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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTERNALLY MANDATED CHANGE

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By
MERRIE SUSAN FOOTE
Norman, Oklahoma
2001

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PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP
IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTERNALLY MANDATED CHANGE

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
AND POLICY STUDIES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this arduous task has brought with it a sense of renewal in my belief that we are all teachers who seek to guide others toward success.

I wish to offer my undying gratitude to the members of my committee. Pamela Fry, my chairperson, who made herself available at any time to assist, advise and refine this endeavor, deserves my thanks and appreciation. Michael Langenbach served me well as the committee member who enabled me to see light at the end of my tunnel. In addition, his expertise in editing and giving advice cannot go without mention. Jeffrey Maiden's steady commitment to the task of enabling this student to achieve a successful completion was always heartwarming and encouraging. Jayne Fleener was my "outside" committee member who quickly became an "insider" as she encouraged me through her professionalism and friendly nature. Gregg Garn came on board in the final stages of this process and saw it through to fruition. I thank you all.

.The invaluable assistance of Sally Zepeda cannot go unmentioned. She served on my committee right up until the end when she was forced to step down due to the regulations of the Graduate College. Since her leaving the University of Oklahoma, many students have missed her expertise and student advocacy. OU's loss is the University of Georgia's gain. Her signature may not be a part of this student's dissertation, but her encouragement, assistance, and belief in my work is woven throughout the pages. She is the quintessential student advocate, professional educator, and caring mentor.

This journey has been long and the demands have been great. Throughout the journey, my husband, Clifton Foote, pushed, harassed, encouraged, and loved me. He has stood by me through thick and thin with patience and confidence. He believed in me. He has been my partner, my friend, and my constant source of strength. Thank you.

Lastly, I dedicate this endeavor to my children, Lisa and Michael. I hope they understand that it's never too late to follow your dreams and realize your aspirations. They constantly teach me the meaning of love and support. They are my true legacy and hope for the future.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the work and experiences of three elementary school principals (grades K-3) who have implemented the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). By examining the work of principals in implementing externally mandated change, the study helped clarify the leadership of the principal, who, according to the language of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the site plan.

This study sought to understand the experiences of three elementary school principals who worked with teachers to implement the state-mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). A phenomenological research design allowed the researcher to study three elementary school principals whose leadership with teachers assisted in implementing state-mandated school reform. This is the phenomenon that the researcher sought to better understand.

The form of participant selection known as non-probability, purposive sampling was used. Initially, each participant was selected based on methods of reputational and network sampling. The elementary principals were described by others in the field as "good at what they do," indicating that there was a level of recognition of effectiveness in the person. Criteria for selection included being the principal of an elementary school that included kindergarten through grade three. Participants must have been principals during the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

While each of the three participants in this study was unique and expressed her own perspective of the experience in implementing the externally mandated change

inherent in the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), there were striking similarities as well as differences among the three principals. After examining their philosophies of leadership, their need to foster collegiality and collaboration, their willingness to support staff development to promote construction of knowledge, and the necessity of dealing with externally mandated change, it was found that all three principals' leadership tactics were, in essence, successful in implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the work and experiences of three elementary school principals (grades 1-3) who have implemented the provisions of an externally mandated change, specifically the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). The knowledge discovered through this study might assist other principals and district-level administrators in Oklahoma who are implementing externally mandated initiatives. Although this study was focused on leadership and not policy implementation, in examining the work of principals in implementing extemally mandated change, it was hoped to be able to clarify the work of the principal. The principal, according to the language of the Oklahoma Sufficiency Act (1998), is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the site plan.

The Work of Principals

The work of principals in the age of accountability and high stakes expectations for student achievement will more than likely continue, yet "the role of the principal has become dramatically more complex, overloaded, and unclear ... " (Fullan, 1991, p. 144). The early literature concerning the importance of the instructional leadership of the principal pointed to certain leadership qualities and characteristics of effective principals (Berlin, Kavanagh, & Jensen, 1988; Flath, 1989; Fullan, 1991; McNally, 1992; Stronge, 1993).

More recent literature on the principal has purported that improved education for children requires improved instructional leadership (Blase & Blase, 1999a; Calabrese &

Zepeda, 1997; Hallinger, 1992; Zepeda, 1999). However, principals encounter difficulties in focusing their attention to the academic program due to the hectic and fast-paced nature of their workday. Stronge (1993) calculated that approximately 62.2% of the elementary principal's time focused on school management issues, whereas only 6.2% of their time focused on program issues. Moreover, Stronge indicated that "a typical principal performs an enormous number of tasks each day - but only 11% relate to instructional leadership" (p. 32).

Although daily managerial tasks must be accomplished, the provisions of state mandated legislation, as well as federally mandated legislation, requiring the implementation of specific provisions to increase student learning, cannot be ignored by the principal. As such, this study sought to explore what elementary school principals do to provide the leadership needed to implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). In order to uncover the perspectives of select elementary school principals in Oklahoma, a qualitative approach was utilized. Specifically, a phenomenological approach was employed as the researcher sought to understand the perspectives from the point-of-view of the principals who participated in this study. Although the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) call for the involvement of numerous stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents, central office administrators, and members of the wider school community), this study sought to understand more fully what principals do and experience from their points of view.

As instructional leader, the principal is the pivotal point within the school who affects the quality of individual teacher instruction, achievement of students, and the degree of efficiency in school functioning. Findley and Findley (1992) asserted, "... the

task of the principal must be to keep focused on activities which pave the way for student achievement" (p. 102).

Societal Challenges and School Reform

Schools, regarded by some as an equalizing institution in American society, often magnify differences among children (e.g., social, cultural, economic). "Public schools as organizations were never designed to teach all students, especially the children of the poor, to a high level of achievement" (Lezotte, 1994). Differences in equity can be found both in the opportunity children are provided and in the outcomes they achieve in school (Samuels & Pearson, 1988). For example, many children from lower socio-economic homes start off at a disadvantage, with less access to prenatal and early health care, day care, early childhood programs, and other supports more readily available to children from middle-class homes. Payne, 1995, stated that, "regardless of race or ethnicity, poor children are much more likely than nonpoor children to suffer developmental delay and damage..." (p. 37).

Linda Darling-Hammond (1997) wrote, "Setting standards may send signals about the learning that is valued by society, but it will not create the conditions for learning where they do not already exist" (p. 261). Further, she stated, "If academic outcomes are to change for the disadvantaged, aggressive action must be taken to change the caliber of learning opportunities students encounter" (p. 277). This concept was a basic tenet inherent in the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act when it called for additional reading instruction that might take place outside of the regular school day using techniques that were to directly address the learning problems that the students demonstrated.

A prevailing thought by some is that students are not learning to read. The book that helped to promote this thinking was *Why Johnny Can't Read* and then its sequel, *Why Johnny Still Can't Read* (Flesch, 1955, 1981). In 1994, *Goals 2000, the Educate America Act* was passed by Congress. The first goal of the *Act* deals with readiness to learn: *By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn* (National Education Goals Panel, 1994, p. 2, emphasis in the original).

Schools often feel the pressure to reform curriculum due to high stakes mandates for improved standardized test scores (Tucker & Codding, 1998). Darling-Hammond speculated, "Focusing on testing without investing in organizational learning is rather like taking a patient's temperature over and over again without taking the necessary steps to promote greater health" (p. 241). At the site level, school personnel are responsible for developing curriculum (Glatthorn, 1997) that reflects standards across the curriculum—reading, math, and English. While at the same time, schools, by default, are faced with meeting the more immediate survival needs of children (e.g., hunger, health, and safety); and the principal, regardless of leadership style, is held accountable for the overall performance of the school. The effective schooling literature has firmly established that strong leadership by the principal is essential to a successful and innovative school (Hoerr, 1996). Hoerr (1996) reported:

> The role of the principal has become increasingly complex as society has made ever-greater demands on the schools. Today there are breakfasts to provide and after-school programs to oversee ... [and] special instructional programs to coordinate for students at both ends of the spectrum. (p. 380)

In a 1998 report by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),

the socio-economic differences of children and their reading at grade four was reported: "the average reading score for White students was higher than that for Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students" (Donahue, Voelki, Campbell, & Mazzeo, 1999).

Moreover, findings from a 1998 study of reading scores of central U.S. fourth-grade students showed a strong correlation between poverty and poor reading scores: "students who were eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch program had lower than average reading scores than students who were not eligible for the program" (Donahue, et al., 1999). Kozol (1991) believed that the effects of inequality are profound and long lasting:

> I look into the faces of these children. At this moment they seem full of hope and innocence and expectation. The little girls have tiny voices and they squirm about on little chairs and lean forward with their elbows on the table and their noses just above the table's surface and make faces at each other and seem mischievous and wise and beautiful. Two years from now, in junior high, there may be more toughness in their eyes, a look of lessened expectations and increasing cynicism. By the time they are 14, certain rawness and vulgarity sometimes sets in. Many will be hostile and embittered by that time. Others may coarsen partly the result of diet, partly self-neglect and self-dislike. Visitors who meet such girls in elementary school feel tenderness; by junior high, they feel more pity or alarm. (p. 182)

A school principal's success and ultimately his/her competence are based on how well he/she can shape the culture of the school community. If he/she can identify the

existing school culture and lead it to higher levels of achievement, he/she will be successful. The work will be an act of competence (Calabrese, 2000). Leadership competence is different from managerial competence. Dubrin says, "Broadly speaking, leadership deals with the interpersonal aspects of a manager's job, whereas planning, organizing, and controlling deal with the administrative aspects. . .leadership deals with change, inspiration, motivation, and influence" (p. 3). The purpose of this study was to gain insight and understanding into how three elementary principals view leadership narrowly focused on a mandated state policy entitled, the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Background

Often, the amount of money spent on education is strongly influenced by local property values. As a result, children who live in low-wealth inner cities or rural areas are likely to receive much less in per-pupil funding than are children in wealthier suburbs (Slavin, 1998). State appropriations to common education in the 1990s have provided much-needed funds to support public schools and their students. However, because many other states have invested more money than the state of Oklahoma, in 1997, Oklahoma fell to 48th in terms of financial support of school spending per student. However, the National Center for Education Statistics reported in January, 2001 that Oklahoma had risen to 41st in the nation including the District of Columbia and fifth in a region including the seven contiguous states (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Nonetheless, schools have been able to accomplish much—lowering class sizes, implementing uniform accreditation standards, and holding higher expectations and academic standards for students—to name a few.

Schools have been pressured into creating programs as a possible way to help decrease the equity gap in academics for disadvantaged and minority students (Goals 2000; Kozol, 1991; Lezotte, 1994; Slavin, 1998; Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999). Merely increasing programs is not a panacea for addressing inequalities, however. It is doubtful that schools will ever be able to eradicate the inequalities with which children enter the schoolhouse. Perhaps a missing equation in special programs is the direct involvement of school administrators (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999). What leadership beliefs and qualities exhibited by school principals effectively impact and motivate teachers who, in turn, must impact and motivate student learning? The leadership role to implement mandated programs for the improvement of student learning is worthy of study.

At the beginning of the 1998-99 school year, 627,353 K-12 students entered public schools with approximately 22% of the third graders reading below grade average in the state of Oklahoma (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1999). Is it realistic to expect reading instruction, pullout remediation in reading, and after school programs to narrow the reading abilities of non-majority students to their majority counterparts? This is a troubling question because we supposedly teach children how to read, but many are reading two and three years below grade level, far below their potential (National Research Council, 1998), leading to long-term and deleterious effects (Kozol, 1991).

Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Sandy Garrett, reported statistics that give evidence of a sobering percentage of children in Oklahoma who encounter difficulty

in reading (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1999). According to the publication, *Investing in Oklahoma: The Progress of Education Reform,* on an average fall day during the 1998-99 school year in Oklahoma:

- 627,353 children attended Oklahoma's public schools;
- about 71,000 of them were served in special education classes,
- nearly 32,000 were identified locally as speaking a language other than English
- more than 13,300 were served in alternative education programs,
- one in four Oklahoma children lived in poverty, and,
- 46 percent qualified for free and reduced-price meals. (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1999)

According to this same report, at the conclusion of the 1997-98 school year, third graders' overall or composite scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) were at the 64th percentile. Reading scores, however, were at the 51st percentile (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1999). Considering that nearly one-quarter of Oklahoma children live in poverty and a similar percentage of adults have not completed high school, Oklahoma's investment in public schools is more important than ever (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1999).

Providing remedial or special education services after children have already failed appears, on an intuitive level, counterproductive. Prevention and early intervention make more sense than remediation and special services after the fact (Slavin, 1996). According to research compiled by the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children in 1999, between a third and a half of students' academic time during the

first six years of schooling is spent on reading, spelling, and language arts, all of which are aimed at developing literacy.

Despite the efforts of a large corps of teachers and the mounting pressure from the public (both directly and as reflected in legislative and governmental agencies), after more than a decade of instruction, many youngsters leave school unable to read fluently and with insufficient understanding to meet the literacy demands of modern society (Hirsch, 1988; Pearson, Fielding, & Salch, 1996). These deficiencies are not always evident. The basic skills as measured by standardized tests show signs of improvement on a yearly basis. The problem arises at the upper levels of performance. Higher level skills such as comprehension bump along at an undesirably low level and often decline over time (Reid, Baker, & Lasell, 1993).

House Bill 2878 (Oklahoma)

The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act of 1998 was enacted to ensure that each child attains the necessary reading skills by the end of the third grade. The responsibility to interpret and implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) rests upon, in part, the principal; however, there are many aspects of the Act that require the input of many direct stakeholders (teachers, parents, district personnel) and indirect stakeholders (business and community members). Table 1 highlights the 1998 Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act.

Table 1

Highlights the 1998 Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act

District Responsibility	Site Responsibility
Adopt and update district reading plan.	Implement district reading plan.
Distribute training funds to the site.	Establish a committee at the site to include administrators, teachers, parents, and a certified reading teacher Report results to the state. (if available). Identify students reading below grade level (testing).
	Develop an individualized reading Assessment plan for each student reading below level.
	Develop multiple student assessments for each student. Provide training for all teachers who teach students in grades three and four.
	Secure tutorial instruction for after school and on weekends.
Implement a program evaluation that will identify areas for the plan's improvement.	Implement a program evaluation that will identify areas for the plan's improvement.
Re-evaluate student progress.	Report results to the district.
	Continue ongoing staff development and training to teachers.

Problem Statement

Although the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) requires the participation of multiple stakeholders, the final responsibility of implementing its provisions rests on the principal, and the success or failure of facilitating a curricular and instructional

program that supports reading can be enhanced by the building administrator. The leadership of the principal is a worthy area to examine as the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act requires administrative support in such areas as:

- providing initial and ongoing staff development and training;
- evaluating the overall effectiveness of instructional strategies used both in and outside of the classroom to enhance reading;
- coordinating the site-level committee;
- overseeing the design of site-based development of student assessment instruments and scheduling standardized testing;
- reporting results and ongoing planning based on gains on multiple assessments; and,
- overseeing the after-school and weekend tutoring program and coordinating the summer school program.

Although the instructional leadership role is often considered a vital responsibility, "it is easily deferred—especially if the principal lacks training in curriculum and instruction" (Samuels & Pearson, 1988). The work that must be achieved under the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) requires the attention of the principal. Lessons learned from examining the type of support principals give to teachers and what this means to gains in student learning might shed light on what principals can do to support both teachers and students in the classroom in relation to the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to gain insight and understanding into how three elementary principals view leadership narrowly focused on implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) in their schools. The study focused on leadership, not policy implementation. What do these elementary principals think about leadership? What do they claim their leadership practices are and why did they choose those practices in the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act? These general questions led the researcher in designing a study to examine the role, function, and duty of the elementary principal in providing leadership to implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Research Questions

This study was designed to gain insight and understanding into how three elementary principals view leadership narrowly focused on the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). To facilitate this study, the following research questions were considered:

1. How did participants in the study implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) at their sites?
2. What leadership qualities were used?
3. What factors supported implementation?
4. What factors limited implementation?

Significance of the Study

John Gardner (1990, cited by Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993), discussed leadership by suggesting six characteristics that distinguish leaders from typical administrators:

1. Leaders think longer-term; they look beyond immediate problems.
2. Leaders look beyond the agency or unit they are leading and grasp its relationship to larger realities of the organization, as well as to the external environment.
3. Leaders reach and influence people beyond their own jurisdiction.
4. Leaders emphasize vision, values, and motivation; they intuitively grasp the nonrational and unconscious elements in the leader-constituent interaction.
5. Leaders have political skills to cope with conflicting requirements of multiple constituencies.
6. Leaders never accept the status quo; they always think in terms of renewal. (Gardner, 1990, p. 93)

A school principal's leadership style and practices are woven throughout his/her work and hopefully can be seen throughout the internal (teachers, students, paraprofessionals) and external (business) communities. Principals, however, have never been under such scrutiny and stress as when they are required to implement state or federally mandated legislation. How do they view their leadership practices? Do they actually link their best practices with the tenets found in social learning theory?

It is the hope that research on how elementary principals view, select, and practice leadership will provide insight for future administrators who are faced with implementing externally-mandated reform such as the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Three elementary principals were studied in order to gain insight to their individual beliefs and practices during the schoolwide process of implementing externally mandated change. The insights gained from their reportings and reflections might be able to

provide additional information on the leadership process for aspiring principals, school districts, institutions of higher learning, and for those already in the trenches.

Limitations of the Research

1. The data were gathered from elementary principals from three suburban school districts in Oklahoma.
2. The findings and conclusions will be based on the perceptions of the participants and should be regarded as such.
3. A small number of participants diminishes generalizability to larger samples.

Assumptions

It is assumed that:

1. Principals were truthful in their responses to the questions asked of them by the researcher.
2. Principals were able to articulate and describe behaviors that exhibit leadership practices while implementing and evaluating the activities associated with the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter one included the background, problem, and the significance for the study of three principals' leadership beliefs and practices during externally mandated program implementation. Chapter two presents a review of the related literature in the areas of leadership change and innovation. There are a number of theories about leadership styles and practices, and several of these will be examined in relation to change, innovation, and

the principal. Chapter three includes the methods utilized for this research. The findings and analysis of data are included in Chapter four. Chapter five provides a discussion of the study's results, and implications for practitioners and those who prepare principals for work in the field.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Related Literature

Introduction

This study sought to examine the perspectives of three elementary school principals who implemented the mandates of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). The importance of this study resides in the fact that at the conclusion of the 1997-98 school year the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) reading scores were at the 51st percentile (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1999), and because nearly one-quarter of Oklahoma children live in poverty and a similar percentage of adults has not completed high school, Oklahoma's investment in public schools, its teachers, and the leadership of its principals is more important than ever (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1998). Examining and describing the leadership beliefs, behaviors, and perceptions of elementary principals during the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) were the primary purposes of this study.

Although the instructional leadership role is often considered a vital responsibility, "it is easily deferred—especially if the principal lacks training in curriculum and instruction" (Samuels & Pearson, 1988). The work that must be achieved under the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act requires the attention of the principal. Lessons learned from examining the type of support principals give to teachers and what this means to gains in student learning might shed light on what effective principals can do to support both teachers and students in the classroom.

