A CASE STUDY OF THE OKLAHOMA

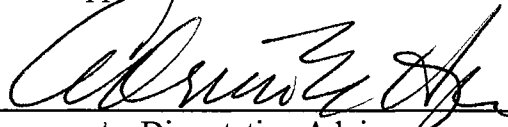PRINCIPAL'S ACADEMY

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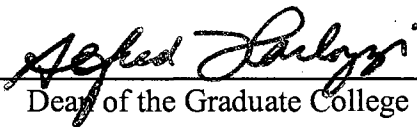Central State University
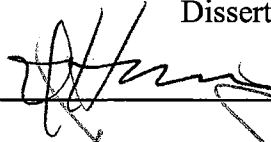Edmond, Oklahoma
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Submitted to the faculty of the
Graduate College of
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in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for the degree of
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A CASE STUDY OF THE OKLAHOMA

PRINCIPAL'S ACADEMY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

Design of the Study

Large numbers of today's principals are reaching retirement age, and research

suggests a steady decline in the number of qualified candidates for openings at every

level (Educational Research Service, 1998). Results of a study conducted by the

Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration (CCOSA) reveal that over 30

per-cent of Oklahoma school administrators would retire over the next few years (J.

McCarthy & S. Buxton, personal communication, April 1, 2002). Indeed, schools are

facing a dangerous shortage of highly qualified school leaders. Although the shortage has

not yet reached crisis proportions, many individuals, who possess the necessary

credentials, see the principal's job as impossible---a stressful, thankless endeavor that

doesn't pay nearly enough to compensate for the frustrations (Lashway, 2002).

In addition to the need for qualified candidates for the job of principal, the role of

principal has come under scrutiny. Following publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National

Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and *No Child Left Behind* (U. S.

Department of Education, 2001), policymakers have sought to re-define the role of school

leaders in a framework for education reform (Hessel & Holloway, 2001). Numerous

studies have identified the importance of instructional leadership in school change and

improvement efforts (Betman & McLaughlin, 1987; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982;

Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, & Ouston, 1979). Subsequently, the evolving image of what a principal should know and be able to do demands a significant shift in role expectation for principals.

As pressure grows for schools to be accountable for higher standards, they are simultaneously struggling to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population and dealing with a number of issues, such as school safety, that would have been unthinkable just a decade ago. Under those conditions, the traditional roles and rules of school administration seem less relevant. Whereas principals had traditionally functioned primarily as managers of the status quo (Cuban, 1988; Tyack & Hahsot, 1982), reform advocates now conceive of them as leaders of learning in a culture of change (Fullan, 2001).

Unfortunately, relatively few principals have either received relevant preparation as a change agent or been employed to fill the role of instructional leader (Leithwood, Stanley, & Montgomery, 1984; Murphy, Hallinger, Miller, & Lotto, 1987). Without new thinking and training for leaders about the ways schools are run, we will likely see continuous change but very little real improvement. Taking a fresh look at the role of school leader for both new and experienced principals is needed to improve schools. School leaders are thinking anew about how to define "quality" in schools and how to create and manage supportive environments (National Association for Elementary School Principals, 2001).

Corporate America has demonstrated that progressive organizations make significant investments toward the development of their senior level executives. This is a hallmark of organizations that consistently lead their respective industries (Aspen

institute, on-line, 1999; IEL's School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative, on-line, 2000). Oklahoma has launched an initiative to provide a similar type experience for senior executives within its K-12 educational institutions. The Oklahoma Principal's Academy is an opportunity designed specifically for executives in education.

Established in 1993, the Oklahoma Principal's Academy, sponsored by Northeastern State University and the Oklahoma State Department of Education, provides state-of-the art leadership training designed for Oklahoma school principals. The purpose of Oklahoma Principal's Academy is to provide participants with the most current application of effective leadership principles from education and business. Implicit in this training, and consistent with the national trend, is the practical goal of transforming Oklahoma principals into leaders of learning communities (Oklahoma Principal's Academy, 2001, Brochure).

Problem Statement

For the past 30 years, there have been calls to change schools but for the most part, schools remain the same (Murphy, 1990, Fullan, 2001, Eaker, DeFour & DeFour, 2002). Those that do change exist, but they are rare. The anomaly of some few schools changing while the majority do not can best be explained by the development of different ties among the school leaders of changing schools.

Perpetuation of the status quo is the norm. Theoretically, Perpetuation Theory (Granovetter, 1973, 1983, 1986; McPartland & Braddock, 1981; Wells & Crain, 1994) would explain that this happens through the maintenance of strong ties. Some would term

this doing things the same way they always have been done. Theoretically, the leaders of schools that maintain the status quo have few ties with individuals or organizations outside the strong ties and traditional good ole' boy network or pipeline. But in schools where things are changing, leaders have other ties, weak ties or social experiences that promote the development of relationships across ideas and context that promote learning and successful school change.

Perpetuation Theory (Granovetter, 1973, 1983, 1986, McPartland & Braddock, 1981, Wells & Crain, 1994) would explain the evolution of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy in terms of the interaction of and support for strong and weak ties within its social system. Strong ties maintain the dominant cultural norms and values while weak ties support links between the dominant system and culturally different ones (Granovetter, 1973). The Oklahoma Principal's Academy and common school systems of Oklahoma are related but distinctly different cultural systems. Maintenance of the dominant common school systems norms and perspectives should be the result of the predominance of the strong ties within the system. Change in the system norms and perspectives should result from the predominance of weak ties across the system and beyond, ties across common schools of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Principal's Academy.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships among principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and document the extent to which principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy reached the Academy's

goals through socialization experiences that facilitated successful school improvement and change. Specifically, the following was done:

1. Described the outcome of relationships and the "ties" (Granovetter, 1973) that exist among members of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy;

2. Analyzed the impact of Academy goals and resulting "ties" through the lens of Perpetuation Theory (Wells & Crain, 1994);

3. Reported other realities that may be revealed; and,

4. Assessed the usefulness of this lens for explaining this phenomenon.

Theoretical Framework

For this study Perpetuation Theory allows the examination of relationships (ties) among members of groups for patterns of interactions or absences thereof. Perpetuation Theory provides a useful method of examining these ties in context and served as the theoretical framework for analysis of the data. This theory was chosen as it lends itself to the naturalistic inquiry approach and provides a useful lens from which to examine the evolution of the academy.

Perpetuation theory (Braddock, 1980) was developed to explain racial segregation. It states that segregation tends to repeat itself "across the stages of life cycle and across institutions when individuals have not had sustained experiences in desegregated settings earlier in life" (McPartland & Braddock, 1981, p. 149). Students will, in most instances, make choices that maintain physical segregation when they become adults because they have never tested their racial beliefs. McPartland and

Braddock (1981) point out that the black-white split in career tracks is partially the result of individual decisions that are shaped by experiences and the decisions of people with whom they have strong ties-friends and family members.

However, even a short-term break in the cycle of perpetual segregation can influence black students' career goals by allowing them access to information regarding the necessary steps to achieve an occupational goal. Black students, who are exposed to desegregated setting, were more likely to attend predominately white colleges (Braddock, 1980). Wells and Crain (1994) expanded on this finding and added that minority students who participated in desegregated settings also had higher educational and occupational aspirations than those who did not.

Perpetuation Theory is also useful in predicting the acclimation of individuals into group settings. Within groups, the time, emotional intensity, intimacy, and reciprocal services of individuals with similar backgrounds and experiences (strong ties) (Granovetter, 1973) will be different than those of individuals with dissimilar backgrounds (weak ties). As additional members were added to the group, these individuals could learn to operate within the environment with the existing group members and form strong ties with members with similar backgrounds and experiences. In time, subgroups, cliques or cohorts would form within the group.

Among the first to incorporate the effects of occupational aspirations and expectations into the concept of Perpetuation Theory were Wells and Crain (1994). Strong ties were formed between family and friends, individuals who were in contact with each other on a consistent basis. Weak ties are relationships formed through acquaintances, people that you know of or have contact with occasionally, inconsistently,

or sporadically. In applying the notion of "strong ties" and "weak ties" to Perpetuation

Theory, Granovetter's (1973, 1983, 1986) work, shows the strong impact of "weak ties,"

or less formal interpersonal networks – that is, acquaintances of friends, on the diffusion

of influence, information, and mobility opportunities. These weak ties, Granovetter

(1973) argues, are the channels through which ideas that are socially distant from an

individual may reach him.

Procedures

Qualitative research methods – those that produce data in the form of words and

analyze data by means of the use of human instruments are necessary to discover and

understand the principals and academy. The use of naturalistic inquiry allows the

researcher to attempt to provide solutions to daily problems faced by leadership by

examining the day-to-day challenges that principals have to deal with as a leader of a

school.

The Oral Solicitation, (see Appendix A) was used as an introduction and (see

Appendix B), Consent Form, was used to seek approval for participation for each

participant. Principals examined their beliefs and practice in the setting of their own

school and reflected on whether their experience with Oklahoma Principal's Academy

has changed the way that they handle a complex, rapidly changing environment where

they can implement reforms that lead to sustained improvement in student achievement.

Appendix C, Demographic Information, provided a clear picture of physical conditions

and vital statistics of this study group. The Survey, Appendix D, explored the content of

the academy curriculum and its use by the participants to initiate change through the facilitation of new programs and ideas. Through this research method, data was obtained, tentative meaning was applied, new data was obtained, and meaning was revised (Merriam, 1988). The use of a theoretical framework in research is similar to Kuhn's conceptualization of a paradigm. It provides a way of looking at the problem by providing a set of assumptions, rules and direction.

The qualitative case study method (Yin, 1994) was used for this study. It is "an ideal design for understanding and interpreting observations of educational phenomena" (Merriam, 1988, p. 2). Explanatory case studies generally seek to answer the "how" and "why" questions. The case study report allows for a thick description of the phenomenon under study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A case study design is used to explore the manner in which the Oklahoma Principal's Academy operates and the degree to which it accomplished its goals of administrative development and educational improvement.

Researcher

I, the researcher, have formally worked in common education for 23 years: teaching in middle school for 21 years, serving in various curriculum fields and teacher leadership positions. All but one, of these years was at the same school and all were in the same district. Three years ago I entered the field of administration as an assistant principal in a new district at an upper elementary school, grades four, five and six. In July of 2003, I was promoted to Director of Federal Programs/Curriculum for the district. My educational beliefs have been greatly impacted by my life experiences, as well as the

philosophy shared by those I have been associated with through work and education. As I evolved as an educator, I have become more cognizant of my beliefs and their relationship to my education, my environment, and my expectations. It is through self-reflection, examination, and professional collaboration with other educators, that I gain understanding, direction, and professional growth.

It is my assumption that educational administrators develop a philosophy of education through experiences. This philosophy is influenced by my own experiences as a student, teacher, and administrator. It is also influenced by, and through, the interaction with other educators with like and different work experiences. The doctorial cohort that I have been a part of has had a profound impact on my interest in social group interaction. I presume that philosophies are developed and perpetuated through socialization and experiences. I believe that principals can positively, or negatively, impact their own schools and the system of schools as a whole through their beliefs and interactions with their peers. They help determine the direction of education in Oklahoma and across the nation. This view has affected my research from the development of a problem statement to the analysis of data and interpreting of the findings.

My goal has both personal and universal applications, to inform my own practice and the practice of others. As an assistant principal, and participant in Oklahoma Principal's Academy, I took the position of an active learner, relating my findings from the perspective of a participant-observer (Yin, 1994). This study presents a qualitative case study of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. This study took place over the course of the spring semester of 2003 and included seven members of Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. In addition I surveyed the members of Class I and Class V of the

Oklahoma Principal's Academy. I also received valuable information about the history and participants of the academy from its founder Charlie Hollar and director Cheryl Price.

Data Needs and Sources

This study looked primarily at Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. The participants in Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy were comprised of various principals from seven public school districts in Oklahoma. Each participant was interviewed and observed in the setting of their school. Demographic information and survey data were collected from Class I and Class V and Class X of the Principal's Academy to determine the various ways in which the curriculum of the academy has been operationalized. Each element of the curriculum emphasized by the Oklahoma Principal's Academy was viewed along a continuum that included: (1) Pre-initiation, (2) Initiation, (3) Developing, and (4) Sustaining.

The Demographic Information (see Appendix C), and Survey (see Appendix D), gave a clear description of the participants and the settings in which they practice 1, 5 and 10 years since their participation in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. Analysis of the longitudinal impact of the curriculum on the participants of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy was explored. Additional written documentation about the academy, its leaders and participants was collected from Northeastern State University, headquarters for the Oklahoma Principal's Academy, and its founder Charlie Holler.

Participants of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy were selected through an application process involving the superintendent and his/her commitment to support the nominee to the academy by attending one day of instruction, providing release time for the principal to attend the summer session and five follow-up sessions, and furnishing the cost of transportation, as well as the $1,000 registration fee.

The participants attended class and resided on campus for the initial one-week session of the academy groups/classes during the summer. Five follow-up sessions, consisting of one and one-half days each, were staged at historical Oklahoma locations. The curriculum of the academy emphasized:

- The power of vision

- Creating community

- Creating synergy

- How to leverage oneself

- Team building

- Personal growth

Data Collection

Multiple methods were used for data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Data gathered from the Oklahoma Principal's Academy staff and participants comprised of document collection, interviews, observation, artifacts, survey, and field notes.

Primary data was obtained through a series of interviews with Class X participants through a written list of questions and probes used to guide the conversation

when interviewing research subjects. The interview protocol addresses the process issues as well as ties among principals participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy training. A pilot-test was made to ensure that the wording could be understood and to validate the interview protocol as well as the demographic and survey instrument.

I interviewed participants in the natural setting of their office at school to give participants a greater sense of security and comfort. Studying these principals in their own school setting provided a naturalistic setting through which to see the application of theory in different contexts. Each site provided a unique setting and climate in which the principal must work. Situational mastery of the work environment may, or may not, lead to generic skills that could work as well in other settings. These interviews/observations were used to explore the relationships among principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and document the extent to which principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy, reached the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitated successful school improvement and change. Class X responses were compared to the survey sample of Class I and Class V for a longitudinal picture of the implementation of curriculum presented to participants of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy.

Through interviews, I was able to clarify responses and continuously assess and evaluate data collected, allowing me to redirect, probe, and review the line of inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Interviews allowed clarification of individual choices and helped me to "understand and put into a larger context the interpersonal, social, and cultural aspects of the environment" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 85). Through

interpretation of data received from the respondents, further investigation was conducted using follow-up interviews with some to gain greater insight about the choices they made.

To navigate my investigation, a series of interview questions guided and uncovered major themes that illuminate the "how" and "why" (Yin, 1994). "What" questions, also exploratory in nature, were used to develop "pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry" (Yin, 1994, p.6). Using this set of assumptions, rules and direction, questions that guided my research were:

1. How did you decide you wanted to become a principal?

2. What type of background preparation did you have to become a principal?

3. Why did you choose Oklahoma Principal's Academy?

4. How would you describe your Oklahoma Principal's Academy experience? What have you experienced which you did not have the tools to respond to prior to your training? How will the Oklahoma Principal's Academy experience impact you in the future?

5. How has the training offered through Oklahoma Principal's Academy been used in your practice? What specific tools have you used from what was taught in the academy?

6. How much do you socialize or interact with principals outside of your district?

7. How do you solve problems?

8. Whom do you consult when you have a problem or are seeking ideas? Do other leaders seek you for ideas or advice?

9. How has the amount of time and preparation for your job as principal changed?

10. What else would you like for me to know about your Oklahoma Principal's

Academy experience?

These questions provided a rich description that was used to illustrate, add

realism, and provide in depth examples to other information about similar programs

(United State General Accounting Office, 1990). They may also yield exploration for the

testing of hypotheses for later investigation. Before proceeding with the research study, I

submitted my proposal and received approval to proceed with the study from the

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (see Appendix E).

Pseudonyms were used in the final document to preserve confidentiality and

anonymity for the individuals of Class I, V, and X of the Oklahoma Principals Academy;

only I had access to the actual names of the participants. Interview participants had the

opportunity to edit their verbatim transcripts and remove any information deemed

unacceptable or inaccurate. Data was collected from Charlie Holler founder of the

Oklahoma Principal's Academy; Sheryl Price, Director of Oklahoma Principal's

Academy; and Class X participants of Oklahoma principal's Academy through site

interviews and observation.

Data Analysis

Interview and survey data was analyzed by identifying recurrent themes among

the perspectives of the principals (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Themes were identified

using codes to form categories and topics from the lines of text as they were analyzed and

interpreted from the textual data (Hofmann, 1995). These interpretations were then

compared with the data derived from the documents, artifacts, and field notes as a means of triangulation (Jick, 1978). The analytical framework, perpetuation theory, allowed the examination of relationships (ties) among members of groups for patterns of interactions or absences thereof. The process brought to the forefront a collective picture of how the case study of Class X of Oklahoma Principal's Academy had attempted to explore the relationships among principals and document the extent to which principals reach the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitate successful school improvement and change.

Research Criteria

Four criteria for a qualitative study to be considered trustworthy were used. They include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Erlandson et al., 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility

The quality of the work, its accuracy, its inclusions and exclusions, its method of organization and presentation established the credibility of the researcher and provided a base of validity for the study (Anderson & Arsenault, 1999). This study involved the researcher as a program participant and evaluator. This is particularly valuable in formative evaluations, where the purpose is to gain understanding of what is going on and how to improve. One major advantage of participatory evaluation is that it is easier to

communicate and implement its results than when the evaluation is done externally. However, such participatory evaluation sacrifices credibility, as it is generally not perceived as independent.

To establish credibility of the research data, I worked diligently to separate my biases from the data, and attempted to accurately depict what the research subject had submitted (Erlandson et al., 1993). Member checks and peer debriefing were used to achieve credibility. Member checks allowed those interviewed to respond, modify and challenge the categories, interpretations, and conclusions of the inquiry. (Erlandson et al., 1993). Peer debriefing permitted an outside professional to analyze the study and provide feedback about the findings and conclusions in order to challenge, refine and redirect the process of the study as necessary. Dr. Adrienne Hyle, my dissertation advisor, served as professional analyst. Dr. Edward Harris, Dr. Kay Bull and Dr. Wilbur D. Johnson, members of my dissertation committee provided feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Transferability

We need to know whether the conclusions of a study have any larger import. Are they transferable to other contexts? Do they "fit" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)? How far can they be "generalized?" Were data presented with enough detail to allow sufficient information about context, sample, and methodology to expose its transferability to other situations or similar groups? Thick description and purposive sampling helped facilitate transferability (Erlandson et al., 1993). By using demographic information completed by

the eight principal participants in Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy I established the diversity of the group according to gender, school student socio-economic status, geographic location and grade level and student academic performance. The eight principals interviewed, thus provided multiple interpretations through which to examine the many aspects of principal leadership in Oklahoma. An analysis of the initiation and facilitation of ideas presented in the academy curriculum was presented and compared to responses of participants in Class I and Class V of the Principal's Academy.

Dependability

The underlying issue for dependability was whether the process of the study was consistent, reasonably stable over time and across researchers and methods, in effect, "quality control" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Were things done with reasonable care? I attempted to provide tracking of the process, describing the methodology and construction, to insure replication of the study with the same sample would bear the same result.

Confirmability

The basic issue in confirmability was the relative neutrality and reasonable freedom from researcher biases. Did the conclusions depend on "the subjects and conditions of the inquiry," rather than on the inquirer (Guba & Lincoln, 1989)? I have not

attempted to ensure that observations are free from contamination, but rather to trust in the "external reliability" of the data themselves (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

An audit trail of interview transcripts, tapes, notes, analysis, and other documents were kept by me in a concerted effort to recognize potential bias. Conclusions, interpretations, and recommendations were related to their sources and supported by the study (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Significance of the Study

The study of principal preparation is of interest for a variety of reasons. It is, of course, centrally important in its own right, to the extent to which it is linked to the development of more successful educational leaders and schools. An analysis of professional development programs also provides a window on the development of the field of school administration. Connections between the academic and practice arms of the profession and theory are all highlighted in the evolutionary tapestry of principal preparation. Because formal, university-based training for school leadership positions is no longer adequate, or needed, for certification of new and practicing principals they must find a professional development program that will prepare them for their new role.

This study presented the results of a qualitative case study of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. The study explored the relationships among principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and documented the extent to which principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy reached the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitated successful school improvement and change. A

thick description of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy program and its perceived impact on the participating principals was presented. Although the scope of this study is limited, it does begin to suggest areas of success as well as some of the limitations and obstacles confronted by leadership development programs for principals.

Perpetuation Theory (Wells & Crain, 1994) explains the evolution of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy in terms of interaction of and support for strong and weak ties within its social system. Strong ties maintain the dominant cultural norms and values while weak ties support links between the dominant system and culturally different ones (Granovetter, 1973). Principals in common schools in Oklahoma are related in that they share a similar role and job description, but each individual serves a distinctly different cultural system at their unique site. Instructional leadership may look different in different communities, yet there are similarities found in all effective school administrators. Maintenance of the dominant principal vocation system norms and perspectives should be the predominance of the strong ties within the system, but change in the system norms and perspectives results in weak ties. Weak ties are formed when laws and regulations change and the expectations and definition of principal is altered.

Theory

This study used Perpetuation Theory to expose and provide an explanation for the interaction among member of the sample group. Granovetter's (1986) concept of strong and weak ties provided guidance in presenting and formulating understanding regarding

these interactions. This study also helped clarify perpetuation theory for use in educational settings.

Research

This study adds information to a limited knowledge base on the socialization of individuals within formal academies as the result of diversity in educational background and previous experiences in the field of education. Insights in developing and supporting collegial relationships for school improvement and change were explored.

Practice

Using the information from this study should enhance the practice of education by providing group members with insight regarding the formation of networks within groups due to diversity in education and previous work experience. Through this recognition, practice can be enhanced by a concerted effort to recognize and minimize the affects this has on the effectiveness of maintaining cohesive goals and purposes.

