across the board reported a feeling of being supported. This feeling of support evolved from consistently having someone to answer their questions to having someone to talk through situations. As Robert put it, "I think a sounding board…someone to bounce ideas off of," was a benefit.

As Renee expressed, "…it helps individuals feel connected, supported, learning in a role that can take so much out of a body because of the stress." As Carla put it, "Sometimes she could just vent and I could just vent and then we'd get past it and then we'd move on to what we needed to."

Along with feeling connected, Carla reported feeling that, within the mentoring relationship, the district valued her. She shared, "…I also think it just makes you feel connected because there is an investment in you and your position and what you do and they value you enough to find someone to help you be better at your job basically."

Mentees see the relationship as beneficial because they are working with a veteran who understands the heavy demands of being an administrator. As Carla described,

> I think sometimes in our jobs it's nice to talk to somebody who is in a similar situation, who is dealing with things like you're dealing with, who can just listen and understand. You know, you can go home and you can talk to your husband, you can talk to your wife, but they don't live it. You can't assume they know all the details and the ins and outs of everything that you know. So you don't get the same feedback from them.

Amanda said, "It gives you that modeling and coaching that we all need at some point." Sylvia agreed,

> I would say definitely take advantage of any program that's offered to give you support your first, second, third, however many years you can get it. I wouldn't say take advice from just anybody, but somebody that has the education, the background, that has the training, that has the experience in a mentoring program to help. I think definitely take advantage of it.

One component of feeling supported is the honesty and trust level that is built between a mentor and mentee. Feeling free to ask questions in a nonjudgmental relationship is important to novice administrators. Sylvia pointed out, "Being a first year and even second year principal is a daunting experience for anyone and having someone you can talk to and ask advice of in a confidential manner is great." Elizabeth agreed the support of, "…having someone to, you know, bounce questions off of, reflect with, learn from," was important as a new administrator.

Being part of a community and not feeling alone is important for a new administrator. This often helps a new administrator feel like their load has been lightened or some of the pressure has been taken off of them, possibly because they have developed personal relationships and a common sense of identity as they have become a member of a community of practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). As a member of a community of practice, they deepen their knowledge and expertise by

interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). It helps them feel they are no longer isolated on an island. Elizabeth believed it was nice "just having someone there that has the time to have that conversation with you." Elizabeth felt very supported, appreciating that "the mentor is there for you." Carla pointed out,

> You're spending a lot of time with that individual, so it's just more comfortable. It's on a more personal level. Even if you're not friends with that individual you still have a different, a more intimate relationship with that person, if that makes sense.

Carla clearly believed the relationship she had developed with her mentor, although not necessarily based on a friendship, had evolved into a close, personal, work relationship. This indicated that Carla and her mentor had developed a sense of trust and commitment to the mentoring process. Sylvia reported that she appreciated the objectivity her mentor brought to the

discussions. She recalled,

> You know, (being) a principal is a lonely job because it all deals with confidentiality a lot and not just with students, but with adults as well. So that was, how do I do this or I'm frustrated about that, or I'm disappointed with that, my expectation is this, how do I get them there? He can just look at a situation without putting an emotional attachment to it where other people in the district may put an emotional attachment to it and therefore we lose track of our goal and our target. He can be much more objective.

Renee expressed her belief in the support that a formal mentoring program can provide. She shared,

> I'm an advocate of having an official program. I think it just gives you access to the individual you need to help develop your infrastructure to know where you're going. I think that formal piece connects us and helps us develop things we may not be thinking of as an infrastructure, areas to delve into we might not be thinking of in an informal setting.

Vehicle for Self Reflection

Experience is necessary, but reflection is the true teacher. One of the most powerful strategies mentors can model is how to reflect. One of the biggest things administrators can learn is how to reflect on their practice, stepping outside oneself to critically examine oneself. Most of the study participants identified reflection within the mentoring relationship as a clear benefit. As Renee shared, "It's allowed the time to go back and reflect and I think that's the beauty in the official relationship." Amanda agreed, "It allows you to reflect, helps you to determine what type of leader you are." Elizabeth referred to reflection as being able to regularly brief and debrief situations. She shared, "I guess to have the conversation before and after. You know, how do I do this and then after it is over, here is how it turned out. You know, what could I have done to improve it." Robert felt the relationship promoted conversations focused on reflection. He appreciated that it was a structured time for "…reflection, time to reflect back and think things through."

Regular debriefings that promoted reflection were identified by participants as being beneficial. Reflection was typically connected to topics that were chosen by the participant and was facilitated through questioning and discussion. The metacognition that occurred during the process of reflecting promoted professional learning. Elizabeth reported the benefits of having reflective conversations. She shared,

> I'll say well, you know, I've had several incidents of this and this is how I handled them and I feel good about it because I've already made the contacts, the parents are supportive, they understand, you know so just the conversation with her is reflective.

Elizabeth also shared how important it was to have those conversations about her professional practice, "…reflecting on, you know, what could I have done to improve it?"

Phenomenological Dimensions of Learning within Administrator Mentoring

Textural Description

Textural descriptions are constructed to provide a description of the nature and focus of a phenomenon. They can be approached as an individual experience or as a composite experience of each study participant. To further examine the nature and focus of learning a composite textural description will provide a depiction of the experience of learning. The constant themes of every participant are studied in order to depict the experiences of the group as a whole (Moustakas, 1994).

Immersed in the reality of becoming a new administrator, at some point participants experienced a growing feeling that there was much about their new role that was unknown to them. This experience brought about other feelings, such as excitement about reaching a new goal, but also apprehension, self-doubt, and uncertainty about impending and unknown responsibilities in their future. Almost immediately participants felt a separation from their usual peers, other teachers, and began to experience the feelings of isolations often reported by school administrators.