Social learning theory broadly encompasses constructivism, collaboration, and leadership change. Coupling social learning theory as it relates to leadership might

provide a framework for examining the work that principals need to do as they lead their schools through the process of improving instruction in the area of reading and the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory includes collaboration and constructivism. The principal of a school who is viewed as a leader has a multitude of responsibilities which include, but are not limited to, curriculum change and implementation (Glatthorn, 1997). Social learning theory supports collaboration, cooperation, and autonomy.

The success or failure of facilitating a curricular and instructional program that supports reading can be enhanced by the building administrator. Moreover, the leadership style that an administrator uses can have an impact on the willingness of the faculty to implement a curriculum and the instruction that supports literacy. Therefore, the success of programs to be implemented may be contingent on the chosen style of leadership and the techniques that a principal utilizes to motivate his/her staff.

Leadership can vary from the traditional authoritative approach to newer approaches that are more collaborative. The current climate of school restructuring and the concept of democratic schools support more democratic styles of leadership (Apple & Beane, 1995; Blase & Blase, 1995; Glickman, 1993; O'Hair & Reitzug, 1997). With an interest in school renewal, there is a movement away from a Machiavellian approach to leadership where principals are encouraging participation of teachers, students, parents, communities, business leaders, and other stake holders in the development of schools.

Although there is a plethora of literature on leadership and leadership styles, this review concentrated on the literature that is pertinent to more collaborative approaches to leadership. Literature on the role of the principal was examined along with a discussion on collaborative leadership with emphasis given to the role of the principal as an "unleader" (e.g., Blase & Blase, 1999b). According to Blase and Blase (1999b), effective principals lead teachers by unleading. They state, "...principals who are effective instructional leaders work to create a cooperative and nonthreatening partnership with teachers that encourages openness, creates a willingness to experiment, and provides freedom to make and admit mistakes in the interest of improvement"(p. 18).

The Role of the Principal

Effective schools do not merely develop on their own. Effective schools, in part, develop through supportive district administrators and the principal who clearly defines and articulates the mission of the school. Effective administrators provide the guidance necessary for their schools to succeed. Blumberg and Greenfield' s (1980) study of effective principals underscored that there was a variety of approaches to effective school leadership and that these approaches vary from one setting to another (Blumberg & Greenfleld, 1980). In an effective school, the principal serves as an instructional leader who expects excellence in teaching, aligned curricular programs, and results found in student achievement.

As schools evolve in the twenty-first century, so too will the role of the principal. The leadership role that the principal plays in curriculum development and the implementation of programs such as reading is worthy of further study. Despite many

important studies, much remains to be done toward understanding principals' leadership and its relationship to instruction and learning in school (Blase & Kirby, 1992).

The role of the principal as an instructional leader has come under increasing scrutiny with the introduction of new laws, regulations, and local mandates at both the state and national levels. The demands of time place pressure on the principal as she/he is forced to deal with non-instructional issues such as breakfast programs, anti-gang and drug-awareness programs, employee unions, and community groups as well as others. Although the instructional leadership role is often considered a vital responsibility, "it is easily deferred---especially if the principal lacks training in curriculum and instruction" (Samuels & Pearson, 1988, p. 124). These increasing demands may require new approaches to the principals' role in order to reduce teacher isolation and to foster autonomy. Autonomy, though not necessarily a negative aspect, is undeniable in schools because of the "physical isolation of teachers in their classrooms, the relatively infrequent opportunities for administration to monitor teachers' work, and the broad authority teachers have over students' work" (Hoy & Miskel, 1991, p. 123). The amount of autonomy, or personalizing one's time and duties within given constraints, can vary from school to school and from principal to principal. Due to their expectations for professional status, "teachers demand autonomy regarding curriculum and instructional decisions, particularly at the classroom level" (Blase & Kirby, 1992, p. 55).

In the area of instruction, teachers claim the authority of expertise and assert that this authority supersedes the principal's positional authority. This makes the instructional leadership role currently advocated in many school improvement and restructuring literature difficult for school administrators to fulfill (Blase & Kirby, 1992).

Instructional leadership is certainly an important component of the responsibilities that are delegated and assigned to principals. However, the responsibility for the quality of instruction is not the complete responsibility of the principal alone and can be shared by others. Effective instructional leaders work to develop a culture of collaboration, equality, and lifelong study of teaching and learning through talk, growth, and reflection (Blase & Blase, 1999).

Reitzug and Burrello (1995) stated, "Outstanding principals go beyond merely involving teachers in decision making --- they encourage teachers to continuously engage in best practices" (p. 46). Reitzug and Burrello conducted a study of 13 outstanding principals from 13 school districts in the Midwest, Southwest, and Southeast. These principals had been recommended by school administrators and university colleagues from each geographical region of the United States. The sample included urban and suburban as well as male and female administrators. Reitzug and Burrello observed the behaviors of principals, and the behaviors were analyzed looking for evidence of empowering and self-renewing leadership behaviors. They found three things that these principals do to help teachers become more reflective practitioners that included:

- Providing a supportive environment that encourages teachers to examine and reflect upon their teaching and on school practice.
- Using specific behaviors to facilitate reflective practice.
- Making it possible for teachers to implement ideas and programs that result from reflective practice. (Reitzug & Burrello, p. 45)

Reitzug and Burrello found that "the role of principals changed from dispensing information to facilitating processes in which teachers could discover knowledge" (1995,

p. 46). Staff development provides a means by which the principal can encourage teachers to discover knowledge and to provide instructional leadership for pedagogical change. Staff development provides an opportunity for shared exchanges through interaction that can lead to the resolution of problems. The concept of staff development places emphasis on the development of professional expertise by involving teachers in problem-solving and action research (Zepeda, 1999). Responsibility for planning, development, and provision of staff-development activities is shared by both teachers and principals. "The focus is much less on training than on puzzling, inquiry and problem solving" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993, pp. 266-267).

The knowledge and input of teachers, whether gained through reflective practices or other strategies, may be useful in assisting a principal in the role of instructional leader. In a study of teachers' perspectives of instructional leadership by Blase and Blase (1999a), more than 800 teachers from public elementary, middle level, and high schools in various regions of the country participated. Their findings indicated that principals who want to promote classroom instruction:

1. Talk openly and freely with teachers about teaching and learning. Because instruction is a complex and artistic endeavor, principals who are effective instructional leaders work to create a cooperative and non-threatening partnership with teachers that encourages openness, creates a willingness to experiment, and provides freedom to make and admit mistakes in the interest of improvement.
2. Provide time and encourage peer connections for teachers. Principals believe that teachers are thoughtful, responsible, growing professionals

who need to collaborate. They enhance professional community in schools by providing adequate time for teachers to meet with colleagues and engage in actions to "link" teachers with one another.

3. Empower teachers. A feeling of empowerment and self-efficacy flourishes in a school atmosphere of free, mutual dialogue. Effective principals know this and readily share decision making in schools with teachers.

4. Embrace the challenge of teachers' professional development. Principals believe that teachers are willing to examine their work critically to improve. However, they understand professional development can be a difficult journey that requires courage, risk-taking and even some failure along the way.

5. Lead. Principals are neither heavy-handed nor afraid to promote teachers' professional development. Respecting the knowledge and abilities of teachers while facilitating growth is appreciated by and motivating to teachers. (Blase & Blase, 1999a, p. 18).

The role of the principal can be complex and challenging. Input from teachers, parents, and other members of the school community can be useful in meeting these challenges.

Types of Leadership

If a school is restructuring and in the process of reinventing the way "things are done," old styles of leadership and ways of dealing with problems must give way to more inclusive approaches. Those who have worked in public education for a number of years have seen a variety of democratic approaches that include school choice, administrative

decentralization, increased and invited parental involvement, and shared governance councils. This is not always an easy task. "Relinquishing old roles and power while being accountable for decisions made by others necessitates the development of collaborative decision-making processes, the creation of a shared vision, and the invention of a supportive network of professional relationships" (Blase & Blase, 1999b, p. 84).

With the advent of site-based management, community and parent participation in schools and participatory decision making as well as other collaborative efforts, problems such as shared governance may present a dilemma as to who should govern. Glickman (1993) suggested "in the ideal" some ground rules for membership in school governance groups:

1. All major groups should be represented, with access always open to others.
2. Regular classroom teachers should be in the majority.
3. The school principal should be a "standing"(automatically included) member.
4. The group as a whole should fairly represent the gender, ethnic, and socioeconomic population of the entire school community. (p. 35)

In a 1993 study (Blase, Blase, Anderson & Dungan, 1995) of eight shared governance principals, both potential and actual barriers to shared governance were described. These barriers included those related to self, time, and higher-ups such as superintendents, central office personnel, and school boards. Principals recognized the absolute necessity of learning to let go of power and expressed that they had difficulty

doing so. The principals reported that shortages of time were a major barrier to shared governance. The findings indicated that traditional expectations for principal behavior were a major baffler to shared governance. Teachers wanted principals to employ a traditional approach to leadership. These traditional approaches included defining expectations, developing of plans, solving problems, and making decisions for the school. Superintendent succession was identified by several principals as an impediment to shared governance (Blase, Blase, Anderson & Dungan, 1995).

More recently, Blase and Blase (1999b) studied eighteen principals from the League of Professional Schools. The study examined principals' perspectives on developing facilitative-democratic leadership and shared governance in their schools. The findings indicated that major changes occurred as a result of developing a collaborative or shared governance leadership style. The data indicated that role conflict and uses of power had to be examined first before their respective faculties could move forward with change. The principals in this study faced many challenges. The first challenge dealt with the feeling of being needed. Principals wondered how much they were needed by teachers and felt hurt at being excluded from certain decision-making processes. The second challenge was determining where the line is drawn between power, control, domination, and collegiality. Several principals revealed their inclination to control others.

The findings of this study did include major rewards as a result of moving toward shared governance leadership. The principals found their work rewarding on various levels. These rewards including feeling more open, alive, self-aware, and motivated. They reported being able to behave in ways consistent with personal values. The

principals also reported that they felt rewarded from public recognition and the opportunity to demonstrate their school's shared-governance approaches. It was found that, in spite of the uncertainty and anxiety that resulted from diving into the shared governance experience, the principals were actually less lonely and more motivated (Blase & Blase, 1999b). Although the change from traditional forms of leadership may present challenges and be stressful, shared governance does offer rewarding opportunities to be more collaborative (e.g., Blase & Blase, 1999b; Blase, Blase, Anderson & Dungan, 1995; Blase & Kirby, 1992; Glickman, 1993).

Relinquishing power and decision-making is not an easy concept for some leaders. This may be especially true for those schooled and mentored in more autocratic styles of administration. Collaborative approaches may be new or foreign to some who have been in education for long periods of time and failed to stay informed about what might be viewed by some educators as new and innovative approaches to leadership. It may be difficult for some leaders to accept that they no longer have exclusive control and are now serving in a new role --- as a catalyst for change and renewal (e.g., Apple & Beane, 1995; Blase & Blase, 1999b; O'Hair & Reitzug, 1997; Reitzug & Burrello, 1995). Leadership for the twenty-first century can no longer be viewed with the principal as the sole visionary and master of the school's curriculum. The top-down management approach to school leadership is being replaced in some schools by more inclusive, progressive, and democratic approaches to leadership. "Progressive leaders are not dictatorial and they share some of their responsibility for leadership with others as well as sharing authority" (Sergiovanni, 1994, p. 169).

O'Hair and McLaughlin (2000) believed that democratic conceptions of leadership are grounded in a different set of assumptions about the nature of reality and life in schools. The assumptions of a democratic conception of leadership include the following:

1. Individuals at all levels of the organization have knowledge and insight to contribute that can enhance the work of the organization.
2. Individuals will construct different interpretations of what they perceive to be appropriate ends for the organization and appropriate means of achieving those ends.
3. Multiple appropriate courses of action exist in any situation.
4. Due to practical reasons as well as the moral right to have a voice in determining one's destiny, all members of the organization should be involved in reflecting on and discussing appropriate means and ends to the organization. (p. 426)

Inclusion of constituents is important to more democratic schools and democratic schools are marked by widespread participation in issues of governance and policy making. "Committees, councils, and other schoolwide decision-making groups include not only professional educators, but also young people, their parents and other members of the school community" (Apple & Beane, 1995, p. 9).

Parents and teachers play an important role in collaborative leadership. Schlechty (1997) stated:

> Parents and teachers do have much to contribute to the decisions that are made in education and they should be positioned to contribute

> and encouraged to do so. Many central office functionaries do behave too much like stereotypical petty bureaucrats, and too many school boards behave foolishly and in ways that are almost disgraceful. Therefore, some means must be found to attend more adequately to the needs and perceptions of parents and the wisdom of teachers in the decision making process. (p.117)

Building school communities can be a means to include and involve stakeholders in the educational process. Sergiovanni (1994) stated, "In communities, leadership as power over events and people is redefined to become leadership as power to accomplish shared goals." School communities, through the use of collaborative democratic approaches, then become a means to achieve shared goals, objectives, and engage in shared decision making. However, the cultivation of school communities alone is not enough to ensure participation in collective learning.

It is through effective leadership that emphasis can be placed on cooperation and collaboration and not competition. The movement toward participation is a worthwhile endeavor on the part of the principal. Schlechty (1990), in his book, *School for the 21st Century,* stated that, "Participatory leadership makes sense in school because this pattern of leadership promises to yield better decisions and better results." The principal who is charged legally, morally, and professionally with the operation of the school is at the apex of control and can provide the leadership necessary for authentic collaboration (Apple & Beane, 1995; Blase & Blase, 1999a; O'Hair, McLaughlin & Reitzug 2000; & Reitzug & Burrello, 1995).

The concepts of democratic schools support more collaborative styles of leadership (Apple & Beane, 1995; Blase & Blase, 1999a; Glickman, 1993; O'Hair & Reitzug, 1997). According to Blase and Blase (1999a), principals lead teachers by unleading, and ". . . are effective instructional leaders who work to create cooperative and nonthreatening partnerships with teachers... [they] encourage openness, create a willingness to experiment, and provide freedom to make and admit mistakes in the interest of improvement" (p. 18).

The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) calls for widespread participation. The right to "have a say" introduces questions about how various viewpoints fit into the equation of balancing special interests with the larger common good (Apple & Beane, 1995). Participation may lack authenticity if it is driven by political consideration, public relations, or is poorly conceived and then implemented. "Engagement in authentic experiences," according to Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner and Slack, (1995), "enables us to form and re-form world views and personal schemas in concert and conversation with others." Anderson (1998) stated, "Participation is authentic if it includes relevant stakeholders and creates relatively safe, structured spaces for multiple voices to be heard" (p. 575).

Constructivist Leadership

Many theorists discuss constructivist leadership as another approach toward reform and movement in the direction of more democratic schools. Glatthorn (1997) stated "Constructivism is a theory of learning based on the principle that learners construct meaning from what they experience; thus, learning is an active meaning-making process" (p. 6). O'Neil (1998) believed that:

> people learn by actively constructing knowledge, weighing new information against their previous understanding, thinking about and working through discrepancies (on their own and with others), and coming to a new understanding. (p. 51)

Lambert et. al. (1995) described constructivist leading as follows:

> Leadership is viewed as a reciprocal process among the adults in the school. Purposes and goals develop from among the participants, based upon values, beliefs, and individual and shared experiences. The school functions as a community that is self-motivating and that views the growth of its members as fundamental. There is an emphasis on language as a means for shaping the school culture, conveying commonality of experience, and articulating a joint vision. Shared inquiry is an important activity in problem identification and resolution; participants conduct action research and share findings as a way of improving practice. (p. 9)

The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act calls for the kind of attention that Lambert et al. (1995) believed could "free leaders to frame actions that embody new behaviors and purposeful intentions." The very "purposefulness" of the principal as far as the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act is related in a series of activities that must be implemented; but the Act does not specify the leadership needed to shepherd the school through its implementation.

The principal can be a constructivist leader by involving people in the processes that cause them to construct knowledge through the process of dealing with issues. Dealing with issues can encourage the construction of new knowledge. The

constructivist principal can enhance teacher professionalism through his/her collaborative efforts at building an authentic learning community (Zepeda, 1999). Darling-Hammond (1997) said,

> ... schools are structured for democratic decision making rather than representative governance or merely advisory input. This point is critical: everyone has a voice, and everyone hears the other voices. Thus ownership of practice and the development of shared ideas are possible. (p. 163)

However, it often seems that widespread reform tends to falter because many policymakers and practitioners do not fully understand what the changes entail or appreciate the fact that any serious change will affect all the other regularities of schooling. Through the involvement of the school community in inquiry into other practices and policies, and discussion of issues, construction of new knowledge, development of shared understanding, and newer and better ways of doing things may result.

Research was conducted via the Internet to see whether state-mandated reading programs or policies exist in five states that surround Oklahoma. An examination of the state statutes and education regulations from Kansas, Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, and New Mexico revealed that four states require reading programs be implemented as part of their early childhood curriculum. Remediation was to be provided for those that did not score at grade level on state-mandated tests. The only exception was the state of New Mexico that did not require such measures be taken. It should be noted that, while the majority of states have a similar program, the state of Oklahoma appears to be

in the forefront of this type of program due to the legislation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Leadership Change

The intended goal of change should always be increased student learning. Unfortunately, the track record of educational change has been far less than satisfactory (Fullan, 1991; Sarason, 1990). Change is difficult. The nature of human response to change explains a lot. Evans (1996) wrote that:

> Change leads a doubly double life. There is a fundamental duality to our response to change: we both embrace and resist it. We acknowledge its inevitability, and yet a profound conservative impulse governs our psychology, making us naturally resistant to change and leaving us chronically ambivalent when confronted with innovation. (p. 21)

Because of the inherent duality in the human response to change, reform is a difficult road to navigate. Walker, Templeton, and Stott (1996) found that, "Change is an ongoing, sometimes painful, and always confusing process" (p. 109).

The primary implementers of change in schools are teachers. Fullan (1991) posited that, "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think—it's as simple as that" (p. 117). It must be noted, however, that strong leadership is a key ingredient to any change effort. Heck, Larsen, and Marcoulides (1990) wrote:

> Our results indicate that many of the important instructional leadership variables influencing school achievement are not related to the regular clinical supervision of teachers. . . .While regularly observing teachers and conferencing with them regarding instructional improvement is admittedly an important aspect, our results

show that principals' time and attention are focused on a variety of additional activities. Many behaviors, which are more informal and strategic, cluster into the constructs of instructional organization and school climate and impact student achievement as well. Some of these efforts involve clarifying, coordinating, and communicating a unified school educational purpose to teachers, students, and the community. Effective principals appear to build a sense of teamwork at the school. (pp. 120-121)

Champy (1995) believed that if a key leader is opposed to change, then efforts at improvement would almost surely fail. It is the principal's role to set forth the conditions necessary for teachers to successfully implement change. Calabrese (1994) wrote that, "Change is the process of living. It is inherent in the evolutionary nature of our existence. As a result, it has always been part of the formal education process" (p. 1). Effective schools manage change as an integral segment of the improvement process. Being able to manage change begins with understanding the phenomenon of change, especially within the context of schools.