Summary

Principals find themselves in an environment that calls for educational reform. As pressure grows for schools to be accountable for ever-higher standards, principals are simultaneously struggling to meet and needs of an increasingly diverse population and

dealing with a number of new and changing issues. Under these conditions, the traditional roles and rules of school administration seem less and less relevant. In an attempt to meet these needs principals across the nation and the state of Oklahoma are looking for opportunities to rethink the principalship, build capacity for leadership and network with peers to support successful school improvement and change. Oklahoma Principal's Academy serves as a tool for school leaders to redefine the role of the school leader, analyze practice and build new relationships. It allows principals to focus on instructional leadership while balancing management responsibilities and change with the help of a network of peers. It also establishes an alternative route to the principalship for those who have chosen the profession without the rigor of previous administrative training and experience. This parallel system allows the integration of new candidates to practice in the field of education without having experienced the "pipeline" of ascending to a position of leadership.

The purpose of this study was to use Perpetuation Theory to explore the relationships among principals participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy and document the extent to which principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy reach the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitate successful school improvement and change. Specifically this study will describe the relationships that exist among members of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy; analyze the impact of Academy goals and resulting "ties" through the lenses of Perpetuation Theory; report other realities that may be revealed; and assess the usefulness of this lens for explaining this phenomenon.

Reporting

       Chapter II reviews the literature. Chapter III presents all data that has been collected. Analysis and interpretation of the report are in Chapter IV and Chapter V includes a summary of the study and findings, conclusions, discussions, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

First the review of literature looked at the prevailing issue of principal training

and development. The history and evolution of training programs for educational leaders

in the United State primarily in the 20th century were traced. The history of preparation

was divided into four eras: The Ideological Era, 1820-1899; the Prescriptive Era, 1900-

1946; The Scientific Era, 1947-1985; and the Dialectic Era, beginning around 1986. Key

dimensions and central events are underscored in each time frame.

Second, an examination of the existing initiatives to educate and prepare

principals in other states, as well as programs in Oklahoma, provided a perspective of

professional learning programs that currently exist to assist principals. What is known

about training and socialization experiences helps to understand and explain principal

behavior, ties that exist among members of groups, and the impact that these ties have on

participants and schools. This allowed me to examine what is known and what is

unknown.

Finally, Perpetuation Theory and the research that has used it as a frame were

reviewed. Perpetuation Theory offers new and seasoned leaders' insights into the

dynamics of change and presents an approach for navigating the intricacies of the change

process. Perpetuation Theory offers leaders a framework for exploring new ways to accomplish goals and become exceptional leaders.

The Evolution of Principal Training and Preparation

History and reflection on the evolution of the principalship are important for a complete understanding of the profession. By examining the early days of school administration, its training and preparation, gives a good perspective of how the job of school principal has gotten to where it is today. The literature explored the past emerging trends that have changed the nature of the principalship as the year's progressed. This foundation provided context and rationale for the new skills required of principals in the field of education. While some of these skills are addressed by traditional school curriculum, many of them are not.

The Ideological Era, 1820-1899

In its early days administration of school "went largely unrecognized as an essential component of school operation" (Guba, 1960, p.155). Until after the Civil War the number of administrators was quite small. The superintendency, the first administrative position in education, was created during the latter part of the 19th century (Gregg, 1960). The Department of Superintendence, precursor of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), was not organized until 1866 (Button, 1966). At this time administration was not considered an arduous task because early

schools were simple organizations. As Gregg (1969) notes the administrator could learn his profession effectively on the job by trial-and-error processes. Little, if any, formal specialized preparation was needed, and none was provided. The minimal formal education, which was designed for teachers, was deemed sufficient for those who would become administrators (pp. 993-994).

In 1875, William L. Payne, wrote the first book in the USA dealing with school administration. He also taught the first college level course in school administration at the University of Michigan in 1879 (Callahan & Button, 1964). However, it was not until the early 1900's that formal training for administration included some basic pedagogy (Cooper & Boyd, 1987, p. 16), school management and philosophy (Moore, 1964, p. 11). The "first teachings to prospective administrators were 'theories' about exemplary school leaders which were then rarefied into 'great man' and 'trait' theories" (Cooper & Boyd, 1987, p. 7). The doctrine of administration as applied philosophy emphasized eternal wisdom and moral judgment. It made the administrator into something like the clergyman and gave him similar status.

The Prescriptive Era, 1900-1946

In 1900, no institutions were offering systematic study in the area of school management but, by the end of World War II, over 100 institutions were actively engaged in preparing school administrators (Silver, 1982). Many states were requiring formal coursework in educational leadership for administrative positions and were certifying graduates of preparation programs for employment (Moore, 1964).

The shift from an era of teaching, ideology, character and philosophy to one of prescription represented the first era of change in school administration. This trend has been repeated since this period of time with critical analysis about the health of educational administration in general and the status of preparation programs in particular. There was considerable muckraking literature about the way practicing administrators were managing schools (Cooper & Boyd, 1987). In addition, new views of leadership such as the captain of commerce role from 1900 to 1930 and the social agent role from 1930 to 1950 were held up as desirable alternatives for training educational administrators (Callahan, 1962).

Most administration students of this period were white males holding full-time positions as school administrators while attending school on a part-time basis (Campbell et al., 1987). The education received by principals was largely undifferentiated from that of teachers until the scientific management movement of the corporate world between 1910 and 1915. For the next 20 years, business exerted considerable influence over preparation programs for school administrators. The objective was to train students to understand the job of administration as it was and to perform successfully in the roles they undertook (Campbell et al., 1987).

The Scientific Era, 1947-1985

At the onset of the scientific era, considerable criticism was leveled against the untested principles that constituted the knowledge base of educational administration at the time. Administrators came under attack for their unscientific, non-theoretical

approach to administration. As has been the case throughout the history of school management, preparation programs were reorganized to mirror the high status professions in the larger society. An alternative vision of the role of school administrators, was developed, one for a science of school administration was undertaken (Culbertson, 1988; Greenfield, 1988; Griffiths, 1988).

Four major events mark this era. The first was the formation of the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) in 1947. By linking professors throughout the country for the first time, the NCPEA exercised considerable influence over emerging conceptions of the profession and over school administration training programs (Gregg, 1960; Campbell et al., 1987). Second was the creation of the Cooperative Project in Educational Administration (CPEA), a consortium of eight universities funded by the Kellogg Foundation whose primary purpose was to institute changes in preparation programs. A multidisciplinary approach to analyses of administration and to the education of school leaders was encouraged. The establishment of the Committee for the Advancement of School Administration (CASA) in 1955 and of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in 1956 are the third and fourth milestones that helped shape evolving conceptions of school administration during this era (Griffiths, 1959; Moore, 1964). CASA focused on the development of professional standards of performance and UCEA influenced the study and teaching of educational administration (Campbell et al., 1987, pp. 182-183).

The 1950's and 1960's was a period of rapid growth in educational administration. Growth in institutions for the preparation of school leaders rose to over 500 (National Commission of Excellence in Educational Administration, 1987). While

there was considerably more diversity among students in preparation programs in 1985 in terms of gender and, to a lesser extent, ethnic background, there were still many commonalities. Most students continued to be drawn from the bottom quartile on national entrance exams, to have self-selected their programs, attended local institutions on a part-time basis and exercised little control over their lives as students (Murphy, 1990, 1992).

The scientific movement led to a conception of educational administration as "an applied science within which theory and research are directly and linearly linked to professional practice" (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 4). There was also a heavy reliance on social science content (Miklos, 1983, p. 160), the use of research techniques and instruments from the behavioral sciences, and a multidisciplinary approach to preparation (Culbertson, 1963; Hodgkinson, 1975).

The Dialectic Era, 1986-2003

Educational administration today is in the throes of a shift from a scientific to a dialectic era (Murphy, 1993; Murphy & Forsyth, 1998). This is being fuelled by devastating attacks on the current state of preparation programs, critical analyses of practicing school administrators and references to alternative visions of what programs should become. Also contributing to the current uproar is the increasingly voiced opinion that existing school leaders are responsible for the current crises in education and that they are incapable (or unwilling) of solving the array of problems that plague schools (Murphy, 1990). It is argued that school administrators are mere managers, nurturing a dysfunctional and costly bureaucracy (Murphy, 1991).

The definition of principal and the leadership roles of principals have changed over time and continue to change. Historically, the principalship evolved from the duties that were performed by the headmaster in the mid-to-late 1800's. These duties centered around being the chief disciplinarian, ordering textbooks and supplies, and generally supervising the schoolhouse, in addition to teaching (Rebore, 1985). Today's literature paints a different picture of what a principal is and what he/she does.

Principal as Leader

The changing metaphors from leadership reflect how the situations in schools have changed in the past 30 years. In the 1980s, the Effective Schools research introduced the term *instructional leadership,* establishing that in effective schools, principals focused on student and teacher learning and on monitoring progress and achieving key instructional objectives (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979).

In the 1990s, influenced by corporate models, the managerial focus on funding, facilities, mandates, and politics became vital. Realizing the importance of instructional leaders, principals assisted teachers in becoming instructional leaders, defining the principal's role as the leader of leaders. Site-based management and distributed leadership became the often under achieved ideals. Recent research concerning the traits of high-achieving schools confirms earlier findings on effective school leadership. In a review of the literature since 1985, principals in high-achieving schools create safe and

orderly environments where students feel a sense of responsibility for their learning

(Cotton & Blum, 2001). Principals are highly visible, visiting classrooms frequently so

that they know what is going on. The most successful principals engage their staff in

decision-making and collaboration. Educators are moving "beyond instructional

leadership," becoming ever more sophisticated in their understanding of the term and

incorporating such roles as culture builder (Barth, 2002), lead learner (DuFour, 2002),

and change agent (Fullan, 2002).

Professional Development for Principals

Improved training will produce school leaders who are ready to handle today's

challenges, but continued restructuring will likely make tomorrow's challenges quite

different. Schools that fail to support professional development may find their leadership

becoming increasingly irrelevant (Sparks, 2002).

Unfortunately, socialization into school leadership is often informal and

inconsistent. Newcomers to the profession are vulnerable, looking for acceptance by

mimicking the behavior of established members. Without frequent, well-supported

opportunities for reflective learning, newcomers may uncritically absorb the values and

assumptions of those around them (Marshall & Kasten, 1994).

One of the most effective sparks for professional growth may be peer networking.

The chance to consult with sympathetic peers can lead to reflection, questioning, and

problem solving, particularly in a structured setting. For instance, study groups for

principals using facilitators and structured protocols to keep the discussions focused,

serve as learning communities in which school leaders can draw on their own experience to raise questions, solve problems, and provide mutual feedback and support (Mohr, 1998).

Leadership academies, a program that includes district involvement in candidate recruitment and selection, a mentor for each student, and paid administrative training that stresses reflection, collaboration, and active problem solving. Kenneth Leithwood and colleagues (1995) concluded that the evidence was "unequivocal:" preparation programs with these characteristics make a significant difference in leader success. The cost of such a program is insignificant when compared to the real costs of failed leadership to school districts, staff members and students.

Another promising tool is the professional portfolio. Analogous to the portfolios now being used in many classrooms, professional portfolios serve as both a marker of development and a tool for reflection. John Daresh and Marsha Playko (1995) suggest that a principal's portfolio might contain such things as a current resume, statement of educational beliefs, references, transcripts, and personal reflections. Used reflectively, portfolios can give tangible form to themes and issues that are otherwise elusive.

Springing up around the nation are also professional development opportunities for school leaders to facilitate the change in the role of principal. As in the case of classroom teaching, the spectrum of knowledge and skills that school administrators must be able to bring into play are not easily learned in a classroom setting; they are learned in practice. Administrators, unlike most teachers, have nothing like a student teaching experience. A student teacher serves a sort of apprenticeship, working side by side with a master teacher, receiving daily modeling and feedback. Administrators, while they

typically move through positions of increasing responsibility, step into those positions with very limited practical preparation. In response to this void some districts are now growing their own administrators. School districts are identifying lead teachers and providing opportunities for training and practice as interns in the field of administration (Bower, 2001).

Administrator preparation programs have often been criticized as ineffective and irrelevant. Universities and K-12 schools have very different cultures. University teachers are typically oriented toward research centered in discrete academic disciplines, whereas school leaders are more interested in practical solutions to problems that cut across disciplinary boundaries. Moreover, preparation programs frequently develop managers with a custodial mentality rather than leaders who can take their institutions into a radically transformed future (Hallinger & Bridges, 1997).

Several recent trends promise better alignment between preparation programs and schools, including the development of standards for administrator preparation, closer links between universities and K-12 schools, and new instructional methods. In the last decade, the profession has moved toward the development of explicit standards centered on performance in school settings. Initially, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration identified twenty-one key proficiencies for principals, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals provided its own set of essential competencies. Most recently, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) developed standards for school leaders that are closely linked to the goal of improved student learning and language that reflects the real-world environment of principals (Murphy, et.al., 1987).

The ISLLC criteria standards have already been incorporated into tests required for licensure. As the ISLLC criteria become widely accepted, undoubtedly it will be incorporated as guiding principles in many administrator preparation programs (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2000).

<center>*Perpetuation Theory*</center>

Perpetuation Theory has its roots in the social theory of racial segregation literature (Granovetter 1973; McPartland & Braddock 1981). Segregation typically repeats itself "across the stages of the life cycle and across institutions when individuals have not had sustained experiences in desegregated settings earlier in life" (McPartand & Braddock, 1981, p. 49). To break the cycle of perpetuation, doing things the way they have always been done, individuals must develop new ties or relationships. Perpetuation theory indicates the existence of strong ties (segregated existence and reliance on family and friends or strong ties and the absence of weak ties, acquaintances) does not provide new ways of thinking and learning and therefore perpetuates segregation. Braddock and McPartland's (1989) research explains the failure to break a perpetuation cycle of unchanged ideas and thinking attributed to underdeveloped ties (weak ties).

Granovetter's (1973, 1983) research describes the role of ties and includes informal and interpersonal networks such as acquaintances or acquaintances of friends. Granovetter (1973) states that weak ties allow ideas from "socially distant" acquaintances to reach individuals. These social networks provide a path to new ideas and understandings. Weak ties give impetus to learning helping to predict how individuals

will interact in new group situations and serving to explain the benefits of interactions within a group. They build bridges to personal and professional growth.

Strong ties provide stability that facilitates the building of new relationships that lead to growth and change. Granovetter (1973) indicates that the strength of a tie is a combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, intimacy, and reciprocal services. Each is somewhat dependent of the other and the set is highly intra-correlated. (p. 1361). Wells and Crain (1994) analyze the long-term effects of desegregation from a sociological perspective that allows access to institutions and powerful social networks within them.

Several studies have applied the lens of Perpetuation Theory as a framework for investigation. David A. Reingold (1999) sought to investigate the link between social networks and the ability to find a job through a personal contact among adult inner-city residents. He found ethnic differences in the rate of finding jobs through word-of-mouth. In addition, Reingold discovered racial differences in the way social networks operate to connect job seekers and job vacancies. Overall, the findings suggest that social networks account for some of the employment problems that many inner-city residents face (Reingold, 1999).

Yanjie Bian (1997) found that in China personal networks are used to influence authorities that in turn assign jobs as favors to their contacts. This is a type of unauthorized activity facilitated by strong ties characterized by trust and obligation.

Bakkenes, Brabander, and Imants (1999) analyzed teacher isolation at the level of communication network participation and task perception. This research provided insights in developing and supporting collegial relationships in schools. Related topics for

further research suggested by the authors included the analysis of the relationship between principals' communication and task perception. The more work-related communication a principal engages in (i.e., the more ties that are established), the less isolated. That principal will have access to more information and will have greater influence on the course of events. Consequently, group ties can play an important role in the establishment of consensus on the broad goals to be pursued by schools.

Stoloff, Glanville, and Bienenstock (1999) applied network research about employment to outcomes focused on women. They found that the greater the quality and diversity of the social resources that are available through a woman's social network, the more likely she is to be working for pay.

Aston and Hyle (1997) examined the social networks of teachers' strong and weak ties and the impact of those associations upon their beliefs about the realities of elementary education in terms of the knowledge and skills that influenced those realities: school context, general pedagogy, specific subject matter pedagogy, nature of the learner, and self as teacher. Results indicated that social networks tended to impact teachers' beliefs more than school experiences; and the networks offered opportunities for strong and/or weak ties collaboration and teamwork helped chip away at traditional beliefs established through life experiences. Strong ties in schools that supported nontraditional beliefs improved the effects of traditional life experiences. The principal's role was evident as a fosterer of positive networking. These studies and others like them that used Perpetuation Theory as a frame, provide evidence that this lens has led to fruitful research.

Theoretically, this study uses Perpetuation Theory (McPartland & Braddock, 1981) to expose and provide an explanation for the interaction among members of the sample group. Granovetter's (1986) concept of strong and weak ties provides guidance in presenting and formulating understanding regarding these interactions. McPartland and Braddock explain the failure to break a perpetuation cycle of unchanged ideas and thinking attribute to underdeveloped ties. Well and Crain (1994) allowed the analysis of these "ties" through the lenses of Perpetuation Theory.

In their research Wells and Crain examined the life changes of blacks that attend desegregated schools. They found that blacks that have interracial contact in elementary or secondary school overcome perpetual segregation. Their life was significantly improved over those of comparable blacks who attended segregated schools. These findings support advocates who believe that school desegregation enhances opportunities for social mobility and thus improve life changes.

Summary

Literature from the past and present help clarify and explain principal behavior, ties that exist among members and groups, and the impact of these ties on participants and schools. The history and evolution of training programs for educational leaders in the United States primarily in the 20th century was traced. An examination of the existing initiative to educate and prepare principals provided a perspective of professional learning programs that currently exist to assist principals. Perpetuation Theory and the research that has used it as a framework offered insight into the dynamics of change and

presented an approach for navigating leadership in the future through training and

socialization experiences.

CHAPTER III

Presentation of the Data

Oklahoma Principal's Academy is doing something right. From its 10 plus years of existence through state and private funding to its high principal attendance figures, positive referral by participants, and high satisfaction rating, all indications are that the Academy is doing a lot of things right (Oklahoma Principal's Academy Participant Survey, 2003). This study examined the factors contributing to the success of this leadership-training model. The question that I explored was the role relationships or "ties" played in reaching the goals of the Academy.

The academy has created a phenomenon of relationships, or ties, that nurture a network for personal and professional growth. These ties are the phenomena that this qualitative research piece, a single case study, bound by Class I, V, and X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy studies (Merriam, 1988). Described by Yin (1994), the case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that a case is "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" (p. 25). For this study, Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy is the context and the relationships, or ties, are the phenomena.

The practices and techniques derived from work in sociological case studies and applied to educational settings were drawn upon to provide a lens from which to view the process. The review of literature revealed that Wells and Crain (1994) would explain the evolution of the principals in terms of interaction and support for strong and weak ties within its social system. The case study is particularly appropriate from the lens of perpetuation theory given the focus of ties or relationships within the context of time, intimacy, emotional intensity and reciprocal services (Granovetter, 1973).

In conformance with the intersection of qualitative, naturalistic, interpretive case study and its related characteristics as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 36-43), this study explored the multiple, constructed realities of principals who participated in Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy through the lens of Perpetuation Theory.

Procedures

I began with a pilot study of the interview protocol, to test the efficacy of the questions. Few modifications in the protocol were necessary to obtain the needed information. To help ensure validity and to accomplish the task pleasurably and efficiently, process skills and transition statements were practiced. This allowed a smooth flow to the next question during the interview. The interview protocol is included in Appendix B.

Data collection began during the spring semester of 2002-2003 school year. I was the primary instrument for the collection. Interviews were scheduled at each of the principal's schools during the month of May, one year after completion of the Academy

training. A planned and detailed guide was used for each interview. Interviews lasted from 30 minutes to one-hour. A series of 10 questions was used in the interview protocol (see Appendix E).

I was the only one who had access to the actual names of the participants. Pseudonyms were used in this final document. I followed the e-mail contact with a phone call to set a date and time for interview. A hard copy of all the information was made available to each respondent at the time of the interview. Interviews were recorded on audiotape with the respondents' knowledge. Interview questions (see Appendix F) were open-ended to gain information about the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and its intended impact on the participants. Probing questioning also took place during the interviews. Probes were used to clarify and gain additional information that may not have been presented. I personally transcribed each interview verbatim on the computer and stored the files on several computer diskettes. All audiotapes, transcripts, field notes, and computer diskettes were kept in a locked file cabinet to which I had the only key.

Reliability and validity checks were maintained throughout the project. I offered member checks with the respondents after the interview was transcribed for verification and response. Follow-up interview questions by phone were made to gain a clarification and understanding. According to Erlandson et al. (1993, p.30), "it is imperative that both data and interpretations obtained be verified by those persons. No data should be included if it cannot be verified through member checks." This clarification ensured a trustworthiness of data. The interviews, were then analyzed, and categorized, using the lens of perpetuation theory.

Survey and demographic information were collected by e-mail and postal mail.

Participants in Class I (1993), Class V (1997) and Class X (2002) responded to six survey

questions related to goals of Oklahoma Principal's Academy. The survey patterned after

the rubric for learning environments (Jones, 2000), provided opportunity for the

respondent to describe implementation of the academy's goals:

- Power of vision,

- Creating community;

- Creating synergy;

- How to leverage oneself;

- Team building and;

- Personal growth.

Each Academy goal was divided into four levels: pre-initiation, initiation,

developing and sustaining. Examples or illustrations to support placement were

requested. This collection of longitudinal data represented the stages or patterns of

implementation of the academy learning experiences for the purpose of school

improvement and change.

Sites visited were one high school, one middle school and five elementary schools

ranging from a large inner city metropolitan school to a small consolidated school in a

rural setting. I traveled by car to each location in the state of Oklahoma. Site visitations

allowed first-hand knowledge of the context of the workplace for each participant.

Document analysis of surveys, demographics, and academy materials provided evidence

of the goals of the academy. Interviews provided additional data explanations for the

documented and observed realities. This process involved corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on the phenomenon under review.

Cresswell (1998) writes, "In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence (Ely et al., 1991; Erlandson et al., 1993; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1980, 1990). Triangulation "Helps eliminate bias and detect errors or anomalies" (Anderson, 1998, p. 257). Class X of Oklahoma Principal's Academy provided a rich mixture of settings, people, programs, interactions and structures.