Coupled with a state mandate that new administrators participate in a mentoring experience and recognition of the need for professional support in their new role as a school leader, participants intentionally sought out a forum for learning. The experience of learning in the initial period of being a new administrator brought about feelings of relief. Each new bit of information assimilated into their schema meant they had gained

knowledge that would help them be successful in their journey as a school leader. They began learning "what to do, and what not to do." Gaining new knowledge provided opportunities for participants to refine, review and build on new learning. But, gaining new knowledge also brought about feelings of being overwhelmed. Participants experienced the realization that there was so much more learning that needed to happen, but they did not necessarily know what exactly they needed to learn. They had the sense of not knowing what you do not know. Gaining knowledge in one area could trigger a panicky realization of the knowledge they did not possess. Taking in large amounts of new knowledge, day after day, consumed participants, leaving them wondering how they would learn everything they needed to learn. Sometimes they felt their brain was overflowing with new information and they couldn't take in any other piece of new knowledge. Weighing heavy on their minds was the fear of not knowing something and making a mistake.

As learning continued, participants continued to experience an intermittent sense of accomplishment as they used their newfound knowledge to tackle everyday situations. They experienced a sense of accomplishment when they retrieved new knowledge to help them maneuver through a situation or make a decision. At the same time, they continued to have realizations of gaps in their knowledge. Specific situations would shine a spotlight on their lack of knowledge. These experiences and resulting realizations highlighted the need for them to continue learning. The same experiences and realizations also motivated them to continue learning.

As participants became more knowledgeable about their new administrative role and responsibilities they had more experiences of using their new knowledge in a

practical way. Learning was still occurring on a regular basis, although new learning experiences tended to address more unique situations, rather than those that occurred on an ongoing basis. Throughout the mentoring relationship learning sometimes happened quickly, and sometimes was a slow process, requiring purposeful attention and focus.

A textural description was constructed to present the learning experience of administrators participating in a mentoring program. The description provides a view of what happened regarding the phenomenon of learning for these school administrators.

Structural Description

A composite structural description is developed to portray how participants experience the phenomenon. The composite structural description focuses on the aspects of the experience that allow for description of the general experience by all rather than the specific details of the experience as reported specifically by the participants (Giorgi, 1985). The integration of experiences of each individual in this study provides a description of how the learning occurred.

Gaining new knowledge in order to be successful as a school administrator was a high priority for all participants. Forming a relationship with a mentor was a means to an end, or in other words, a vehicle to transport them to higher levels of knowledge. Dialogue between mentors and mentees within the context of the mentoring relationship served as a catalyst for learning. At times the discussion focused on immediate needs based on what was happening in the professional and/or personal lives of participants. Other times saw the discussion turn to future needs, looking ahead to what was coming down the pike.

Discussion between mentors and mentees often led to reflection. Sometimes this reflection was focused and purposeful and other times it was related to whatever issue was most urgent or on the mind participants. For mentees, reflection often happened alone in the quiet of their office at the end of the day. This reflective experience often turned into a discussion between mentor and mentee through a phone call or face-to-face meeting. Learning through the eyes of another emerged from reflective discussions. Dialogue and reflection were closely intertwined as participants constructed new knowledge.

Participants experienced learning as they had the opportunity to interact and observe each other in the context of their role as administrator. Assimilating new knowledge from the words and actions of another administrator proved powerful and impactful. A follow-up discussion in which reflective interaction occurred further embedded new knowledge in the schema of participants.

Description of Essence

The belief that an essence exists within the lived experiences of people who have progressed through a similar situation is the foundation for creating a composite portrait of a phenomenon. Even as individual participant's experiences vary in relation to learning as a phenomenon, when considered altogether, their experiences reveal a common reality throughout the structure of their learning experiences. Textural and structural descriptions are blended into a final interpretation of the common experience.

All participants in this study experienced the common phenomenon of gaining new knowledge, or learning. Although a state-mandated mentoring experience was imminent, all participants articulated a willingness and desire to enter into the

experience for professional growth and support. Working through the transition from the classroom to an administrative role created excitement, fear, and apprehension of the unknown, but also served as a platform for learning. Even though participants had other resources at their disposal, the formation of the mentoring relationship facilitated positive interactions with another individual who had walked in their shoes. The participants were intent in their desire to learn, knowing that new knowledge would ease their transition to their new role.

As participants continued through their mentoring experience, learning became a source of relief and at the same time, generated new anxieties about the large gaps of knowledge that still existed. Discussions between mentee and mentor became invaluable avenues to learning. Whether discussions happened in person, over the phone or electronically through e-mail, they facilitated exchanges of ideas and promoted learning among participants. Participants interacted with and observed each other, which also led to discussion and reflection. Reflection occurred often. Sometimes it occurred within the context of a discussion, and at other times in the solitude of one's own experience. As a tool for learning, reflection proved to be powerful for all participants.

Drawbacks

Participants in Missouri's AMP were overwhelmingly positive about the experiences they had. Two of the seven participants (Amanda and Elizabeth) believed there were no drawbacks to participation whatsoever. Elizabeth shared, "Oh no, I can't think of anything negative." Amanda was in agreement as she clearly stated, "No,"

when asked if she perceived any drawbacks to participation in a formal mentoring program.

Evelyn had specific thoughts about measuring growth in the context of the mentoring program. She shared,

> I think that's a drawback, because how the situation is set up there really is no true instrument that you can measure that [growth]. So do I know that she learned everything I wanted her too? No, I really don't know that.

Often new administrators feel there is never enough time in the day to accomplish everything that has to be accomplished. As she discussed drawbacks, Sylvia shared concerns about the lack of proximity of her mentor as well as concerns about the time she had available to spend with him. She shared,

> He dropped by in the middle of, while I was doing something else and I made time to see him because he was here. I knew that it was important that I saw him, but I was in the middle of handling day to day routines and activities.

Carla also made reference to time, or the lack thereof, as an obstacle in a mentoring relationship. She shared, "The drawback is time because whenever you're starting a new job, obviously there is always a time constraint. So I definitely think that's a drawback. Time is always an issue." Renee wholeheartedly agreed, "It is a huge time drawback, just to even facilitate where are you going to do it? Where are you going to meet? Some days when you're getting fifteen phone calls about this, this and this…"

Educators know that the job of an administrator can be demanding and unpredictable. Making time to meet became an obstacle for some participants and required an intentional commitment. Renee articulated,

> You know the drawback is always the resource of time. And so, I recognize that is a drawback and I suppose what it means is that you know you're going to have an hour to do this and you're going to be an hour later at work, and are you ready to do that? And I think you have to acknowledge that it is a big

commitment and a huge drawback.