While the process of change is filled with uncertainty, one conclusion concerning change seems clear: the principal plays a critical role in assisting teachers to change their practices. Berman and McLaughlin (1977) concluded that, "projects having the *active* support of the principal were most likely to fare well" (p. 124, emphasis in the original). Hall, Hord, and Griffin (1980) found that "The degree of implementation of the innovation is different in different schools because of the actions and concerns of the principals" (p. 26). Fullan (1991) added support to these findings:

> The principal has to become directly involved [in change]. He may not know mathematics per se or science or history; but he can [be seen] ... as an expert in curriculum planning. ... he's got to help them [teachers] plan what they are going to do and then help them measure whether they're doing it or not." (p. 153)

A careful analysis of the change literature reveals five major roles of the principal in facilitating change. These roles are:

1. involving teachers as leaders;
2. creating and maintaining an environment conducive to innovation and risk-taking;
3. providing ongoing staff development to support needed teacher and administrative learning;
4. facilitating open and honest communication about the innovation; and,
5. securing necessary resources for supporting the innovation.

All of these behaviors empower teachers to be professionals who can make data-driven decisions concerning their practices and their continued professional growth (Blase & Blase, 1997).

For change to be successful, principals need to involve teachers as leaders. Top-down leadership that mandates change meets resistance. Evans (1996) forwarded that:

> School improvement is embedded in an ethos of empowerment and collegiality ... administrators are to practice participatory leadership. They are to relinquish conventional uses of power and politics and nurture

instead shared governance and collegial interaction. This reflects a larger trend in leadership thinking, a strong emphasis on community and on 'servant leadership' the leader as a steward of a self-motivating, self-managing community. (pp. 229-230)

In Hall, Rutherford, Huling-Austin and Hord's (1987) Principal-Teacher Interaction (PTI) Study, three styles of principal leadership within the change process emerged: the responder, the manager, and the initiator. The correlation between principal leadership style and overall implementation success was high (p. 76). Principals who were initiators were the most successful in implementing change. The key-identifying characteristic of the initiator is the empowerment of others to lead the implementation process. Hall, Rutherford, Huling-Austin and Hord (1987) discovered that, while managers personally made the most interventions (e.g., communications, providing staff development, monitoring progress), the schools led by initiators tallied the most interventions. The initiators empowered others (e.g., teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals) to take leadership roles, while these *other leaders* implemented many of the interventions.

Empowering teachers offers important advantages for schools. Blase and Blase (1997) identified six major benefits of teacher empowerment:

- Teacher reflection: teachers become more actively involved in considering their actions and the impacts of those actions on student learning and development ... they consider the moral and ethical import of their actions. Teachers also develop a *deeper commitment* to become actively involved in dealing with schoolwide problems.

- Teacher motivation: as a result of empowerment through shared governance, teachers reported feeling more energy, excitement, enthusiasm, drive, and inspiration for teaching.
- Sense of team: shared governance allowed teachers to feel like a valued part of the team. This sense of team refers to their close identification with both school-based shared governance structures as well as with other faculty and administrators.
- Ownership: refers to teachers' positive identification with and greater responsibility for shared governance structures and processes as well as the outcomes of such processes (e.g., innovations, decisions).
- Commitment: increases in work commitment are linked to the leadership of shared governance principals. Teachers become more involved, caring, dedicated, and invested.
- Sense of professionalism: refers to teachers seeing themselves as being trusted and respected with the authority and ability to make independent decisions within and outside of their classrooms. (pp.44-50)

Teachers who are empowered see themselves as facilitators of change, and not victims of change. Principals can help bring about this change of perception by participating in the change process as an equal. Prestine's (1991) results demonstrated that:

> The primacy and importance of [the] role of democratic participation can not be underestimated. Data showed that while principal participation was a necessary factor in promoting importance of the effort and positively

affecting the interest and activity level of the teacher participants, this participation had to be as an equal. (p. 14)

Murphy (1994) believed that principals need to "orchestrate from the background, to become a support element or facilitator, [and become] an equal participant in shared decision-making ..." (pp. 28-29).

Teacher empowerment multiplies the leadership capacity of schools. The increase in leadership capacity provides the means to increase the school's ability to learn and grow. For learning and growth to occur, a nurturing environment must prevail where teachers can feel free to take risks. For teachers to change their practices, they must be allowed to take risks (Dooley, 1998).

Change involves loss. For this reason, change can be threatening (see Zepeda, 2000, 2001). According to Kanter (1995), "Change is always a threat when it is done to people, but it is an opportunity when it is done by people" (p. 83). Real, lasting change occurs within a supportive environment. Hall, Rutherford, Huling-Austin and Hord (1987), in the PTI study, found that the most common type of intervention principals made was aimed at developing a supportive environment for teachers.

The creation of a supportive, risk-free environment begins with a community belief that supports such an environment. Producing and maintaining this type of climate is an ongoing task. Schlechty (1997) believed that, "Beliefs must be constant, and they must constantly be attended to in the literature of the organization and in the symbols of the system as well as in the public expressions of those who occupy leadership positions therein" (p. 106). The belief that innovation requires risk is essential in change.

Dooley (1998) found an environment that celebrates risk-taking to be essential for teachers to accomplish change. Creating a risk-taking environment requires trust. Martin (1997) found that creating and maintaining trust during a change to be one of the most difficult conditions for the principal to address. This type of environment celebrates diversity. Martin (1997) believed that:

> The process of self-reflection and of self-renewal ... is essential for continuous and meaningful educational change ... an openness to explore and reflect on issues of conflict, history, race, and culture could provide the impetus to move towards more transformative instructional change. (p. 81)

Placier and Hamilton (1994) found that for teachers to successfully implement change, an environment that minimizes stress is desirable. Teachers "may be skeptical of innovations that depend on ideal conditions" (p. 137) for success. Calabrese and Zepeda (1997) believed that a nurturing environment of trust helps alleviate teachers' anxiety from change. Fullan (1993) offers the following description of the forces of change:

> It is much like whitewater rafting. If you try to over manage it, you capsize. Rather than steering away from upcoming rocks, you move toward the danger, guiding the craft in relation to the forces coming at you. (p. 79)

Through the establishment of a community of learners in which risk-taking is supported, principals and teachers can assist one another to negotiate the "whitewater" of change. In a supportive atmosphere, teachers "become more autonomous, flexible, more confident,

and more willing to take risks" (Swafford, Jones, Thornton, Stump, & Miller, 1999, p. 80).

Conclusion

It seems evident that school reform is becoming more of an imperative for school leaders. Leadership that includes participation on the part of teachers, parents, and the school community is worthy of consideration. Leadership styles, characteristics, and processes used by individual principals can sometimes account for the success or failure of educational programs at the outset of the implementation stage.

Perhaps, through democratic and collaborative efforts, principals may be successful in bringing about the changes needed to enact mandated programs such as the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act of 1998. Schlechty (1997) stated, "Unfortunately, too many educators seem to lack the sense of urgency it will take to bring about the kinds of reforms that are needed if public education is to be a vital force in American life in the twenty-first century" (p. 17). These educators will have to be courageous, innovative leaders who are determined to provide the leadership necessary for the future if we are to accomplish the school reforms necessary to instructional improvement and improved student learning.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

Principals are given enormous responsibilities. These responsibilities include the overall success of the students and the contentment of their parents. In addition, principals must be accountable for the implementation of new state and federal mandates.

My interest in the leadership role of elementary school principals in how they clarify, coordinate, and communicate stemmed directly from my personal experience as an elementary school principal charged with the responsibility of implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). The primary purpose of this study was to gain insight and understanding into how three elementary principals view leadership narrowly focused on the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Methods and Procedures

Qualitative research, with its philosophical roots in phenomenology and symbolic interactions (Merriam, 1998), seeks to find meaning in life events. Its ultimate goal is "to transform data into information that can be used" (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 11). Qualitative research is concerned with the study of individuals in their natural settings, with the researcher being an instrument of data collection, gathering words for analysis and focusing on the meaning of the participants. In qualitative studies, the researcher seeks a complex, holistic picture of the problem (Creswell, 1998), and the researcher tries to understand the meanings that the participants have constructed from their experiences. To that end, qualitative research:

1. Depends on in-depth study of the few, rather than more superficial sampling of the many;
2. Relies on fieldwork by the researcher; and,
3. Discovers emergent trends and principles from the inductive research strategies employed (Cassell & Symon, 1995).

Qualitative research is, by its nature, interactive (Rossman & Rallis, 1998) and requires the researcher to become involved with the participants. The researcher must interpret the data through complex processes that will allow meanings to be made clear. A qualitative study seeks to understand the perspectives of the people involved, with data being gathered through interviews, observations, and or document analysis (Tuckman, 1988).

Qualitative research is not theory driven, does not test hypotheses, nor does it necessarily produce generalizations (Peshkin, 1993). Rather, it is a form of research that is *problem finding* (Peshkin, 1993). The label qualitative method has no precise meaning in any of the social sciences. It is at best an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world (Van Maanen, Dabbs, & Faulkner, 1982, p. 120). Qualitative research tends to result in tentative answers, and to this end, it leads to an expanded range of researchable questions and a broader framework for further research. Qualitative researchers reason from the particular to the more general, beginning with the experiences of the participants and moving toward the development of theory (Rossman & Rallis, 1998).

Restatement of the Research Questions

The primary purpose of this study was to gain insight and understanding into how three elementary principals view leadership narrowly focused on the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). To facilitate this process, the following research questions were considered:

1. How did participants in the study implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) at their sites?
2. What leadership qualities were used?
3. What factors supported implementation?
4. What factors limited implementation?

Research Design and Rationale

Qualitative design allows participants to have more flexibility in narrative descriptions, and this study sought to describe the work of elementary principals who have experience in implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). This study utilized in-depth, face-to-face, audiotaped interviews that were later transcribed by the researcher. The formats of the interviews were semi-structured, and employed the use of an interview guide with questions to explore; however, the semi-structured questions allowed the researcher to remain open to pursue other areas and to develop questions that were not on the interview guide. The study group consisted of three elementary school principals. Follow-up interviews were conducted on a needs-basis in order to have participants further clarify information.

This study sought to understand the experiences of three elementary principals who worked with teachers to implement the state-mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency

Act (1998). The researcher did not seek to understand the individual participants' lives, or to develop a theory to explain the phenomenon of elementary principals who work to implement legislation. A phenomenological research design allowed the researcher to study three elementary principals whose leadership with teachers assisted in implementing state-mandated school reform. This is the phenomenon that the researcher sought to better understand. As Fryer (1991) suggested:

> Qualitative researchers are characteristically concerned in their research with attempting to accurately describe, decode and interpret the precise meanings to persons of phenomena occurring in their normal social contexts and are typically preoccupied with complexity, authenticity, contextualization, shared subjectivity of researcher and researched and minimization of illusion. (p. 3)

The guidelines of the University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board for research with human subjects were followed. Written permission to collect data from each participant and his/her respective school system was obtained (Appendix G).

Participant Selection

The form of participant selection known as non-probability, purposive sampling, based on the assumption that the researcher seeks to discover, understand, and gain insight (Cassell & Symon, 1995) was used to choose the participants for the study. In purposive sampling there is a reason for selecting the individuals who will participate (Cassell & Symon, 1995). Initially, each participant in the study was selected based on methods of reputational and network sampling. The elementary principals were described by others in the field as "good at what they do," indicating that there was a level of recognition of effectiveness in the person. Prior to final selection of each

elementary principal for participation in this study, informal conversations were held by the researcher and the elementary principals to determine the suitability of each elementary principal for further participation. Criteria for selection included being the principal of an elementary school that included kindergarten through grade three. In addition, the participants must have been the principals during the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Once the participants were chosen, informed consent was secured from each participating elementary school principal and their respective school systems.

Phenomenological Research Interview

The purpose of the qualitative interview is to obtain descriptions of the lived experiences of the participants, and phenomenological interviews seek to discover the essence of a concept or phenomenon. As Kvale (1996) noted:

> The research interview is an interpersonal situation, a conversation between two partners about a theme of mutual interest. It is a specific form of human interaction in which knowledge evolves through a dialogue. The interaction is neither as anonymous and neutral as when a subject responds to a survey questionnaire, nor as personal and emotional as a therapeutic interview. (p. 125)

Phenomenological interviews themselves are in-depth, open-ended, and oftentimes begin with the phrase, "think of a time that you ... tell me about it" (Cassell & Symon, 1995). Therefore, the research participants in this study were asked questions related to the following themes:

1. Externally mandated school change.

2. The concept of leadership.

3. Implementation processes.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected in face-to-face, audiotaped interviews at the school site, and field notes were used to notate data. A tape recorder with an external microphone was used to ensure more stable data were collected. Initial interviews were between 60 and 90 minutes in length. In addition to interviews, data were collected in the form of field notes made both at the school site and immediately after meeting with and interviewing each participant. Following the initial interview with each participant, follow-up interviews were held in order to clarify and augment the information of the first interview. The interviews were all conducted in administrators' offices or meeting rooms. The participants were all open to the topic and seemed to be honest and forthcoming in their responses to the main questions as well as to the follow-up queries.

The audio taped interviews were reviewed multiple times by the interviewer, were transcribed and then compared to the field notes of the investigator. Impressions and additional data from the field notes were added to the margins of the transcriptions as appropriate, and salient points were also noted in the margins on the first read through of the transcripts. Emerging themes were noted, and the data from the transcripts were then coded relative to the thematic material. Subsequent readings revealed some new material and also data which were linked to more than one theme. Notations, revisions, and needed changes were made until the data revealed no new thematic material. Once the interviews were completed, and transcriptions were developed, the tapes were labeled using pseudonyms and were stored in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's residence.

A minimum of three observations of the physical setting, the participants, and activities with others at the site were recorded. Artifacts, which included memos, site-implementation plans, and completed site and district plans were collected.

Phenomenological Data Analysis

There is no single set of rules for the analysis of data from qualitative research interviews. Indeed, as Hycner (1985) points out, the notion of producing a 'cookbook' of instructions is entirely at odds with the aims of flexibility and openness to the data that are at the heart of qualitative research.

Using a template approach in this particular study, the researcher followed fairly well defined steps and proceeded through the methodology of reducing data, analyzing the participants' statements to ascertain themes, and searching for all possible meanings. To this end, the researcher must first set aside prejudgments through the process of "bracketing" in order to best understand the experiences of the participants in the study. Crabtree and Miller (1992) discuss analyzing interview text through the use of an analysis guide, or 'codebook' consisting of a number of categories or themes relevant to the research question(s). The codebook is revised through exposure to the textual data. Also, the pattern of themes emerging is interpreted qualitatively (Crabtree & Miller, 1992).

In this process, nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statements were listed. These statements were then transformed into clusters of meanings or themes. The themes were joined to produce a description of the phenomenon that was experienced by the participants -- or what happened -- including quotations from the participants. There were two ways to build the textual description: individual and composite. The composite

is an integration of the individual textual descriptions. The researcher, using imaginative variation or structural description, constructs a description of how the participants experienced what they experienced and constructs an overall description of the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). Individual structural descriptions were then aggregated into a composite description. The textual and structural descriptions were then integrated and synthesized into a final product that presented the meanings of the particular experience, (Moustakas, 1994) in this research, the experience of three elementary principals implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

In this study, data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection. The textual and structural descriptions were integrated and synthesized into the final analysis. Conclusions were drawn from those analyses in order to present the meanings of the experiences of the elementary school principals.

Verification of Data

Qualitative research seeks to find meaning in life events. The researcher attempts to understand the meanings that the participants have constructed from their experiences. Data do not speak for themselves, but must be interpreted. The driving question in verification of data is: Did I get it right? It is necessary to safeguard qualitative research through measures that assure trustworthiness and authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)?

Quantitative research places great emphasis on the need for reliability and validity in the measures it uses. Not surprisingly, methods developed to assess reliability and validity in quantitative research cannot be applied directly to qualitative research. Nevertheless, the underlying issues involved are important in qualitative research.

The researcher's characteristics that influence the way in which study participants respond to the questions in a structured interview would be considered a flaw in the research method. However, qualitative research, in seeking to describe and understand how people make sense of their world, does not require researchers to strive for 'objectivity' and to distance themselves from research participants. In fact, to do so would make good qualitative research impossible, as the interviewer's sensitivity to 'subjective' aspects of his or her relationship with the interviewee is an essential part of the research process (Cassell & Symon, 1995). Indeed, "the requirement of standardized objectivity here yields to the aim of individual sensitivity" (Kvale, 1996, p. 189). Researcher bias cannot be ignored. Researchers should explicitly recognize their presuppositions and in the analysis of the data make a conscious effort to set these aside as in the technique of 'bracketing' in phenomenology (Kvale, 1996). In addition, at the stage of coding for themes or categories, co-researchers can code 'blind' (that is, independently, without consultation), and afterwards, explore the reasons for any disagreements.

In qualitative research, a study is valid if it truly examines the topic that it claims to have examined. In discussing whether or not research is valid, Polkinghorne (1989) suggested five questions for researchers to ask in order to ascertain trustworthiness of qualitative research:

1. Did the interviewer influence the contents of the subjects' descriptions in such a way that the descriptions do not truly reflect the subjects' actual experience?
2. Is the transcription accurate, and does it convey the meaning of the oral presentation in the interview?

3. In the analysis of the transcriptions, were there conclusions other than those offered by the researcher that could have been derived? Has the researcher identified these alternatives?
4. Is it possible to go from the general structural description to the transcriptions and to account for the specific contents and connections in the original examples of the experience?
5. Is the structural description situation specific, or does it hold in general for the experience in other situations? (p. 57)

In addition to asking the questions suggested by Polkinghorne, other methods were incorporated to enhance the credibility of this study. A form of triangulation — finding three sources that say the same thing (Langenbach, Vaughn, Aagaard, 1994, p. 89) — was used. Additionally, member checks were conducted, allowing the participants to determine the correctness of the researcher's interpretation of their experiences.

Bracketing of the Researcher's Preconceptions

Phenomenological studies not only allow researchers to examine the experiences of the participants in the study, but also requires the researcher to make meanings of those experiences. No researcher enters the field with a clean slate of experiences. All previous life events of the researcher ultimately color the interpretation of the data gathered. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize and state the researcher's misconceptions. This recognition and statement are what Moustakas (1994) referred to as 'bracketing.' The end result is what Crotty (1998) referred to as a 'single-minded effort to identify, understand, describe and maintain the subjective experiences of the respondents. It is self-professedly *subjectivist* in approach (in the sense of being in

search of people's subjective experience) and expressly *uncritical.'* (p. 83, emphasis in the original)

My interest in the leadership role of elementary school principals in how they clarify, coordinate, and communicate stemmed directly from my personal experience as an elementary school principal charged with the responsibility of implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). It is this researcher's desire to seek the perspectives of three other elementary school principals on the leadership skills they utilized in the implementation process. Hopefully, other practitioners may be able to glean some information and direction for their own leadership practices, and, consequently, strengthen the knowledge base on leadership roles for elementary principals in the future.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into how three elementary principals in Oklahoma viewed leadership while implementing the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). The questions addressed in this study were:

A. How did participants in the study implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) at their respective sites?

B. What leadership qualities were used?

C. What factors supported implementation?

D. What factors limited implementation?

Summary of Research Methodology

A phenomenological research design allowed the researcher to study three elementary principals who implemented the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). This study utilized in-depth, face-to-face, audiotaped interviews that were later transcribed by the researcher. The format of the interviews was semi-structured, and employed the use of interview questions with topics to explore; however, the semi-structured questions allowed the researcher to remain open to pursue topics that were not among the interview questions (Appendix B). The study consisted of three participants, principals of Oklahoma elementary schools that included kindergarten through grades three. Follow-up interviews were conducted on a needs basis in order to have participants further clarify information.