All but three members of Class X participated in this study. One class member was employed as a consultant for Great Expectations. She had never served as a principal nor did she hold administrative certification? Another class member chose not to participate in this study due to professional time constraints. She was the principal of a middle school, which was scheduled for closing. The third participant was me, the researcher.

Reporting

To provide a detailed view of the findings that emerged from my study of Oklahoma Principal's Academy, I now introduce the respondents by name and background and then share a description and short history of the Academy. Following this description, I introduce my findings, by reviewing the goals of the Academy. Perpetuation theory then serves as a lens from which to view the collection of evidence.

One at a time, I present a review of each goal of Oklahoma Principal's Academy. With each goal, I present the themes that emerged in the analysis of the data drawn from my research.

Class X Respondents

Respondents were purposively selected based on their participation in Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. All participants were site principals with the public school district they represented. Each principal held professional certification in administration that was recognized by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. There were three males and four female respondents. Training took place in 2001-2002 school year with participants experience as a principal ranging from first year with no previous school administrative experience to eight years of leadership as a site principal in a public school. Each principal was contacted by e-mail with a letter of introduction for the study along with consent form, survey and demographic information. (Appendices A, B, C, D) The respondents gave the consent forms to me at the beginning of the interview session. Each document was signed and completed before the interview took place.

Chase was principal for a rural district 22 miles northeast of the city limits of Oklahoma City. This young principal had served as a classroom teacher four years before taking the reins as high school principal with no prior administrative experience. Chases' high school, grade 9-12, had a student population of 358 in a district of 1,067 students. Ethnic makeup was 83% Caucasian, 9% Native American, 6% Black, and 2% Hispanic. Only 27% of the students were eligible for Free/Reduced lunch. The middle-aged brick

schoolhouse was located just blocks of the state highway through the city. Chase described his school as being located on the geographic center of the state and also academic middle of the road. The Oklahoma Report Card revealed that students in Chase's school did not meet the 70% benchmark for Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests in end of instruction tests given in English II and U.S. History. Slightly over 50% of the 76-graduating seniors at this high school entered college.

Cheryl was principal at an urban inner-city elementary pre-K through sixth grade school. Located in the southern part of one of the largest districts in the state of Oklahoma this economically depressed school had a 94% student rate for Free/Reduced lunch. The school itself had 498 students of which 52% are Hispanic, 32% Caucasian, 9% Black and 7% Native American ethnicity. The school was located close to a main highway artery in the city and homes in the neighborhood were small and in need of repair and maintenance. The total district student population was 38,676. There was one administrator and 29 regular classroom teachers located at this site. Cheryl had served as principal for four years, teaching for fifteen years before becoming a principal. She was the only African American participant in this study all other principals were Caucasian. All areas of the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test were in need of improvement at Cheryl's school.

Cindy was principal in a rural community approximately 80 miles south from the capitol of Oklahoma. Her elementary K-5th grade school was nestled in the neighborhood homes of the blue-collar working class. The pulse of this community beat with the boom and bust of the Oklahoma oil industry. Eighty-eight percent of the 319 students enrolled at Cindy's school qualified for Free/Reduced lunch. Student diversity included 63%

Caucasian, 16% Hispanic, 12% Native American, and 10% Black. One administrator and 21 teachers facilitated the education of 319 students in this district of 3,724 children. Areas of academic concern were geography and the arts with students meeting or exceeding the 70% benchmark for Oklahoma Core Curriculum tests in all other areas. Office, gym and computer lab were housed under one roof with classrooms separate having outside access; there was no hall. Each class had a window unit air conditioner and the heating system was described as an old "bubble" hot water heater with rooms located closest to the boiler the warmest and those furthest away with very little heat reaching the rooms. Cindy had served as a principal for four years of her 20 years in education.

Larry was the principal of a small K-5 grade elementary school encompassed in a district with an enrollment of 4,283 students. Located 140 miles to the southwest of Oklahoma City the school was 55% Hispanic, 26% white, 18% Black and 1% Native American. Seventeen teachers and one administrator served 178 students in the school. Larry had been an administrator for five years having taught in the classroom for 20 years prior to becoming a principal. Ninety-nine percent of the student population qualified for Free/Reduced lunch and school performance was satisfactory only in science and history, constitution and government. Students were in need of improvement in math, reading, writing, geography, and the arts. This elderly building was a product of the 1930's with additions in 1950 and again in 1990. Hardwood floors adorned the cafeteria.

Martin was the principal of a small-consolidated rural school district including pre-K through 6th grade. One hundred four elementary students attend school at this site. Nine full time teachers and a half-time administrator were full time employees. Martin

had served as principal for eight year and in the classroom as a full time teacher for nine years of his career in education. Currently his duties were split; principal, school bus driver and physical education teacher. The school itself was a metal building and the predominate structure in the district of 209 students. A family atmosphere was observed where students received individual attention and nurturing. The student population was 64% Caucasian, 23% Hispanic, 12% Native American, and 1% Black. 67% of the students were eligible for Free/Reduced lunch.

Phyllis was principal at an urban Pre-K through 5th grade elementary school located in a residential neighborhood. She had served as principal for five of her twenty-three years in education. The district of 19,400 students provided a sense of community involvement and pride that were evident in the appearance and routine that was observed. Eligibility for student Free/Reduced lunch at 59% was above both the district and state average. Ethnic groups present in the school population were 58% Caucasian, 20% Black, 14% Hispanic and 4% respectively for both Asian and Native American. Her elementary school had 35 full time teachers, 2 administrators and 630 students. The 70% benchmark for Oklahoma Core Curriculum tests were met in all tested curriculum areas except for math and the arts (School Report Card, 2002).

Susan's school was outside the Oklahoma City metroplex in a suburb with a student population of 2,541 students. This growing community boasted a new middle school for 331 sixth and seventh grade students. Twenty full time classroom teachers and 1.5 administrators watched over this predominately Caucasian student population. Fifteen percent of the students who attended this school were Native American, 8% respectively were Hispanic and Black and 1% was Asian. Three-fourths of the students at this middle

school qualified for Free/Reduced lunch. Located on the edge of town with a view of the interstate highway this was a school designed with a large central commons area for student activity. Observed were signs of high expectations, data driven assessment, curriculum alignment and concern for student safety. Susan had seven years of experience as a principal and eighteen years in the classroom as an art/language arts teacher. Test scores at Susan's school were all in the satisfactory range. Table 1 provides information about each of the respondents and the context in which they work.

Table 1

Demographic Information for Class X Oklahoma Principal's Academy

Name	Gender	Location	Number of Students In School/District	Title I/%Free/ Reduced Lunch	Years Experience Teacher/Principal
Cheryl	Female	Elem./Urban	498/278,610	Yes/94%	15/4
Phyllis	Female	Elem./Urban	630/19,407	Yes/59%	18/5
Larry	Male	Elem./Rural	178/4,283	Yes/99%	20/5
Cindy	Female	Elem./Rural	300/3,664	Yes/88%	16/4
Martin	Male	Elem./Rural	104/209	Yes/67%	9/8
Susan	Female	MS/Suburban	319/2,541	Yes/73%	18/7
Chase	Male	HS/Rural	358/1,067	No/27%	4/2

Oklahoma Principal's Academy

Created to support the efforts of teachers, the Oklahoma Principal's Academy spawned from Great Expectations in summer of 1993. Founder Charlie Hollar met with Dr. Ramona Paul, Assistant Oklahoma State Superintendent of Education, to discuss the

idea of creating at Northeastern State University (NSU) an academy for new elementary principals in Oklahoma. The idea was to have principals attend a concentrated one-week seminar at NSU and then return for five one-and-a-half day follow up sessions during the school year. Principals would be assigned a strong mentor principal outside of their school district. The thrust of the training would be built around training which has been effective with institutions, e.g., Covey, Joel Parker. Dr. Paul shared from her own experience as a middle school principal in Edmond how much power a principal has over a family. She also mentioned how Dr. Arthur Stellar, Superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools, had assigned her to do a national search for Oklahoma City principals. She said, "It was difficult to find quality people. The training we provide new principals in Oklahoma is not adequate" (C. Hollar, personal communication, June 18, 1993).

From the idea an Advisory Board was formed. This enthusiastic group accepted the challenge of taking a draft of an idea and from that creating a quality Academy. These were busy people who created time to author and implement a unique program. What precipitated was about phenomenal comradeship. This was a group of real risk takers who signed on to be part of a program with no history. Each came with high individual expectations. They merged as a supportive team and continued to strengthen individual and collective ties. I think all of their differences were resolved except one. "There was a clear division ---three camps ---and probably always will be concerning whether Principals Academy should have an apostrophe and if so should it go before or after the "s" (C. Hollar, personal communication, June 18, 1993).

There was a blending of the Advisory board and the class members during the first year with the Advisory Board serving as the first mentors. The end result-- they

became instead of two groups, one extended family. The ultimate happened--they all got caught up in the learning experience--there were no bystanders. Given that backdrop, the wish of those pioneers was to continue to view themselves as members of a family. As time passed, they hoped their relationships would not fade but become richer. They saw the end of the training not as the end of a scheduled program but only the beginning. "There is so much yet to learn from one another, to share with each other and I firmly believe we have much to offer to the future success of education leadership in Oklahoma," wrote one participant. (C. Hollar, personal communication, June 8, 1993).

Alumni activities were developed complete with trips, seminars, retreats and e-mail communication. Attending an alumni event allowed the participant to re-connect with fellow class members and expand the circle of ties to include new faces from other classes. Support, knowledge and skills continued to expand even after the actual training. This sustained involvement allowed participants to continue to reflect on their purpose, disseminate information and maintain a vision for the future.

Oklahoma Principal's Academy was not without criticism. Some believe that it was in competition with an existing program. But supporters like Sandy Garrett, Superintendent of Schools for the State of Oklahoma said, "Give people a choice" (C. Hollar, personal communication, June 1993). NSU President Roger Webb also gave the program the green light and when the original source of funding failed to materialize he had faith that funding would become available. "And thank heavens, it did" said Charlie Hollar. To begin there were four primary sources of funding for the Oklahoma Principal's Academy: (1) the Kirkpatrick Foundation, (2) Sarkeys Foundation, (3) Walton Family Foundation and (4) The Equitable of New York. Today, state funds are also appropriated

for leadership training by the legislature on a yearly basis (C. Hollar, personal

communication, June 8 1993).

Each step in the development of Oklahoma Principal's Academy was crucial---the

initial research, the visit with leaders in the State Department of Education, the

collaboration of the Advisory Board, the work by individuals, the organizations that

funded the program, to the presenters. The *Tahlequah Daily Time Journal* featured a

picture of a principal demonstrating a "trust fall" during the first Oklahoma elementary

principals leadership academy at NSU on July 28, 1994. The newspaper described

Oklahoma Principal's Academy as "A life-changing experience that translates into

enhanced working and learning environments."

Goals and Resulting Ties

Throughout the data, but particularly in the interview and the survey, the six goals

(the power of vision, creating community, creating synergy, how to leverage oneself,

team building, and personal growth) were used to describe the outcome of relationships

and the ties that exist among members of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. These

goals provided the foundation for socialization experiences of the principals. Next, I

examine each goal individually and the themes that became evident from the analysis of

the data.

"The Power of Vision"

Max DePree, CEO of the successful Herman Miller Company, says, "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality" (1989, p. 11). "A vision is a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization" (Nanus, 1992, p. 8). According to Joel Barker, we should all start with sharing a vision. The following passage is taken from Joel Barker's (1992) work, and it expresses the importance of having and encouraging a vision: "New ideas change the status quo. Resistance to change can keep people from seeing the advantages of change and accepting new ideas. What may seem obvious to one person may seem impossible to another because of their perceptions and self-imposed regulations about life" (p. 127).

Larry's school was an example of what can go wrong when a school is without a vision and strong leadership to support improvement over a long period of time. At Larry's school there had only been six principals in the building since 1930. Over the span of 73 years the attitudes and perception of the staff had become static, entrenched in their own way of doing things, teachers could not see why change was necessary. Larry said the first year he was there a teacher told him, "Just stay in the office and read the newspaper like the previous principal."

This was not the vision that Larry had for himself or others in his school. His mission from the superintendent was "Come in and shake things up." Test scores revealed that there was a "need for improvement" and the school had been on the "at risk" list at least three times. Larry was faced with a mature faculty resistant to change, a

predominately Hispanic student population in a primarily Caucasian district and a student body 99 percent eligible for Free/Reduced lunch.

Every time Larry would leave the building the following announcement was made: "Elvis has left the building." This was the signal that things could return to the status quo. During Larry's four years as principal of this elementary school things did improve, but the ability to sustain that change was difficult. He described it as being like a roller coaster ride. In the end he lost the fight, they closed Larry's school.

In Stephen Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,* he states that a paradigm is the way people view the world---not in terms of the visual sense---but in terms of perceiving, understanding, and interpreting. The word "paradigm" is taken from the Greek language. It was originally a scientific term, (Kuhn, 1967) and is more commonly used today to mean a model, theory, perception, assumption, or frame of reference (Covey, 1989, p. 23). For a person to be open to change, he/she must take a look beyond the thing that seems so evident to that which may seem impossible at first. This requires vision, the "power of dreams in action."

Covey states that to have a vision one must "begin with the end in mind" (1989, p. 97). To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of the destination. People should know where they're going so they can better understand where they are now and always take steps in the right direction (1989, p. 98). Survivors of the death camps of Nazi Germany and POW camps in Vietnam and elsewhere have reported the single most significant factor to survival was the sense of future vision.

Larry said,

> The Academy gave me the tools to survive. If it hadn't been for the Academy I
> would have asked to get out of this position and go back to teaching, or I would
> have left and gone somewhere else. It's given me some tools to cope with
> problems and be tenacious enough to hang in there and know that things are going
> to get better. Although I hate to see the school close I feel like it will be the best
> thing for the kids and the community.

Larry is optimistic about his new job as an administrator and teacher at the alternative
school in his district.

Why is vision so powerful? The key reason is that it grabs attention. It provides
focus. Focused rays of diffused sunlight can be concentrated into a force powerful
enough to start a fire. It is this kind of manifestation of creative imagination and
independent will that create focus. It is the practicality of "eating our elephants one bite at
a time," of translating vision into achievement and action. It is a common denominator of
successful individuals and organizations (Covey, 1989, p. 136). Several themes emerged
from the principals of Class X that are evidence of vision: focus, goals and common
bond.

Theme of "Focus" as Related to Vision. Throughout this research, particularly in
the interviews and survey, statements about focus were prominent. This theme rang true
in the conversations and writing of Class X. For example, articulation of attitudes,
behaviors, and commitments of the staff and students were important at Phyllis'
elementary school. "Daily recitation of teacher and student creed and sharing the good at

all faculty meetings" Phyllis said contributed to the advancement of her schools mission and vision of what the school might become. For Phyllis, the Covey teachings that she learned at the Academy were most beneficial. She said, "Putting first things first and really concentrating on what is important made an impact on both my personal and professional life." Others also found focus to be central to their success.

About vision, Cheryl, the principal at a large urban elementary school, said:

We have different things that we are doing, but then again as a whole we all come together for a shared purpose. Not only do I have a vision for the school but also all those who participate must share that vision. They have to see what I see and participate by providing input. As long as you ask people what they think it becomes ownership. If I just keep telling them what I think, it is mine, not ours. So as a school we talk about what we want and where we want to go.

Cheryl realized the importance of shared vision to create ownership at her school. She knew her personal goals for the school, but wanted the collective vision of the learning community to reflect their future. On the other hand, Chase admitted that at first he did not have a vision for his school. He felt Oklahoma Principal's Academy helped him define his own role as school leader.

Chase reflected on what he learned about vision. "The first year I didn't know what to do. Now I have a good idea of the things that need to be done so I am constantly busy. There is no down time. I recognize that I have a better vision. There are those things out on the horizon that I want to get done so I am much busier than I was in the beginning."

Still other principals encountered barriers in developing a vision. Sustaining a focus has been difficult for Cindy due to leadership change. The average superintendent now only stays in one location for about three to four years. Oklahoma State Superintendent of Schools announced at the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year that in Oklahoma alone 40 percent of the administrators in the state were new to the job. Because of this shift and the struggle for power with each move, principals like Cindy's have found their organization has been stripped of a strong sense of mission and the strength of vision. Ingersoll (2001) and Useem (1997) have both asserted in recent studies that mobility has a distinct impact on school improvement. Included in the research among the reasons teachers gave for their dissatisfaction were the lack of support from the school administrations and lack of teacher influence over decision making. Articulating a clear vision that reflects the beliefs, values and commitments of the school community is important but difficult to do if the leader has not defined their own values and fundamental beliefs.

Earlier I shared the story of Larry who was having serious problems in his school. He was deeply concerned about his apparent weaknesses and about the way other people were treating him. As long as he focused his efforts on those things, he accomplished nothing, except to increase his own feelings of inadequacy and helplessness. It was only when he focused on his own values, and began to create a positive change within himself was he able to influence others.

Theme of "Goals" as Related to Vision. Principal's Academy has not, it seems, fallen into this "power of vision" atmosphere accidentally. Rather, each day Principal's

Academy started with meditation time, participants silently and individually strolled the streets of historical Guthrie or the orange and yellow leaf lined trails of a country retreat. This was followed by written reflection. For this group of busy principals it was one of the most difficult yet rewarding times of the training. Taking time to nurture the inner person rather than helping others was foreign. The logical/verbal left brain attempted to capture the right brain images, feelings, and pictures in words. Writing became a kind of integrating activity that helped bridge the conscious and subconscious. Writing helped distill, crystallize and clarify thought and helped break the whole into parts or goals.

Susan said,

Because of the quiet time we had each morning and the writing and reflection that we had to do it was good for my personal life as well as my professional life. I am glad that I forced myself to keep going and to stay there. I think "insightful" would be the best word to describe the whole experience. Principal's Academy was more about the spiritual side of education the camaraderie, not so much dealing with all the little details of being a principal. It dealt with more of the philosophical side, the mind-set of a principal. You can't be good at your job if you're not good for yourself.

Personal vision and the ability to choose responses became magnified through the value choices that principals made to be proactive rather then reactive. When we are proactive, we accept responsibility for who we are, what we have, and what we do (Covey, 1989, p. 65-94). Principals have a number of different roles in their lives— different areas or capacities in which they have responsibility. For example they must be a manager, instructional leader, change agent and moral leader (Fullan, 2003), in addition

to being a mother, father, sister, brother, son, and daughter. Each of these roles is important but creates a problem---finding balance--one role may consume the others. By identifying specific goals for each role and how they overlap it became easier to manage the whole. By prioritizing, principals found time for what was most important. Principals learned that the cause of almost all relationship difficulties is rooted in conflicting or ambiguous expectations around roles and goals.

For Susan goal setting was the tool that she has used most from what was taught in the academy. She said,

Having the end in mind is helpful. We are a very goal oriented school and I see the importance of that and I think that has made us a better school. You take it one day at a time, but you have to have that goal out there at the end. We all have to know what we are working towards. It has also given us a way to dialogue. When you hear a teacher conversation in this school you recognize the win/win philosophy. It has given us a common language.

This commonality did not just happen it was purposefully created. Not only do principals need local goals, but there is also a need for state and federal goals.

Theme of "Common Bond" as Related to Vision. Davenport and Anderson in their book *Closing the Achievement Gap, No Excuses* examined the common bond of all educators created by *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). Faced with Academic Performance Index (API) and Adequate Year Progress (AYP) reports each school and district must show progress toward the goal of ensuring the success of all students. Oklahoma's Priority Academic Subject Skills (PASS) provides a common bond for all Oklahoma

educators. For some it is the ceiling and for others it is the ground floor for academic achievement. But however you view PASS it is the spot light that gives all Oklahoma educators the same vision and specific academic goals for improvement.

"Yearly assessment, setting goals, defining strategies and instructionally embedded progress checks throughout the year drive all decisions" (Susan). Like it or not schools are faced with increasing demands for accountability. *NCLB* requires schools to disaggregate student performance data—that is, separate it by demographic group—and show that each group is making progress. If even one group fails to make progress on one element, a school will not make adequate yearly progress for the year—even if a school does well overall. Schools receiving assistance under Title I that do not make AYP for a least two years are subject to the NCLB'S improvement requirements, such as providing school choice and, in subsequent years, district intervention or state takeover (NAESP, 2001). *NCLB* provided a single national focus for school improvement, development, research and innovation. As Susan said, "It helped me see the bigger picture."

"Creating Community"

An expanded view of vision leads to the notion of the school as a learning community and the external stakeholders who can and should be partners in the learning community of the school. The education of a child is much broader than the learning that takes place in the school. Schools and communities are inextricably intertwined, and the principal is the linchpin in creating a learning community that seamlessly integrates the

work and expectations of students, teachers, parents, citizens, community and business leaders and policy-makers (NAESP, 2001).

To be successful requires all members of the school community to commit to a common vision of the school and to high academic standards. They must be clear about what students are expected to learn and what teachers are expected to teach. If people in the school do not believe that all children are capable of learning at high levels, then some children will continue to fall through the cracks (Lezotte, 1997). If all the people in the school do not see it as their responsibility to move children to higher levels of performance, then children simply will not get there. Values of the school are embedded in the school culture. These shared values are evident to new staff and to those outside of the school. They influence policies, procedures, and daily practices of the school as well as day-to-day decisions of individual staff members (NAESP, 2001). Principals need processes that work in bringing in the community, including parents, to be involved in meaningful and supportive activities. Several themes emerged that are evidence of principals creating community: family, trust and building capacity.

*Theme of "Family" as Related to Creating Community. F*amily has been a resounding theme from initial conversations with state leaders about the need for Oklahoma Principal's Academy. The Assistant State Superintendent referred to the great power a principal has over the family. It appears that this theme has been gently nurtured and gradually expanded by the Academy.

Participants in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy are required to spend a week together in training and then have periodic over-night retreats to foster a "family

atmosphere," a sense of concern and care for each other that were genuine. In *The Challenge to Care in Schools* (1992), Nodding discusses how an ethic of caring connects community and a relationship of trust among the members. This type of caring that was created in the Academy was also evident in many of the school sites I visited.