Robert sympathized with new administrators. He shared, “They’re swamped. There is so much to do as an administrator that sometimes it’s a matter of finding the time.”

Unlike others in the study, Evelyn did not believe time was an issue. She shared, “It was pretty convenient to be a mentor. It’s not so demanding on your time that you don’t feel like you don’t want to do it. I mean, that’s a good thing.”

Conclusion

Drawing together the findings of this study reveals both the “what” and “how” of learning within formal mentoring relationships under the direction of a statewide programmatic initiative. Several themes related to perceived learning emerged from participant’s recollection of their mentoring experiences. Participants reported that mentees learned to communicate more effectively with colleagues, parents and community members. This was of high importance to all participants and identified as an area of difficulty for mentees. Managing time more effectively was also identified as a learning outcome. Mentees developed a better understanding of their new role as an administrator and believed they learned to be better leaders. Participants also reported learning occurred involving situational problem solving involving policy and procedure.

Throughout the mentoring process, ongoing, supportive dialogue between the mentor and mentee established a level of trust, which laid the foundation for a meaningful learning experience. Much of the learning was experienced as the result of critical reflection on the part of the mentee regarding day-to-day actions and experiences. Job-embedded, authentic, and interactive learning experiences such as observations or participating in walkthroughs together were instrumental in developing

new knowledge and skills of novice administrators. Often new learning happened as a result of conversations between mentees and mentors in which mentors shared ideas, interpretations of situations, and best practices. Mentees would then work to implement a strategy or practice and follow up with their mentor with continued reflective discussion.

Participants in the study identified what they believed were benefits of being involved in a mentoring program. Most of the participants perceived the mentoring relationship as a meaningful professional relationship, one built on trust. All mentees and mentors in the study indicated that professional learning was a significant benefit of their involvement in the program. They were unanimous in their belief that a mentoring relationship served as a catalyst for professional learning and recommended participation in a mentoring program. Mentees reported feeling very supported by their mentors and attributed the mentoring relationship for providing a framework for support. Finally, most of the study participants discussed the mentoring relationship as a vehicle for self-reflection.

Overwhelmingly, participants in the study believed their experience in a mentoring program was a positive experience that resulted in significant professional learning. There were two drawbacks that were noted by participants. The first was the lack of an instrument to measure growth in the program. Although participants perceived significant learning occurred, there was no way to gather this relevant data. Secondly, a lack of time as identified by some of the participants as a drawback. With so many demands on administrators, finding time to meet sometimes became an obstacle.

Chapter 5

Discussion

In response to the growing demand to improve leadership in our nation's schools, we must first assess how well new school administrators have been prepared for their new role as a school leader. Current research indicates administrator preparation programs do not always provide new administrators with the necessary knowledge and skills (Clayton, Sanzo & Myran, 2013; Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr & Cohen, 2007; Mendels & Mitgang, 2013; Mitgang, 2012). Additionally, once these new administrators obtain a leadership position in a district or school, there is often little support provided to them as they tackle their new job responsibilities (Aycock, 2006; Burkhart, et. al, 2007; Villani, 2006, Wardlow, 2008). Mentoring has evolved as a form of professional development/learning for new school administrators as one way to address these issues (Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013; Honig, 2012; Skinner, 2010; The Wallace Foundation, 2011). But, do administrators who participate in mentoring programs gain new knowledge and skills to promote their success? This study was focused on determining the kind of professional learning that occurs – both what is learned and how it is learned within a formal mentoring program.

In this study, seven school administrators were interviewed using a qualitative approach to address the following questions: What kind of professional learning occurs for novice administrators in a formal mentoring program? What are the most salient commonalities and differences in learning among novice administrators? What are the perceived benefits and drawbacks to being involved in a formal mentoring program? This chapter presents a conclusion of research findings, how the findings of this study

intersect with other empirical research, how adult learning theory in the educational administration work context can be further explored, and addresses implications for current policy and practice related to the support and induction of novice school administrators. Additional considerations and recommendations concerning future research on administrator mentoring are explored.

Conclusions and Summary of Study Findings

From the data findings, the development of communication skills emerged as an important area of learning and growth. All of the study participants indicated learning how to communicate more effectively was a direct outcome of their mentoring relationship. Participants clearly identified time management as an area where learning occurred. Learning how to manage time better meant participants believed they learned how to prioritize and create action plans in order to accomplish the many tasks on their list each day. Better time management also promoted a balance between work and commitments at home, therefore improving overall mental health.

The administrators interviewed in this study articulated a belief they learned how to be better leaders. Role socialization was an important component in their growth as new school leaders. This meant first gaining true understanding of what it means to be an administrator. It included learning how to improve instructional leadership skills and how best to support teachers and their professional growth. It involved learning about different leadership styles, finding the right fit and encompassed how to facilitate meaningful change.

The experiences of the participants indicated they learned how to be better problem solvers, especially in instances involving policy and procedure. There was a

steep learning curve when making "everyday decisions." Participants reported learning about how to handle issues such as student behavior, discipline and dress code. There was also learning about how to handle issues with teachers, such as student grading practices and teacher dismissal. All participants reported learning how to solve problems related to policies and procedures was a direct result of their mentoring relationship.

As study participants reflected on their experiences, they expressed several benefits of participating in a formal mentoring program. Establishing a meaningful professional relationship was viewed as an important benefit. All participants in the study believed the mentoring relationship facilitated significant learning and this was an important benefit. Learning from the experience of a seasoned veteran and being able to view situations through the eyes of another was valued. Mentees and mentors reported they learned how to communicate more effectively and manage their time better. Mentees also believed they increased their leadership skills and problems solving skills. Participants believed they learned to be better administrators as a result of their mentoring relationship. As a result, all participants recommended participation in such a relationship.