The researcher used a phenomenological approach to analyze data. In analyzing data, the researcher followed fairly well-defined steps and proceeded through the

methodology by reducing data, analyzing the participants' statements to ascertain themes, and searching for all possible meanings. Relevant statements made by the participants were pulled from the transcripts and listed in a process known as horizonalization, where each statement was judged to have equal value. Once that was finished, the nonrepetitive, nonoverlaping statements, or invariant horizons were listed. These statements were then transformed into clusters of meanings or themes. The themes were joined to produce a description of the phenomenon that was experienced by the participants – or what happened – including quotations from the participants. Individual descriptions were aggregated into a composite description and were then integrated and synthesized into a final product that presented the meanings of the particular experience. Conclusions were drawn from these analyses in order to present the meanings of the experiences of the elementary principals who had implemented the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

The Context of the Study

Because this study specifically examined elementary principals' perceptions of leadership during externally mandated school change, purposeful sampling was utilized in the selection of research school sites and participants. Linda, Alice and Denise are aliases used for the participant principals. The three elementary school principals worked in three different school districts. Each district is profiled.

Allenville

Allenville is a suburban community located in central south-central Oklahoma. It is within 40 miles of the state capital and several private or state universities. The town's population is approximately 6,500, whereas the school district's population is 10,000.

Allenville Public School district consists of six school sites that serve students who come from a land area of 98 square miles.

Linda Edwards is the principal of Allenville Elementary School. The school typically enrolls approximately 400 first, second, and third grade students each school year. She is the lone administrator with a staff of 40+ professional and paraprofessional educators.

In Allenville school district during the 1998-99 school year, 34% of parents had less than a 12th grade education, 34% had a high school diploma, 23% had some college and only 9% had college degrees. The ethnic make-up of Allenville Elementary School was 26% Native American, 1% Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% Hispanic, 2% African American and 70% Caucasian. The average income per household was $20,317. During the 1998-99 school year, the Allenville school system was declared a Schoolwide Title I district with 85% of the students qualifying for free or reduced priced lunches. This particular suburban setting provided limited job opportunities, limited life experiences and limited access to technology outside of the schools.

Bonner

Bonner is a small community located in the central-southeast part of Oklahoma. It is only one hour's drive from the state capitol, but gave the appearance of being a rural community because it was surrounded by wooded, rolling hills. Many landowners had settled there since retirement and own large parcels of land.

The population of Bonner was listed by the local chamber of commerce at only 68, but the Bonner Elementary School had approximately 300 students enrolled in 1998-

99, and the district population was 1,550. The school district served students from a fifty square mile radius.

"I like working in a small school district," said principal Alice Newman. "It helps to get in touch with the students better by knowing their families." Bonner Elementary School had fifteen certified staff and three paraprofessionals. Mrs. Newman said that only one of her certified teachers had an advanced degree. The student body was composed of 79% Caucasian, 10% Native American, .05% Asian, 3.5% Hispanic, and 7% Black. Mrs. Newman related that approximately 90% of the students in first grade through third grade attended a Pre-Kindergarten program.

Alice Newman reported that the average family income was $18,125 and that she served approximately 70% of the student body a free or reduced price lunch. Almost 45% of the parents whose children attended Bonner Elementary School did not graduate from high school, but 8% of the parents reported having a college degree.

Camdon

Centered geographically in both the State of Oklahoma and in the United States, Camdon claimed to entice people to its city limits because of its accessibility and potential for development. Most of Oklahoma's major universities, numerous junior colleges, and trade schools are within a one-hour driving radius.

The population of Camdon is approximately 3,000. The district population is approximately 8,000. The school district is comprised of four school sites that serve approximately 1800 students from a 90 square mile area.

Denise Pope is the principal of Camdon Elementary School. She served approximately 420 students in grade kindergarten through grade three and supervised

forty professional and paraprofessional staff members during the 1998-99 school year. Camdon Elementary School had a lower socioeconomic structure with about 52% of the students' families receiving some type of public assistance. Approximately 85% of the parents had no education beyond high school. Due to the proximity of a U. S. Air Force base, and a Native American tribal headquarters, 25% of Camdon's students' families who lived or worked on federal land allowed Camdon to receive federal Impact Aid. The ethnic makeup included 78% White/Caucasian, 2% African American, 19.54% Native American, .43% Hispanic, and .03% Asian.

Profiles of the Participants

Three elementary principals from three separate suburban school districts in Oklahoma participated in this study. These principals were selected for this study because:

1. The elementary principals were described by others in the field as "good at what they do," indicating that there was a level of recognition of effectiveness in the person.
2. The elementary principals were administrators of schools that included kindergarten through grades three.
3. The elementary principals were serving as administrators of these schools during the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

All three participants were female, Caucasian, and held advanced degrees. Table 2 summarizes participant information.

Table 2: Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender	Race	Highest Degree Earned	Highest Degree Major Area of Study
Linda Edwards	Female	White	M.Ed.	Elementary Administration
Alice Newman	Female	White	M.Ed.	Reading
Denise Pope	Female	White	M.Ed.	Administration, Curriculum & Supervision

The three participants were veteran educators whose teaching experience ranged from 7 to 21 years. Administrative experience among the participants as administrator ranged from 5 to 8 years. Table 3 summarizes the experiences of each participant.

Table 3: Levels of Participants' Experience

Participant	Total Years in Education	Years as Principal at Current Site	Total Years Teaching Prior to Becoming a Principal	Total Years Serving as a Principal
Linda Edwards	29	6	21	8
Alice Newman	22	4	17	5
Denise Pope	15	8	7	8

Findings and Analysis of the Data

The researcher first constructed a description of how each of the participants experienced what they experienced and then constructed an overall description, or composite, of the essence of the experience of implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Linda Edwards

Linda, a 29-year veteran educator, was in her sixth year as principal of a K-3 suburban Oklahoma elementary school, and held a Master of Education degree. There were 30 teachers who taught at her school.

Five themes emerged from the interview with Mrs. Edwards:

- description of her leadership style;
- the importance of collegiality between the principal and the teachers when implementing school reform;
- the value of collaboration when implementing school change;
- the importance of constructing knowledge prior to implementing school reform; and,
- the apprehension that must be dealt with when faced with externally mandated change.

Linda self-reported that she felt her primary role as a building administrator was to be a "guide." She related that it was a philosophy that has developed from her own personality:

> I don't like for someone to just get in my face and tell me the way something is going to be. I feel like I'm intelligent enough to make a contribution, and I want

to feel that I'm included in putting something together. I will certainly have more of a vested interest in it, for one thing. Not that I don't do stuff that I'm told to do! We all have to do that, but I think major policy changes that involve curriculum, for example, is accomplished when I can guide the teachers in the decision-making process. Teachers are trained, they have good heads on their shoulders for the most part, and if they have input, then it will make a smoother transition.

Linda continued discussing her philosophy by relating that

I think if we have some input from fellow staff people they will have more ownership in what's going on within the school in every facet. I could go in and just dictate the way it's going to be and they're just going to be rebellious and not as accepting of change ... a lot of times the brainstorming and what they put together is a wonderful program, and I find that if I want something changed, I can just throw out a little bug to people and they talk about it for a while and before long it's done and I'm not the bad guy for dictating. They are the ones who've made the changes and they don't even know they've done it!

When asked her opinion of externally mandated programs involving school change, Linda was quick to respond:

Some of these people making these changes don't really know what's going on. They don't know what's going on in schools. Sometimes they expect programs to make better changes when they don't make better changes ... they're not realistic programs for the kind of kids and families that we have to deal with right now. I think some of the people who are making these decisions need to spend some time

in the classes ... in the schools so that they can really see what teachers and administrators have to deal with before they put forth these expectations. I don't feel that they are realistic.

Mrs. Edwards continued by expressing interest in some of the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). She reported being very interested in the provision that mandated multiple assessments because, in her opinion, that was a "more equitable way" to measure "real student achievement" rather than "one standardized test such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills."

Mrs. Edwards further elaborated that wide-based standards, whether they be state or national, and their assessment leave little room for taking into account the individual differences of students. She said:

> The reality is that we try to abide by what they mandate, but it makes it very, very difficult at times because our kids are just not equipped. They are not ready for all that is expected of them. All of the testing ... it's good to have accountability, but I'm not necessarily agreeing with testing the children as much as we do. Maybe one test at the end of the year would enable us to have enough information and we would not have to test them three or four times a year. It takes a lot of time out of the classroom.

Mrs. Edwards was concerned about the pressure of accountability and stress being put on students. She elaborated:

> It puts a lot of stress on the kids, on the teachers, and I don't know that we really use the data that much to serve the kids after we get it. We get so involved in

teaching, in the daily routine, that I don't know that we take that material and really do anything with it after we've tested.

Linda continued to reiterate her opinion on externally mandated change and emphasized that her feelings applied to externally mandated change in general as well as the mandated change that resulted from the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

> Programs that have been very successful for my school were those that were designed to fit our kids' needs. We developed a more structured phonics reading program, and across the board reading and math programs. When I first came to this school district about 10 years ago, each teacher did her own thing. There was not a district curriculum guide. They used numerous reading series, math series, and it was basically little units within the building and no one really communicated as to what was going on. It was very difficult then for the next year's teachers to know where these kids were coming from. Of course, this is a plus for externally mandated change ... consistency across the board. Quite a conundrum.

When queried as to what leadership processes were most helpful to her in the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), and she responded:

> I think getting together with our committees ... with the teachers to talk about the problems associated with putting the program in place and having people that were willing to listen to where the state was coming from ... and just realizing that we had to do it anyway helped a lot. You know, a lot of them disagreed with a lot of the basic concepts of the reading program, but when they realized that they had to do it whether they wanted to or not, then they did it!

When asked about how her teachers "usually" reacted to mandated change, Linda responded, "It is usually mass rebellion."

When questioned about the differences, if any, that occurred when teachers were faced with the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), she hesitated until the question was reformed: Do your teachers more readily accept externally mandated change because they believe it will improve student learning? Linda replied:

> No, I think that the first year there was a lot of opposition because of the paperwork, of keeping track of test scores and things that they routinely did anyway, but seemed to be such a waste of time. They were rebellious against it. But, I think that after they made it through it a year and saw what happened at the end of a year and realized how important the documentation was that we had obtained, they began to see that it was important to do all that stuff. We even came to like the plan (see Appendix B) that we came up with. I think now, after three years, even if we did not have the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), our teachers would still want to do it. They are very confident in what they are doing; they see some really good results that have come from all of our reading tests. They are convinced that having the supporting evidence is good for later on ... for retentions, etc. And, they've got the proof that they have tried.

For Linda Edwards, implementing change made her take stock of her own leadership skills, and what would be needed to implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998):

Aside from collaborating with the teachers ... I remember so well that when I first found out that we were having to implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), I just didn't even know what it was.

I had to educate myself first on what we were implementing before I could even talk to the staff about it. I don't think anyone knew where he or she were going or even where the state legislature was coming from! So, I did a lot of research on it and did a lot of reading on what other schools had done and made copies of articles that I would find on the internet and just gathered a lot of data so that we'd have something to go by.

For Edwards, involving her teachers "sooner than later" was critical in getting ready to move her school toward implementing large-scale change.

I started talking with grade level people so that I could plant a seed that would grow in the direction that I thought we were going to go with reading. Of course, some of the teachers still didn't buy into it. You know, they just thought, 'another one of those flash in the pan programs. They are just trying something else; this won't stick around. Just give it some time, stick it on the back burner and it'll go away.' I certainly remember that as being the theory of a lot of the old timers. Then, when they really began to realize that we had to implement this and I started throwing all the data and research at them ... I think the reality ... I think a lot of them are real visual ... and when they saw that stuff, they thought, 'we're really gonna have to do this.'

Linda reported having to work "double-time" in her efforts to educate herself and her teachers. "Planting seeds" was not enough, however, according to Mrs. Edwards.

She reported having to have resources for teachers and modeling what to do with these resources:

> Then, some of them began doing some reading on their own, and began trying to pull some information together and then sharing the information with other colleagues. They began talking to their friends in other schools and realized that it wasn't just our school that was having to do the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). I was really surprised at how many of them did get out and talk to other teachers, but I have to admit that I know some of them did it so that they could come back to me and say, 'well, other schools aren't doing it; I don't know why we have to.' They didn't come back with that, however. Then, the real work began.

When probed about what she felt was the most successful leadership behavior that she exhibited during this implementation process, Linda appeared quite confident in her answer:

> I have no doubt that I was more successful because I did not push it down their throats ... by leading them to want to do it ... leading them to see the good that could come from a new reading initiative ... providing the opportunities and time for them to research the problems as well as the possible solutions.

Alice Newman

Alice Newman had been the building principal at her current school site for four years. She previously served for one year as a principal in a neighboring school district while the former administrator was on a year's leave of absence. Ms. Newman had 17

years of teaching experience as a special education teacher and reading instructor prior to entering administration.

Three major themes emerged from the interview with Ms. Newman:

- description of her leadership style;
- identification of her leadership role as the professional academic authority; and,
- the importance of externally mandated change to improve student learning.

Ms. Newman expressed her belief that an administrator's leadership practices are a direct result of her philosophy and beliefs about education. She related that, "I would characterize my leadership as democratic when possible and somewhat autocratic at times, depending on what the situation might be." When asked about the leadership processes that were helpful to her when implementing the externally mandated school change that resulted from the passage of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), she stated:

> Well, at that particular time, my background in reading was very, very helpful since I have a master's degree in reading and had much more experience in teaching reading to a number of children and older adults. I conveyed that to the teachers and pretty much mandated to them the type of testing and the things that we would do in order to ensure that our students were reading.

She explained that the teachers were very accepting of her leadership approach by stating, "I have found that most primary teachers are very receptive of that type of leadership when they know that you have had the experience and the knowledge. They like to be led."

A smile broke across Ms. Newman's face when questioned about externally mandated school change. She was firm and direct in her answer:

> Generally, I think that many of the mandated changes are needed. I think that, in many cases, they can improve instruction within the public school. I think, however, that a number of issues need to be looked at in regard to interpreting test results. For instance, we have some children who do very well on testing ... who don't display that quality of work within the classroom ... their grades are not that great. Then, we have students that are poor testers but who are outstanding students. So you have to look at the overall child, not just the testing component. Naturally, our school report cards don't reflect all of that. Fortunately, for elementary students, the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) is the only externally mandated change that I can think of ... except of course, for special education mandates which change all the time.

Ms. Newman emphasized that her background in the teaching of reading was the most successful leadership practice that she brought to the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) implementation process, she elaborated:

> I relied upon my past experience and conveyed that knowledge to the teachers and pretty much mandated to them the type of testing and the teaching strategies that we would use in order to ensure that our students were reading. I developed a site plan that I thought would work (see Appendix C). I think it helped for me to keep the teachers on task so that I could ensure that the students had quality teaching time or learning time within the school day.

Denise Pope

Mrs. Pope had completed eight years as a building administrator. All of this experience was gained at her current school site. The seven years previous to being hired as the principal was spent teaching first and second grade classes at the same school. She had a master's degree in elementary education and through postgraduate hours, she earned a certificate as an elementary principal.

Five major themes emerged from the interview with Denise Pope:

- description of her leadership style;
- the importance of collegiality between principal and teachers;
- the value of collaboration when implementing school change;
- the importance of constructing knowledge prior to implementing school reform; and,
- the inherent skepticism that must be overcome to successfully deal with externally mandated school reform.

When questioned regarding her philosophy of leadership, Denise Pope quickly volunteered:

> I'm not 'a prophet in my own land.' I try to role model anything and everything to both the teachers and the students. I don't expect anybody to do anything that I wouldn't do myself and I wouldn't ask somebody to do something that I can't do myself. I think if you're just proactive about what you do and what you expect, you know what I mean, if you kind of anticipate what will happen and you kind of lead by facilitating instead of true dictatorship, you know, that kind of helps. I

guess I'm just a facilitator really. The people that I have are so good, you know, you just have to kind of guide them in the direction you want and provide them with workshops that show them: 'this is the way I think about it, and you know, maybe this lady can convince you that this is the way it should be.' Staff development is very important.

Mrs. Pope expressed her concern that she never become "totally autocratic," but said that "there were times when you have to depend on the confidence that the staff has in its principal to follow that type of leadership, when it becomes necessary."

We do a lot of committee things and there are some times, you know, when you have to say 'this is the way it is ... just because ... and why? Because I said so.' You have to do that occasionally. We have grade level leaders, though, and I'll say, 'Could I have the grade level leaders come to my office after school?' They'll come in and I'll say, 'Now you guys go find out, research it, figure out what you want, and get back to me.' Researching a problem together and trying to set common goals and reach consensus helps establish an atmosphere that allows me to be the dictator when I have to. We try to do things in a positive way and have as much fun together as we can. You know, if we don't feed the teachers, they'll eat the kids!

Denise Pope paused to reflect when asked her opinion of externally mandated programs involving school change. Starting out slowly, she spoke:

It depends upon what their research base is or what their purpose of it is. My reaction to it would be based on that. If we are talking about the reading sufficiency program, I could see where they were going with that, but just because

they mandate that kids will be reading at grade level by the end of third grade doesn't make it so. What is going to happen is going to happen. I don't know what they thought we were doing in schools before they mandated it, but we were teaching school before they mandated that we teach school, you know ... so kids were learning to read. It is not a horse race. They are not going to all learn to read on the same day just because somebody in the legislature said to make it so.

At least they put a little money with it for a change. As far as other programs we've had ... you know, they just mandate them and they don't put anything with them like monetary support or additional help. You know, it doesn't even have to be monetary if they'll just support you. It's usually like, 'here it is, go find out how you are going to do it on your own' type of mandate. I don't mind them if they have good reasoning behind them, but, without help, it is just putting another pin in our pincushions ... and somewhere, sometime the boat is going to start leaking.

Mrs. Pope related the importance of researching what information was available regarding the newly mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998):

We had to get a committee together quickly to begin looking at what information was out there. We attended an Oklahoma State Department of Education conference, and they showed us Lawton's reading plan. You know, I think a lot of schools' plans looked like Lawton's at the beginning! We took the information home, got everyone together and I said, 'What do you think we can do about this?' We worked on our plan (see Appendix D) and worked on it, tweaking it a

little each time to meet the needs of our students. My most important leadership role as the principal was to support the teachers.

Mrs. Pope related many anecdotes that clarified her support. She said that she provided a support role for the teachers when attempting to simplify the paper trail that was associated with documentation mandated by the reading plan. She spoke of covering classes so those teachers might have extra time to plan teaching strategies involved with reading remediation. She chuckled when explaining the many meetings held with her superintendent to ascertain how afterschool programs would be funded when no school district in the state knew what monies would be tied to the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998):

> Sometimes I think my superintendent will just cry when he hears of how I want to do things, but I am the 'Queen of Manipulation!' People in the 'outside world' sometimes don't understand how those of us in public education in Oklahoma have to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear when it comes to monetary appropriations.

Mrs. Pope revealed that she tried to be very aware of the tension that she and the teachers were experiencing between the work of beginning the 1998-99 school year and implementing the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). She stated that, in retrospect, being reflective and aware of the added pressures helped everyone work with a little more compassion toward each other.