Martin's school functioned much like a family. When I arrived at Martin's school all students and teachers were in the cafeteria with Martin leading at the microphone. His message was much like that of a father to his children---with an emphasis on caring for one another. He gave each student a high five as they left the room and called each by name. As the students filed out each received a smile and Martin made a personal comment to several students about a new shirt, a concern or a good report. Not only did Martin function as principal he also taught physical education and drove a school bus. On the day of my visit I met his wife who was a teacher in the building and his daughter, a student. Conversation at the school was reflective of school pride. The Panthers were in the spring state baseball tournament for the seventh straight year. An article in the sports section of *The Daily Oklahoman* newspaper that day reflected the strong tradition of community support for the kids and their coaches. When an individual's attachment to family is extremely intense, there is a greater potential for the individual to relate to the organization and /or the individuals in an extremely intense way (Sobel, 1982, p. 9).

Martin was a teacher nine years before becoming a principal at a rural Pre-K thru 6th grade elementary school. He knew the Principal's Academy existed because of his participation in Great Expectations workshops with his teachers. It took him three years to convince his superintendent to let him attend the Academy.

Martin's office was unique, adorning the wall was the mounted head of a trophy deer draped with a bobcat pelt along with various other memorabilia such as a dream keeper he was given at Principal's Academy by his mentor. From the personal décor of the office to the family atmosphere in the hallway one immediately felt the strong family community culture that radiated throughout the school.

Martin had grown up in this community and had spent so much time in the principal's office as a child that there was not much that took place there that he had not witnessed first hand. "I know it from the inside out" He had decided to become a principal in the sixth grade because of a new principal that gave him a fair shake. Martin said, "He never did compare me to my sisters." The community of learners that Martin refers to is important to the success of school children, their attitudes, self-esteem, expectations just to mention a few. As Hillary Clinton's book title revealed, *It Takes A Village To Raise A Child.*

In Eaker and DuFour's book *Getting Started, Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities* they speak of successful schools that function as professional learning communities, characterized by a collaborative culture. Stakeholders work together to identify collective goals, develop strategies to achieve those goals, gather relevant data, and learn from one another. Goals are clearly linked to the school's shared vision. School improvement is viewed as a collective responsibility. The school provides parents with information and materials that enables parents to assist their children in learning. Community resources are used to strengthen school and student learning.

This type of family support from the community was evident in the new facility where Susan was principal. Bond money from the community had supported the building of a modern facility. In addition the families of her students were highly supportive providing the resources necessary to help make students successful. Sharon modeled for her staff the importance of shared leadership by presenting with her staff at state conferences the processes of alignment used in her district. Her innovation and resourcefulness as a leader were evident when the conference audience received a CD with the Power Point presentation, not a handout with an outline. Test scores, all in the satisfactory range, in her building reflected the community's emphasis on excellence.

Principals' everyday experiences, along with more than 30 years of research, illustrate the critical nature of family involvement in children's success. Principals can help families understand the importance of their role in student learning. They set a vision for what it means for families to be a part of the learning community. At the heart of any community is its center of values, sentiments, and beliefs that provide the needed cement for bonding people in a common cause. Community is an expression of what is valued by the individual school and it provides a set of norms that guide behavior and give meaning to school community life (Sergiovanni, 1996).

Theme of "Building Capacity" as Related to Creating Community. Linda Lambert (2003), in *Leadership Capacity, for Lasting School Improvement*, states "Leadership is the process of releasing the energy, intelligence, and participation of the entire school community. Viewing leadership as primarily in the service of developing a healthy organization, learning and leading are intricately tied" (p. viii).

Susan related that monthly faculty meetings and other meetings allowed time for concerns of administrators, teachers, parents and students to be communicated in a collaborative culture. School newsletters were used to distribute information about school activities. Susan said, "Vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum develops stakeholders who focus on the shared goals of the school." Like Susan, Phyllis experienced that sustainable development in schools was enhanced when she engaged principals, teachers, parents, and students in broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership. Phyllis related, "School improvement plans facilitate the building of community to strengthen student learning."

Teaching and learning are critical to our individual and collective survival and to the quality of our lives. The pace of change has us snarled in complexities, confusions, and conflicts that will diminish us, or do us in, if we do not enlarge our capacity to teach and to learn (Palmer, 1998). Martin said, "The faculty works hard to provide the best for the children. All have a stake in the outcome. Our community views our school very positively."

Harvey S. Firestone the rubber baron stated, "The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership" (www.thinkexist.com/English/Author/x/Author_4482_1.htm). Everyone wants something that can make him or her better and can be used tomorrow. Successful leaders know that people do not grow and change unless they are familiarized with relevant, practical, and useful guidance. Resources that could help us lead better are available from each other— if we could get access to them. But there, of course, is the rub. Academic culture builds barriers between colleagues even higher and wider than those between teacher and

student. These barriers come partly from the competition that keeps us fragmented by fear. But they also come from the fact that academic leadership is perhaps the most privatized of all the public professions. Larry commented,

> I felt like I was isolated. I was the youngest principal in the district, and I was the one with the least amount of experience. I felt like I could call other district principals and talk with them at any time, but then again I didn't want to call and bother them. I didn't want anybody to think I couldn't handle the job. Principal's Academy was a neat opportunity to hear people talk about the same kinds of problems I had and provide strategies for solutions.

Oklahoma Principal's Academy was Larry's solution to being able to continue to fit into the district culture and be able to reach out for help in another similar, but different context.

Theme of "Culture/Context" as Related to Creating Community. Culture represents an interdependent set of values and ways of behaving that are common in a community and that tend to perpetuate themselves, sometimes over long periods of time. This continuity is the product of a variety of social forces that are frequently subtle, bordering on invisible, through which people learn a group's norms and values, are rewarded when they accept them, and are ostracized when they do not. The importance of this phenomenon has been recognized for decades. Certain kinds of cultures help, while other undermine, long-term academic performance. Strong cultures with practices that do not fit a schools context can actually lead intelligent people to behave in ways that are destructive—that systematically undermine the schools ability to survive and prosper.

Furthermore, cultures will not promote excellent performance over long periods unless they contain norms and values that can help schools adapt to a changing environment. In cultures that promote useful change, principals pay close attention to relevant changes in a schools context and then initiate incremental changes in strategies and practices to keep schools and cultures in line with environmental realities (Hickman, 1998, p. 337).

Malcolm Gladwell (2000) argues that the power of context is an environmental argument. He says that behavior is a function of social context. In *Tipping Point*, Gladwell writes "the power of context says that what really matters is little things" (p.150). The starting point, then for changing context is not the external environment; rather, it is the immediate situation. Change the situation and you have a chance to change people's behavior in the short run as well as beyond. If you want to change people's beliefs and behavior, "You need to create a community around them, where these new beliefs could be practical, expressed and nurtured" (Gladwell, 2000, p. 173).

Phyllis addressed this issue when she referred to "feeding the teachers." She said,

I try to go out of my way to let them know on a daily, if not weekly, basis how important they are in just the little things. Principal's Academy has made me more aware of doing that. You know we all think that because we said, good job or that's great, that's enough. The teachers are just like the kids, a sticker, or mint candy means the world. It is amazing to see their faces light up.

Celebrating small victories is a good way to begin to change the culture in the context of schools in powerful, new ways.

Context is social, not individual. For principals most major strategies for reform have individualistic assumptions as described in *Principals Should Know and Be Able To*

Do (NAESP, 2001). These are important, but in themselves they will not change situations and systems. If the focus is not on changing the culture and working conditions of schools good leaders will not stay long—or come in the first place (Fullan, 2003). We need to remember that people make schools work. And we need to relearn old lessons about how culture ties people together and gives meaning and purpose to their day-to-day lives.

"Creating Synergy"

A relationship where commitment is high and all parties involved are deeply committed to success is the ideal springboard for tremendous synergy. Relationship neither makes the issues any less real or important, nor eliminates the differences in perspective. But it does eliminate the negative energy normally focused on differences in personality and position and creates a positive, cooperative energy focused on thoroughly understanding the issues and resolving them in a mutually beneficial way. "That's something that a lot of people have trouble with; turning loose of the reins and then still being able to go along with it and not be in charge of everything." Said Cheryl.

There are two fundamental sources of energy that can motivate organizations: fear and aspiration (Fullan, 2003, pp.65-67). Fear, the energy source behind negative visions, can produce extraordinary changes in short periods, but aspiration endures as a continuing source of learning and growth. Principals are key to providing a positive win/win atmosphere for their school. The school family as a whole is responsible for the performance of the school. The principal by enabling others to act makes people feel

empowered and they use their energies to produce extraordinary results. Synergy leads to teamwork, team building, unity, and harmony.

Theme of "Balance" as Related to Synergy. Foremost, the themes of balance and communication rang true and purposeful in the actions and language of the principals. To find synergy for their schools principals found that they must first find balance in their own life. The academy pointed this out to participants early in the training with an exercise called the Ropes Course. Travel to a nearby lake found participants in the midst of a wooden fort like tower 40 foot in height with a web of cable and poles extending outward. Closer to the ground was a trail of stations each with a unique set of simplistic equipment. At each station participants were presented with a group problem to solve. After a picnic lunch, participants were faced with the "high ropes." The higher off the ground the participants moved the more personally challenging the problem became. Each participant was encouraged to participate as long as possible, but it was acceptable to quit at any time. It was "challenge by choice."

Each principal had hoped to gain something a little different from their participation in the Academy, but they all felt supported in their pursuit. Larry shared that he had contact with several of the members of the class and each had offered help and suggestions as he tried to change the culture at his school. "To me that was the strongest thing that I saw at Principal's Academy, it really gave me a good opportunity to network with people. People who had good experiences and could give me some good solutions to problems that I had run into." Said Larry.

Individuals found synergy in the cohort of Class X through encouragement and support. By developing this kind of trust and support early in the training it allowed participants to relate, demonstrating honestly their approach to problem solving, individual risk taking and leadership. After a grueling day in the hot sun of working together and individually testing the limits of their comfort zone participants found out a lot about their true character and those of their classmates.

From this point on in the training there was much more sharing and respect for each persons unique differences and point of view. After pulling each other over the final wall any way possible, modesty was irrelevant. Participants had experienced the interrelatedness of their physical, social, mental and spiritual side. They realized to compartmentalize or ignore one dimension of life powerfully affects each of the other dimensions. By seeing the interrelatedness of these needs, principals realized that the key to meeting an unmet need was in addressing, not ignoring the other needs. This is one of the strengths of personal leadership. Several principals during the interview shared a response to the need for balance in their life. Larry realized he needed more personal time and responded in this way:

> I went out and bought a motorcycle. Whenever I can't do personal time here at school, and it has been a tough day, I get out on that motorcycle and I head out on the road. Where I am not going to get run over by someone here in town and just ride for a while. Principal's Academy training gave me permission to think rather than react, as if it was a personal attack. It allowed me an opportunity to step back and think about what was said. I don't have to give an answer right then. I can come back with an answer, and if there is something that I need to say something

right now about, I can do it. But if I need time to think about it I don't feel the urgency of saying right now here is the answer. I can sit back and think about it. Martin said,

I've dropped a few things that I thought were important and I thought I needed to do. When I really analyzed things I could see I could benefit a lot more by doing less. And that is still what I'm doing. I have to make myself slow down and not do anything for a while. My down time is reading the Bible 15 minutes after I get out of bed in the morning. Sometimes it is sitting in the classroom just listening and watching, having a good time, not thinking about the things that need to be done in the building. I try to just slow down and watch what is happening. By taking time to understand the situation it is easier to be understood. Like a doctor, a principal should diagnose before prescribing.

Sir Geoffrey Vickers (1995) in *The Art of Judgment* eloquently stated, the function is to "balance" and to "optimize" (p. 220). To maintain those relations between inflow and outflow of resources on which every dynamic system depends; and also adjust all the controllable variables, internal and external, so as to optimize the values of the resulting relations, as valued by the individual and by those to whom he is accountable. The two elements are present and inseparable in every decision, but in different situations one or the other may be dominant. The balancing judgment is a judgment of reality the optimizing judgment a judgment of value. They are interconnected. The challenge is to apply the art of judgment in our social interactions.

Cheryl commented, "Principal's Academy gave me the tool of response. A lot of times when people come into the office having patience and also looking to what the real

problem is and not just their agenda is needed." I have to ask myself how does this benefit the whole school and the children not just one person or agenda. Communication is the key medium of most social interactions, the voice of connection in relationships (Crossley, 1996).

Cheryl was a principal at an urban elementary school for students Pre-K thru 6th grade. Children at Cheryl's school performed below the state benchmark in all subject areas. Gang activity and high poverty in the school community had resulted in a uniform dress code at her school. Cheryl was encouraged to Attend Oklahoma Principal's Academy by her supervisors, "It was highly recommended—I had to go." She said. Cheryl described her Oklahoma Principal's Academy experience as enlightening. "It is more than just a Ropes Course, it is skills and decision making and all of the things that go into being a total person as well as a principal." Cheryl felt like the academy gave her the ability to work with teams and with other people to solve problems. Her natural response was to be independent and self-sufficient. Having been a part of a military family she identified with an authoritarian leadership style. Cheryl said, "It has shown me that other people can also do things with trust, incentive, encouragement and support." Cheryl learned strategies to communicate with her staff and how to work together more productively.

Theme of "Communication" as Related to Synergy. Synergistic communication is opening your mind and heart and expressions to new possibilities, new alternatives, and new options. You are not sure when you engage in synergistic communication how things will work out or what the end will look like, but you do have an inward sense of

excitement and security and adventure, believing that it will be significantly better than it was before. Susan talked about feeling uncomfortable with some things, being forced out of her comfort zone. But appreciating the opportunity to communicate with others about real problems associated with some of the day-to-day realities of being a principal. "The times that principals would meet after the sessions were over and the relationships that those conversations created were most valuable" said Susan.

As Carl Rogers (1969) taught, "That which is most personal is most general" (p. 127). The more authentic you become, the more genuine in your expression, particularly regarding personal experiences and even self-doubts, the more people can relate to your expression and the safer it makes them feel to express themselves. That expression in turn feeds back on the other person's spirit, and genuine creative empathy takes place, producing new insights and learning and a sense of excitement and adventure that keeps the process going.

Trust is directly related to the level of communication. At the lowest level of communication there is defensiveness, protectiveness, an often-legalistic language. The middle is respectful communication. It is polite but not empathic. Synergistic communication is produced by high trust and results in collaborative solutions better than any originally proposed through a creative and genuinely enjoyable experience. As evidenced in the words of all the principals in Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy they would recommend this experience for others. They are communicating a strong message that this is an experience worthy of their time and effort.

Martin said,

> The Academy is getting to be with people that are doing what you are doing, and
> listening to a group that is really concerned about what they are about. If you are
> at Principal's Academy you care about your job and you are trying to make your
> job better. A lot of times we go to meetings and everybody just wants to sit and
> gripe and moan and complain about how bad this is and how bad that is and they
> don't want to do anything about it. And I think the group of people that go to
> Principal's Academy is the group that wants to make this situation better, for
> themselves, for their teachers, and for their students, for the whole system.

Through involvement and engagement with other principals Martin received a kind of
synergy he took back to his school and the business of being a principal.

The respondents continually emphasized that it is what people learn and do
together, rather than what any particular leaders does alone that creates the fabric of the
school. Participation is one of the key deciding factors and the conversation that it
produces. Effective principals understand that they must engage the entire community in
conversations and decision about the school. They promote two-way conversations where
both sides are listening and acting. And they help the community define their role and
responsibility for public education.

"Leveraging Oneself"

The principal's self-mastery through the development of personal character and
the ability of the principal to maintain personal production capability through physical,

mental, spiritual and social-emotional development is key to new leadership. Covey (1990) wrote, "The place to begin building any relationship is inside ourselves, inside our Circle of Influence, our own character. As we become independent—proactive, centered in correct principles, value driven and able to organize and execute around the priorities in our life with integrity—we then can choose to become interdependent—capable of building rich, enduring, highly productive relationships with other people" (p. 66-93). It is understandable then that the academy identifies one of their goals as leveraging oneself. Three themes emerged in this area knowledge, attitude and skill. The interview with Phyllis revealed that she had been diagnosed with kidney cancer and was off work for six weeks in March/April. She had returned to work and was on a half-day schedule. Phyllis shared, "I think many of the things I learned at Principal's Academy will be things that I will always keep with me. I think it has helped me be more centered personally as well as in the school on the important things in my own life. It made me feel better about what I was doing. I don't feel like I'm alone. It's good to have others to share with. I guess it has made me feel better about myself in general."

Theme of "Knowledge" as Related to Leveraging Oneself. Knowledge is about beliefs (commitment), meaning and action, which is why it must be developed not barrowed (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995, p. 58). For Susan Oklahoma Principal's Academy was another opportunity for her to learn. Susan said, "I continue to read from the suggested book list and it has helped sustain the initiative." Knowledge is needed to reconceptulize the role of school leadership. The new role of the principal resembles in conception to that of the chief operating officer. The role is close to Jim Collins's (2002)

Level 5: Executive (builds enduring greatness). While consensus on redefining the role of principal has not been reached, there is a growing understanding that the patterns of hierarchical leadership that served us in the past are not as well suited to the global complexity, rapid change, interdependency, and multifaceted challenges of today. There is a need for people focused leadership. It is founded on the belief that in the complex future "answers are to be found in community" (Wheatly, 1992) in group-centered organizations where "everyone can learn continually" (Senge, 1999). As the demand for this new leadership grows, the command and control leaders at the top of the pyramid are being challenged to change. They are expected to become leaders who are facilitators, stewards, coaches, designers, and teachers (Senge, 1999). They are being challenged to become leaders who "walk their talk" and model the way, inspiring others, delegating and serving.

Most principals currently do not have the capacity to operate in this new mode. To expect great leadership in the absence of capacity is to squander an opportunity and resources. Some principals are not even on the continuum of school development. They are managers, at best running a good shop. There is a need, instead, for organizational development, a continuum that starts with actions that are directed at schoolwide, instructional development. Principals themselves must be part of the strategies required for school improvement and change. Susan shared changes she had observed in the training required for principal and how she was working with others:

> Teachers in my building who are going through their administrative training now do intern hours and portfolios. Last year my math teacher had to do a list of things for one of his administrative classes and I allowed him to help me in several ways.

He did a presentation at a faculty meeting and I let him work with a part of the budget. I let him do some in-service training and some planning to see what it was like. None of this was required when I went through my training. But as a result, I can remember the first job I went into I didn't have a clue about budgets. I didn't know what Title I was or anything. Even though I had a financial class they talked theory not about how to prepare a budget. That was all very new to me and I have really had to work and struggle to get that all done.

Due to neglect in terms of leadership development we are paying for it now as people try to play catch-up in face of massive demographic departures and the reluctance of good people to take the role of principal under current conditions. Tom Williams (2001) captures this crisis in his recent study of the principalship in Ontario, *Unrecognized Exodus, Unaccepted Accountability: The Looming Shortage of Principals and Vice-Principals in Ontario Public School Boards.* The pipeline of leadership is crucial. Fostering leadership at many levels is one of the principal's main roles.

As in the case of Cindy, leadership change hindering the progress of the school system. It was not turn over of leadership per se that was the culprit; rather, it was whether there was any attention to continuity of direction. What happened was either mindless replacement of leaders or hiring of new, high profile leaders who were expected to turn the ship around with a new solution, which often was180 degrees from the previous solution. Leadership should not be judged on the bottom line, but on the number of leaders left behind who are committed to carrying on the vision.

Theme of "Attitude" as Related to Leveraging Oneself. Leader as steward is almost solely a matter of attitude. It is an attitude critical to learning organizations. While stewardship has long been recognized as an aspect of leadership, its source is still not widely understood. Robert Greenleaf (1977) came closest to explaining real stewardship, in his book *Servant Leadership.* There, Greenleaf argues that leaders operate on two levels: stewardship for the people they lead and stewardship for the larger purpose or mission that underlies the enterprise. Leadership could be considered the single most important aspect of effective school reform. Leadership is a necessary condition for effective reform relative to the school-level, the teacher-level, and the student-level factors. Research indicates that leadership has a strong relationship with the attitudes of teachers (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Oakes, 1989; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rutter et al., 1979).

Lundin, Paul and Christensen's (2000) book *Fish!* suggests, "When we choose to love the work we do, we can catch our limit of happiness, meaning, and fulfillment every day" (p. 9). There is always a choice about the way we do our work, even if there is not a choice about the work itself. We can choose the attitude we bring to our work. "Daily modeling of attitudes and skills desired in others helps develop character in those around us" stated Susan and she continued, " I actively search for ways to improve myself."

Tackling a difficult problem is often a matter of seeing where the high leverage lies, where a change—with a minimum of effort—would lead to lasting, significant improvement. Systems thinkers refer to this idea as the principle of "leverage." Small well-focused actions can produce significant, enduring improvements, if they are in the right place (Senge, 1990). New leadership roles require new leadership skills.

Chase shared:

You know I was never a member of the union as a teacher. Absolutely,

philosophically opposed to them. When I came here, my second year here I joined

the union. I joined again this year and I will probably join again next year only

because the union here in this district--- I like the way it works. And what I am

getting at is that our local representative the head of the local association is a

teacher here and she has been a huge help to me. She is able to call and get advice

from the state people and it has always come down to be fair and insightful and

she has been a big help for me. Just because I know that when I go to her first on

a lot of issues that I think are going to be questionable, it's nice to have her on my

side.

Theme of "Skill" as Related to Leveraging Oneself. Learning organizations

represent a potentially significant evolution of organizational culture. So it should come

as no surprise that such organizations will remain a distant vision until the leadership

capabilities they demand are developed. In a school you have the fundamental challenge

of learning how to help people make good decisions without coercing them into making

particular decisions. By creating processes whereby people come to decisions themselves,

there is a deeper conviction, better implementation, and the ability to make better

adjustments when the situation changes. A pattern for consulting with others about

problems emerged in the interview with Chase.

Chase stated:

> If it is a student issue I call the middle school principal because she is very
> structured in that sense. If it is a faculty or curriculum issue I go to the association
> president or call another principal like my mentor. For athletic stuff I go to the
> assistant principal who is also the athletic director and football coach. And of
> course I always go to my uncle (retired superintendent) quite a bit for just general
> stuff. So depending on the nature of the problem I do have a process.

Individual situations dictate the need for flexibility in the role of leadership.