Providing a framework for support was another benefit identified by all study participants. Having a sounding board and someone to bounce ideas off was important to novice administrators in the study and they felt this was provided through their mentoring relationship. The fact that their sounding board was someone who had walked "in the same shoes" made the support and feedback even more meaningful.

Reflection is an important practice that facilitates professional growth as new leaders begin to maneuver through new duties and responsibilities (Hall, 2008; Trotter, 2006). Participants articulated regular opportunities for reflection within the mentoring relationship as a meaningful benefit. This happened mainly through conversations between mentees and mentors. Some expressed appreciation that the mentoring relationship, because of the formal nature and expectations for interaction, provided the structure for the conversations to actually happen. The formation of a trusting relationship built on confidentiality created not only a foundation for learning, but became a catalyst for the exchange of ideas. Participants' reflections helped them determine what they could do to improve their professional practice.

There were participants who believed there were no drawbacks to participation in a formal mentoring program. Others identified the lack of a tool to measure professional growth and finding the time to fit the mentoring relationship into an already busy schedule as drawbacks. Even so, those participants who identified obstacles highly recommended participation in a formal mentoring program noting that the benefits far outweighed any drawbacks.

Study Findings and the Empirical Literature

Current literature supports the importance of mentoring as a means to facilitate the professional growth of new school leaders (Duncan & Stock, 2010; Gray, et al., 2007; Spiro et al., 2007). All study participants echoed this idea as they unanimously recommended participation in a mentoring program as a meaningful form of professional development. As a form of job-embedded professional development, mentoring facilitated learning for study participants in the areas of communication, time

management, leadership, and problem solving involving policy and procedure. With respect to learning as it related to improved leadership, participants reported gaining a better understanding the role of an administrator and learning to be a better school leader. This finding is similar to the findings of Daresh (2004), who has suggested that mentoring has the potential to help individuals become effective school administrators, and Grissom and Harrington (2010), who found evidence that school administrators who engaged in mentoring opportunities performed better in their role of school leader. To build capacity for instructional leadership, mentoring as a form of sustained, job-embedded support may be fundamental in assisting new administrators (Blasé & Blasé, 1999; Davis et al., 2005; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Honig, 2012; Leithwood et al., 2004; Peterson, 2002).

The professional relationship between a mentee and mentor, when built on trust and confidentiality, served as a platform for significant growth. Establishing a meaningful professional relationship sets the stage for meaningful collaboration to take place. This is consistent with current literature that advocates networking among school leaders in the development and support of new school leaders (Duncan & Stock, 2010; Nicholson et. al., 2005; Peterson, 2002; Pourchot & Smith, 2004). This is an important finding as the opportunity to create strong professional relationships with experienced school leaders is commonly seen as an essential component of good administrator professional development opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Grissom & Harrington, 2010; Peterson, 2002).

When a level of trust was reached within the learning relationship, adult learners were more comfortable and willing to work within the environment, increasing the

likelihood of professional growth (Bakioglu, Hacifazlioglu, & Ozcan, 2010; Drago-Severson & Aravena, 2011; McAdamis, 2007; Reina & Reina, 1999). Collaboration between mentees and mentors was an essential practice when it came to promoting professional growth. Current literature supports participation in collaborative experiences as a means of professional development for new school leaders (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe et. al., 2007; Drago-Severson, 2009; Duncan & Stock, 2010; Holloway, 2004).

Empirical research suggests that the most important component of mentoring programs is the development of a supportive mentor-protégé relationship (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; Crow & Matthews, 1998; Daresh, 1995; Gehrke, 1988; Megginson & Clutterbuck, 1995). Consistent with the literature, novice administrators in this study welcomed the support they received from their mentors (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Daresh, 2004; Lashway, 2002;). They reported feeling connected and supported as they maneuvered through the demands of being a school administrator.

Discussion and interactive dialogue were instrumental in promoting learning for novice administrators in the study. This dialogue included mentors' explanations and insights about various topics or situations. Sharing and exploring new ideas and problem solving happened often in conversations and was an important vehicle for learning (Hansford & Ehrich, 2005; Hezlett, 2005). Weinberg and Lankau (2011) reported similar findings when they reported that listening, communicating, and providing opportunities for identity development were very influential learning experiences in formal mentoring programs. Reflection also played a prominent role in the learning of mentees involved in the study. This finding is congruent with earlier

studies that support the importance of reflective practices in the development of new school leaders (Barnett & O'Mahoney, 2002; Fenwick & Pierce, 2002; Petersen, 2002; Sergiovanni, 2009; Strong et. al., 2003; Zellner et. al., 2002).

Protégés often report learning occurs through observing their mentors (Hezlett, 2005;). Similar to these findings, protégés reported that opportunities to observe their mentor contributed to their learning. These authentic, job-embedded experiences were influential learning opportunities for new administrators. In fact, in response to the criticism that pre-service and in-service administrator training programs provide no mechanism for linking theory to practice in a real-world setting (Darling-Hammond et al. 2007; Murphy & Vriesenga, 2004), the authentic learning experiences in mentoring programs are seen as a natural vehicle for making these links (Grissom & Harrington, 2010).

Similar to findings in other research, participants in this study reported that a lack of time was a drawback or difficulty when participating in a mentoring relationship (Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran, 2013; Hansford & Ehrich, 2006). When novice administrators are feeling time pressures while handling conflicting priorities, it can be more difficult to maintain a focus on the mentoring relationship.

Adult Learning through Mentoring

Mentoring, as a form of professional learning for novice school administrators, calls on the social-constructivist theory of adult learning. As such, there is an emphasis on experiential learning and knowledge as commonly established through inquiry, observation, experience, participation and practice (Clark, 2001; Dewey, 1933;

Engestrom, 1994; Engestrom, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Loughran, 2003; Orland-Barak, 2010; Tillema, 2005).