Composite Findings and Analysis

While each of the three participants in this study was unique and expressed her own perspective of the experience in implementing the externally mandated change

inherent in the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), there were striking similarities as well as differences between two of the three principals in their:

- philosophies of leadership;
- need to foster collegiality and collaboration;
- willingness to support staff development to promote construction of knowledge;
- necessities of dealing with externally mandated change.

Although the third participant, Alice Newman, articulated a philosophy of education, her approach to leadership was at the extreme end of the continuum. In comparison to Linda Edwards and Denise Pope, Ms. Newman felt a:

- need to provide direction for school reform at the authority level;
- necessity of dealing with externally mandated change.

Philosophies of Leadership

Although the scope of this study was limited to three principals across three different districts, two "extreme" leadership philosophies guided the work of the principals implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). The extremes were a collaborative, empowering leadership style and an authoritative, closed leadership style. Two of the three principals expressed a philosophy that was consistent with ideas included in social learning theory such as collaboration and constructivism rather than with leadership that is top-down and bureaucratic. For example, Linda Edwards stated,

> My teachers have good training, they have good heads on their shoulders, and we're going to be the ones in the trenches when the smoke of implementation

clears. They needed to 'help me, help them.' It had to be a schoolwide effort with everyone working together to implement this new reading program.

Mrs. Edwards emphasized her belief that she had a responsibility to be supportive of her teachers. In a discussion of what it meant to be a supportive administrator, Mrs. Edwards included encouraging teachers themselves, as well as encouraging teachers to support each other in their efforts to remain engaged. Linda elaborated by saying that she worked hard to convey her belief of "being a guide, a facilitator" to the teachers and staff members with whom she worked.

Denise Pope asserted that she was not one, who employed practices of "power from the top," though she would not shy away from applying a direct approach when its use was indicated. Both Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope reiterated the idea of respect for their teachers. They noted that teachers had much to offer in terms of experience in the classroom and in the teaching of reading.

Mrs. Pope said, "The teachers know when you respect them and their work. It's easier to deal with them if you do have to ask them to change something or tell them to do something they don't want to do."

Mrs. Pope explained that one way in which she demonstrated her respect for the teachers was high visibility and availability. "I try very hard to be out and about the building on a daily basis. If a teacher needs to talk, I try very hard to listen," she said. She also noted that she tried to be cognizant of how different teachers might perceive her presence by saying, "most teachers appreciate my stopping by because it gives me an opportunity to observe good things that are happening in their classrooms; the ones who don't may think they're being spied upon." Denise relates that she feels she has

overcome the negative perceptions by letting the teachers see that she is looking for what is going right. "I'm looking for the exciting learning events that are going on," she said. Mrs. Pope found it imperative to express appropriate praise in recognition of exciting, good things teachers were doing, but she recognized the need for equity in recognition. She was keenly aware of teachers' feelings and stated, "You don't want to overlook people ... you don't want to slight people, but yet you really do want to acknowledge what you see. I think that's a very important part of my leadership style."

At the extreme end of the leadership style continuum was the autocratic approach of Alice Newman. She felt that a more autocratic approach to leadership was the one that worked best for her. Alice Newman related that, "my teachers want to be led, and that's what I do best" Alice stated that she would like to use more "democratic approaches" at times, but they "just didn't seem 'to work'." When faced with the implementation process of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), she voiced confidence in her authoritarian leadership due to her personal background as a reading specialist. She reiterated, "I relied on my past experience and knowledge and pretty much told them the types of testing and teaching they would do."

In speaking of their philosophies of leadership, all three participants kept returning to the idea of communication playing a central role in the success in implementing school change. Both Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope emphasized the need for two-way communication. Mrs. Edwards said, "It must be reciprocal." Ms. Newman confessed that she had worked "very diligently" at improving her communication with teachers over the past few years. Alice Newman indicated that "being a good listener" was not one of "her strong points" when she first became a principal.

Need to Foster Collegiality and Collaboration

As characterized by Mrs. Edwards, collegial relationships are built on respect, understanding, sensitivity, and communication, and resulted from her conscious efforts to get to know her teachers and staff members. She described how she stressed communication with teachers by saying:

> I'll send notes to the teachers and tell them that 'if there are any concerns you would like to discuss with me' ... just to let them know where I'm coming from. I make a conscious effort to communicate with them and say, in effect, 'I am your person. I will be on this journey with you.' I want them to know that I value them as individuals, and the job they do.

Mrs. Pope described the initiatives in place to recognize teachers' continuing education through public recognition of those who are in graduate school. She reported that she would announce this in faculty meetings, Parent-Teacher Organization meetings, and would include it in her newsletters to parents. Additionally, she involved veteran teachers in mentoring programs for new teachers, as well as for teachers new to her school, and she provided staff development for all teachers involved in these programs.

Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope both discussed the importance of facing critical school issues as a "team" with teachers, staff members, and administrators being a member of the team. They both expressed a need to create a "cooperative community" of staff members. Denise Pope spoke of "doing a lot of committee things." She said,

> I like to identify a problem with the help of the teachers, form a committee, provide release time for the committee to do some action research, and then have

them come back and report to everyone else. We keep everyone involved, keep reconfiguring the committees, and try to keep reflecting on our best practices.

Linda Edwards reinforced this same concept by telling of her experiences as a teacher:

> I taught in a school where only a select few were involved in shared decision-making. I was not in the group. I felt disenfranchised. I think that makes me very aware of 'taking turns.'

Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope both emphasized in their own ways the notion of collegiality as related to support. They indicated that camaraderie existed at their respective schools as a result of the efforts of both the teachers and the principal to support each other in a mutually beneficial manner. At several points during the interviews with Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope, they both spoke of how much they valued collegiality when it came to accomplishing any area of school reform such as the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) that might not be readily embraced at the outset. Denise Pope elaborated by saying,

> We knew that one of the first orders of business would be to write a site plan that conformed to the provisions of the act. This type of collaboration meant working together in a very focused way. Collegiality seemed to be a necessity to create the positive goal-oriented atmosphere that we needed. You have to remember that the collegial relationship is 'give and take' when it comes to expertise.

Among some initiatives mentioned as being crucial to building collegiality were the team and grade level meetings, a formalized peer mentoring program, and being a Great Expectations school. Mrs. Edwards' and Mrs. Pope's respective faculties have both gone through Great Expectations training.

Mrs. Edwards spoke several times about the importance of praising her teachers' good practices. She related, "We are just like our students. We will work harder and longer with positive reinforcement." Mrs. Edwards also emphasized her observation that her teachers needed the "atta-girl" comments to build their confidence when muddling through the difficult process of implementing the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Edwards elaborated:

> Teachers are natural collaborators if the right atmosphere exists. Everyone feels more secure with a 'buddy' to talk things over with, and, if you have a bunch of buddies, better yet! If you have a problem to solve or a situation to examine, you feel a lot safer when you are receiving encouragement from each other and from your boss. I know that any situation that has input from fellow staff people is more likely to succeed because we all have ownership in it.

Ms. Newman, on the other hand, reported that she "had little time to get reading sufficiency implemented." She related that her commitment to utilize her background in reading left little need to collaborate. "More than anything, I needed for the teachers to start the year right off by trying to identify those boys and girls who would qualify to be on a reading plan." She stated, "I believe I facilitate support and a collegial feeling by letting them know my expectations of them. We all like to know that."

Staff Development for the Construction of Knowledge

One of the elements mentioned by Linda Edwards and Denise Pope as critical in supporting their respective teachers was the encouragement of professional growth through staff development offered at their school sites and through state department of education workshops. "Literacy First was a great inservice offered through the

Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation due to the passage of House Bill 3348" (Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act), said Denise Pope. "This is the first time that I can remember the state providing such intensive training for every teacher in the state at no cost to the individual or the district," she continued. Mrs. Edwards reported that there had always been tremendous support in her district for professional growth "if it will provide teachers with the means or knowledge to impact student learning." She said, "I have never refused support, either release time or money, to any staff person who makes such a request."

Both Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope mentioned the importance of seeing that every teacher had equal opportunities to do action research in regard to reading remediation. "This is where good networking came in handy. Several times, I or a teacher might know of someone or some other school district we might recommend as a good source to go observe or to talk to," said Mrs. Pope. She held that it was her responsibility to provide opportunities for risk taking as well as to remember to take risks herself. Pope added that she found it imperative that she maintain her own professional knowledge through continuing education. Her idea of academic savvy included encouraging teachers to read, to study, to observe others in their classrooms and to confer with one another.

Ms. Newman did not place the same emphasis on staff development during our discussion, as did the other two principals. She indicated that she was somewhat reticent to suggest staff development to teachers who were struggling with discipline, for instance. She commented, "I don't like to release them from the classroom when they are still working on classroom management."

Dealing with Externally Mandated Change

Participants in this study agreed that change is difficult. The nature of human response to change explains a lot. Evans (1996) wrote that:

> Change leads a doubly double life. There is a fundamental duality to our response to change: we both embrace and resist it. We acknowledge its inevitability, and yet a profound conservative impulse governs our psychology, making us naturally resistant to change and leaving us chronically ambivalent when confronted with innovation. (p. 21)

All three participants expressed opinions that supported school improvement, but that also revealed "uncertainty," "apprehension," and some "resentment" toward externally mandated change. Mrs. Edwards indicated, "I think all schools need to have guidelines to make them more uniform throughout the state ... even throughout all 50 states ... even perhaps a national curriculum." Mrs. Edwards expressed real apprehension, however when she first heard about the plan: "I hadn't read it yet, and didn't know that it would be so specific, and I was concerned that some of the people mandating these changes didn't have a grasp of what's really going on in schools." Edwards addressed the specific concern of having such a mobile student population and how test scores would indicate student learning when so many students moved in and out of her school. She posited,

> Kids moving from school to school and from state to state ... they all have different backgrounds. Did you know that, of 158 third graders this year, only 67 of them began school in our district? Do you think the state legislature took into consideration that we only taught around 65% of our students during the time

period covered by the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) when they voted to publish our school's report card?

However, Mrs. Edwards confided that her fear of the unknown is why she usually resists change. She explained that, once she had read the Act, she found one of the positive aspects of the externally mandated change brought about through the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) was that the reading plan clearly delineated responsibilities of the school site and the district. Mrs. Edwards said the Act definitively outlined the five areas of reading instruction to be addressed as: phoneme awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency and comprehension. "Probably all teachers of reading would agree to these areas of concentration. That was reassuring," said Mrs. Edwards. She went on to say, "it helped me to know those areas because I had the type of relationship with my staff that enabled me to know which teacher(s) had expertise and could best collaborate with some knowledge in that area."

Denise Pope echoed Edwards' opinions by stating,

> It depends on what their research base is or what their purpose of it (externally mandated change) is, but after my initial skepticism, I could see where they were going with the reading sufficiency. I don't know what they thought we were doing in schools before they mandated the change, but it has helped to have the teachers, counselors, reading specialist, and I collaborate on what our site plan would be to specifically address the elements of the law.

Mrs. Pope reminisced about numerous staff meetings and the brainstorming that took place when trying to develop a site reading sufficiency plan. She reported that one of the

most valuable outcomes was the sharing that took place among the teachers in regard to their various techniques in attacking reading difficulties among their students.

Mrs. Newman, on the other hand, never voiced any resistance on her part to the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). She confided a sense of security that she felt in having a law passed that provided a clear mandate to work in a number of areas that she already believed should be emphasized in the area of reading instruction. The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) provided affirmation to her philosophy. More importantly, she stated, "we knew exactly what outcome the state expected of us, and I intended to see that the teachers worked toward that goal."

Conversely, both Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope felt an obligation to win over the teachers' acceptance of the externally mandated change that came with the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), when they felt still trepidation themselves. Mrs. Pope said that she was very alarmed when she read the section of the reading act that called for retention of any third grade student who was not reading at grade level by the end of third grade: "I had visions of some of my third-graders being 16 years old and driving to school to still try to reach a third grade reading level. We'd have to enlarge the parking lot! Thank God that was revised."

Linda Edwards remembered her motivation in trying to find out every detail of what the act included by saying,

> I recall being so relieved that the act excluded those students who were on IEP's. I could not have gone to my teachers when I first found out we would be mandating this change. I think it's an important factor of my leadership ability that I am able to model the type of behavior that I expect from my staff people. I

had to become informed and confident in our abilities to enact this law before I could model the type of attitude that I wanted to see.

All three participants seemed to agree that there were many unanswered questions when Oklahoma principals were first informed of the new legislation inherent in the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). In final analysis, they also agreed that, regardless of the approach, this externally mandated change would happen.

Summary

The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (House Bill 2878) was placed into law by the legislature in July, 1998. The first provision to be met by elementary principals was to submit a site and district reading sufficiency plan to the Oklahoma State Department of Education by October 1, 1998. The site and district reading sufficiency plans were to reflect the existing programs that had been put in place as a result of the mandates.

The findings of this study indicated that the three participants were faced with the implementation of this externally mandated program, and they had very little time in which to do it. All three participants expressed opinions that supported school improvement, but that also revealed "uncertainty," "apprehension," and some "resentment" toward externally mandated change. Two of the participants employed leadership practices that embraced the concepts of collegiality, collaboration, and empowerment of teachers to encourage professional growth. One participant employed leadership practices that were autocratic in nature.

A review of the artifacts indicated that there were no substantive differences in the site reading sufficiency plan from each respective site. Each plan specifically

addressed the five essential elements of reading instruction: phoneme awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, and comprehension.

In review of the field notes, it was noted that each participant in this study indicated that samples of site reading sufficiency plans were offered at meetings conducted by representatives from the Oklahoma State Department of Education. These meetings were held to inform elementary building principals of the new mandates in preparation for implementation during the 1998-99 school year.

CHAPTER FIVE

Interpretation and Implications

Introduction

This qualitative study was conducted in order to describe the experiences of three elementary principals who worked with teachers to implement the state-mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). The participants' descriptions of their leadership while implementing the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) provided the data for this study. This chapter includes a summary of the procedures used in this study, a discussion of the conclusions reached in this study, and implications and recommendations based on the findings of this study.

Summary of the Study

The following questions were used to direct this study:

1. How did participants in the study implement the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) at their sites?
2. What leadership qualities were used?
3. What factors supported implementation?
4. What factors limited implementation?

Summary of Procedures

A phenomenological research design allowed the researcher to study three elementary principals who were responsible for the implementation of the externally mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). This study utilized in-depth, face-to-face, audiotaped interviews that were later transcribed by the researcher. The format of the interviews was semi-structured, and employed the use of an interview guide with

topics to explore; however, the semi-structured questions allowed the researcher to remain open to pursue topics that were not on the interview guide. The study group consisted of three participants, principals of elementary schools in suburban Oklahoma districts. Follow-up interviews were conducted on a needs basis in order to have participants further clarify information provided during interviews.

The researcher used a phenomenological approach to analyze data. In analyzing data, the researcher followed fairly well defined steps and proceeded through the methodology of reducing data, analyzing the participants' statements to ascertain themes, and searching for all possible meanings. Relevant statements made by the participants were pulled from the transcripts and listed in a process known as horizonalization, where each statement was judged to have equal value. Once that was finished, the nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statements, or invariant horizons were listed.

These statements were then transformed into clusters of meanings or themes. The themes were joined to produce a description of the phenomenon that was experienced by the participants, including quotations from the participants. Individual descriptions were aggregated into a composite description and were then integrated and synthesized into a final product that presented the meanings of the experiences of the participants. Conclusions were drawn from these analyses in order to present the meanings of the experiences of the three elementary school principals who were responsible for the implementation of the externally mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that, while each of the three participants in this study was unique and expressed her own perspective of the experience in

implementing the externally mandated change inherent in the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), there were striking similarities as well as differences between the three principals in their:

- philosophies of leadership;
- need to foster collegiality and collaboration;
- willingness to support staff development to promote construction of knowledge; and,
- necessities of dealing with externally mandated change.

These were the substantive elements for the study participants in the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Philosophies of Leadership

Effective schools, in part, develop when a principal clearly defines and articulates the mission of the school. Effective administrators provide the guidance necessary for their schools to succeed. Blumberg and Greenfeld's (1980) study of effective principals underscored that there were a variety of approaches to effective school leadership and that these approaches vary from one setting to another. The elementary principals who participated in this study indicated that they had clear understandings of the roles, duties, and responsibilities. The participants indicated that they believed that they, along with their respective staff members, were members of the same team, a "well-oiled machine," with "complete support" of one another for both their individual endeavors, and as well as for their group endeavors. Two of the three principals noted that they were "on the same page" when it came to supporting their teachers and to sharing the workload

associated with implementing the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Two of the participants espoused a belief in participative leadership, but all three participants acknowledged the limiting influence that administration and the daily managerial tasks can have on leadership. Two principals expressed ideas such as "working together to examine our values, beliefs, and perceptions" that were consistent with those of constructivist leadership as noted by Lambert (1998), as well as ideas of team learning, encouragement and support of creativity, and empowerment of teachers that are hallmarks of formative leadership (Ash & Persall, 2000).

One of the participants felt that traditional bureaucratic administration was necessary to maintain an orderly school environment. This participant did not express a need to foster collegiality and collaboration in decision making as she professed to be "the authority" in the area of reading and literacy.

Findings corroborated that two of the elementary principals incorporated elements of progressive leadership that encouraged team work, collaborative learning, innovation, creativity, open communication and empowerment of teachers--all elements of leadership according to Blase and Blase (1999a), Reitzug and Burrello (1995), and Zepeda (1999). Generally, these two principals used a non-directive, non-threatening approach that allowed teachers autonomy within the work situation. However, if a situation arose in the management of detail that required them to act in a more directive manner, they segued into the traditional bureaucratic model and asserted the power of the position of principal.

Two of the principals voiced that they were not comfortable in asserting themselves in an authoritative manner with teachers, particularly in situations that

required a reprimand or admonishment. Mrs. Edwards said, "When I shut my door, the teachers know it's bad. What they don't know is that it's because I'm uncomfortable as well as the teacher." Mrs. Pope related that she found that recognizing teachers' achievement and accomplishments was easy to do, but she found admonition of the teachers to be difficult. Mrs. Edwards attributed her reticence to confront teachers to her own dislike of reprimand. She said, "I don't like for someone to just get in my face when telling me the way something should have been done, when I feel I've tried my best."

All three participants indicated that they held the belief that ineffective teachers should not be in classrooms for a long time. Ms. Newman related that she had had a conversation with a teacher when she herself was a young teacher and said, "If I am ineffective in that classroom, in front of twenty-five kids, I hope somebody will pull me out. I don't want an ineffective teacher in the classroom, at all." Newman demonstrated an understanding of the problem with some principals being apprehensive about admonishing teachers, when, in reference to an ineffective teacher, she said:

> It might be that nobody ever addressed it before. They just didn't feel comfortable saying, 'I'd like to come observe you in the classroom ... I'm continuing to see the same kinds of things going on in your classroom, and it's a problem.'

While the principals recognized that the situation of having to admonish a teacher was more pleasant for both parties involved when there was a feeling of mutual respect between the teacher and the principal, they tended to treat the idea of admonition as a taboo subject. The participants emphasized the importance of two-way communication between principals and teachers in keeping open the channels of communication and

respect, a concept found in the literature in discussion of building mutual respect, trust, and collegiality among educators (Apple & Beane, 1995; Blase & Blase, 1999a; Glickman, 1993; O'Hair & Reitzug, 1997).