I began teaching in 1975 and did not grow up in an era when transformation was
common. With less global competition and a slower-moving school environment, the
norm back then was stability and the ruling motto was: "If it isn't broken, don't fix it."
Change occurred incrementally and infrequently. The challenges we now face are
different. Globalization, technological change and cultural change are forcing schools to
try to improve. The problem is that most principals have no history or legacy to guide
them through all this. Some few schools have discovered new strategies, and restructure
in a way that works for them. They have minimized the change errors and have gone
from low or middle-of-the-pack schools to excellent educational institutions. An
examination of these success stories reveals an important pattern. High-quality
leadership, not just excellent management, drove success (Barth, et al., 1999). Susan
shared her experience as a leader at a school known for excellence.

Susan stated:

> Two of my teachers and myself did a presentation for the elementary mid-winter
> conference. The director of a statewide organization knew we were working with

vertical alignment using data analysis and asked if we would do a presentation. As a consequence the assistant superintendent asked if we would help her do that same presentation for a similar conference.

Reflecting on the data from this study reveals that several of the principals in Class I, Class IV and Class X have been promoted to central office jobs since participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy. (Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3)

Realizing the need for first-rate leaders in our schools to help support the practice of high quality teachers Oklahoma Principal's Academy was born. Although it appears that one size does not fit all schools there are certain indicators of quality present in all successful schools. NAESP (2001) identified six standards that characterize instructional leadership.

- Lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center.

- Set high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults.

- Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed-upon academic standards.

- Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals.

- Use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify and apply instructional improvement.

- Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success.

To accomplish this the organizations principals serve, and that serve them, must support principals' professional growth. Oklahoma Principal's Academy is one avenue of choice that principals have for personal and professional development. As pointed out by the principals in Class X there are other choices for leadership but they are very different in their approach. Some may be more suited to different levels of practice such as elementary vs. secondary. Others may be for experienced leaders vs. novice principals. The choice is in the hands of the participant. It should be clear though that greater autonomy and flexibility do not mean isolation and loss of accountability. Just the opposite, as Fullan (2003) makes clear in his recent book *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership*. Oklahoma Principal's Academy is a starting point and a continuum for development that Fullan speaks of that can be used for collaborative/reciprocal leadership. Chase had this to say about Oklahoma Principal's Academy:

> I am suggesting it (OPA) to the middle school and elementary school friends of mine, but not necessarily the high school principal friends of mine. And maybe that is just a personal thing. I also think it is for somebody who has been in the job for three to four years. It's more suited for somebody that actually knows what the job is going to take. I have learned the value of collaboration so I meet with several other principals on a monthly basis just to share information and visit. I am also working on my PH.D.

Sharon said:

> I have recommended it to one of my teachers who is serving as my assistant, she is going to go this year. I would recommend it for any principal.

And Martin added:

> I have had several principal's call about attending Oklahoma Principal's
>
> Academy. One principal friend said I don't know if I want to go...I don't know
>
> about this Ropes Course? I told him not to worry you don't have to get off the
>
> ground. You can do what you want to do, just have a good time. He just graduated
>
> and said he loved it.

"Team Building"

Team building is the ability to work collaboratively to identify collective goals,
develop strategies to achieve those goals, gather relevant data, and learn from one
another. Teamwork is characterized by common goals and interdependent efforts to
achieve those goals. Team building has become more important as new generations are
less tolerant of bosses. There is more desire for self-expression, personal growth, and
self-fulfillment (Manz & Sims, 1993). The transition needed in leadership thinking and
philosophy by empowering lower levels in the organization can be very unnerving
process for many. Several themes related to team building were evident collaboration,
ownership and trust.

Team building was an area that Phyllis had really concentrated on with her
faculty. She had taken her teachers to a Ropes Course at the beginning of the year and felt
like it had been very beneficial in creating a collaborative community where more
sharing takes place. She said at first there was some resentment about the time it was
going to take away from the work that needed to be done in the classrooms, but after the

experience all the teachers were enthusiastic about the transformation that had occurred in the relationships of the faculty.

Theme of "Collaboration" as Related to Team Building. Terms like shared governance and site-based management speak to the opportunities which principals can employ to help create a sense of belonging and vision (David, 1996, pp.4-9). These are generally terms used in relationship to defining the goals of the school for improvement. By giving teachers a leadership role and a greater meaning to their belonging in the school community their sense of belonging is enhanced. Allowing and encouraging teacher leadership helps embed the values of the school in the school culture. They influence policies, procedures, and daily practices of the school as well as day-today decisions of individual staff members. It also adds leverage to school improvement, one of the problems at the root of this study. Larry shared how his school had responded to his efforts to encourage school improvement, Larry said:

> The first year everything was adversarial. Everything was a problem. These past two years things have eased up and started working. When we found out that we were a school that was in "need of improvement" we talked about a planning session. We had to find some time to plan what we were going to do to bring us out of this problem. Should we wait until next year when school starts? Come back a week early and plan? Or get together one week during the summer? The staff all agreed to meet during the summer and get our plans together and it turned out that every teacher showed up except for one. They made some good plans and in fact the idea of all-day kindergarten came out of that planning session. We

worked seven hours a day for five days and put the whole plan *together*. We had a teacher study group and once each month we would invite a textbook representative to come in or one of the reading specialist from the state department would come in and we would hire substitute teachers and the regular classroom teacher would come into a planning session and work with a consultant or reading specialist or representative from a textbook company or whatever. We did the all day kindergarten program the first one in our community. We had little bitty kids, kindergarten age kids, at Christmas who were reading first grade material. It was exciting to see that happen. We had the Accelerated Reader program and 100% of the classrooms achieved the "model classroom" level. We had some really good things that were happening. I believe that some of those things that were taught in Principal's Academy helped me accomplish those goals. I learned that I had to step back out of the way; I didn't have to have my hands on everything. Let them take some of the responsibility and trust other people. Unfortunately I must be a slow learner because it took three years. There is still some baggage in this building, but even the teachers that had been a source of irritation or problems have improved. I am just amazed at the qualities of some of those teachers and wish I could do some of the things they can with kids.

Teams are often seen as a critical element to total quality management (TQM) program. Dr. W. Edwards Deming went to Japan in the 1950's and is known for setting Japanese business upon the course that has made them #1 in quality throughout the world. He has been called the "Founder of the third wave of the Industrial Revolution." Dr. Deming's basic philosophy on quality was that productivity improves as variability

decreases. He claimed that management is responsible for 94% of all quality problems, and pointed out that it is management's task to help people work smarter not harder. TQM is a movement that has spread in every industry, business, and service organization including public education. In schools Total Quality involves everyone within the school district. In providing training in quality principles every school person is armed with the education, training, and authority needed to identify, analyze, and solve problems; to establish quality goals and objectives and to measure results; and to focus the strategic vision on the needs, requirements, and expectations of its students. The process of continuous improvement is the hallmark of Total Quality Movement and a key to Japan's economic ascendancy (Davenport & Anderson, (2002).

Theme of "Ownership" as Related to Team Building. By encouraging "capacity-building" and "systems-changing," two terms offered in the work of McDonnell and Elmore (1987), the principal also builds a bridge for improvement. Defined in their work, capacity building involves teacher empowerment by increasing their professional skills, which in turn increases their commitment to the values of the profession. Systems' changing seeks a new way of looking at what we do in schools and how we do it. It allows for a new understanding of what practices are effective, and it does so as it simultaneously encourages a teacher base of authority within the change process regarding instructional practices. This base of authority again creates and strengthens connections to the school. As Fullan (2001) points out,

> There are few professions other than teaching where gaining personal meaning
>
> through improving the lives of others for years and even generations to come is so

palpable and profound. A flow of new and better knowledge and ideas is the lifeblood of continuous improvement." (p. 84)

Cindy wrote, "I use team building when there is a project to do or develop. It begins in team meetings and then expands to larger groups of people as needed to help complete the task successfully." Phyllis said, "I value teacher input on issues and concerns, but some teachers do not have the resources or skills for teaming yet." The development and planning of team building activities was a goal of most of the principals (see Appendix G). Empowering lower levels in the organization can be very unnerving process for leaders who may perceive it as a threat to their own status and power. In addition, leading self-managing employees calls for new management and leadership perspectives and strategies that often do not seem to come naturally to principals who cut their own teeth in a traditional hierarchical system.

Theme of "Trust" as Related to Team Building. Why is teaming not spreading faster in education? We often hear of teaming at the middle level of education but seldom at the elementary and secondary levels. As a middle school teacher who experienced the change from junior high to middle school there are several philosophical and practical barriers to the ready acceptance of the team concept. Many of these stem from discomfort with the unknown and general resistance to change. In the U.S. we have a strong political and personal tradition of individual freedom that at times runs counter to the collective nature of teamwork. Many teachers have difficulty adjusting to the idea of working without a traditional boss or supervisor after so many years of dependence. The trust needed to implement team processes is necessary. This takes an investment and time.

Interactions based on trust and respect relationships among the different races and genders are the critical success factors to having effective teams and stakeholder relations. The respondents in all three classes of Oklahoma Principal's Academy identified teambuilding as one of the most difficult of the six goals to develop and sustain (see Appendix G). Phyllis used much of her Academy training in helping create a sense of community and teambuilding. She shared the following:

> Team building was on of the things that I really concentrated on this year. We started off with one of our staff development days with a visit to a Ropes Course. It was real interesting because there were a lot of teachers that said this is just going to be a big waste of time. But when we got done they really felt like they got something out of it. The teachers really enjoyed it and I think the community benefited a lot from the exercise. I have tried to do a lot more sharing at faculty meetings also. Giving teachers five to ten minutes, grouping them in clusters where they are not with their grade level and sharing something specific. That's helped because normally they tend to bond together in their little grade level groups.

Teaming was perhaps the most challenging format for skillful leadership work (see Appendix G). Successful teaming rests on the capacities of individuals to form relationships that enable them to work well together. Cheryl stated that she used many teams in her school:

> Each grade level has a team as well as the special education and specialty teachers. There are about 6 to 8 people on each team. They elect a chairperson who is in charge of the meeting and a grade level representative that serves on the

faculty advisory. We meet once a month and then we work on those concerns and suggestions. Actually it's kind of a democratic thing. All ideas are listened to as well as used. For example we have a beautiful school committee that just completed a big paper drive and in conjunction we did a litter blitz recycling campaign. It was a building competition, with the 6th grade collecting and weighing the paper. For each five pounds the student received a tree by their name. We also have the "Grouch" award for the cleanest classroom. Each Friday at our Rise and Shine Assembly we celebrate with a garbage can with Oscar the Grouch painted on the side awarded to the cleanest classroom.

Personal Growth

Personal growth enables the individual and school to grow and improve. If everyone in the school participates in an ongoing cycle of systematic personal growth and it is deeply imbedded in the school's culture it then represents a driving force in the daily work of the school. In this context colleagues help each other develop their professional capacity and promote learning through celebration. Einstein describes the experience of increasing connectedness as one of the subtlest aspects of personal mastery (Hickman, 1998 p. 422). Martin linked his own learning to that of his faculty, "I took my people through the whole thing. We had a deal. I would come back and tell them what we did and we all tried it out together. Now it is just a part of what we do."

Just as teachers are isolated in their classrooms, so are principals often isolated in their building. Martin principal in a small rural school said, "As an elementary principal I

am isolated." Echoing his sentiments Cheryl principal in a large urban school said, "I am isolated in a large district." School leaders need support and resources from other principals. Oklahoma Principal's Academy provided a means of linking effective practices in the principalship, through principal mentoring, coaching, list serves, study groups and conferences. The academy provided a training program that clearly defined and described the nature of instructional leadership. Principals must be extremely knowledgeable about how children learn and develop, how teachers teach, what kind of training helps teachers the most and what kind of interventions and support school leaders can provide. But principals must also know who they are, what they represent, and how best to lead. Oklahoma Principal's Academy provided a program that included reflection, an expanded knowledge base regarding leadership and management and instructional strategies based on real practice. Themes that appear in the conversation and writing about personal growth included: emotional intelligence networking, relationships.

Theme of "Emotional Intelligence" as Related to Personal Growth. Goleman (1995) suggests that one of the critical elements of a healthy leadership perspective is emotional intelligence. The emotionally intelligent principal is self-motivating and empathic, persists toward the goal of educating all children, manages his emotions and stress so as not to lose sight of his core values and commitments, and perhaps most importantly, hold on tightly to hope. These individuals are able to create organizational climates of trust, information sharing, healthy risk-taking, and learning. They are open, collaborative, and clear about what is important---student learning---and how to work with others so it can be achieved. The survey indicates that several principals felt like

self-mastery through the development of personal character was enhanced by Oklahoma Principal's Academy (see Appendix G). Cindy experienced the benefits of emotional intelligence in the following way:

> We have come a long way and I have a great staff. I have learned a lot from them. Even the survey we filled out, was great. A lot of times we don't see what we are projecting because we are so used to it. You are just normal with it. But what other people see is different. As a result I have changed some of the things I do. I think it has helped me build a better relationship with my staff.

Dr. Goleman's 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence* challenged our concept of "being smart," showing how emotional intelligence (EI)---how we handle our relationships and ourselves—can determine life success more than IQ. Cheryl, principal at a urban elementary school shared her philosophy: "A lot of times you can have all the book knowledge, but if you have no people skills it doesn't mean anything."

Goleman's 1998 book, *Working With Emotional Intelligence* argues that workplace competencies based on emotional intelligence play a far greater role in star performance than do intellect or technical skill, and that both individuals and organizations will benefit from cultivating these capabilities. His most recent book called *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* explores the role of emotional intelligence in leadership. He argues that a leader's emotions are contagious. If a leader resonates energy and enthusiasm, an organization thrives; if a leader spreads negativity and dissonance, it flounders. This concept charges leaders with driving emotions in the right direction to have a positive impact on change and improvement. Emotional intelligence is developed from emotional competencies, which are learned

capabilities that contribute to effective performance at work, outstanding leadership, and deeply satisfying relationships in life. In addition to the themes of skill and knowledge that were recognized earlier and are necessary for top performance, social role, values, self-image, trait and motive are characteristics that lead to longer-term success. Four clusters are identified: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills. Larry shared a situation during the interview that had just occurred with a teacher in his building:

> Vickie I had to give a warning to a teacher here yesterday. The teacher has a problem with yelling at kids. It's not uncommon for teachers, my self-included, to raise your voice at kids. That does occur. But this teacher is yelling constantly. She gets directly in a kids face and just screams. I had already warned her and even put it in her evaluation. A couple of days ago she just went ballistic on a kid. Got in his face, yelled and screamed at him, at this little kid. The mom came up the following day and she was mad. I told her I would visit with the teacher and try to make sure that it never happened again. I gave this teacher a warning letter again rather than an actual letter of admonishment. Her response was, "If you get a chance to write me up why shouldn't I get a chance to write you up?" The only thing that I said, rather than blowing my stack, which I really wanted to do was say, You have a right to write a rebuttal within ten days and turn it in to me. She said "I will write a rebuttal and turn it into you" and then she walked out. If I had not gone to Principal's Academy and tried to take care of that problem on my own in my own way, I'd have been in her face. Principal's Academy taught me to treat people the way I want to be treated.

Self-Awareness is the core of EI. It recognizes our emotions and their effects, it provides

accurate self-assessment whereby you know your strengths and limits and provides self-

confidence, a strong sense of self-worth and capabilities. Second, self-management is

self- regulation through self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness and adaptability.

It is also motivation the guiding drive to meet an internal standard of excellence and the

initiative to act. Third, social awareness is empathy, understanding others and taking an

active interest in their concerns, organizational awareness and service orientation.

Finally, social skills for leading others by developing others, leadership, influence,

communication, and change catalyst. Social skills also include conflict management,

building bonds and teamwork and collaboration. Goleman (2002) stresses in his book

Primal Leadership that to develop emotional intelligence; we must engage our heads and

our hearts with the true determination of wanting to change. With passion the changes we

seek must be linked to our dreams for the future, our passion for life, our values, and our

beliefs. With vision we need to see a vision of our future "self" and know how that vision

is different form our current state. (pp. 39-41)

  The triad of self-awareness, self-management, and empathy all come together in

the final EI ability: relationship management. Managing relationships skillfully boils

down to handling other people's emotions. This, in turn, demands that leaders be aware

of their own emotions and attuned with empathy to the people they lead. It means that

principals must work under the assumption that nothing gets done alone. Such leaders

have a network in place when the time for action comes. And in an era when more and

more work is done long distance—by email or by phone—relationship building,

paradoxically, becomes more crucial than ever. Since graduation Class X has been linked

to other Oklahoma Principals Academy graduates through the alumni group. Oklahoma education leaders have taken a Caribbean Cruise together, attended summer retreats and participated in conferences and lectures about new knowledge and changes in the social structure of our world. Economic hard-times for schools were cited as a barrier for some to participate in these alumni activities. It appears the Academy tries to link the learning of leaders at various levels in an effort to form a vertical alignment between common schools to the university, from the classroom teacher to the university president.

Each principal in Class X was able to participate in the ECI-360 to assess the full spectrum of emotional intelligence-based leadership competencies. Class X was the first group of principals to use this instrument. The training participant's immediate work supervisor, peers, teachers and support staff members rated the trainee on six scales assessing behaviors such as sensitivity toward others, leadership, and decisiveness. A review of the research on 360-degree feedback found that peers give evaluations that have better predictive power than those of bosses or subordinates—and, of course, better than a leader's own self-assessment (Lewin & Zwany, 1976; Shore, Shore, & Thronton III, 1992) but other studies have found that subordinates' views are more powerful than peers' in predicting leadership (McEvoy & Beatt, 1989). Class X principals found the assessment to be revealing.

Being alumni of the Principal's Academy, also makes you an alumni under the umbrella of the Educator's Leadership Academy, which hosted Dr. Daniel Goleman on March 26, 2002 at the University of Central Oklahoma. This was the first alumni event available for the Class X and an opportunity for continued professional development in

the context of relationship leadership. Ongoing opportunity for professional and personal development is one of the features that serve the principal well today and in the future.

Theme of "Relationships" as Related to Personal Growth. Increasingly, the best lead not by virtue of power alone, but by excelling in the art of relationship, the singular expertise that the changing climate renders indispensable. Leadership excellence is being redefined in interpersonal terms as schools strip out layers of strategies that are not scientifically based, technology provides communication across national boundaries and as students and stakeholders redefine the web of connection.

Resonant leaders know when to be collaborative and when to be visionary, when to listen and when to command (Blanchard, 2001). Such leaders have a knack for attuning to their own sense of what matters and articulating a mission that resonates with the values of those they lead. These leaders naturally nurture relationships; surface simmering issues and creates the human synergies of a group in harmony. They build a fierce loyalty by caring about the careers of those who work for them, and inspire people to give their best for a mission that speaks to share values. A leader does each of these at the right time, in the right way, with the right person. Such leadership creates a climate of enthusiasm and flexibility, one where people feel invited to be at their most innovative, where they give their best. And such a working climate, given today's realities, creates added value through the essential human ingredients for performance. Such leaders are more values-driven, more flexible and informal, and more open and frank than leaders of old. They are more connected to people and to networks (Goleman, 2002). Susan stated: "Principal's Academy made me fell connected to the rest of the world. I am not all alone

in Oklahoma. I know that there are other people out there going through the same thing.
There is a bigger picture out there."

Theme of "Networking" as Related to Personal Growth. Networks provide
principals with an extended learning community in which to develop their professional
self-concepts. In regional or national networks, principals see themselves as part of a
broader profession and are listened to with intensity and respect that may not exist in
their schools; hearing and seeing how other principals think and interact allow them to
fine-tune their perceptions of their own roles as principals. Martin explained, "
Principal's Academy was revealing because I got to see my position from your point of
view."

Network analysts share a model of action that treats actors as purposeful,
intentional agents. Most would agree with Granovetter (1973) that it is important to avoid
both under socialized and over socialized models of action, and recognize that actors
have social as well as economic motives and that their actions are influenced by the
networks of relationships in which they are embedded. Beyond that, though, there are
several points of divergence.

Organizations such as schools are composed of ties of a myriad nature. Ties can
differ according to whether they are based on friendship, advice, or work; whether what
flows through them is resources, information or affection; whether they are strong or
weak ties, unitary or multiplex ties, face-to-face or electronic ties; and so on. Though the
complex nature of ties is recognized by everyone who takes a network perspective, there
has been, as Wellman (1988, p. 25) has observed, a tendency to concentrate on the form

of network patterns rather than their content…that similar patterns of ties may have similar behavioral consequences, no matter what the substantive context. Pushed to its extreme, the argument has been that the pattern of relationships is substantially the same as the content.

As Kantar (1983) and Eccles (1988) conclude, network research can provide practitioners with the means to define and classify the properties of networks, assess outcomes associated with particular types of networks, and describe the dynamics of network formation and evolution. In this way, a network perspective can help practioners identify the importance of networks to organizational activities and outcomes, diagnose their current state, and proactively change networks to improve their own performance and the effectiveness of their organizations. Interviews and other data sources indicated that some principals had developed networks within their own community. Larry had developed a Saturday breakfast group and Carl met with other principals for lunch once a month. In addition, several mentioned seeing each other at conferences and acknowledging each other through newspaper articles, TV broadcasts, and e-mail links.

Alumni of Oklahoma Principal's Academy value their newfound network of friends. Larry said, "The strongest factor of Principal's Academy was the ability to do networking. To be able to talk to anybody at anytime…it did not matter if it was school hours or after school hours." Larry has continued to network in his own community with others that have attended the academy. They meet every Saturday morning for breakfast.

Chase said what he found was the opportunity for networking and building relationships with others that have helped him by providing ideas as he restructures his curriculum and policy at his school. He has used the network several times for ideas and

information. Others like Cindy said it is nice to walk into a room for a conference and recognize a face "It is a lot more fun when you know somebody." The network has obviously worked in political ways also. The current president of the Oklahoma Secondary Principals Association is an alumni and mentor of Class X of Oklahoma Principal's Academy. In addition, the outgoing president of the Oklahoma Elementary Principal's Association was also an alumnus of Oklahoma Principal's Academy. I know personally my vote was influenced by the connection I had with them through the academy. The other candidates may have been just as qualified, but the weak tie I had with them through the academy was the deciding factor when I was asked to vote.