Social constructivism suggests that engaging in talk and activity about shared problems or tasks is a dialogic process of making meaning, in which individuals are introduced to a culture by more skilled members (Driver, Asoko, Leach, Mortimer, & Scott, 1994). Attending to experience as a core component of professional learning for adults can be traced back to John Dewey, who developed the concept of experiential growth (Knowles, 1978; Dewey, 1938). In reference to adult learning Orland-Barak (2010) states,

> The prevalent view is that adult learning is more effective when it is relevant to the participants' 'vicarious experiences' (Stake, 1988), to their daily dilemmas, concerns, and stages of professional development (Knowles, 1978; Hunt, 1978; Brundage & MacKeracher, 1980), and when it allows for adult learners to share these experiences with other colleagues in conversational frameworks that are both challenging and supportive (Florio-Ruane, 1991; Connelly & Clandinin, 1995; Clark, 1995; Rust & Orland, 2000) (p. 159).

Mentoring as a collaborative and reflective process stresses the reciprocal relationship between the mentor and mentee as they engage in learning conversations (Orland-Barak, 2010). Participants in this study engaged in collaboration, purposeful discussion, and reflection as a means to facilitate learning in praxis (Orland-Barak, 2010). This is consistent with literature on adult learning theories in which reflection is a prevalent practice (Dewey, 1933; Fenwick, 2000; King & Kitchener, 1994; King & Kitchener, 2004; Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Schon, 1987). Participants' construction of professional knowledge is initiated and sustained through ongoing, progressive discourse among colleagues as they interpret work-related situations (Edwards, Gilroy, & Hartley, 2002; Orland-Barak, 2010).

Mentoring situates itself easily within a model of adult learning which emphasizes that learning must be self-directed, experiential, and involve critical reflection by individuals who are motivated and ready to learn (Brookfield, 1995; Huang, 2002; Knowles, 2005). For participants in the mentoring program, learning was grounded in interactive, collaborative, authentic, and learner-centered experiences, therefore constructing meaningful and authentic knowledge (Huang, 2002).

Implications for Policy and Practice

Improving student achievement continues to be an urgent focus in our nation. Second only to highly effective teachers in the classroom, effective school leaders have the most influence on student achievement than any other related school factors (Leithwood et. al., 2004). We must pay careful attention to leadership development, providing the necessary support and opportunities for professional growth, including mentoring for new school leaders. The practice of mentoring as a form of professional development is well documented in the literature across many fields (Higgins & Thomas, 2001; Kay & Wallace, 2009; Laband & Lentz, 1995; Varkey, et al, 2012). The findings from this study of a state-mandated mentoring program indicate the types of learning that take place, as well as the benefits of participation in such a program. These findings have implications for school districts, universities, state departments of education, and state legislatures.

The commitment to such programs must begin with state legislatures across the nation. Recruitment and retention of school leaders are a significant issue in the field of education. In order to recruit and retain effective leaders in our nation's schools, states must commit to providing the support necessary for the successful transition of novice

administrators to their new roles. The induction period is a critical period in the career of a school administrator. Experiences during this time can play a large role in whether an administrator chooses to remain in the field or move on to something else. It is not acceptable to hand a new administrator the keys to the building and end all support, yet expect them to be successful. For novice school administrators to mature into successful, reflective leaders, they must be nurtured and supported in their beginning years. In states where mentoring programs are not mandated, it is left up to individual school districts to implement this support mechanism. Unfortunately, this means inconsistent support, at best. Establishing state-mandated formal mentoring programs in every state is important if we are truly committed to the success of new administrators in our nation. Missouri's Administrator Mentoring Program (AMP) is an example a mentoring program implemented by the state legislature for the purpose of supporting new administrators as they transition from preparation to practice, and assume their roles as school leaders. Novice administrators are matched with successful administrators who provide one-to-one mentor services. Mentors and mentees interact frequently for planned observations, discussion and reflection.

A challenging implication is the direction that state departments of education must take regarding resource allocation. This can be interpreted as an insurmountable obstacle, especially in the current economic difficulties states across the nation are experiencing. As state budgets begin to stabilize and the recent funding crisis in education reverses, state leaders must consider a commitment to providing the necessary funds to implement mentoring programs for new school administrators.

The findings of this study indicate a need for closer relationships between universities and local school districts. There still remains a gap between the manner in which school leaders are prepared in university programs and the reality of their day-to-day responsibilities once they assume their new position. One can infer that potential school leaders need not only a theoretical foundation of school leadership, but also an equal understanding of the nuts and bolts of being a successful school leader. Leading and managing are both important skill sets for a novice administrator. Through a strong partnership, universities and local school districts can maintain a focus on the internship experiences of prospective and new administrators in order to facilitate the practical application of theoretical knowledge.

If educators in the United States are serious about meeting the academic needs of our children and raising students to high levels of achievement, we must create a practice of collaboration. State legislatures, state departments of education, universities and school districts must work together to create a culture of support for education, as well as school leaders in our nation (SREB, 2012).

Recommendations for Future Research

This study only focused on the experiences of participants in one midwestern state-mandated mentoring program. For substantial understanding of the learning that occurs within formal mentoring programs, continued research that includes programs in other states must take place. Do participants in other state-mandated programs report the same areas of learning? Do they perceive the same benefits of participation? A future study might take a closer look at whether the learning that occurs is similar among rural and suburban participants. Additionally, are there differences in learning

among administrators in primary vs. secondary schools? Investigating similarities and differences across various mentoring programs in different states would continue to expand the current knowledge base regarding the types of learning that take place with formal mentoring programs.

For mentoring programs to be meaningful and supportive of the needs of new school leaders they must maintain a focus on the individual needs of the participants (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; Gray et. al., 2007; Holloway, 2004). In order to convey the knowledge, skills and performance targets for effective school leaders, standards are imperative. The vision and goals of a mentoring program should be explicit and aligned to ISLLC standards (Bloom et. al., 2005). A focus of future studies should be whether there is a direct connection between the learning that is taking place and established ISLLC standards for school administrators.

An evaluation component to monitor mentee growth must be present in mentoring programs if the mentoring relationship is to be truly supportive of new leaders (Gray et. al., 2007; Grissom & Harrington, 2010). Future studies of existing mentoring programs should question whether there is an instrument available to measure growth and if so, is the instrument an effective measurement of growth?