Two participants in this study reinforced the thought of teachers as being the primary implementers of change as reflected in the literature of Fullan (1991). Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope voiced opinions that strong leadership was a key motivator to their teachers. Heck, Larsen, and Marcoulides (1990) wrote:

> Our results indicate that many of the important instructional leadership variables influencing school achievement are not related to the regular clinical supervision of teachers. . . .While regularly observing teachers and conferencing with them regarding instructional improvement is admittedly an important aspect, our results show that principals' time and attention are focused on a variety of additional activities. Many behaviors, which are more informal and strategic, cluster into the constructs of instructional organization and school climate and impact student achievement as well. Some of these efforts involve clarifying, coordinating, and communicating a unified school educational purpose to teachers, students, and the community. Effective principals appear to build a sense of teamwork at the school. (pp. 120-121)

In conclusion, all three principals' leadership tactics were, in essence, useful in implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Although all three principals were successful in implementation, two of the principals took the road of collaboration and one took the road of an autocrat.

The collaborative principals had empowered their teachers to reconstruct knowledge about the teaching of reading and to collaborate in making decisions on how the externally mandated change would take form to enact the mandates of the law. They viewed the teachers as the ones closest to instruction, and closest to recognizing the needs of the students. The teachers were major stakeholders in this process. The principals had operationalized a program that fit the context of their schools from the point of view, the knowledge, and the experience of these teachers.

On the other hand, the third principal was successful at implementation through giving the teachers directives according to her point of view, her knowledge, and her experience. She excluded the major stakeholders.

The mandates of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) are intended to be realized by students, their families, and the teachers who work with them. Successfully implementing external mandates such as the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) requires inclusion of the major stakeholders. The two principals who practiced leadership in a collegial fashion involved the major stakeholders in a collaborative process that resulted in a new reading program that had many individuals vested in seeing that it was a success and that student learning was kept as the primary focus. The autocratic principal was successful at implementing the letter of the law of the legislation, but she failed miserably as a democratic, inclusive leader. In current school reform, this is an issue that must be addressed (Apple & Beane, 1995; Blase & Blase, 1999a; O'Hair, McLaughlin & Reitzug 2000; & Reitzug & Burrello, 1995). Leadership for the twenty-first century can no longer be viewed with the principal as the sole visionary and master of the school's curriculum. The top-down management approach to school leadership is

being replaced in some schools by more inclusive, progressive, and democratic approaches to leadership. "Progressive leaders are not dictatorial and they share some of their responsibility for leadership with others as well as sharing authority" (Sergiovanni, 1994, p. 169).

Collegiality and Collaboration

The need to express support and encouragement for teachers was a strong conviction held by two participants in the study. Within that precept, there were several secondary topics mentioned by two principals as contributing to what they meant by the term "support." For one of the principals, support was predicated by a need to "know" who the teacher was and what that teacher was capable of doing in order to provide appropriate support and encouragement. For two of the principals, the concept of support was grounded in terms of collegiality. Finally, the idea of support being necessary to allow for professional development and growth was emphasized by two of the three participants.

Common sense would dictate that it would be easier to support someone who is "known," rather than someone who is not. Both Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Pope articulated that the principal must take the time to get to know their constituencies of teachers in order to better support them. "We spend time at every faculty meeting doing 'energizers' and always devote a little time to recognizing individual teachers' successes or something they are doing that's exciting in the classroom. It helps us to get to know and appreciate one another a little more," Denise Pope said. Pope stressed that she needed to know what experiences the teachers had. Research confirms that it is important to take into account life experiences that teachers bring with them (Ash & Persall, 2000).

Collegiality was an issue that two participants indicated as being critical to their being able to provide appropriate and adequate support to teachers. The term collegiality was used to describe a "give-and-take" relationship between one of the principals and her teachers during the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Mrs. Edwards put much stock in being a visible administrator and available as a means of indicating her commitment to support and respect of the teachers, but she also indicated that it was important for teachers to respect and support each other, as well. The point was made that both principals and educators had important roles to play within a school, and that one position complemented the other.

It is through effective leadership that emphasis can be placed on cooperation and collaboration and not competition. The movement toward participation is a worthwhile endeavor on the part of the principal. Collaborative opportunities such as peer coaching and mentoring were given as examples of the collegial, supportive situations in which two principals' support was critical to working with teachers. In implementing the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), Denise Pope related:

> When faced with implementation, I had to get the committee together really quickly because we had little time to come up with our site reading plan, our afterschool program and all that. I was able to give a number of representative teachers release time to help work on it. We couldn't have done it without working together and bringing a variety of expertise to the table.

This type of collaborative effort fully supports Schlechty (1990) statement that, "Participatory leadership makes sense in school because this pattern of leadership promises to yield better decisions and better results" (p. 117).

Participatory leadership was evidenced in two of the principals' approaches to implementing the program as they expressed the view that teachers are an integral part of any policy implementation. The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) was implemented through shared decision making and constituent participation.

The third principal did not see a need for collaboration. She stated, "I was the one with the knowledge of how to teach reading. I have a master's degree in reading." She also related that, "my teachers want to be led, and that's what I do best." Glickman (1993), in discussing developmental readiness and the appropriate approach to change, says,

> It is well documented that people with limited thinking---limited experience and knowledge---about a topic desire and need structure from authorities or experts. They view help as being told how to do something. People who do have experience in and knowledge of a particular area tend to view authorities or experts as sources of information for their own thinking, rather than as dispensers of truth. Those with little concern about a particular topic tend to want somebody else to make decisions for them. (p. 87)

It was implied by this participant that, indeed, the teachers at her respective site had limited experience and knowledge about the teaching of reading and wanted her, the authority in this area, to tell them what to do.

Encouraging Professional Growth

Professional growth was highly regarded by two participants in this study. One principal made known her support for professional growth activities and reported that she had found funding to support staff development for anyone who requested it. The

principal said she encouraged teachers to pursue graduate work and attend to their professional growth, as well. Mrs. Edwards emphasized her own commitment to professional growth, both formal and informal, in her statement:

> When faced with the externally mandated change with the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998), I couldn't wait to attend some of the Oklahoma State Department of Education workshops to hear more details. Too, I was on the phone as soon as I'd read the Act ... trying to find out what other principals thought and what they were going to do!

Mrs. Edwards has also encouraged teachers to read professionally; lending them textbooks from her own library and enabling those teachers to have access to the Internet at school. She said:

> Of course, the first thing I did when we heard about the reading program was to tell the teachers that they would all be able to attend Literacy First, the professional development program offered through the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998).

Concepts of adult learning and life transitions are linked to professional growth and development. The two principals, Edwards and Pope, who ascribed to the idea that professional growth was critical, indicated an understanding of adult learning. They encouraged teachers to draw on experiences they had in designing their own learning opportunities. O'Neil (1998) believed that "people learn by actively constructing knowledge, weighing new information against their previous understanding, thinking about and working through discrepancies (on their own and with others), and coming to a new understanding" (p. 51).

Perhaps, given the data as reported by this study's participants, administrators need to keep in mind that teachers' professional and personal lives intertwine, sometimes leading to a need for assistance. Mrs. Pope, in talking of teachers dealing with family and personal crisis, said:

> My obligation as an administrator is to help a teacher grow. I will look for opportunities to help that teacher ... make them feel comfortable enough ... trust me ... I try to look at the whole picture, try to make it a growth situation.

Linda Edwards noted, in describing how she worked with teachers in professional growth, that it was worthwhile for the teacher "to be reminded of the good things in their everyday teaching that work well for students and to focus on those things ... [and be] willing to learn and to change." Further, Mrs. Pope and Mrs. Edwards both mentioned encouraging teachers to practice self-reflection as a means of focusing on developing their professional growth. This line of thinking is consistent with Zepeda's (1999) idea that the principal can be a constructivist leader by involving people in the processes that cause them to construct knowledge through the process of dealing with issues.

Two participants in this study indicated that a primary goal was to provide opportunity and support for teachers' professional growth. Mrs. Edwards was so committed to her belief that encouragement of professional growth was an integral part of leadership that she assumed duties over and above her usual workload in order to assure success of the professional growth and development initiatives at her school. She noted that she sits with "every single person" in professional growth goal-setting conferences at the beginning of the year, and again at the end of the year in assessment conferences, in order to ensure that both the teachers' and the program's integrity be maintained.

The one principal who did not emphasize professional growth as a priority during her interview was Alice Newman. She did, however, state that her teachers had attended the Literacy First workshops which she felt was important in carrying out the mandates of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Mrs. Newman voiced concern that her duties as sole disciplinarian and facilities manager had her somewhat removed from instructional supervision and teacher instructional support issues. In informal conversation with the researcher, however, Ms. Newman indicated her own commitment to pursuing higher education and her support of teachers at her school who were in graduate programs. She did remark that she wanted to use her position of leadership to "return the favor" of her mentors to those she works with now.

Externally Mandated Change

Conditions of uncertainty as were created by having to implement the externally mandated Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) brought about anxiety that often accompanies fear of the unknown during the early stages of a change process. School personnel often respond quickly in an effort to "get it done." Some might say that the main problem in public education is not resistance to change, but the presence of too many innovations mandated or adopted uncritically and superficially on a fragmented basis (Fullan, 1993).

Superintendents were notified of the impending legislation at an Oklahoma State Department of Education leadership conference in June, 1998. The Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998) was passed on July 1, 1998. Principals, who typically do not report back to school until the first of August each year, were informed of the new mandate upon their return to school. Linda Edwards said, "I was surprised. I knew some

things were being discussed between legislators, but I was caught off guard. I thought, 'what now?"

Denise Pope stated, "You know, I could understand where they were going with the Act, but the timing was bad, and I was disgusted that no one in the legislature ever asks me, 'What will this do for your school?'" All three participants in this study agreed that change is difficult. The nature of human response to change explains a lot. As Evans (1996) explained, "There is a fundamental duality to our response to change: we both embrace and resist it" (p. 21).

All three principals in this study expressed feelings of encouragement after reading the provisions of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998). Two principals, Linda Edwards and Denise Pope, also expressed feelings of frustration due to a lack of planning time prior to the implementation deadline. All of the participants in this study reiterated feeling a tremendous sense of responsibility for "making it work" because the possibility was there to "really do something right for reading." These reactions directly correlate with Champy's (1995) belief that if a key leader were opposed to change, then efforts at improvement would almost surely fail.

It is the principal's role to set forth the conditions necessary for teachers to successfully implement change. While the process of change is filled with uncertainty, one conclusion concerning change seems clear: the principal plays a critical role in assisting teachers to change their practices (Blase & Blase, 1997).

Implications

Based upon findings of this study, implications and recommendations are made for:

- principals;
- school districts that provide staff development for administrators and teachers;
- institutions of higher education that conduct leadership training programs.

Implications for Elementary School Principals

As an instructional leader, the principal influences the culture of the school through his/her work with teachers. As indicated by the participants in this study, the principal needs to "know" the teachers in order to support, to encourage, and to enhance collegiality. In working with teachers, the principal must keep in mind that the teacher has much to offer, both in professional experiences and lived experiences. The task for the principal should be to tap the teacher resource while acting as a resource to the teacher.

Implications for School Districts

Participants in this study placed much emphasis on providing professional growth and staff development opportunities for teachers for purposes of rejuvenation, information, and/or remediation. They also commented on their own needs for ongoing professional growth and development. As with teachers, administrators need to be offered professional growth and staff development opportunities, also. It is incumbent on the school district to provide appropriate staff development for principals.

Responses from the three principals indicated that factors of adult learning need to be taken into account in designing staff development offerings. The participants indicated that, while the experiential background of the principal needs to be considered, a primary factor that needs to be attended to is the active involvement of the principal in decision-making about what is to be learned. The principal must not only perceive that

s(he) has a role in developing the learning opportunity, but also that it is authentic participation.

Implications for Institutions of Higher Learning

As indicated by the participants in this study, the scope and sequence of principal preparation programs may not adequately address the unique work of the principalship including the role of the principal in implementing external mandates. Universities need to offer a principalship curriculum in educational leadership that focuses not only on the aspects of general administration, but also on the dynamics of the relationship of the principal to the various publics with whom s(he) must work.

Further, educational leadership programs for principals should include courses in conflict management and resolution, in development of professional growth programs for teachers, and in development of teacher recognition initiatives. All three areas were identified through this study as areas critical in endeavors of a principal to meet the challenges of an administrator in today's society.

Recommendations for Further Study

As noted in the literature (Blase & Blase, 1999a; Reitzug & Burrello, 1995; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993), effective instructional leaders work to develop a culture of collaboration, equality, and lifelong study of teaching and learning through talk, growth, and reflection. Blase and Blase (1999b) found that "relinquishing old roles and power while being accountable for decisions made by others necessitates the development of collaborative decision-making processes, the creation of a shared vision, and the invention of a supportive network of professional relationships" (p. 84). As schools evolve in the twenty-first century, so too will the role of the principal. The leadership

role that the principal plays in curriculum development and the implementation of externally mandated change is worthy of further study.

This study found that the participating principals perceived that their respective teaching staffs put much faith in their principal to not only manage their daily operational tasks, but also to contribute significantly to the overall task of externally mandated change through instructional leadership. The principals in this study indicated a feeling of authentic empowerment.

Would this be true in other elementary schools? Further research within other school districts is recommended. It would be interesting to study principals in other elementary schools across the state of Oklahoma to determine what, if any, differences there would be inherent to style of leadership of the individual site principals.

Finally, further research predicated on the perceptions of assistant principals, teachers, students, parents, and/or central office personnel, as relating to the principal's work, would add other dimensions to the understandings derived from this study.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998)

APPENDIX A

An Act relating to schools; amending Section 3, Chapter 349, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 1210.508C), which relates to the Reading Sufficiency Act; modifying grade-level of students required to be assessed for reading skills and have a reading assessment plan; adding to elements of plan; modifying means by which remediation shall be continued; requiring submission of each district plan to the State Board of Education as part of Comprehensive Local Education Plan; modifying components of district reading sufficiency plan; requiring the promulgation of certain rules; requiring ongoing assessments to be administered to third-grade students; specifying assessments to be considered in development of plan; requiring implementation of certain plan; mandating inclusion of parent or guardian in third-grade retention consideration of certain students; requiring certain report for all elementary schools; modifying requirements for student permanent records; providing for certain monetary assistance; requiring school districts to report the receipt of certain funds pursuant to the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System; amending Section 21, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-200), as last amended by Section 24 of Enrolled House Bill No. 3348 of the 2nd Session of the 46th Oklahoma Legislature, which related to professional development institutes; requiring the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation to make certain professional development institutes available under certain conditions; amending 70 OS. 1991, Section 3-104.2, as last amended by Section 66, Chapter 290, O.S.L. 1994 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 3-104.2), which relates to Comprehensive Local Education Plans; requiring reading sufficiency plan to be included in Comprehensive Local Education Plan; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 3, Chapter 349, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 1210.508C) is amended to read as follows:

Section 1210.508C A. Beginning with the 1998-99 school year, each student enrolled in <u>kindergarten, first, second and third grade</u> of the public schools of this state shall be assessed by multiple on-going assessments for the acquisition of reading skills for the grade level in which that student is enrolled. Before the close of <u>each</u> school year, except for students who are on an individualized education program, have limited English proficiency or for which English is a second language, any of the students provided for in this subsection found not to be reading at the appropriate grade level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which shall include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills. The plan shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Sufficient additional in-school instructional time for the development of reading and comprehension skills of the student;
2. If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular school hours, on Saturdays and during summer; however, such instruction may not be counted toward the one-hundred-eighty-day school year required in Section 1-109 of this title; and

3. The five essential elements of reading instruction: phoneme awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency and comprehension.

The program of instruction shall continue until the student is determined not to be in need of remediation in reading.

B. 1. Every school district shall adopt and annually update a district reading sufficiency plan which shall be submitted to and approved by the State Board of Education as a part of each district's Comprehensive Local Education Plan. The district reading sufficiency plan shall include a plan for each site and which includes an analysis of the data provided by the Oklahoma School Testing Program and other reading assessments utilized, and which outlines how each school site will comply with the provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act.

C. For any third-grade student in need of remediation as determined by multiple ongoing assessments and reading assessments administered in the Oklahoma School Testing Program, a new reading assessment plan shall be developed and implemented as specified in this section. In addition to other requirements of this act, the plan shall include specialized tutoring and may include a recommendation as to whether the student should be retained in the third grade at the close of that year. The parent or guardian of the student shall be included in the retention consideration. The State Department of Education shall annually issue a Reading Report Card for each elementary site which includes the number of students in need of remediation in reading in kindergarten, first, second and third grades.

D. Copies of the results of the assessments administered shall be made a part of the permanent record of each student.

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1210.508D of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. Contingent on the provision of appropriated funds designated for the Reading Sufficiency Act, the State Department of Education is hereby authorized to award schools up to One Hundred Fifty Dollars ($150.00) for each enrolled first-, second- and third-grade student of the current school year who is found to be in need of remediation in reading.

B. Each school district that received funds pursuant to the Reading Sufficiency Act for the previous school year shall report receipt and expenditure of the funds to the State Department of Education by project reporting code, object and program classification as part of the final revenue report and final expenditure report pursuant to the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY Section 21, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995 (70 OS. Supp. 1997, Section 6-200), as last amended by Section 24 of Enrolled House Bill No. 3348 of the 2nd Session of the 46th Oklahoma Legislature, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-200. A. Subject to the availability of funds, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall have authority to develop and administer training for residency committees and training for professional development through professional development institutes. Included in the professional development institutes training shall be technology training. Professional development institutes shall be accepted by the State Board of Education for professional development purposes and shall be defined as continuing education experiences which consist of a minimum of thirty (30) clock hours. The institutes shall be competency-based, emphasize effective learning practices, require collaboration among participants, and require each participant to prepare a work product which can be utilized in the classroom by the participant. Any state professional development institutes administered by the Commission shall be chosen through a competitive bid process and if funds are available subject to peer review. The Commission, prior to offering any professional development institute, shall promulgate rules related to administering state professional development institutes.

B. With the funds appropriated in House Bill No. 1872 of the 1st Session of the 46th Oklahoma Legislature specifically for the purpose of funding professional development institutes to train elementary school teachers in reading education. The funds shall be used for the cost of developing, administering and contracting for the professional development institutes. When possible, certified reading specialists shall be included as consultants. All costs of the institutes shall be included in the contract price and no tuition or registration fee shall be collected from teachers attending the institutes. The institutes shall be offered by or through the Commission. Working in conjunction with the State Department of Education, the Commission shall develop a state plan for administration of such institutes and shall report to the Governor and the Legislature on the format of and participation in the institutes. The State Department of Education shall cooperate with and provide any information requested to the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation as is necessary to carry out the provisions of this subsection. As additional funds become available for such purpose, the Commission shall develop and offer professional development institutes in mathematics for teachers in grades five through nine, the use of technology in the classroom, training of residency committee members in teacher mentoring and in hands-on inquiry-based science for elementary teachers.