Comparison of Class Response to Survey

Most respondents indicated that they were functioning in the developing and sustaining stage for the six goals taught in the Academy (see Appendix D). The greatest strength was in the development of vision, leveraging oneself and personal growth followed by creating synergy, creating community and team building. The survey indicates that the respondents believe that they have been able to apply the concepts taught at the Academy in successful ways. Respondents indicate that the Academy has helped participants by identifying their strengths and weaknesses as a leader, impacting their perception of themselves as a principal. Most believe that their organization benefited from their participation in this program because they are better able to successfully meet the challenges of organizational change and build better relationships. There was little evidence to show that relationship behaviors were consistently related to leadership

success. The relative effectiveness of this behavior dimension often depends on the situation. Hersey and Blanchard (1969, 1977, 1982) proposed a model, situational leadership, to explain why leadership effectiveness varied across the dimension and situation. Just as Coleman did in the 1960's I could use a broad stroke to characterize the whole education system as failing to help principals learn. But I would be ignoring the success stories of individuals who are overcoming the odds, changing attitudes and finding success such as Oklahoma Principal's Academy.

Class I of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy was the first group to participate in training in 1993. Only 7 of the 22 participants in Class I continue to serve as a site principal at the time of this survey. Five principals had retired, one had moved out of state, five were employed as Central Office administration, one worked at the State Department of Education, one school had closed, there was no address for one participant and one principal was deceased. All participants in Class I of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy that responded to the survey were elementary principals. Only two respondents were from schools that did not qualify for Title I funding. These same two schools were also the only two schools that met the 70% performance benchmark for all Oklahoma Core Curriculum tests according to the Office of Accountability. At this time it appears that socio-economic status of the student population of a school in Oklahoma plays a big part in the academic success of the student. Demographic information collected about Class I revealed the following data:

Table 2

Demographic Information for Class I Oklahoma Principal's

Gender	Type of School	Number of Students School/District	Title I/% Free/ Reduced Lunch
Female	Elem./Rural	135/253	Yes/52%
Male	Elem./Rural	582/1,315	Yes/50%
Female	Elem./Rural	411/4,283	No/29%
Female	Elem./Urban	647/19,407	Yes/40%
Male	Elem./Urban	295/38,676	Yes/83%
Female	Elem./Suburban	746/17,446	No/8%
Male	Elem./Rural	285/601	Yes/68%

Class V of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy attended training in 1998. They had 15 of 26 participants still listed as principals of public schools in the state of Oklahoma. Two principals had retired, one school had closed, one participant worked for the U.S. Department of Education, two had no address, two had moved out of state, two did not respond and one participant was serving as a principal at a private school. Information gathered about these participants is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Demographic Information for Class V Oklahoma Principal's Academy

Gender	Type of School	Number of Students School/District	Title I/%Free/ Reduced Lunch
Female	Elem./Rural	395/894	Yes/46%
Female	Elem./Rural	178/270	Yes/89%
Male	Elem./Rural	475/6,157	No/9%
Female	HS/Rural	108/286	Yes/35%
Female	Elem./Urban	280/42,202	Yes/88%
Male	HS/Rural	481/1,549	Yes/50%
Female	Elem./Suburban	367/12,450	No/29%
Female	Elem./Urban	447/38,676	Yes/90%
Female	Elem./Rural	405/2,213	Yes/85%
Female	Elem./Urban	406/38,676	Yes/80%
Female	Elem./Rural	406/725	Yes/65%
Male	Elem./Rural	168/491	Yes/61%
Male	Elem./Rural	497/497	Yes/51%
Female	Elem./Rural	346/1,490	Yes/60%
Female	Elem./Rural	354/6,344	Yes/75%

Twice as many females as males participated in Oklahoma Principal's Academy. This may be due to the fact that the majority of the principals who attend the Academy are also elementary principals. The majority of participants were also from rural schools in Oklahoma. Most of the schools had less than 500 students and the majority of districts were smaller than 5,000 pupils. Nearly all of the sites qualified for Title I federal

assistance and two-thirds were above the state average 49% for Free/Reduced lunch.

Two-thirds of Class I principals were no longer principals of public schools in Oklahoma.

Five principals in Class I had been promoted to central office jobs such as Director of

Federal Programs/Curriculum or Superintendent's Liaison. Half of the principals in Class

V were still serving as site principals in Oklahoma public schools. This demographic

information permits a more complete description of the sample and also supports an

argument for representativeness. While such an argument is always inconclusive since it

is impossible to obtain data on all pertinent variables (or even to be sure as to what they

all are), it is an important feature of any research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

Summary

Evidence of ties or relationships between members of Class X of the Oklahoma

Principal's Academy were present at all sites with differences in time, intimacy,

emotional intensity, and reciprocal services present. Although social interaction between

members of Class X was limited after the initial training all members voiced confidence

that the bond between members of the cohort remained strong. This bond was evident to

me when I called to set up the interview during the busiest time of the year for a principal

and all were quick to welcome me, taking precious time to answer all my questions and

give me a tour of their school.

The Oklahoma Principal's Academy focuses its experience and learning around

six principals: the power of vision, creating community, creating synergy, how to

leverage oneself, team building, and personal growth. The survey allowed the participant

to report the level at which they perceived their organization to be functioning. Examples or illustrations were used to support placement. Interviews with the principal's, on-site observations and demographic information reveal that this was a group of people who wanted to build personal and professional leadership capacity. Through the Academy participants sought the development of a vision of learning that would allow them to work smarter, build a network with colleagues, creates positive relationships that nurture trust and exchange of information, and promote ties for support and collaboration of shared knowledge

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis

Data in this study was analyzed through the lens of Perpetuation Theory (Wells & Crain, 1994) in an effort to describe the outcome of relationships and "ties." Chapter III reported the realities of the principals interviewed. This chapter will describe the findings relative to the research questions including the usefulness of this lens for explaining this phenomenon.

Perpetuation Theory

Braddock (1980) studied the perpetuation of racial segregation and found that sustained experiences of desegregation were necessary to effect any change in relationships between groups that might lead to greater equity. It was shown that African American students who attended integrated high schools were more likely to later attend integrated or predominately white universities. Those African American students formed ties with students of the dominant culture, and were later able to use those connections to their advantage. They were able to escape the limited environment established by segregation.

On the other hand, African American students who attended segregated high schools never had the opportunity to form ties outside their race. Their strong ties were with classmates, friends, and neighbors of the same race. Those students generally had no personal connections, other than those that were also available to their same-race peers. If they entered higher education, it was generally at segregated universities (Braddock, 1980; Braddock & McPartland, 1989; McPartland & Braddock, 1981).

In an integrated setting, diversity brings with it a greater number of possible relationships. A classmate's social connections become available to others with the formation of ties. The network continues to grow with increased integration. The African American students' chances to attend a prestigious university or obtain a well-paying job increase as ties are formed with members of the dominant culture (Braddock, 1980; Braddock & McPartland, 1989; McPartland & Braddock, 1981).

Braddock and McPartland (1989) found that racial segregation in schools, neighborhoods, job sites, and among informal social contacts continues to be perpetuated because African American and other minority members have been in segregated settings throughout their lives. Consequently, minority adults often make life choices that perpetuate segregation because they have not had the opportunity to test their racial beliefs in an integrated setting (Braddock, 1980). Long-term desegregated experiences are essential to providing maximum opportunities for individuals.

Applying perpetuation theory (Braddock, 1980; Bradock & McPartland, 1989; McPartland & Braddock, 1981) to principals and isolation of leaders suggests that lack of school improvement and change may be due to the years of dominance by segregation, a lack of integrated and shared experience with other principals and other contexts.

Relationships may be underdeveloped between principals promoting a system in which the status quo is maintained.

Networking is a term that is commonly used to describe interactions between groups or individuals. According to Baker (1992), networking is defined as a process of building and managing relationships by means of interrelated social ties. Granovetter (1973, 1986) claims that social ties can be measured and categorized as either strong or weak and that segregation and integration can determine the strength of ties in an individual's social network.

Granovetter's study of the strength of ties (1973; 1986) provides a lens through which principal's relationships can be examined. Ties are strengthened based on the length of time spent together, the intimacy of the interactions, the emotional intensity of a relationship, and the reciprocal nature of the relationship. Without emotional involvement and shared history, individuals are less likely to form ties. Weak ties, when formed, are generally intermittent with no expectation of future involvement. Reciprocity is an important factor because interaction that is mutually rewarding will encourage future interaction and further stimulate the formation of ties. Ties are also strengthened when there is a shared commitment to a cause or institution (Granovetter, 1973, 1986). Principals in Oklahoma Principals Academy spent time together in training and meetings, they helped one another solve problems and shared a commitment to the success of their students and schools. The shared history and commitment among principals should have strengthened their ties with one another.

According to Granovetter (1973; 1986) strong ties are found primarily among family members and close friends. These individuals have spent a great deal of time

together and have very close relationships that are intimate and reciprocal. All of the close friends of one would also be close friends of the other. On the other hand, weak ties are created in relationships between more casual acquaintances. Individuals who share weak ties would have very little overlap in their social circles. Therefore, the collective pool of personal relationships for those bonded by weak ties would include many more resources on which to draw. This greater source of connections would serve the individual well when seeking information about job possibilities and professional advancement. Individuals who share strong ties would all have access to the same people and the same information, limiting the scope of their social network and its advantages (Granovetter, 1973, 1986).

Granovetter (1973, 1986), Well and Crain (1994) propose that individuals with similar backgrounds and experiences are more likely to form ties to one another. Using these lenses, principals generally have similar academic backgrounds, set expectations and standards, demand content and instruction, create a culture, use data, and engage in relationships with students, parents, teachers, and community to create shared responsibility for student and school success. Although principals often have similar academic backgrounds their professional work experience is quite different. The uncertainty of assignment of schools, the variety of students that attend an institution, the experience of the faculty, values of the community all make for a vastly different point of reference for principals. At many schools principals are isolated. As a rule, principals do not have a system to support and nurture their talents as leaders. It is possible that the path of the principal may never lead to professional development. Based on the status quo

of most schools and their leaders, principals might be viewed as segregated. (Sarason, 1982; Fullan, 2003)

Granovetter (1973, 1986) further states that, in segregated settings, strong ties primarily represent individuals' social networks with others like themselves. Theoretically then, principals are kept on the fringes of an institution and have limiting opportunities to form ties with other school leaders. This personal and professional segregation severely limits principals' opportunities for forming ties that may prove beneficial for networking and growth.

This research illuminates the principal as an individual in an integrated setting, as having the opportunity to form ties with others that have different backgrounds. Although group members with dissimilar backgrounds and experiences tend to share only weak ties, those weak ties are critical for the purpose of change and improvement. Weak ties provide collaboration within and across group affiliations and expand one's contact sources exponentially. Increased integration of new ties benefit not only the person but also the profession.

Oklahoma Principal's Academy

Relationships and ties among principals lead to personal and professional growth. As principals collaboratively reflect on the way they work it creates new models of school leadership. This sense of belonging and common bond is then perpetuated due to the underdevelopment of ties across the different contexts. Perpetuation Theory (Braddock, 1980; McPartland & Braddock, 1981; Granovetter, 1973) provides a lens

through which to view the segregation of principals from colleagues and the resulting realities of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy.

Successful principals improve relationships to become more productive and achieve better results. These principals realize that they have to rely on and work with others in order to be productive and achieve results. The problem is that many school environments are not conducive to positive relationships. Instead, they employ the approach of trying to catch people doing things wrong. This type of culture can be unproductive and self-defeating. While focused on the mistake, inadvertently reinforcing what we do not want to happen---the negative behavior. By building positive relationships, learning communities can be more productive, students can achieve greater results, and principals can create an environment where everyone is genuinely excited about the work they are doing.

The purposeful seeking out of new ways of doing things can be difficult. It is no accident that many schools are bypassing traditional training as a source for leadership personnel. It also explains the fierce resistance to change within schools. Those who have been there the longest have the most invested and also the most to lose if change occurs. Principals must actively challenge their paradigms through purposeful networks by examining the status quo, assumptions, and premises to find new ways of doing things better. Principals must anticipate and then innovate to achieve excellence. By going beyond the strong ties and venturing outside the district and being exposed to a larger more diverse collection of colleagues often paradigms did shift. It was a way of looking beyond "the way we do things" and opening the mind, introducing new pedagogy, restructuring or changing by providing hope, ideas and opportunities.

When all data were analyzed and coded into major categories the four themes of Perpetuation Theory (time, intimacy, emotional intensity and reciprocal services) resonated loud and clear through the material. Principals' comments indicate that they perceived Oklahoma Principal's Academy to be leadership development as a reciprocal process where a community of learners inspired both individual and group development. Not only did the group members feel a spirit of connectedness, but they also perceived that the group worked together toward the accomplishment of goals. There was a vision, which united members in common pursuit.

Bonding took place within the academy, a finding that confirms much of the research about cohesiveness within university cohort programs (Herbert & Reynolds, 2002; Hill, 1992; Kasten, 1992). The mutual support and solidarity found in other groups (Johnson & Johnson, 1987) seemed to permeate the feeling expressed by principals of the Academy. From the Academy experience, some insight is gained regarding principals' understanding of the factors that promoted or hindered cohesiveness. They suggested that they were inspired to bond together by such things as "time," "activities," both in class and outside of class, and "a chance to talk about what they were experiencing." The most important factor to increase their cohesiveness was spending time together---problem solving, sharing ideas and actually participating in joint presentations.

From my experience in working with this group of principals at the Academy and from the impressions they have shared, it appears that individual development within the group proceeds through a continuum of developmental stages. The perceived growth of these individuals is represented by the four themes of Perpetuation Theory. While all principals may not reach all stages of development, the progression toward full

development seemed to proceed in a similar fashion. The development beginning with (1) time, then (2) intimacy, followed by (3) emotional intensity, and finally (4) reciprocal services are documented in their conversations.

Time

Principals in the Academy expressed the belief that significant individual growth did take place as a result of their experience. They talked about time as being a priceless commodity of which there was never enough. That time was difficult to handle when they were asked to use it to reflect for their own benefit. By prioritizing and identifying the important things in their life, principals were able to find more time for what the individual valued. Larry was overwhelmed with the attitudes of the personnel at his school. He had this to say about time.

At first I said I really don't have time. But then I decided that it (Principal's Academy) would be worth my time. I had so many problems I didn't know what to do. Now I realize it is the best time I have spent.

Martin wears many hats in his district as principal, bus driver and teacher. He said, I don't have enough time in the day to get everything done. Time is the biggest problem I've got. It's hard to apply your time to all places. If there is a negative thing I didn't like right off the bat, it was giving me free time. I don't handle free time very well. I would come back and say; well we just spent one afternoon just sitting. I felt like I was wasting my time. But now I understand. It turned out to be a positive. But that was probably the hardest thing for me to

accept about the Academy. I rushed and drove all the way over there just to sit

and do nothing for two hours. It took me a while to get used to that. It ended up

being positive to just sit down and think. You know. Take time to slow down.

Time to reflect that was the hardest for me.

Principals need time to evaluate their values. What they think, do and encourage

other to do needs to be consistent with the values they espouse and demonstrate.

Congruence between demonstration of those beliefs and action is observed and credibility

as a leader develops (Kouses & Posner, 1993). Followers quickly note discrepancies, and

the trust a leader needs to build relationships is thwarted. Inconsistent values and actions

can lead to ineffective leadership. A way to guide such development is to encourage

reflection in leader preparation programs. Through self-assessment instruments, reflective

writings, regular feedback from instructors and colleague's principals can come to a

clearer understanding of themselves as leaders.

Intimacy

The principals indicated that the group supported them---"made them feel

connected not isolated." They sought out one another to find solutions" and "pulled

together to seek new ideas." The academy seemed to provide a climate for trust that

allowed individual members to become more emotionally secure. This nurturing

atmosphere fostered individual freedom to feel "validated," "secure," and "connected,"

and to experience "risk-taking" and "question" the reality of situations occurring in

education and in their own schools. Cindy expressed these feelings:

I don't feel like I am alone out there. It's good to have others to talk with and people that have done it for a long time, share what they have been doing. I feel like there is a relationship there. It makes me more comfortable just to call someone up and ask a question. It has given me a group of people I know I can call on if I have a situation come up. I could have called anybody in our class anytime, and I did. I also talked with my mentor and our director. To me that was the strongest thing that I saw out of Principal's Academy, it really gave you a good opportunity to network with people. I still have access to those materials, people and activities through the alumni group.

Susan valued the relationships.

Even though we haven't seen each other for a year, I think if I needed something or needed to know about your school I wouldn't hesitate to pick up the phone and call you. It just gives me a sense of satisfaction to know that when I hear the name of a community on the news that I know a principal that is there. It kind of makes you feel connected to the rest of the world; that I'm not all alone here. I know that there are other people out there going through the same thing that I am because I have talked to them. I have spent evenings with them. I have done stupid skits with them. It is just nice to know that they are out there and that if I need them I know that they would be there for me. Even if we don't use them, just knowing that they are there.

Oklahoma Principal's Academy staff and instructors encouraged an ethic of care, an emphasis on inquiry, and the right to question current practice, a search for meaning and purpose, and an emphasis on vision and renewal. From the office assistants who

provided principals with fresh *Krispy Kreme* doughnuts from the grand opening of the first store to open in the state to the personal site visits from the director the feeling was warm and genuine.

Emotional Intensity

The mutual support and emotional intensity found in the Principal's Academy permeated the feelings expressed by the principals. Repeatedly throughout the interviews, words such as "relationship," "family," "bonding," and "fellowship" are found. Wrapped in this group climate, individuals responded to the warmth and concern they felt was extended. In turn, individuals reached out to others. Bonds were formed. Individuals acknowledged personal feelings of "tolerance," "acceptance," and "care" for others. Impressions that these principals genuinely liked each other and valued the time spent in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy learning experience were expressed. Susan's comments exemplify an attitude of emotional intensity:

> It was a bad time in my life; I was dealing with a lot at the time. It was good for me personally and professionally. We need to have an opportunity to talk to other principals. We need to have someone to talk about or help us to think about things other than the nitty gritty nuts and bolts that we deal with daily. There is a bigger picture out there. And I think that as administrators we need to remember that. I think that is the beauty of Principal's Academy.

Martin shared the following:

> Getting to be with people that are doing what you are doing and listening to a group that is really concerned about what they are about. If you are at Principal's Academy you care about your job and you are trying to make your job better. The group of people that go to Principal's Academy is the group that wants to make this situation better, for themselves, for their teachers and for their students, for the whole system. Larry and I got real close and he was my roommate first, we never got to room together again but he was probably the one I was the closest to and we got to visit and he got to know my family and I got to know his family and you know the things going on in his life and his job and big problems he was dealing with and problems I was dealing with. It's good. It's been a good deal. We had a lot in common, and our kids were close to the same age, and they went to church with us and we kept up with them pretty close.

And Cindy added:

> The networking, the people you meet, even though you may not contact each other a whole lot during the year is the best part. When you go to a meeting and see them it is like, hey! A great re-acquaintance. You don't loose a step.

Several principals expressed personal discomfort with socializing with other principals at meetings or conferences if they did not have a prior relationship. Even then it was often easier to remain with other administrators from their district than to spend time with those outside the district. The strong ties held them captive. Still others looked forward to the interaction with their classmates by phone, e-mail, at conferences and alumni events.

Reciprocal Service

Principals in the Academy indicated that their knowledge and understanding were greatly enhanced through their group experiences in the leadership preparation program. Several principals mentioned sharing as a significant factor in their personal development. They talked of "vision," "goal setting," "teamwork," and "problem solving" as being important characteristics of their learning experience. They did not view their learning as complete, however, but mentioned the words "challenge," "determined," "building," and "committed" as they discussed their continued development. Their comments suggested that the experience of working in a cohesive group was meaningful. Chase revealed:

> There have been some things that I have done with my math program based on some conversations I had with my mentor, but that was not something we went over in the curriculum of Principal's Academy. It was the result of the relationship. Principal's Academy is for those who are looking to take their performance and their schools to the next level. It made me hungry for more knowledge and I have started working on my doctorate.

Cindy also felt like she gained knowledge from her experience.

> Principal's Academy helped me learn how to work with people, deal with people in a different way and to be able to ask people for ideas. The emotional intelligence survey we filled out helped me see what I was projecting to others. I still think about the ideas we shared in the brainstorming session. The teaming concept and curriculum---I have tried to do some pieces of that.

Larry reflected:

> It feeds you in a way you need but you don't really realize that you need it, or I
> didn't. After I went through the Academy, it made me see things in a different
> way, at a different level. It teaches you something about yourself and about what
> other people think and how to work with them and how you treat them. They need
> to know that you are human and that it is OK to make a mistake.
>
> I would encourage anybody that wants to do something for personal growth to go
> to Principal's Academy. It was a good program because it was more intense than
> other workshops I had attended, with the follow-up sessions during the school
> year. It wasn't like a shot in the dark and then it was over with.

These four themes form a supportive climate for individuals of the group. The individuals strengthen the group as he/she experiences growth. As the group is strengthened, the individual also experiences growth. That growth proceeds systematically in the sense that each step toward full development is a growth area or need that group membership promotes for the individual. As these needs or growth areas are fulfilled the individual moves in an upward path toward realization of interdependence. It is at this point that a leader is able to find full potential to transfer those attributes to others. Each step is viewed as hierarchical, with each step reinforcing the others. The individual's total development within the Academy is enhanced as the group itself is strengthened. The ultimate benefit of this leadership development process is reflected in the transfer of knowledge and skills into the leadership necessary for promoting school improvement and change.

Summary

Growth and self-renewal are the cornerstones of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. School principals must be responsible for building communities of learners where people are continually expanding their capabilities and sharing knowledge. Learning is an attitude of lifelong growth and development. The six goals of the Academy lend themselves to the development of the hierarchy of leadership represented in the four tiers of Perpetuation Theory.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, Implications and Interpretations

The first chapter explained the purpose of this study, to explore the relationships among principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and document the extent to which principals reach the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitate successful school improvement and change. The second chapter provided a review of relevant literature and research on the history and evolution of training programs for educational leaders, initiatives to educate and prepare principals, and the lens of Perpetuation Theory. The third chapter provided detail of the design of the study and why it was appropriate. Data was presented using the Academy goals as a framework to expose relationships among principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and the facilitation of these goals to produce successful school improvement and change. Chapter IV focused on the use of Perpetuation Theory as a lens to analyze the impact of Academy goals and resulting ties, assessing the realities that may have been revealed and the usefulness of this lens for explaining this phenomenon In this chapter, Chapter V, I summarize my findings, draw conclusions, discuss implications and other interpretations related to this study.