Professional development support for new school leaders, including mentoring programs, is currently in place in many states and school districts. Even so, the existence of a mentoring program provides no guarantee that new school leaders will gain the skills necessary to be an effective leader. In order to develop and implement effective mentoring programs to support future leaders it is important to understand whether there is meaningful learning currently taking place in established programs. As

we gain an understanding of what new school leaders are currently learning, and how they are learning, in such programs, state leaders, universities and school districts can use this information to plan effective mentoring models for future school leaders. Mentoring is not the only solution for supporting novice school administrators. However, as future generations of school administrators take on the challenge of leading schools in this ever changing, increasingly demanding school climate, formal mentoring programs show great promise as an effective professional development opportunity designed to facilitate high levels of professional learning.

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Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Allen et al. (2004)	X			X
Alliance for Excellent Educators (2005)		X	X	
Alsbury & Hackman (2006)	X		X	
Altmeyer, Prather & Thombs (1994)	X			X
Anthony & Kritsonis (2007)	X		X	
Archer (2006)		X	X	
Ashby (1991)		X	X	
Aycock (2006)	X		X	
Bakioglu, Hacifazlioglu, & Ozcan (2010)	X	X		
Barnett & Mahoney (2002)		X	X	
Bauer & Brazer (2009)		X	X	
Bauer & Stephenson (2010)	X		X	
Becker (1964)		X		X
Bickmore & Bickmore (2010)		X	X	
Blasé & Blasé (1999)	X		X	
Bodger (2011)	X		X	
Boice (1993)	X		X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington & Weindling (1995)	X		X	
Brady (1993)		X	X	
Brown, Anfara, Hartman, Mahar & Mills (2001)	X		X	
Browne-Ferrigno & Muth (2001)		X	X	
Browne-Ferrigno & Muth (2004)		X	X	
Browne-Ferrigno & Muth (2006)		X	X	
Bryant & Terborg (2008)	X			X
Burk (2012)	X		X	
Burke & McKeen (1989)		X		X
Burke & McKeen (1990)		X		X
Burke, McKeen & McKenna (1994)	X			X
Burkhart, Roberts-McDonald, & David (2007)	X		X	
Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, Ikemoto (2012)	X		X	
Bush & Coleman (1995)	X		X	
Chao (1998)	X			X
Chao, Walz, & Gardner (1992)	X			X
Chong, Low & Walker (1989)		X	X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Clayton, Sanzo, & Myran (2013)	X		X	
Coleman (1988)		X		X
Coleman, Low, Bush & Chew (1996)		X	X	
Connelly & Clandinin (1995)		X	X	
Cordeiro & Smith-Sloan, Lumsden (1992)	X		X	
Cunningham (1999)	X		X	
Daresh (1986)		X	X	
Daresh (1987)		X	X	
Daresh (1995)		X	X	
Daresh (2004)		X	X	
Daresh & Laplant (1985)		X	X	
Daresh & Playko (1989)		X	X	
Daresh & Playko (1991)		X	X	
DiDio (1997)		X		X
Dozier (2004)	X			X
Drago-Severson & Araena (2011)		X	X	
Dreher & Ash (1990)	X			X
Driver et al. (1994)	X		X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Dukess (2001)	X		X	
Duncan & Stock (2010)		X	X	
Eby et al. (2008)	X			X
Ehrich, Hansford & Tennent (2004)	X		X	X
Elsbury & Bishop (1993)	X		X	
Emrick (1989)		X	X	
Engestrom (2001)	X		X	
Evertson & Smith (2000)	X		X	
Fagenson (1988)	X			X
Fagenson (1989)	X			X
Farkas, Johnson, Duffett, Foleno & Foley (2001)	X			
Feiman-Nemser (2001)	X		X	
Fenwick (2000)		X	X	
Fenwick & Pierce (2002)		X	X	
Ferrandino (2001)		X	X	
Fink & Resnick (2001)		X	X	
Fleck (2007)		X	X	
Frick (2006)	X		X	
Friday, Friday & Green (2004)	X			X

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Gaskill (1991)	X			X
Gates et al. (2013)		X	X	
Gehrke (1988)		X	X	
Ginty (1995)		X	X	
Gray et al. (2007)		X	X	
Grissom & Harrington (2010)	X		X	
Grossman & Thompson (2004)	X		X	
Haack (2006)		X	X	
Halford (1998)		X	X	
Hall (2008)		X	X	
Hamilton & Scandura (2002)		X		X
Hansford & Ehrich (2006)	X		X	
Hargreaves & Fullan (2000)		X	X	
Harris & O'Bryan (1997)		X		X
Healy & Welchert (1990)		X	X	
Hean (2009)		X	X	
Hellar & Sindelar (1991)		X	X	
Hezlett (2005)	X			X
Higgins & Kram (2001)	X			X