C. Subject to the availability of funds, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall:

1. Make available in Fiscal Year 1999, a three-day follow-up professional development institute for teachers who participated in an elementary school reading professional development institute during Fiscal Year 1998;

2. Provide five-day initial professional development institutes in elementary reading for elementary school teachers and instructional leaders; and

3. Contract for an independent evaluation of the elementary school reading professional development institute.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY 70 0.5. 1991, Section 3-104.2, as last amended by Section 66, Chapter 290, O.S.L. 1994 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 3-104.2), is amended to read as follows:

Section 3-104.2 A. As part of the requirements for receiving accreditation by the State Board of Education, each school district board of education shall adopt a Comprehensive Local Education Plan once every four (4) years. The plan at a minimum shall contain the following:

1. A school improvement plan as provided for in Section 5-117.4 of this title;
2. A staff development plan as provided for in Section 6-158 of this title;
3. A capital improvement plan as provided for in Section 18-153 of this title; and
4. An alternative education plan, as provided for in subsection C of Section 1210.566 of this title; and
5. A reading sufficiency plan as provided for in Section 1210.508C of this title.

B. The Comprehensive Local Education Plan specified in subsection A of this section shall be submitted by each school district to the State Board of Education on or before May 10, 1993 and every four (4) years thereafter on or before May 10. Each school district shall review and update the plans annually.

C. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules for monitoring compliance with the provisions of this section by school districts. The State Department of Education shall provide training for regional accreditation officers in alternative education program compliance.

SECTION 5. This act shall become effective July 1, 1998.

SECTION 6. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the House of Representatives the 28th day of May, 1998.

Jim R. Glover
Acting Speaker of the House of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 28th day of May, 1998.

Hub Rozell
Acting President of the Senate

Appendix B
Interview Questions

Appendix B

Interview Questions

E. In general, what is your opinion of externally mandated programs involving school change?

F. Have you implemented new programs at your school site prior to the passage of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act of 1998?

G. How do you characterize leadership?

H. What leadership processes do you feel were helpful to you in the implementation of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998)?

I. What do you feel was the most **substantive** contribution you made to the implementation process of the Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act (1998)? Why do you select that contribution? Tell me about it.

Appendix C

Bracketing of Researcher's Perceptions

Appendix C

Bracketing of Researcher's Perceptions

Phenomenological studies not only allow researchers to examine the experiences of the participants in the study, but also requires the researcher to make meanings of those experiences. No researcher enters the field with a clean slate of experiences. All previous life events of the researcher ultimately color the interpretation of the data gathered. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize and state the researcher's perceptions as:

1. Collaboration and collegiality provide a more positive atmosphere in which to implement externally mandated change,
2. Empowerment of teachers enables them to participate with ownership of the task, and,
3. It takes construction of knowledge by the principal and the teachers in order to effectively implement change.

Appendix D

Allenville Elementary School Reading Sufficiency Plan

APPENDIX D

Allenville Elementary Reading Sufficiency Plan

1. Reading Sufficiency Plan Committee Members:

Reading Sufficiency Plan Committee Members shall include:

- Classroom teachers whose students are placed on a Reading Assessment Plan
- An administrator (Principal or Counselor)
- A parent of a student who has been recommended for placement on a Reading Assessment Plan
- Special Education Teacher
- Student (optional)

2. Student Assessment:

A list or samples of multiple, ongoing assessments will be used to check for the aquisition of reading skills for Grades K-3 (documentation will be maintained in student's permanent record).

Barnard students will be evaluated through the following means:

- Gates McGinitie Reading Test
- STARS
- Slosson
- Progress Reports
- Report Cards
- Curriculum assessments-such as ITBS
- Reading Unit Test (Entry tests)

3. Overview of Classroom Reading Instructional Programs and/or Extended School Day/Year Tutorial Programs:

- Students will be provided with one-on-one instruction by the classroom teacher
- Skills will be reinforced by reading specialist, Title IX assistant, teacher assistants, volunteers, foster grandparents, high school leadership students, and parents
- After-school tutoring will be available for at-risk students.
- Additional reading materials will be provided for parental use during the regular school year and throughout the summer
- Outside agencies such as the public library will be recommended for expanding vocabulary and reading experiences
- Monthly newsletters will be provided for parents/guardians containing reading reinforcements, games and instructional tactics
- Summer school will be offered for at-risk students

4. Reading Methodologies:

The five essential elements of reading instruction (phoneme awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency and comprehension) will be taught with the following techniques:

- Reading curriculum will be coordinated using reading basals and aligning daily assignments
- Adequate time will be spent each day on all the elements of reading
- A variety of methods will be used to reach/utilize reading-phonics, basal readers, whole language and technology
- Core subjects will be supplemented with academic instruction in reading comprehension (e.g. *Accelerated Reader Computer Program)*, vocabulary practice and journal writing
- A priority will be on reading by encouraging children to practice reading and motivating them to reflect on reading experiences
- Outside activities will not intrude on the daily task of teaching reading
- Teachers will read aloud to students on a daily basis from the quality literature that challenges students' comprehension with high quality vocabulary and complex sentence structure
- Regular periods of sustained silent reading (DEAR) will be provided in which students read from materials of their own choosing within acceptable community standards
- Individual instruction and remediation will be provided for students requiring one-on-one assistance
- Small groups of students will be tutored on skills needed
- Tutoring will be provided by volunteers, assistant teachers and high school leadership students
- After school instruction will be provided to help with homework, classwork, reinforcement of skills and development social skills
- extended year instruction (summer school) will be provided for students needing additional instruction and skills reinforcement

5. Professional Development:

In addition to a specialized program of instruction for students who, according to multiple assessments, are below grade level in reading, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide instruction that includes all of the components of an effective reading program. The ten components to an effective, balanced reading program include: reading aloud; shared reading; guided reading; independent reading; shared writing; interactive writing; guided writing; independent writing; letters, sounds, and building words; and phonemic awareness. Professional development will be provided for teachers with strategies to address the curriculum and instructional needs of the students

6. Analysis of the data provided by the "Oklahoma School Testing program (OSTP) and other reading assessments utilized by the district.

Data gathered from reading assessments will be utilized by the district in determining needs of the students in the essential reading areas. Placement in various programs such as tutoring by Title IX assistant, leadership students and volunteers will be determined by test results. Students consistently scoring at-risk will be referred for further learning disability testing. Reading assessments will guide the classroom teacher in planning daily curriculum and yearly curriculum goals for the students.

7. Site Compliance with the Provisions of RSA (Reading Sufficiency Act).

- Barnard will provide a list of Reading Sufficiency Plan committee members
- Informal and formal assessments will be used to evaluate students reading proficiency such as weekly assessments, STAR, Slosson Word Recognition Test and Gates-McGinitie Reading Test
- Classroom instruction and tutorial programs will be implemented to enable students to acquire the appropriate grade levels of reading skills
- Various reading methodologies will be used to instruct students
  -phonetic awareness will be instructed through the *Saxon Phonics* program
  -reading comprehension will be enhanced by the use of *Accelerated Reader* computer tests on library books
  -vocabulary enrichment will be implemented through language development in connection with library skills
  -reading skills such as word attack skills, reading for meaning, etc., will be included within the basal readers
  -an environment rich with reading opportunities will include but not limited to DEAR's (Drop Everything and Read-silent reading) reading Caldecot Award Winning books orally to students
  -shared reading such as "Buddy Reading"
  -structured at-home reading through assigned homework
- Professional development will be provided for teachers with strategies to address the curriculum and instructional needs of the students
- Specialized tutoring and/or grade placement recommendations will be considered for at-risk students

8. Specialized Tutoring and/or Grade Placement Recommendations:

At the first meeting of the Reading Sufficiency Plan Committee, the members should:

- Review the informal and formal assessments used to determine the instructional reading level of the child,
- Determine skills to target for improvement,
- Determine how specialized instruction will be delivered (in class, extended day, summer session, etc.) and
- Document decisions and obtain signatures of all committee members.

The committee will meet at least one more time during the school year to:

- Review current assessments to determine progress toward goals
- Determine if specialized program should continue for this student, cease, or be modified, and
- Document decisions and obtain signatures of all committee members. **

**Beginning with kindergarten students who are identified as at-risk, teachers will discuss with parents about retention if adequate progress is not obtained.

9. Site Plan for Continuing Instruction "until the student is determined NOT to be in need of remediation in reading."

Students will remain in the RSP until determined by the Reading Assessment Committee that services are no longer needed to rehabilitate reading. Termination of services will be determined by the student satisfactorily passing reading assessments and curriculum assignments at or above the 80 percentile. Retention at current grade level may be recommended for students performing below academic grade level. Students not acquiring this accomplishment will remain on a RSP until such time or until the student has been determined having learning disabilities. At this time, the student will be served through the Special Education Department of the District. The Special Education instructor will develop a reading plan on an (IEP) Individualized Educational Plan which will continue to develop the five essential reading elements.

10. Reading Sufficiency funds:

Reading Sufficiency funds will be expended on children needing remediation in the following manner:

- Additional instruction personnel (assistants, teachers)
- Reduction of class size
- Computer programs to reinforce skills
- Developing a Parent Resource Library with materials relating to child development, handling children's problems (both academic and behavior) and learning materials to aid in helping children at home

Reading Sufficiency Program
List of Contents for
Cumulative Literacy Folder

The following assessment records will be collected for each student at grade levels K-3 and placed in a literacy folder. These folders will be dept by each classroom teacher until the end of third grade to be used by teachers for diagnosis and instruction and will be available at parent/teacher conferences for review of the student's progress and recommendations for placement.
Following the third grade year, the literacy folder will become a part of the student's permanent school record.

Student Name_____

Formal Assessments:*

Gates McGinitie Test (K-3)
Cover sheets from pre and post tests.

	G.E./PR	G.E./PR
Kdg	___/___	___/___
1st	___/___	___/___
2nd	___/___	___/___
3rd	___/___	___/___

Slosson Oral Reading Test (Sort-R) (K-3)
Administered a minimum of 3 times per year.
Include the final test for each year.

	Pre-	Post-
Kdg.	_____	_____
1st	_____	_____
2nd	_____	_____
3rd	_____	_____

Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading (STAR) (1-3)

Final	G.E.	PR	ZPD
1st	_____	_____	_____
2nd	_____	_____	_____
3rd	_____	_____	_____

Brigance Test (Kdg.)
Administered pre and post in kindergarten.

Kdg. (R.S.)_____ (R.S.)_____

Oklahoma Screening Instrument (1st)
Administered in October of 1st grade.
1st _____

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (K-3)
NPR Scores for Reading

	K	1	2	3
Comp.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____	_____

Informal Assessments:*
Phonemic Awareness Test (K)
Pre:_____ Post_____

Phonics Assessment Record
Average of tests administered weekly (K-2)
Kdg _____
1st _____
2nd _____

Student Summary Report AR (1-3)
1st _____
2nd _____
3rd _____

Writing Samples
Written response from prompt
Kdg _____
(Name and alphabet)
1st _____
2nd _____
3rd _____

*(Please mark with G.E., PR, Averages, etc. as appropriate.)

READING SUFFICIENCY PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN

School Site_____ School Year _____

Student Name_____ Grade_____ Teacher_____

Level of Service(s)	*Committee Mtg. # Date:			*Committee Mtg. # Date:			*Committee Mtg. # Date:			*Committee Mtg. # Date:		
	Persons Responsible			Persons Responsible			Persons Responsible			Persons Responsible		
	RS	T	Other	RS	T	Other	RS	T	Other	RS	T	Other
a. Guided Reading												
b. Spec. Instruction (Explicit Skills)												
c. In-class Instruction												
d. Computer-Assist. Instr.												
e. Extended Day Instr.												
f. Informal Assessments												
g. Formal Assessments												
h. Test Taking Skills												
i. Accelerated Reader												
j. Other:												
Instructional Focus:	RS	T	Other	RS	T	Other	RS	T	Other	RS	T	Other
a. Phonemic Skills												
b. Vocabulary Building												
c. Word Recognition Strategies												
d. Reading for Meaning												
e. Writing												
f. Higher Level Thinking Skills												

* = There is a minimum of two (2) committee meetings per school year
RT = Reading Specialist T = Classroom Teacher Other = Tutor, Volunteer, Teacher Assistant, etc.

PLEASE INITIAL AND DATE AFTER EACH CONFERENCE. (Use more than 1 sheet if necessary.)	GOAL: (Area(s) of concern.) Committee Mtg. #_____	GOAL: (Area(s) of concern.) Committee Mtg. #_____	GOAL: (Area(s) of concern.) Committee Mtg. #_____	GOAL: (Area(s) of concern.) Committee Mtg. #_____
Teacher will: INITIAL:____ DATE:____				
Parent will: INITIAL:____ DATE:____				
Student will: INITIAL:____ DATE:____				

Committee Participants:

_____/_____ _____/_____
Classroom Teacher Date Parent Date

_____/_____ _____/_____/_____
Student Date Other Title (capacity) Date

_____/_____
Administrator/Reading Specialist Date

READING SUFFICIENCY PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN

School Site_____School Year_____

Student Name:_____Grade:_____Teacher:_____

Check the informal and formal assessments used to determine instructional reading level of student prior to specialized instruction and at the conclusion of the specialized program of instruction:

Evaluation prior to specialized program of instruction:

Date:_____

Informal Assessments: (Include assessment artifacts)

_____ Observation
_____ Anecdotal Records
_____ Checklists and/or Rating Scales
_____ Conferences
_____ Audio Tapes
_____ Video Tapes
_____ Cloze Procedure
_____ Writing Sample
_____ Student Work Samples
_____ Miscue Analysis

Formal Assessments:

_____ Report Cards
_____ Progress Reports
_____ Reading Grade _____
_____ Gates-McGinite Reading Test _____
_____ Reading Textbook or Unit Test (entry)
Unit Test Score_____
_____ SLOSSON_____
_____ STAR : G.E._____ IRL_____
_____ I.T.B.S. _____

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Evaluation concluding specialized program of instruction:

Date:_____

Informal Assessments: (Include assessment artifacts)

_____ Observation
_____ Anecdotal Records
_____ Checklists and/or Rating Scales
_____ Conferences
_____ Audio Tapes
_____ Video Tapes
_____ Cloze Procedure
_____ Writing Sample
_____ Student Work Samples
_____ Miscue Analysis

Formal Assessments:

_____ Report Cards
_____ Progress Reports
_____ Reading Grade _____
_____ Gates-McGinite Reading Test _____
_____ Reading Textbook or Unit Test (entry)
Unit Test Score_____
_____ SLOSSON_____
_____ STAR : G.E._____ IRL_____

CURRENT IRL (INSTRUCTIONAL READING LEVEL):_____
RECOMMENDATIONS:

Appendix E

Bonner Elementary School Reading Sufficiency Plan

APPENDIX E

Bonner Elementary Reading Sufficiency Plan

PURPOSE:

To ensure that each student in . attains the necessary reading skills by completion of the third grade which will enable that student to continue development of reading skills and to succeed through school and life

To comply with requirements of the 1999 Reading Sufficiency Act

RESEARCH:

"There is no skill more basic to success in school than reading ability. However, the probability is very high that a child who is disabled in reading at the end of first grade will remain a disabled reader for quite some time." (Juel, 1998).

"Research on reading disability indicates that the best way to break the cycle of failure poor readers experience in school is to identify and to provide remediation for these children as early as possible. (Stanovich, 1986).

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

Provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act require that students enrolled in kindergarten, first, second, and third grades be assessed by multiple on-going assessments for the acquisition of reading skills for the grade level in which the student is enrolled. Before completion of the third quarter, any student not reading at the appropriate grade level will be provided a Reading Assessment Plan which will become part of the student's permanent record and kept in the cumulative folder. This interpreted to mean that a student who is on grade level will be reading grade appropriate materials. The plan will be designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills. Exceptions to this practice include students who are on an individualized education program, have limited English proficiency, or for which English is a second language.

Third grade students will also be assessed by a nationally recognized test (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills).

A new plan will be developed for any third grade student still not reading at grade level. The plan will include program of instruction in reading designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading, may include specialized tutoring and may include a recommendation as to wheter the student should be retained in the third grade at the close of that year or possibly referred for additional testing.

SITE COMMITTEE

A committee will meet a minimum of twice a year. The committee will include a classroom teacher, a reading specialist (if possible), a parent, and an administrator. The site committee will develop the Individualized Reading Assessment Plan. The student having a Reading Assessment Plan will be reassessed at intermediate intervals for progress and at the conclusion of the program of instruction. The program of instruction will continue until the student is determined not to be in need of remediation in reading. Assessment and progress data may be shared with parents at the Fall and Spring Teacher/Parent Conferences.

Skills Reading Subtests, Classroom Phonics Survey, Dolch Words, Slosson, and Textbook Selection Tests or End of Book Tests.

ADDITIONAL IN-SCHOOL INSTRUCTION

Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students who have been identified as reading below grade level will be provided intensive instruction and teaching methodologies as determined appropriate by the Site Reading Committee. Such instruction may include the following elements

Phonemic Awareness
Phonics
Developmental Spelling
Reading Fluency
Comprehension

Additional instruction in kindergarten will consist of further development of pre-reading skills.

Additional teaching methodologies and programs may include the following (as appropriate):

Shared Reading/Guided Reading/Discussions
Teacher Read-Aloud
Flexible Groups, Whole Groups, Small Groups, Partners
Appropriate Level Text
Pre-teaching/Background Knowledge
Independent Reading
Oral Language
Writing Programs
Accelerated Reader
After School Tutoring

TUTORING INSTRUCTION

After school hours may be provided to the student who, after intensified assistance by the teacher, still is not making sufficient progress.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

expects parents of all children reading below grade level to share the responsibility of improving their student's achievement. To that end, the Site Reading Committee will provide parents with specific tasks and strategies to work on with the child for atleast fifteen minutes per day.

EXPENDITURES

Funds received by the State Department generated by the Reading Sufficiency Plan shall be used to purchase materials that will benefit students trying to obtain grade level in reading. These materials could include:

Computer software
Basal readers
Flash cards
Workbooks, etc...
Funds could also be used for extra tutors during and after school.

The first committee meeting will occur at any time during the course of the school year when it is determined that a student is below grade level in reading. The first committee meeting will include:

A review of the informal and formal assessments used to determine instructional reading level of student;

A determination of a specialized program of instruction for the students;

A determination of the instructional focus(es) to be addressed during the specialized program of instruction;

A determination of the professionals who will be responsible for facilitating the specialized program of instruction and the instructional focus(es):

Completion of the Reading Sufficiency Individual Assessment Plan form to document the decision made during this committee meeting;

Signing of the Reading Sufficiency Individual Assessment Plan form by all committee members.

The second committee meeting will be held at the conclusion of the specialized program of instruction.

This second meeting will include:

A review of the informal and formal assessments used during the specialized program of instruction as well as at the conclusion of the program to determine current instructional reading level of student;

Recommendations concerning whether the specialized program of instruction should continue or cease;

Completions of the Reading Sufficiency Individual Assessment Plan form to document the decision made during this committee meeting;

Signing of the Reading Sufficiency Individual Assessment Plan form by all committee members;

For any third grade student not reading at that grade level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally recognized reading assessment, a new reading assessment plan shall be developed which shall include specialized tutoring and recommendations for grade placement.

Third grade students not reading at grade level will be put on a new Reading Assessment Plan, which will include the following:

a. Areas of defining;
b. Assessment used to determine;
c. Methods to be used to get student on grade level;
d. Schedule special tutoring during or after school;
e. Signature of all committee members.

will keep student on a reading assessment plan until it is determined that they are no longer in need of remediation.