Summary of the Literature

The literature review suggested several commonalities that are pertinent to this study. The first is that the "more things change the more they remain the same" (Sarason, 1996, p. 59). The institution known as school has changed very little. In accordance preparation programs for educational leaders continue to be under siege (Cooper & Boyd, 1987; Culbertson, 1988; Greenfield, 1988; Griffiths, 1988). Charges of irrelevancy, failure to achieve administrative standards, and unprepared leaders are as pervasive today as in the past. Perhaps most alarming there are not enough leaders today who can design and lead schools that will enable all children to be successful (Educational Research Service, 1998). The yawning achievement gap is laid at the feet of today's principals--- and therefore those who prepare them.

Questionable preparation approaches are now accompanied by new options on the part of participants. Recognizing the expectations and the stresses of the job, potential leaders are avoiding the job called the "principal" resulting in fewer qualified candidates. Others who are on the job are finding themselves unprepared to undertake the work at hand (Leithwood, Stanley, & Montgomery, 1984; Murphy, Hallinger, Miller & Lotto, 1987). The effect is compounded: a startling lack of highly qualified educational leaders.

Bearing the burden of perceived school failure is weighty. Such a burden can stimulate hopelessness, and it can stimulate change. One of those changes is how we are looking at leadership preparation. The new images of preparation in the leadership landscape need to be observed for their potential. Oklahoma Principal's Academy is a training program that provides a new view of interdependent and interlocking

dimensions---leadership development portrayed as a reciprocal process where a community of learners inspires both individual and group development (Lambert, 2002).

The model for preparation offered here suggests that through purpose, interaction, and interdependence within community, participants move through stages of development. These stages are expressed through evolving self-development that leads to the empowerment of others. From others, participants draw renewed strength in their own identities and confidence in their abilities to reform the schools they lead. Their capacities to grow are unleashed. They become more inclusive, receptive, and global in they're perspectives. By retaining a habit of reflection and self-understanding, together with continuing conversations, these commitments become actualized in schools. If participants transform who they are and how they think, the schools that they help create are different as well.

Second, the review showed that today's literature paints a different picture of what a principal is expected to know and do on the job. Whereas once preparation programs frequently developed managers with a custodial mentality, today the principal must be a leader who can take their school into a radically transformed future. The changing metaphors from leadership reflect how *situations* in schools have changed (Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; Fullan 2001). Preparation for leaders must encompass not only today's problems but develop and nurture growth for leadership in a bold new world. Individuals can no longer undergo early-life education and then work, but need lifelong education mixed with work. Principals need not only to solve problems but also to define the problems to be solved. They must be self-motivated, adapt easily to

teamwork, combine knowledge from multiple disciplines, and be conversant with electronic media as a source and medium of knowledge (Knoke, 1996).

Employers are becoming more interested in what a principal knows *right now,* than what he/she *once* knew. Because of the advancement of knowledge, learning has become not a one-time event like a vaccination, but rather an ongoing process for life. Social networks have become a grounding point, a course of inspiration, interweaving the lessons of home with those at work. One of the most effective sparks for professional growth documented is peer networking (Mohr, 1998). The chance to consult with sympathetic peers can lead to reflection, questioning, and problem solving, particularly in a structured setting (Leithwood, 1995).

Leadership academies such as the Oklahoma Principal's Academy provide promise for better alignment between preparation programs and schools. The academy provides a setting where participants are engaged in structured peer networking that stresses reflection, collaboration, and active problem solving. Perpetuation Theory (Granovetter 1973, McPartland & Braddock 1981), which has its roots in social theory, provides the ideal lens to view this shift in leadership development.

Third, the review of literature revealed the culture will not shift overnight; the transition will be slow and awkward. As with racial integration, the ties with family and those that we feel secure with are usually sustained and difficult to change (Braddock, 1980). Segregation typically repeats itself unless there is a break in the cycle. New relationships can foster new ideas and ways of doing things. The amount of time, emotional intensity, intimacy, and reciprocal services determine the strength of the tie or relationship and ability to create change (Granovetter, 1973).

The social network of principal's strong and weak ties and the impact of those associations upon their skills as a leader in terms of new ideas and understandings are intriguing (Granovetter, 1973). Research using the lens of Perpetuation Theory indicates that social networks tended to impact beliefs and offer opportunities for change (Wells &Crain, 1994). Literature emphasizes the principal's role as leader as being paramount to success and change of schools (Betman & McLaughlin, 1987; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, & Ouston, 1979). Perpetuation Theory and the research that has used it as a framework offers insight into the dynamics of change and presents an approach for navigating leadership in the future through training and socialization experiences.

Summary of the Study

School reform remains a dilemma. Some few schools have found a way to change but they are rare. While some do change the majority do not. The problem/purpose of this study was to explain how ties among school leaders help to change schools. Perpetuation of the status quo is the norm. Theoretically the strong ties principals have with the leadership in their school district and few ties outside the district would explain how this happens. The traditional status quo of the district is maintained. But in instances where schools are changing leaders have many more experiences or weak ties with other principals outside the local district that promote the development of ideas and learning that compliment successful school change. Perpetuation Theory explains how systematic and sustained professional development training for principals from a variety of locations

across the state of Oklahoma can benefit from the training and build a learning community for principals. Oklahoma Principal's Academy provided leadership training where weak ties were formed by the principals in the context of a collaborative cohort. Implicit in this training is time, intimacy, emotional intensity and reciprocal service. This is accomplished through the bringing together of a diverse group of principals for a year to nurture and build effective leadership skills specifically for education.

Based on my study of Oklahoma Principal's Academy, I found a leadership preparation program that was supported by the four tiers of perpetuation Theory. Seeking to construct communities of relationships or ties using time, intimacy, emotional intensity and reciprocal service to create a positive atmosphere of growth and enrichment for school leaders. Framed by academy goals, supported by a foundation of relationships Oklahoma Principal's Academy created a network rich with opportunities for principals to extend and expand their practices and knowledge. While this is a fruitful training model, it also requires careful attention and investment on the part of the director and instructors.

Designed primarily by and for elementary principals this level of adm9inistrator benefited most by attending the academy. By studying the six goals of the academy opportunities to engage in personal and professional growth were presented. Research indicated a need for the following subjects to be studied:

- Creation of a vision for success and sharing it with all stakeholders---students, teachers, support staff, central office administrators, parents and patrons.
- Planning of time---daily, weekly, monthly, annual and long range.

- Effective written, verbal and nonverbal communication skills with special emphasis on listening.

- How to handle confrontations, which are initiated by the principal and those, which are directed at the principal.

- Teacher observations, sharing of information and follow up.

- Value of networking, including a confidant with whom the principal can share concerns.

- Maintain equanimity in the life. This will lead into the value of growth vocationally, physically, intellectually and spiritually. Concomitant to the above is stress management.

- Additional critical subjects are motivation, integrity, empowerment, earning trust, leveraging, team building and building a positive climate.

Bandura best captures the intent of the curriculum in a quote from the book *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. He states, "Effective persons produce their own future rather than simply foretell it."

When school principals attempted to assess their ability to function as a leader of a learning community, they generally created a simple dichotomy---the school either functioned successfully or it did not. The complex process of school improvement cannot, however, be reduced to such a simple "either/or" statement. It is more helpful to view the development of school along a continuum: Pre-initiation, Initiation, Developing, and Sustaining. Documenting and observing the reality of the teaching of the academy participants in their unique setting I was able to better understand this process and discover the value of creating a social network for principals to create change. While

most principals reported that the training was pleasant it was equally important to explore its usefulness. I discovered that principals could not just continue to do what they have done. They must alter and extend practices, and changes should be based upon building shared knowledge regarding best practice. The basic themes woven throughout this study provide practitioners with the conceptual framework to guide their journey. Perpetuation Theory provided a lens through which to examine the social networks of principals and qualitative methods allowed for insight, discovery, and interpretation (Merriam, 1988, p. 10).

Conclusions

The first lesson of qualitative research is to ask "why" and "how." It is easy to get lost in the how-to questions. For one thing, there is no clear answer to how to implement principal training. There are orientations and guidelines, but no definitive answer. The more I looked for specificity at the how-to level, the more I became aware of the weakness in self-reliance and the more blinded I became in my vision of education. As I pursued the how-to-get-there question, I had to first go back to why?

In most cases if principals look deep into their hearts. They do their jobs because of the kids. Sure, some principals look at the principalship as being able to provide financially for their families and others found it more appealing to work with adults and still others wanted professional advancement. But, most would still say they are interested most in helping all students learn.

To help all students learn, principals must be able to relate to a wide variety of people. A professor I had in undergraduate school said that education was about learning how to get along with people. At the time I did not understand his statement, but as I reflect on the statement it has more meaning. At each level of education I became responsible for influencing the lives of more people. As a student I was responsible for my own learning, as a teacher I was responsible for the learning of adolescent students in middle school assigned to my classroom, as a principal with I was assigned the responsibility of teachers, staff and students in a fourth, fifth and sixth grade building and now as a district administrator my family has expanded to the entire system of schools Pre-K through 12th grade. With the increased capacity also came additional responsibility. The ability to cope with the rapidly changing educational issues was a challenge. At each step along the way, I expanded my community and built new relationships. The ability to increase the capacity of an individual professionally is directly related to his/her socialization experiences within the context of a systematic and explicit learning environment.

To improve education we must have quality leadership at the helm. As one of the mentors at Principal's Academy said we need to get rid of the "hole drillers" those who are resistant to change and create a negative atmosphere for the growth and betterment of education, they continually cause the boat to be swamped or in some cases result in sinking the ship. Perhaps that is what is occurring as evidenced in the lack of highly qualified principals to take the job and the resistance of others to accept the responsibilities of the principalship. In the years to come NCLB will provide sanctions that will target ineffective leadership and provide a mechanism to rid the system of those

principals. But caution must be used here. There may be situations where the school

culture is so strong that it can overwhelm the elements of time and resources regardless

of strong leadership. In the meantime, some who can jump ship and those who cannot

choose not to serve unless they are passionate about the possibility of helping all students

learn. To assist in the transition, Oklahoma Principal's Academy is a way to put the wind

in the sails of those who wish to venture into the captains chair, by giving its participants

the map and crewmembers to help navigate the unpredictable sea to seek new land. The

Academy creates new contexts, expectations, and support for individuals to change their

ways and to find new ones within the system.

The Individual

How can socialization of principals help improve schools? I first revisit the nature

of the journey so that those ready to embark on it know what it entails and how to relate

to those around them. The most important thing to know is that relationships and ties

generate the wherewithal to go the extra mile. It makes a complex, difficult journey

worthwhile and doable. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) explain why:

> "Every day you must decide whether to put your contribution out there, or keep it
>
> to yourself to avoid upsetting anyone, and get through another day. You are right
>
> to be cautious. Prudence is a virtue. You disturb people when you take unpopular
>
> initiatives in your community, put provocative new ideas on the table in your
>
> organization, question the gap between colleagues' values and behavior, or ask
>
> friends and relatives to face up to tough realities. You risk people's ire and make

yourself vulnerable. Exercising leadership can get you into a lot of trouble....
Leadership is worth the risk because the goals extend beyond the material gain or
personal advancement. By making the lives of people around you better,
leadership provides meaning in life. It creates purpose." (pp. 2-3)

These days, doing nothing, as a leader is a great risk, so you might as well take
risks worth taking. At the individual level that means first to take action consistent with
your moral compass and second to push for and be responsible to system opportunities to
deepen and extend educational purpose.

On the first action of the individual, the principal must recognize the need for
relationships or ties. Over time relationship trust grows through the exchanges of
knowledge that can be put into action. Through intimacy conversation becomes more
personal, exploring the depth of problems. Emotional intensity is part of the edge of
success—learning to live with and work with tension is key to success. And reciprocal
service provides ties to support an ever-changing landscape. This type of trust
relationship will not evolve through mere invitation, good will, and expectation. It must
be actively developed and reinforced through a process like Oklahoma Principal's
Academy.

Going down the pathway of the principalship is very difficult to do, especially by
yourself. Powerful leaders often assume too much responsibility for success (Martin,
2002). Weak leaders are complacent, content with the status quo. Leaders have a special
responsibility to establish shared cultures or, new contexts. Martin (2002) concludes:

"With learning comes the enhancement of capabilities, not their decline. For each
of us, the greatest level of self-actualization comes from building our capabilities

steadily over time, but that requires submitting ourselves to a constant level of manageable stress. It also stems from coming to welcome, not resist, scrutiny of our performance by others. Stress guards against our under-responsibility and scrutiny discourages our potential over-responsibility." (p. 268-269)

Is this attainable for the average principal? Our most effective leaders are what Badaracco (2002) talks about as being solid and leading quietly. He refers to three quiet virtues: restraint, modesty, and tenacity. Hiefetz and Linsky (2002, p.226) identify three virtues of a "sacred heart"---innocence, curiosity, and capacity. And Collin's (2001) great leaders build greatness through a blend of personal humility and intense professional will.

The point I wish to make is that all leaders can move in this direction by becoming aware of the nature and importance of what is involved. All can take at least small steps toward these ends, gaining confidence and allies as they go. The current system makes it hard for principals. As in the case of Martin an elementary principal in rural Oklahoma who spent three years trying to convince his superintendent to attend Principal's Academy. It is incumbent that school principals respond to these initiatives and to push the envelope for altering district contexts. Half the responsibility, then, lies with the individual school principal. The other half is system action. It is time that the system rewarded and enhanced those already working to create the conditions under which all leaders will be expected and enabled to lead in powerful new ways.

The System

Current policies, structures, incentives, practices, and allocation of resources at the district, state and federal levels are just beginning to support leadership training to accomplish the needed change. As evidenced at the birth of the Academy the funds were private. Currently it is a combination of state and private funds. And for those schools that receive federal funding it is now imperative that a small portion of money be used for the development of human resources in the area of leadership. This combination of forces working together creates a stronger foundation for the need for competence and expanded capacity for principals. But currently these initiatives are fragmented and could impact the future of educational reform more quickly if they were systematically coordinated and integrated into the system.

With new directions and new contexts it requires both individual and system action. Individual initiative is required because we cannot wait for the system to get its act together. Or more accurately, the system will not move unless pushed by individuals. System action is necessary because as Linda Lambert (2003) said in her book *Leadership Capacity, for Lasting School Improvement,* "I used to believe that the school was the primary unit of educational change, and the literature repeatedly insists, that it is. However, I'm now persuaded that we can't save education one school at a time. Excellent schools in poor districts implode over time, whereas poor schools in excellent districts get better."

Next, this conclusion must include a look back at the research questions that guided this project.

1. *Describe the outcome of relationships and the "ties" that exist among*
   members of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy.

Principals participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy developed authentic relationships with each other, focused on a shared purpose where they worked effectively and efficiently together to solve problems and create a new form of synergy. This form of fellowship regenerated their energy. Many principals talked of feeling calmer, clearer, and less harried by internal conflict about the choices that they made. This synergy came from conversations, collegial work, and action; it was the by-product of true collegiality. This synergy was heightened during the extended periods of time spent together, such as the week in the summer and the four one-and-one-half day follow-up sessions. In anthropology, the concept of "liminality" (Lambert, 2003, p. 76) tells us that when we drop our assigned roles, usual dress, and expectations, as we do during retreats such as the academy, we get to know others and ourselves in new ways. Things are never quite the same again after we have had such experiences; we relate to each other in deeper and more authentic ways and listen to and appreciate others more. These encounters serve both as gifts to the community and to strengthen our sense of community. The power of vision, creating community, how to leverage oneself, and team building constitute the framework for synergy and personal growth both of which help us think about and experience time in a different way.

2. *Analyze the impact of Academy goals and resulting "ties" through the lens of*
   Perpetuation Theory.

Principals can be isolated and segregated from one another in schools. If they interact at all it is more often than not with peers within the same system of schools. Lack

of interaction between other principals outside the district inhibits the formation of weak ties between the groups that could aid and support school improvement and change. These findings indicate a tie between principals due to their socialization experiences at Oklahoma Principal's Academy that leads to the development of the goals of the Academy. According to Granovetter (1973, 1986) an individuals' social network is primarily characterized by strong ties. However, weak ties are those needed for transmission of information that is otherwise socially distant. Consequently, segregation of principals in their buildings limits the principals' ability to form ties that may provide occupational enhancement through critical links to educational wisdom. Connections provide pathways through prior interaction that lead to sources of information to bring about change and improvement within the principals school as he/she realigns policy and curriculum. Without interaction, there is a likelihood that the principals would continue to be segregated. The perpetuation of segregation may be intentional or unintentional, conscious or unconscious, but the result is the same: limited opportunities for principals and school improvement and change.

Business and other professions recognize the power in relationships and the commitment to quality networking can bring. Inadequate professional development for principals is recognized as a loss of human resource leadership capacity. Five to ten years after the original training, the survey showed that principals were continuing to improve on Academy goals. In other words, once they had learned how to improve they continued developing, new strengths on their own. That finding provides evidence that the goals can continue to be acquired.

Clearly, then, leaders can be made more effective---if they are offered the right tools for learning. Such learning however goes beyond the right tools. It is a process that is not necessarily linear and smooth; rather, it is a journey full of surprises and moments of epiphany.

3. Report other realities that may be revealed.

It seems that it is not merely socialization experiences that facilitate successful school improvement and change. Rather, it is relationships with weak ties that build a strong pyramid of support for the advancement of the profession. A triangle may represent the various stages of this relationship beginning with the element of time as its foundation. At first it takes a significant investment in time to create an atmosphere of trust. One of the things that set Oklahoma Principal's Academy apart from other leadership training academies is the amount of time participants are required to spend together. One week in the summer followed by five one-and-one-half days across the state at various sites of interest. Leaders were adamant about the necessity of staying together and not going home. Those that did leave voiced concern that they did not feel like they received the full benefit of the experience because they had not invested the time it took to bond deeply. Intimacy is the next step to providing the authentic way in which principals learn to communicate, then emotional intensity, learning how to disagree agreeably. And finally, the tip of the triangle is reciprocal service, the sharing and transfer of knowledge with sympathetic peers. The tip of the triangle is then connected to another inverted triangle to represent the interconnectedness of the profession and also the collaborative nature of the academy to sustain learning through the alumni association. The resulting shape resembles an hourglass. In similar situations

the hourglass is turned over so the sands of TIER Leadership are renewed. The sands of the hourglass will not flow through to the next situation in the exact order as before but the elements for adjusting to the change are the same. This model has the potential for expansion to various contexts and situations. It is cyclic as it is turned on end to adjust to the change and collaboration within each unique context. This process creates a fluid movement of TIER Leadership through weak ties.
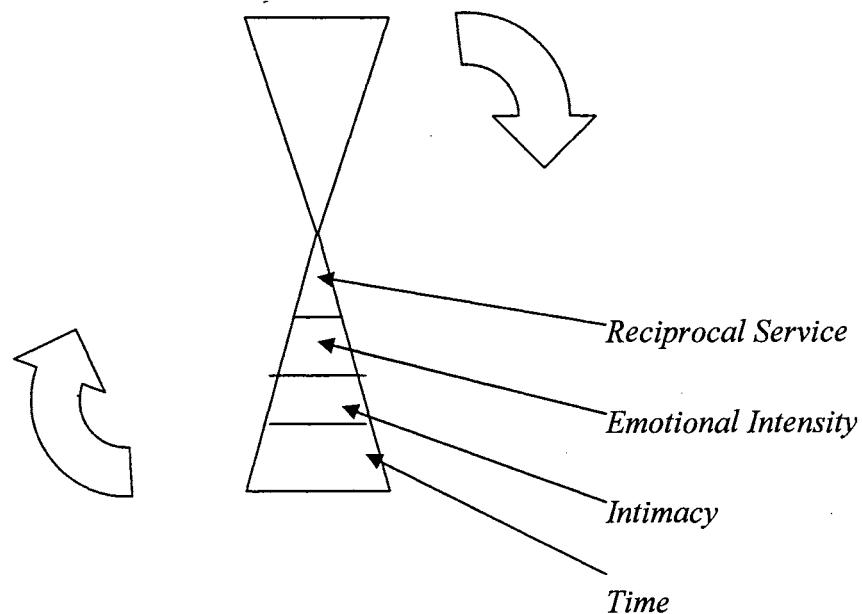
Figure 1. TIER Leadership.

4. Assess the usefulness of this lens for explaining this phenomenon.

Perpetuation Theory has proven to be a useful lens from which to view the socialization of principals. It roots in social science lend itself to the relationships and ties that were created as a result of the principals interactions. Logical correlations could be drawn upon to understand the network of ties and the influence they had on the transfer of knowledge and skills within the system.

The answers to these questions and all the insight gleaned from this study satisfy the needs for the purpose to this study, which was to explore the relationships among principals participating in the Oklahoma Principal's Academy and document the extent to which principals participating the Oklahoma Principal's Academy reach the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitate successful school improvement and change.

Recommendations for Practice

In airplanes we are told that in the case of an emergency, we should put on our own oxygen masks before helping children with theirs, because adults cannot help children unless they are breathing properly themselves. The same principle applies to schools. We need to create an environment where principals are encouraged and supported in their efforts to help others by establishing a thoughtful, focused, and collaborative program to build a pipeline for leadership. Based on my study of Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy, I recommend a leadership preparation program that promotes socialization through the development of ties or relationship for the purpose of improving schools and change.