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Higgins & Thomas (2001)	X			X
Hobson et al. (2009)		X	X	
Holloway (2004)		X	X	
Honig (2012)	X		X	
Horng, Klasik & Loeb (2010)	X		X	
Howard & Mallory (2008)	X		X	
Howley & Howley (2002)	X		X	
Huang (2002)		X	X	
Hunt (1978)		X	X	
Ingersoll (2012)		X	X	
Inzer & Crawford (2005)	X		X	
Isenberg et al. (2009)	X		X	
Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge (2008)	X			X
Kay & Wallace (2009)	X			X
Kerka (1998)		X	X	
Kerka (2002)		X	X	
King & Kitchener (2004)		X		X
Klaus (1981)		X		X
Kling & Brookhart (1991)	X		X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Knapp, Copland & Talbert (2003)	X		X	
Knapp et al. (2010)	X		X	
Koberg, Boss, Chappell & Ringer (1994)	X			X
Kolb & Kolb (2009)	X		X	
Kram (1980)	X			X
Kram (1983)	X			X
Kraus & Cordeiro (1995)	X		X	
Laband & Lentz (1995)	X			X
Lashway (2002)		X	X	
Lashway (2003)		X	X	
Leech & Onwuegbuzie (2008)	X		X	
Leidman (2006)		X		X
Leithwood et al. (2004)		X	X	
Leithwood et al. (2006)	X		X	
Levine (2005)		X	X	
Little (1990)		X	X	
Long (2009)		X	X	
Louis et al. (2010)		X	X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Lovely (2004)		X	X	
Lumsden (1992)		X	X	
Malone (2000)		X	X	
Mathur, Gehrke & Kim (2013)	X		X	
McAdamis (2007)		X	X	
McCarthy & Mangione (2004)		X	X	
McCrary & Camp (2006)	X		X	
Mendels & Mitgang (2013)		X	X	
Menon (2011)	X		X	
Merriam (1983)		X	X	
Mertz (2004)		X	X	
Milstein & Krueger (1997)		X	X	
Militello, Gajda & Bowers (2009)	X		X	
Mitgang (2012)		X	X	
Mohn & Machell (2007)		X	X	
Moller (2007)	X		X	
Mossman (2007)	X		X	
Murphy (2001)		X	X	
Murphy & Hallinger (1987)		X	X	
Murphy & Vriesenga (2004)	X		X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
NASSP (2014)		X	X	
NAESP & NASSP (2000)		X	X	
Norton (2002)	X		X	
Olebe (2001)		X	X	
Orr & Orphanos (2011)	X		X	
Peterson (2002)		X	X	
Playko (1990)	X		X	
Playko (1995)		X	X	
Portner (1997)	X		X	
Pourchot & Smith (2004)		X	X	
Raabe & Beehr (2003)	X			X
Ragins & Cotton (1991)	X			X
Ragins & McFarlin (1991)	X			X
Ragins & Scandura (1999)	X			X
Reames, Kochan & Zhu (2014)	X		X	
Reedy (2005)	X		X	
Reis (2003)	X		X	
Reitzug (1997)	X		X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Resnick (2010)		X	X	
Rhett (2004)	X		X	
Ricciardi (2000)	X		X	
Robey & Bauer (2013)	X		X	
Robinson (2004)	X		X	
Rodriguez (2006)	X		X	
Rogers (1986)		X		X
Roza (2003)		X	X	
Samier (2000)	X			X
Sandelowksi (1986)		X		X
Saunders (2008)	X		X	
Scandura (1992)	X			X
Seay & Chance (1995)	X		X	
Semeniuk & Worrall (2000)		X	X	
Showers (1985)		X	X	
Singh, Ragins & Tharenou (2009)	X			X
Single & Mueller (2001)		X		X
Skinner (2010)	X		X	
Smith (2005)		X	X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Southern Regional Education Board (2012)		X	X	
Spillane & Lee (2013)	X		X	
Spiro, Mattis & Mitgang (2007)		X	X	
Straus, Chatur & Taylor (2009)	X			X
Strong, Barret & Bloom (2003)	X		X	
Summer-Ewing (1994)		X		X
The Wallace Foundation (2011)		X	X	
The Wallace Foundation (2013)		X	X	
Tillema (2005)	X			X
Tillman (2003)	X		X	
Trotter (2006)		X	X	
Trubowitz (2004)		X	X	
Turner & Thompson (1993)	X		X	
Underhill (2006)	X			X
Varkey et al. (2012)	X			X
Vladovic (2009)	X		X	
Walker & Stott (1994)		X	X	
Wang & Odell (2002)		X	X	
Wardlow (2008)	X		X	

Appendix A: Empirical and Advocacy Literature about Mentoring in Education and Other Professions (cont'd)

Author(s)	Empirical	Advocacy	Education	Other Professions
Weinberg & Lankau (2011)	X			X
West (2002)	X		X	
White & Crow (1993)	X		X	
Whitely, Dougherty & Dreher (1991)	X			X
Wilkins & Clift (2007)		X	X	
Wilson & Elman (1990)	X			X
Wright Brumage (2000)	X		X	
Yoder et al. (1985)		X		X
Zellner & Erlandson (1997)	X		X	
Zellner, Ward, McNamara, Gideon, Camacho & Doughty (2002)	X		X	
Zimpher & Rieger (1998)		X	X	

Appendix B: IRB Approval

The University of Oklahoma®

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANT PROTECTION - IRB

IRB Number: **13482**
Approval Date: **June 24, 2011**

June 24, 2011

Lori Connery
Dept of Education
4817 Wellman Way
Norman, OK 73072

RE: An Investigation of Professional Learning in a Formal Mentoring Program

Dear Ms. Connery:

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I have reviewed and granted expedited approval of the above-referenced research study. This study meets the criteria for expedited approval category 6, 7. It is my judgment as Chairperson of the IRB that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected; that the proposed research, including the process of obtaining informed consent, will be conducted in a manner consistent with the requirements of 45 CFR 46 as amended; and that the research involves no more than minimal risk to participants.

This letter documents approval to conduct the research as described:

Other Dated: June 23, 2011 Missouri Dept of Education-Letter of support
Protocol Dated: June 23, 2011
IRB Application Dated: June 23, 2011
Consent form - Subject Dated: June 09, 2011
Survey Instrument Dated: June 09, 2011 Interview protocol
Other Dated: June 09, 2011 Administrator recruitment letter

As principal investigator of this protocol, it is your responsibility to make sure that this study is conducted as approved. Any modifications to the protocol or consent form, initiated by you or by the sponsor, will require prior approval, which you may request by completing a protocol modification form. All study records, including copies of signed consent forms, must be retained for three (3) years after termination of the study.

The approval granted expires on June 23, 2012. Should you wish to maintain this protocol in an active status beyond that date, you will need to provide the IRB with an IRB Application for Continuing Review (Progress Report) summarizing study results to date. The IRB will request an IRB Application for Continuing Review from you approximately two months before the anniversary date of your current approval.

If you have questions about these procedures, or need any additional assistance from the IRB, please call the IRB office at (405) 325-8110 or send an email to irb@ou.edu.

Cordially,

Aimee Franklin, Ph. D
Vice Chair, Institutional Review Board

1816 West Lindsey, Suite 150 Norman, Oklahoma 73069 PHONE: (405) 325-8110

Ltr_Prot_Fappv_Exp

Appendix C: Office of Protections Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research

University of Oklahoma

Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Project Title:	An Investigation of Professional Learning in a Formal Mentoring Program
Principal Investigator:	Lori Connery
Department:	Educational Administration, Curriculum and Supervision

You are being asked to volunteer for this research study. This study is being conducted at elementary, middle and high schools in Missouri. You were selected as a possible participant because you are participating in the Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program.