Leadership capacity depends on understanding the connection between participation and skillfulness. It is like the spiraling expanding wire of a slinky. In this regard Ann Lieberman in the foreword to Linda Lambert's book *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement* (2003) writes:

Leadership is about contributing to, learning from and influencing the learning of others. It is also about creating the opportunities for others to learn—students as well as fellow educators. Connecting participation to skill and adult learning to student learning allows effective thinking about leadership and a vision of school culture that supports teachers. Teacher leadership augments principal leadership, enhances learning and creates greater capacity. Leadership is the process of releasing the energy, intelligence, and participation of the entire school community. Viewing leadership as primarily in the service of developing a healthy organization, we learn that learning and leading are intricately tied" (p. viii)

Reciprocity helps build relationships of mutual regard, thereby enabling principals to become co-learners. And as co-learners principals are also co-teachers, engaging others in teaching and learning approaches. As principals we must attend not only to the learning of our teachers and students but also to our own and to that of the community around us. When we do this, we are on the road to achieving collective responsibility for the school and becoming a community of learners.

The principalship is broad-based skillful participation in the work of leadership.

- The Power of Vision resulting in program coherence
- Creating Community to function as a professional learning community
- Creating Synergy to empower the use of energies to produce extraordinary results
- How to Leverage Oneself to model self-mastery
- Team Building to work collaboratively

- Personal Growth to develop professional capacity

The more people who work collaboratively and are able to experience their profession outside the school---through networks, conferences, professional organizations, academies, etc. ---the broader their scope of responsibility becomes. Networks provide an extended learning community in which to develop professional self-concept. In a state network like Oklahoma Principal's Academy the individuals see themselves as part of a broader profession and are listened to with an intensity and respect that may not exist in their schools; hearing and seeing how others think and interact allow them to fine-tune their perceptions of their own roles. By developing new weak ties principals are better able to gain new vision, to see outside the box. But, realigning principal actions to a new belief system requires that principals be clear about their own core values and confident in their own capacity to work well with others by influencing, facilitating, guiding and mentoring.

Goleman (1995) suggests that one of the critical elements of a healthy leadership perspective is emotional intelligence. The emotionally intelligent principal is self-motivating and empathic, persists toward the goal of educating all children, manages his/her emotions and stress so as not to lose sight of core values and commitments, and perhaps most importantly, holds on tightly to hope. These individuals are able to create organizational climates of trust, information sharing, healthy risk-taking, and learning. They are open, collaborative, and clear about what is important---student learning---and how to work with others to achieve it.

Recommendations for Research

Considerable research and writing has focused on the role of relationships in the business world. Oklahoma Principal's Academy was the brainchild of a businessman and the teachings of the business world that he felt could enhance education. However, by comparison, very little has been written about this phenomenon at work in schools in relationship to leadership. Additional case studies that seek to apply Perpetuation Theory need to be explored.

The variables of intimacy, emotional intensity and reciprocal service are fluid and will take different forms in different contexts over time. There is a need for future research addressing the importance of context using the TIER Leadership model.

As I studied the pages of leadership, school improvement and change authors I discovered that often one study lead to another. I recognized in the writings of people such as Fullan and Lambert how one study led to another. It was also interesting to see how many ideas seemed to overlap or be parallel to other author's findings. Many times different words were used to say similar things.

If I were to suggest a follow-up study it would be a comparison of Oklahoma Principal's Academy to CCOSA Principal's Leadership Training. Susan one of the Principals in Class X eluded to the similarities and differences between the two since she had attend both. Such information could be valuable to perspective participants. I am currently enrolled in the CCOSA training and have yet to experience the same degree of bonding between members of the group. It is also noteworthy that at least two other participants in my CCOSA Principal Training class were also participants in Oklahoma Principal's

Academy. CCOSA itself is a strong leadership organization within the state and provides valuable information and professional development for educators. While I thoroughly enjoyed the research I conducted for this work, I think a follow-up piece comparing the two approaches would make a fine sequel.

Interpretations

In this final interpretative phase I report as Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest, the "lessons learned" from the case. Some of the challenges inherent in qualitative case study development that I encountered were as follows:

- First the actual defining of the problem to be studied was impacted dramatically as a result of some penetrating and thoughtful experienced guidance from my dissertation committee. The resulting problem that I employed encompassed the goals of the Academy, more clearly reflecting my vision of what the case is and what would be explored.

- As a participant observer, I was immersed in the day-to-day lives of the people during the training and again through one-on-one interviews with members of the group one year after the completion of the training (Creswell, 1998 p. 58). Participant observation offered possibilities for me on a continuum from being a complete outsider to being a complete insider (Jorgensen, 1989). The approach of changing roles from that of an outsider to an insider through the course of the study is well documented in field research (Jorgensen, 1989; Wolcott, 1994). The value added from this perspective was

associated with the opportunity to get closer to people in the study and share a common experience. This enhanced my insight into interpersonal behaviors and motivations, and built relationships. Since this study was based on ties I felt participant observation served this case well. Considerable caution was taken during the interview and observation to guard against disclosing my personal feelings, values or opinions. This was an ethical decision subjectively based on my careful analysis and weighing of the possible consequences.

- Case study is concerned with how things happen and why (Anderson, 1998 p. 153). It accommodates varied perspectives of those involved, which provides relevance. Critical questions, which can be summarized in an issues and questions matrix, provide valuable information. The questions asked of specific individuals when they were interviewed or when they filled out questionnaires should reflect the major themes and how they relate to things and why. As a novice researcher I have come to appreciate the importance and value of good questions. The weakness of the research questions lies primarily in the inexperience of the researcher.

- Merging two approaches to analyzing the data, required considerable time and effort. The first, using a qualitative research approach, I organized the data into descriptive themes that emerged during the data collection and preliminary analysis. Second, using analytical strategy, I took the literature and theoretical background of the case and used it as an organizational framework. I had no limitations of previous habits in this regard, and my determination to do it the right way probably resulted in an ethical and

thorough process. However, my inexperience may have resulted in less logical coding and awareness of emerging themes or patterns, and creativity.

- The choice about what to include, and, of equal importance, what not to include was a major decision. A great deal of the multiple source of evidence had to be organized, reduced and only the most salient, descriptive examples reported. I ended up organizing the data into the various goals of the Academy using the themes suggested by the participants in a way that used the verbatim comments of the principals of Class X to describe the outcomes of relationships and the ties that existed among member of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. Incorporating multiple data sources, triangulation, allowed me to point the analysis toward a clear conclusion based on the evidence collected. The chain-of-evidence provided a single and interconnected path to the conclusion, providing internal validity. The extent of generalizability or external validity of this case study is limited. My main emphasis was on understanding.

- Perpetuation Theory served as an ideal lens in which to view the phenomenon of relationships or ties. Admittedly shaky with the idea at first, I did a lot of reading throughout the research to help me better understand the ideas of Granovetter (1973) Wells and Crain (1994). It was definitely a work in progress.

Implications

As public schools increasingly come under attack from all segments of society and as the demands mount on principals in the public schools, the area of principal training will become increasingly more common. In education, as in most fields, research will provide a useful tool. It has the potential to change thinking, practices, and lives. The impact of this case study is uncertain. However, there is a least one educator who was impacted irreversibly by the journey.

For years now, I have read, studied, reflected, questioned, dialogued and written about relationships. As a student completing 16 hours above my masters to qualify for my elementary and secondary administrative certificate I happened upon a professor whose wife had investigated the possibility of seeking her doctorate. With the name of my advisor in my pocket I to explored the possibility. I was told that OSU wanted to embark on a new concept of a doctoral cohort in Oklahoma City. If at least ten people would commit to the group we could proceed. I recruited a few, others heard about the program and the OSU-OKC doctorial cohort was born. And what a wonderful experience it was. Like the Oklahoma Principal's Academy the cohort became a close-knit group who shared years of time, intimacy, emotional intensity and reciprocal services. As a result, it was no wonder that I chose for my research a case study exploring the socialization experiences that facilitate successful improvement and change.

As a result, I have changed, omitted, and improved many of my practices. My actions are now informed with a greater sense of purpose as a result. Now, with a clearer vision, I have additional tools to help me construct meaning from my own learning

community and deal with the complexities of situations. Becoming is just that, it is not arriving; it is a lifetime quest.

And finally, the last responsibility of a leader is to say "thank you."

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Appendix A

Oral Solicitation

My name is Vickie Williams and I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. I am writing a dissertation to explore the relationships among principals participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy and document the extent to which principals participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy reach the Academy's goals through socialization experiences that facilitate successful school change and improvement. This research will present a picture of how this process is perceived by the participants and the researcher.

I need your help to document how this process is perceived. I want to be as accurate as possible and include as many viewpoints as possible.

Each participant in Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy will be asked to engage in an interview session and possibly a follow-up interview. All interviews will be tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. Pseudonyms will be used after transcription to protect the identity of the interviewee. I, as researcher, will have the only copy of the real names with the pseudonyms. Your identity will be protected with complete anonymity. You do not have to answer any question that you choose not to answer. You may also stop the interview at any time.

Class I, Class V, and Class X of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy will be asked to complete demographic information and a survey. Response will be made by e-mail. The information gathered will give a more helpful view of the development of curriculum used by Oklahoma Principal's Academy for change and school improvement.

I am available to meet with Class X participants at your convenience. Please provide me with a time and date that is most convenient for you. I will give you an information sheet with my home phone, address and e-mail. Feel free to contact me for any additional information. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Appendix B

Consent Forms

<u>Consent Form for Interview Respondents</u>

I, _____, hereby authorize or direct Vickie Williams, to perform the following treatment or procedure:

Procedure-The individual indicated would be interviewed about the extent to which principals participating in Oklahoma Principal's Academy, have socialization experiences that facilitate successful school change and improvement. The individual has the right to choose not to answer any question at any time during the interview. After the interview has been transcribed, the interviewee has the right to examine the transcription to make any clarification, if they so choose. The responses, in conjunction with the documents, will be used to present the perceptions of the participants.

Duration-The interviewee will determine the length of the interview. Most interviews should last not more than one hour.

Confidentiality-Pseudonyms will be used in the final document. Only the researcher will have access to the actual names of the participants. Tape-recorded interviews will be transcribed. Any information deemed unacceptable by the interviewee for permanent documentation will be omitted.

Possible Benefits-New and qualified principals are needed in our schools today. Research concerning the participants in Oklahoma Principal's Academy, could provide invaluable information for principal preparation and school reform.

This is done as part of an investigation entitled "Oklahoma Principal's Academy". The purpose is to use a qualitative method of gaining information regarding the perception of the above respondents to gain a clearer understanding of this phenomenon.

I understand that participation is voluntary; that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying the project director. The signature of the principal on this form grants permission to interview/observe the participant in their school. I may contact Vickie Williams, 601 East Oak Place, Edmond, OK 73003 (405-341-4994) e-mail vbethwilliams@msn.com, Adrienne Hyle, 106 Willard Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405-744-9893) or the IRB Executive Secretary, 415 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405-744-5700).

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been provided for me.

Date:_____Time:_____(a.m./p.m.)

Signed:_____

I certify that I have personally included all elements in this form for the subject to read before requesting the subject sign.

Signed: _____ Vickie Williams, Project Director/Researcher

<u>Consent Form for Survey Respondents</u>

I, _____, hereby authorize or direct Vickie Williams, to perform the following treatment or procedure:

Procedure-The individual indicated would complete a survey and demographic form linked to the implementation of the goals of the Oklahoma Principal's Academy. The individual has the right to choose not to answer any question. The responses, in conjunction with the documents, will be used to present the perceptions of the participants.

Duration- Approximately 30 minutes, no more than one hour.

Confidentiality-Pseudonyms will be used in the final document. Only the researcher will have access to the actual names of the participants.

Possible Benefits-New and qualified principals are needed in our schools today. Research concerning the participants in Oklahoma Principal's Academy could provide invaluable information for principal preparation and school reform.

This is done as part of an investigation entitled "Oklahoma Principal's Academy." The purpose is to use a qualitative method of gaining information regarding the perception of the above respondents to gain a clearer understanding of this phenomenon.

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I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been provided for me.

Date: _____ Time: _____(a.m./p.m.)

Signed: _____
I certify that I have personally included all elements in this form for the subject to read before requesting the subject sign.

Signed: _____Project Director/Researcher

Appendix C

Demographic Information

Name _____   School Phone _____

School Site _____   School Address _____

E-Mail Address _____

District Name _____   Type of School: Urban   Suburban   Rural
                                                          (Circle One)

Number of students at school site _____   Number of students in district _____

Grade levels at school site _____   Title I School: Yes   No (Circle One)

Percentage of Free & Reduced Lunch _____

Percentage of Minority Students: Native American _____
                                     African American _____
                                     Asian   _____
                                     Hispanic   _____
                                     Caucasian   _____
                                     Other   _____

Number of years as a teacher _____   Number of years as an administrator _____

Bachelor's Degree: _____
                   (Name of College/University)   (Major)

Master's Degree: _____
                   (Name of College/University)   (Major)

Doctorate Degree: _____
                   (Name of College/University)   (Major)

Ethnicity _____

Professional Certification _____

Professional Experience _____

Professional Organizations _____

Appendix D

Survey

The Oklahoma Principal's Academy focuses its experience and learning around six principles: the power of vision, creating community, creating synergy, how to leverage oneself, team building, and personal growth. Please assess your position or the position of your school on each area of the continuum. Identify examples and illustrations to support your placement.

The Power of Vision

Pre-initiation
Staff members have not yet articulated the attitudes, behaviors, or commitments they are prepared to demonstrate in order to advance their mission and the vision of what the school might become. If they discuss school improvement, they focus on what *other* groups must do.

Initiation
Staff members have articulated statements of beliefs or philosophy for your school; however, these value statements have not yet impacted their day-to-day work or the operation of the school.

Developing
Staff members have made a conscious effort to articulate and promote the attitudes, behaviors, and commitments that will advance their vision of the school. Examples of the core values at work are shared in stories and celebrations.

Sustaining
Values of the school are embedded in the school culture. These shared values are evident to new staff and to those outside of the school. They influence policies, procedures, and daily practices of the school as well as day-to-day decisions of individual staff members.

Examples or illustrations to support your placement of the power of vision:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Creating Community

Pre-initiation
The school vision is a mandate without meaning. Stakeholders feel discounted and marginalized. There is a lack of understanding and commitment from those whose support is needed most. No effort has been made in setting and defining school improvement goals. If goals exist, they have been developed by the administration.

There is little or no effort made to cultivate partnerships with parents and community.

Initiation

Stakeholders have participated in a process to establish goals, but the goals are typically stated so broadly that they are impossible to measure. Teachers recognize a common curriculum that they are responsible for teaching, but there is little exchange of ideas regarding instructional material, teaching strategies, or methods of assessment. An effort is made to keep parents and community informed of events and situations at school in order to secure support for the school's efforts.

Developing

Staff members have worked together to establish long and short-term goals for school improvement. The goals are clearly communicated. Assessment tools and strategies have been developed and implemented to measure progress toward the goals. Administrators solicit and value teacher input as improvement initiatives are developed and considered. Administrators are regarded as having primary responsibility for creating community.

Sustaining

The school functions as a professional learning community and is characterized by a collaborative culture. Stakeholders work together to identify collective goals, develop strategies to achieve those goals, gather relevant data, and learn from one another. Goals are clearly linked to the school's shared vision. School improvement is viewed as a collective responsibility. The school provides parents with information and materials that enable parents to assist their children in learning. Community resources are used to strengthen school and student learning.

Examples or illustrations to support your placement for creating community:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Creating Synergy

Pre-initiation

The principal tells, directs, and orders. Employees listen, take direction, and follow orders. The principal is responsible for the performance of the school. Problems are either solved by the principal or not at all. Teachers work in isolation. There is little awareness of what or how colleagues are teaching.

Initiation

The principal recognizes individual contribution and celebrates accomplishments. There are visible signs of encouragement. The

principal provides structure and information, facilitates meetings, teaches, coaches, and guides. There is a desire to make something happen, to change the way things are, to create something new.

Developing   The principal enables others to act by fostering collaboration and strengthening others. The principal breathes life into what are the hopes and dreams of others and enables them to see the exciting possibilities that the future holds. The principal gets others to buy into their dreams by showing how all will be served by a common purpose. Genuine acts of caring draw people forward. Employees assume increased responsibility for monitoring and controlling their own behavior.

Sustaining   The school family as a whole is responsible for the performance of the school. The principal enables others to act. People feel empowered and they use their energies to produce extraordinary results. Synergy leads to teamwork, team building, unity, and harmony.

Examples or illustrations to support you placement for creating synergy:

_____

_____

_____

_____

How to Leverage Oneself

Pre-initiation   Urgency is the dominant factor in the principal's life. The principal does not have time for what is important because he/she is too busy.

Initiation   The principal practices habits of personal vision. The principal is proactive beginning with the end in mind. The principal chooses his/her own responses and choices are guided by values. The principal accepts responsibility for who they are, what they have, and what they do.

Developing   The principal practices the habits that lead to public victories, the victories that allow the achievement of success with people. The principal looks for alternatives that allow everyone to win. The principal seeks first to understand using an attitude and a skill of listening deeply for complete understanding. The principal discovers a creativity in others that allows them to experience and explore their differences together using synergy.

Sustaining　　　　　The principal models self-mastery through the development of personal character, the foundation of effectiveness. The principal maintains personal production capability by sharpening the saw in four areas—physical, mental, spiritual and social-emotional.

Examples or illustrations to support your position on how to leverage oneself:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Team Building

Pre-initiation　　　There is little or no effort to cultivate team building. Teachers and principal work in isolation. There is little awareness of what or how colleagues are teaching or working. Questions of power are a continuing source of controversy and friction. Relationships are often adversarial.

Initiation　　　　　An effort is made to facilitate the exchange of ideas regarding instructional materials, teaching strategies, or methods of assessment. Teachers and principal are both protective of intrusion onto their turf.

Developing　　　　　Teachers function in work groups that meet periodically to complete certain tasks such as reviewing intended outcomes and coordinating calendars. The principal solicits and values collaborative teamwork.

Sustaining　　　　　Teachers function as a team. They work collaboratively to identify collective goals, develop strategies to achieve those goals, gather relevant data, and learn from one another. Teamwork is characterized by common goals and interdependent efforts to achieve those goals.

Examples or illustrations to support your position for team building:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Personal Growth

Pre-initiation   Little attention is devoted to creating systems that enables either the school or individual to grow and improve. Management of the status quo is characteristic. Little internal or external support for the goals of the school exists. There is limited communication. There is no incentive for top performance and little accountability.

Initiation   A few people in the school are attending workshops, seminars, conventions and classes to enhance personal growth. An effort to provide resources has been made, but the effort has not begun to impact the school culture.

Developing   Principal and staff are beginning to modify their thinking and practice as they attempt to implement school improvement. Structural changes are being made to align with the vision and goals of the school. Personal growth is nurtured and supported by the principal.

Sustaining   Everyone in the school participates in an ongoing cycle of systematic personal growth. It is deeply imbedded in the school's culture and it represents a driving force in the daily work of the school. Colleagues help each other develop their professional capacity and promote learning through celebration.

Examples or illustrations to support you position for personal growth:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time.
Please return your response by e-mail to vwilliams@Guthrie.k12.ok.us

Appendix E

Institutional Review Board Approval

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: **4/17/2004**

Date: Friday, April 18, 2003   IRB Application No   ED0381

Proposal Title: OKLAHOMA PRINCIPAL'S ACADEMY

Principal
Investigator(s):

Vickie Beth Williams   Adrienne Hyle
601 East Oak Place   314 Willard Hall
Edmond, OK 73003   Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Appendix F

Interview Questions

1. How did you decide you wanted to become a principal?

2. What type of background preparation did you have to become a principal?

3. Why did you choose Oklahoma Principal's Academy?

4. How would you describe your Oklahoma Principal's Academy experience? What have you experienced which you did not have the tools to respond to prior to your training? How will the Oklahoma Principal's Academy experience impact you in the future?

5. How has the training offered through Oklahoma Principal's Academy been used in your practice? What specific tools have you used from what was taught in the academy?

6. How much do you socialize or interact with principals outside of your district?

7. How do you solve problems?

8. Whom do you consult when you have a problem or are seeking ideas? Do other leaders seek you for ideas or advice?

9. How has the amount of time and preparation for your job as principal changed?

10. What else would you like for me to know about your Oklahoma Principal's Academy experience?

Appendix G

Survey Results

The Power of Vision	Pre-initiation	Initiation	Developing	Sustaining
Class I	0	0	4	5
Class V	1	0	6	10
Class X	0	1	3	3

Creating Community	Pre-initiation	Initiation	Developing	Sustaining
Class I	0	2	2	3
Class V	1	2	6	6
Class X	0	2	4	1

Creating Synergy	Pre-initiation	Initiation	Developing	Sustaining
Class I	0	0	4	3
Class V	1	3	6	5
Class X	0	3	3	1

How to Leverage Oneself	Pre-initiation	Initiation	Developing	Sustaining
Class I	0	0	3	4
Class V	1	1	6	7
Class X	0	1	1	4

Team Building	Pre-initiation	Initiation	Developing	Sustaining
Class I	0	2	2	3
Class V	1	3	4	7
Class X	1	2	1	2

Personal Growth	Pre-initiation	Initiation	Developing	Sustaining
Class I	0	0	1	6
Class V	1	2	5	7
Class X	1	2	3	1

VITA 2

Vickie Beth Williams

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: A CASE STUDY OF THE OKLAHOMA PRINCIPAL'S ACADEMY

Major Field: Higher Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Enid, Oklahoma, On January 2, 1953, the daughter of Charles and Dorcie Williams.

Education: Graduated from Fairview High School, Fairview, Oklahoma in May of 1971; received Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in May of 1975; received Master of Education in Secondary Education from University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma in 1978. Completed the requirements for the Education Doctorate degree with a major in Higher Education Administration/School Administration at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December 2003.

Experience: Worked as a classroom teacher (1975-2000); coached swimming and diving (1976-1979) at Edmond Public Schools, Edmond, Oklahoma. Received certification as Elementary Principal and Secondary Principal respectively in 1999; and Superintendent certification in 2003. Worked as an assistant principal at Guthrie Upper Elementary School (200-2003), Guthrie, Oklahoma, then as Director of Federal Programs/Curriculum at Guthrie from July 2003 to present.

Professional Memberships: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Oklahoma Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Staff Development Council, Staff Development Council of Oklahoma, Cooperative Council for Oklahoma School Administration, National Association of Elementary School Principals, Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Principals, and Delta Kappa Gamma.