Please read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to take part in this study.

Purpose of the Research Study

The purpose of this study is:

To identify the kinds of professional learning that take place within a state-sponsored mentoring program and to apply this knowledge toward building a case for establishing a state-sponsored mentoring program in Oklahoma.

Number of Participants

Approximately 10 people will take part in this study.

Procedures

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

Participate in an interview (a follow up interview may or may not be necessary) and share documents such as reflective journals and/or observation instruments completed as requirements of the Missouri Administrator Mentoring Program.

Length of Participation

This study will last approximately 1 year. Participants will contribute approximately 1-3 hours of time to the study.

This study has the following risks:

Accidental release of records. The following steps will be taken to avoid accidental release of records: Study data including records, papers, audio recordings and electronic files will be closely guarded by the researcher at all times. All electronic files and audio recordings will be stored in password protected files on the researcher's computer. No person other than the researcher will have access to the computer, which will be kept in the researcher's locked office. All study data, including records, papers, audio

recordings and electronic files will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Study participants will not be identified in published reports.

Benefits of being in the study are:

Opportunities for self-reflection regarding participant learning and professional practice.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private and your supervisor will not have access to your responses. In published reports, there will be no information included that will make it possible to identify you as a research participant. Research records will be stored securely. Study data will be kept in password protected computer files. Audio recordings will be erased at the conclusion of the study. Data stored in password protected computer files will be deleted at the conclusion of the study. Only approved researchers will have access to the records.

There are organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis. These organizations include the OU Institutional Review Board.

Compensation

You will not be reimbursed for you time and participation in this study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you withdraw or decline participation, you will not be penalized or lose benefits or services unrelated to the study. If you decide to participate, you may decline to answer any question and may choose to discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Waivers of Elements of Confidentiality

Your name will not be linked with your responses unless you specifically agree to be identified. Please select one of the following options

_____ I consent to being quoted directly.

_____ I do not consent to being quoted directly.

_____ I consent to having my name reported with quoted material.

_____ I do not consent to having my name reported with quoted material

Audio Recording of Study Activities

To assist with accurate recording of participant responses, interviews may be recorded on an audio recording device. You have the right to refuse to allow such recording without penalty. Please select one of the following options.

I consent to audio recording. ___ Yes ___ No.

Request for record information

If you approve, your confidential records will be used as data for this study. The records that will be used include reflective journals and/or observation instruments. These records will be used for the following purpose(s): To determine what role these documents play in the professional learning that happens in the mentoring program.

_____ I agree for my reflective journals and/or observation instruments to be accessed and used for the purposes described above.

_____ I do not agree for my reflective journals and/or observation instruments to be accessed for use as research data.

Contacts and Questions

If you have concerns or complaints about the research, the researcher(s) conducting this study can be contacted at 405-826-2119 or lsanford@ou.edu. You may also contact Dr. William C. Frick at 405-325-2447 or frick@ou.edu.

Contact the researcher(s) if you have questions or if you have experienced a research-related injury.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, concerns, or complaints about the research and wish to talk to someone other than individuals on the research team or if you cannot reach the research team, you may contact the University of Oklahoma – Norman Campus Institutional Review Board (OU-NC IRB) at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records. If you are not given a copy of this consent form, please request one.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received satisfactory answers. I consent to participate in the study.

____

Signature Date

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

An Investigation of Professional Learning That Occurs Within a Formal School Administrator Mentoring Program

Interview Protocol

1. Can you tell me about your background in education?
    a. How many years have you been employed as an administrator?
    b. How long have you been in this district and at this site?
    c. Can you tell me about the demographics of your school/district and how it fits within the community?
2. Tell me about the Missouri Administrator Program.
    a. What are the main components? What is the mentoring process?
    b. How was the relationship developed between you and your protégé/mentor?
    c. What is your role in the program?
    d. What is your philosophy on mentoring adult learning?
    e. What are the goals and desired outcomes of the program?
    d. What type of schedule do you follow?
    e. As a mentee, do you have input into the type of learning opportunities available to you?
3. Describe what you have learned in intentional ways as a result of your involvement in the program.
    a. Talk about the unintentional learning that you've experienced.

4. What topics do you discuss with your mentor/mentee?
    a. Describe the specific skills or attitudes that you think your mentor has helped you develop.
5. What types of evidence demonstrate attainment of growth?
    a. How are goals measured?
    b. How is learning measured?
    c. How do mentees evaluate their own learning and competencies as a new administrator?
6. What have you learned from the experience of being a mentee/mentor?
    a. Have you had a learning experience in your career that has changed or shaped the way you approach being an administrator?
7. What are the benefits of being involved in a formal mentoring program?
    a. Are there any drawbacks?
8. If you were going to give advice to a novice administrator about participation or non-participation in a formal mentoring program, what would you say?
    a. What makes your mentoring relationship different than other professional relationships in your school or district?
9. If you were to design your own mentoring program, what would you consider important components of an effective program?

Appendix E: Codes, Themes and Conceptual Categories

Codes:

Bkgd: Background

Dem: Demographics

PC: Program components

Rel: Relationships

RP: Role in program

MT: Mentoring topics

AL: Adult learning

PG: Participant goals

PrG: Program goals

Sch: Schedule

Com: Communication

UL: Unintentional learning

IL: Intentional learning

GM: growth measurement

BP: Benefits of participation

DP: Drawbacks of participation

PrePr: Participants reaction to program

PD: Program design

Themes Related to Perceived Learning:

Communication

Time

Leadership

Problem-solving

Policy and procedures

Themes Related to Benefits of Mentoring:

Meaningful professional relationship

Catalyst for professional learning

Support

Self-reflection

Themes Related to Drawbacks of Mentoring:

Measuring Growth

Time

Conceptual "Essence" Categories:

Perceived learning

Benefits

Drawbacks