INFORMAL ASSESSMENTS

Teachers should utilize a variety of informal assessment techniques to monitor student's reading growth and development. Informal assessment techniques appropriate for monitoring progress in grades K-3 include: Observation, Kindergarten Screening Instrument, Anecdotal Records, Teacher/Student Conferences, Writing activities, Portfolios, Informal Reading Inventories, Elementary Curriculum Reading Assessments, P.A.S.S.-Priority Academic Student Skills-Assessments, and Reading Logs.

FORMAL ASSESSMENTS

Formal assessment techniques should be used to determine what knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes have developed over a period of time, to assist with summarizing student progress, and to report progress relative to the curriculum objectives. Formal assessments appropriate include: Report Cards, Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, S.T.A.R. (Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading), Iowa Test of Basic

ANNUAL UPDATES

The District Reading Sufficiency Plan will be reviewed and updated each year as needed and will become part of the Comprehensive Local Education Plan. It will be included in the assessment section of the annual Site Improvement Plan.

CHECKLIST OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR READING PLANS

PRINCIPAL:

Appoint Committee in accordance with Reading Sufficiency Act

Schedule Committee meetings
Chair Committee meetings
Schedule additional meetings as necessary
Complete the forms and obtain signatures
Include the Site Reading Plan with the annual Site Improvement Plan
Assist in resolving problems and implementing the process of Individual Plan Committees
Indicate exit date if student is no longer in need of remediation

CLASSROOM TEACHER:

Complete multiple, ongoing assessments of students
Maintain records of assessments, including results
Maintain records of instructional strategies used for each student
Maintain records of communication with parent
Actively participate in the Individual Reading Plan Committee meetings
Place Individual Reading Plan in student's cumulative folder if student needs remediation

INDIVIDUALIZED READING PLAN

Name of Student:_____ Date of Reading Assessment Plan_____
Last First Middle Month/Day/Ye

Birthdate:_____ Age_____ Grade:_____

Building/Site:_____

_____ Initial Reading Assessment Plan
_____ Second Reading Assessment Plan
_____ Third Reading Assessment Plan

A. Assessments used to determine grade level:

Informal Assessments		Formal Assessments
_____Observation	_____Portfolios	_____Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test
_____Kindergarten Screening Instrument(Dial R)	_____Informal Reading Inventories	_____Computerized Assessments
_____Anecdotal Records	_____P.A.S.S. Assessments	_____Standardized Test_____
_____Teacher/Student Conferences	_____Reading Logs	_____Textbook Selection Tests
_____Other_____	_____Writing Activities	_____End-of-Book Tests
	_____Other_____	_____Other_____

B. Identified area(s) of need:

_____Phonemic Awareness
_____Decoding(phonics and structural analysis)
_____Vocabulary(word recognition and word meaning)
_____Comprehension(specify)_____
_____Other_____
_____Letter Recognition
_____Reading Fluency
_____Developmental Spelling

C. Intervention/Instructional Programs Prescribed:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

D. Post Assessment Instruments Used: (See Formal/Informal Assessments) | Results(include scores, if applicable): | Date:

_____ | _____ | _____

_____ | _____ | _____

_____ | _____ | _____

_____ | _____ | _____

_____ | _____ | _____

_____ | _____ | _____

Comments: _____

_____

E. Parent/Student Reading Activities being used:

_____Parent Reads to Student
_____Student Reads to Parent
_____Library Visit(once a week)
_____Other_____

_____Reading/Word Games
_____Flashcards(letters, sight words or vocabulary)
_____Writing(letters, sight words, or vocabulary)
_____Other_____

F. Recommendations:

_____After School
_____Saturday Sessions
_____Extended Day Program
_____Inclusion Support
_____Volunteer as Tutors
_____Paired Reading

_____Cross-Age Tutoring
_____Psychological Testing
_____Retention
_____Other_____
_____Other_____
_____Other_____

G. _____Exit Program_____
Date

Comments: _____

Signatures: _____ _____ _____
Teacher Administrator Parent

Date: _____

***Conferences**

Conferences with individual students are a valuable means of evaluating personal achievement and growth in reading. Conferences provide opportunities for personal, focused assessments of students' reading progress, as well as their reading behaviors, interests and attitudes. Teacher-student conferences may be held to hear a student read, gather information about students' knowledge of the reading process, discuss a student's reading selections, and to discuss responses to reading selections.

***Audio Tapes**

Audio recordings can provide fine records of reading development. When recording students, it is suggested that teachers ask students to read any story they choose first, and then one the teacher selects. In this way the teacher may collect both students' fluent reading of familiar material and an unrehearsed reading that demonstrates their use of reading strategies on more difficult or unfamiliar text.

***Video Records**

By using a video camera to record student's reading samples, teachers collect not only an accurate record but a visual one as well. Teachers can see how the book is held, where the eyes are looking, whether the page is turned on cue, etc. Video records offer a way of stimulating teachers' memories and interpreting the notes they take.

***Cloze Procedure**

Cloze procedure is a technique in which words are deleted from a passage according to a word-count formula or various other criteria. The passage is presented to students, who insert words as they read to complete and construct meaning from the text. This procedure can be used as a diagnostic reading assessment technique. By analyzing the words that students insert teachers can identify students' knowledge and understanding of the reading process, determine which cueing systems readers effectively employ to construct meaning form print, assess the extent of students' vocabularies and knowledge of a subject, encourage students to monitor for meaning while reading, and encourage students to think critically and analytically about text and content.

***Writing**

Writing samples are maintained by the students, Each folder should include completed writing as well as unfinished drafts, a list of topics for future writing and a writing record. Writing samples reflect the students' writing development, their knowledge of grapho phonics, spelling and vocabulary development, as well as their reading development.

***Students' Work Samples**

Teachers have students collect their work in folders to document learning during literature focus units and reading and writing workshop. Work samples might include reading logs where students keep track of the books that they have read, photos or projects, written work, projects such as puppet show scripts and oral presentations, and books students have written.

***Miscue Analysis**

Miscue analysis is a tool used to understand what strategies a student is employing while reading. With a running record, teachers calculate the percentage of words the student reads correctly and then analyze the miscues or errors. Teachers make a check mark on a sheet of paper as the child reads each work correctly. Teachers use other marks to indicate words that the student substitutes, repeats, pronounces incorrectly, or doesn't know. Teachers can categorize students' miscues or errors according to the semantic, grapho phonic, and syntactic cueing systems in order to examine what word-identification strategies student are using. Miscue analysis gives teachers information to make important observations and ultimate decisions regarding a child's stage of reading development. Miscue analysis may be used informally or a as formal assessment tool.

Formal Assessments

Students should be evaluated on their own personal growth, as well as in comparison to widely held expectations for their particular grade level. Thus, more formal assessment techniques should be used to determine what knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes have developed over a period of time, to assist with summarizing student progress, and to report progress relative to the curriculum objectives. Formal assessments are usually commercially prepared and given at one or more specified intervals during the school year. Formal assessments appropriate for Grade K and 1 include:

*Report Cards
*Clay's Observation Survey
*Miscue Analysis
*Individual Reading Inventories
*Reading Textbook or unit tests
*Iowa Tests of Basic Skills
*Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests
*Mulitple Assessment Series for the Primary Grades
*Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery
*Diagnostic Assessments of Reading with Trail Teaching Strategies (DARTS)
*Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA)
*Phonemic Awareness in Young Children
*Rosner Deletion Task (test of auditory analysis skills)
*Sawyer Segmentation Test (test of awareness of language segments)
*Bear - The Assessment of Orthographic Development
*Computerized Assessment

Formal assessments appropriate of Grades 2 and 3 include:

*Report Cards
*IOWA Test of Basis Skills, including Survey Forms
*Computerized Assessment
*Clay's Observation Survey
*Title I Multiple Criteria Assessment Program
*Miscue Analysis
*Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests
*Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery
*Diagnostic Assessments of Reading with Trial Teaching Strategies (DARTS)
*Individual Reading Inventories
*Reading Textbook or unit tests
* Rosner Deletion Task (test of auditory analysis skills)
*Bear - The Assessment of Orthographic Development
*San Diego Quick
*Phonic Survey

When determining the reading level of students it is important to analyze data collected from both formal and informal assessment instruments. Thus, it is recommended that teachers use a minimum of three informal assessments and one formal assessment to determine the reading instructional level of students.

Requirements of Individual Site Plans

As specified in SECTION 3B of the Reading Sufficiency Act, each elementary school shall develop a plan which outlines how the school site will comply with the provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act. The individual school plans should include the following:

*A list of Reading Sufficiency Plan Committee members;
*A description of informal and formal assessments that will be used to evaluate students' reading proficiency;
*An overview of classroom reading instructional programs and/or extended school day/year tutorial programs that will be implemented to enable students to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills (for example, describe your school's implementation of programs such as Reading Recovery, Guided Reading, Frameworks, Title I School Wide, Computer assisted instruction, or after school tutorial);
*A description of the reading methodologies to be addressed in the specialized programs of instruction (for example, reading for meaning, reading strategies instruction, explicit skill instruction, etc.);
*A description of professional development that will provide teachers with strategies to address the curriculum and instructional needs of their students.
*A description of specialized tutoring and/or grade placement recommendations that will be considered for all third grade students who, based on "multiple assessments including a nationally recognized reading assessment given mid-year," are not reading at grade level.

Requirements of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan

According to The Reading Sufficiency Act, every student found not to be reading at the appropriate grade level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which shall include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills, The Reading Sufficiency Personal Education Plan should include:

*a list of assessments used to determine grade level;
*the instructional programs, services and/or extended day/year to be implemented;
*the instructional focus to be targeted;
*signatures of committee members to include a classroom teacher, administrator, parent and reading specialist, if available;
*recommendations for continued services, if needed
*for grade three students who are determined to be below grade level, a description of specialized tutoring and/or recommendations for grade placement

The specific information required for the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan has been formatted on a form that will be completed for every student in grades one through three who according to data collected using multiple assessments, is below grade level in reading. A copy of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form is attached.

The Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan committee will meet a minimum of twice a year. Committee members should include the classroom teacher, an administrator, the parent or guardian, and a reading specialist (Title I teacher) if possible. The committee may also consist of others such as a special education teacher, tutor and/or teaching assistant.

The first committee meeting will occur at any time during the course of the school year when it is determined that a student is below grade level in reading. The first committee meeting will include:

*A review of the informal and formal assessments used to determine instructional reading level of student;
*A determination of a specialized program of instruction for the student;
*A determination of the instructional focus(es) to be addressed during the specialized program of instruction;
*A determination of the professionals who will be responsible for facilitating the specialized program of instruction and the instructional focus(es).
*Completion of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form to document the decision made during this committee meeting.
*Signing of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form by all committee members. In the event that a parent or guardian does not attend, a certified letter will be sent to the parent.

The second committee meeting will be held at the conclusion of the specialized program of instruction. This second meeting will include:

*A review of the informal and formal assessment used during the specialized program of instruction as well as at the conclusion of the program to determine current instructional reading level of student;
*Recommendations concerning whether the specialized program of instruction should continue or cease;
*Completion of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form to document the decision made during this committee meeting.
*Signing of the reading Sufficiency Person Educational Plan form by all committee members.
*For any third grade student not reading at that grade level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally recognized reading assessment, a new reading assessment plan shall be developed which shall include specialized tutoring and recommendations for grade placement.

The Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan should be retained in the student's cumulative folder. Specialized services will continue until it is determined that the student is discontinued based upon the recommendation of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan team committee.

Classroom Reading Instructional Program

In addition to a specialized program of instruction for students who, according to multiple assessments, are below grade level in reading, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide instruction that includes all of the components of an effective reading program. What works best in primary reading instruction is an interweaving of explicit strategy and skill instruction within the reading and writing of authentic texts. In other words, a balanced reading program—one that is balanced in the sense that skills and strategies are taught in the context of instruction that is driven by rich reading and writing experiences offer students their best chance for learning to read. A balanced reading program includes eight components. The eight components to an effective, balanced reading program include:

*Reading Aloud
*Shared Reading
*Guided Reading
*Independent Reading
*Shared Writing
*Interactive Writing
*Guided Writing or Writing Workshop
*Independent Writing

A description of each component and the supportive research is listed on the following pages.

Professional development in effective reading program components, the reading process, and reading assessment should be a continual process in all elementary schools.

The Five Essential Elements (phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency and comprehension) of reading instruction will be taught, and modeled through a combination of systematic, direct and explicit instruction in "phonics" as well as rich language and literature.

New Reading Assessment Plans

A "new reading assessment plan" shall be developed and implemented for any third grade student in need of remediation, as determined by multiple on-going assessments and teacher intervention practices and methods. This plan shall be developed by the reading assessment committee in conjunction with the parents or guardian of the student.

It is the philosophy of that children should work at a "level" at which they can be successful. As a student moves his way through the various grade levels teachers use a variety of materials and curriculum that is suitable for that particular student. In creating a "new reading assessment plan" this philosophy would be followed. As determined by the committee the student would continue working on reading skills at his level until such time that he can advance his skills. The student could receive "specialized tutoring before or after school or at other times deemed appropriate by the committee. Other options available for the committee could include, but not limited to the following:

1.) Limited pull-out time (spent with reading specialist - Title I)
2.) Retention (consultation with parent or guardian)
3.) Referral for further educational evaluation
4.) Use of alternative remediation techniques such as - Cloze procedures, Glass Analysis, Distar, etc.
5.) Remediation using alternative adult supervision (volunteers listening to students read)
6.) Peer Tutoring

The plan for continuing the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan will be determined at a year end committee meeting. Reading plans will be noted and maintained in cumulative folders following the student. Next year's teacher will be made aware of student progress and continue to follow the plan until new assessments are available to develop new plans and strategies.

Annual Updates

As specified in the Reading Sufficiency Act, the District Reading Sufficiency Plan and the Site Reading Sufficiency Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. The District Reading Sufficiency Plan will be reviewed and updated annually prior to **August** of the new year. A review of the District Plan will be shared with administrators during administrative meetings in August. The individual school sites will review and update their Site Plans in August and September of each school year. Revised copies of Site Plans will be sent to Central Office by **October 15** of each school year.

Timelines for developing reading assessment plans for children in need of remediation

Weeks 1-5	multiple on-going assessments
Last week in September	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test - Grades 1 - 3
October	Students identified and placed on Reading Plan
(October 1)	Report to SDE the number of students on reading assessment plans http://sde.state.ok..us/rsa
January	Mid year assessment with Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test - Grades 2 - 3
March	IOWA -1,2,3
April	End of Year assessment with Gates-Macginitie Reading Test - Grades K -3
Last week of April	Student identified to continue on Reading Plan into next school year - conferences held
August of new year	Review District Reading Plan

Multiple assessment at the **end of each nine weeks** include skill check list and district CRT

Claims for first semester reimbursement must be submitted to the State Department of Education by **January 15, 2001.**

Proposed Expenditures for Reading Sufficiency Funds

1.) Remediation Materials for the classroom

2.) Computer Software

3.) Formal and Informal Testing Resources

4.) After School Tutoring

5.) Summer Tutoring

6.) Phonic Kits

Money expenditures could be more concrete if exact funding for Reading Sufficiency Act were known.

Reading Sufficiency Personal Education Plan
School Year 20__ to 20__

Student Name:_____School:_____Grade:___Classroom Teacher:_____

Levels of Service: Please select appropriate level(s) of services by indicating person(s) responsible.

____Nine Weeks

	Person(s) responsible				Please initial and date at each conference Areas of Concerns and/or Comments
	Title I	T	A	G	
Phonemic Awareness					
Shared Reading					
Guided Reading					
Independent Reading					
Specialized Instruction (explicit skills)					
In-class					
Computer Assisted Instruction					
Monitoring (Informal Assessment)					
Instructional Extended Day/Year					
Accelerated Reader					
Test Taking Skills Instruction					
Other (Specify)					
Instructional Focus:					
Vocabulary Building					
Reading Strategies (Specify)					
Reading for Meaning					
Writing					
Higher Level Thinking Skills					
PASS Review and Reinforcement					
Other (Specify)					

Reading Sufficiency Committee (sign appropriate title)

Title I

Classroom Teacher

Administrator

Guardian

Appendix F

Camdon Elementary School Reading Sufficiency Plan

APPENDIX F

Camdon Elementary Reading Sufficiency Plan

Purpose of District Plan

The Purpose of the Reading Sufficiency District Plan is:

* to suffice partial requirements for the Reading Sufficiency Act (HB 2017) that was passed by the Oklahoma Legislature in June 1997;
* to provide direction to McLoud elementary schools for compliance of provisions specified in the Reading Sufficiency Act; and
* to insure that each child attains the necessary reading skills by completion of third grade which will enable the student to continue development of reading skills and to succeed through school and life.

Summary of Reading Sufficiency Act

A. Beginning with the 1998-99 school year, each student enrolled in first and second grades of the public schools of this state shall be assessed by multiple on-going assessments for the acquisition of reading skills for the grade level in which that student is enrolled. Before the close of the current school year, any student, except students who are on an individualized education program, have limited English proficiency, or which English is a second language, found not to be reading at the appropriate grade level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which shall include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading. That plan shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Sufficient additional in-school instructional time for the development of reading and comprehension skills of the student;
2. If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular schools hours, on Saturdays and during summer; and
3. Utilization of teaching methodologies, including phonics and other methodologies in wide practice, as determined appropriate by the reading assessment committee.

The student shall be reassessed at the conclusion of the program of instruction. The program of instruction shall continue until the student is determined to be reading at or above grade level. The student may continue to progress to the next grade level while the tutorial reading instruction continues.

B. Each school site shall establish a committee composed of educators, which if possible shall include a certified reading specialist, to determine the reading assessment plan for each student for whom one is necessary. A parent or guardian of the student shall be included in the development of the reading assessment plan for that student. Every school district shall adopt and annually update a district plan which includes a plan for each site and which outlines how each school site will comply with the provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act.

C. For any third grade student not reading at that grade level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally recognized reading assessment given mid-year, a new reading assessment plan shall be developed as specified in the section and implemented. In addition to other requirements of this act, the plan shall include specialized tutoring and may include a recommendation as to whether the student should be retained in the their grade at the close of that year.

D. Copies of the results of the assessment administered pursuant to subsection A of this section shall be made apart of the permanent record of each student until the student is reading on grade level so that the results of the next grade level assessment can be measured against the previous grade level results.

Assessment of Student

The Reading Sufficiency Act requires that each student enrolled in Kindergarten, first, second, and third grades be assessed by "multiple on-going assessments" for the acquisition of reading skills for the grade level in which the student is enrolled.

Assessment is the process of gathering evidence and documenting a student's learning and growth. Assessment is trustworthy and authentic when it occurs as an on-going, regular part of classroom learning and instruction every day. Assessment helps teachers plan curriculum and instruction in order to meet the needs of every student. Multiple measures are needed to collect information in a variety of contexts.

Informal Assessments

Teachers should utilize a variety of informal assessment techniques to monitor students' reading and growth and development. Informal assessment techniques appropriate for monitoring progress in K-3 include:

***Observation**

Observation of students as they read is an important component of instruction and evaluation. Observation involves much more than a teacher simply interacting with students or watching and listening to students in the classroom. Observation involves the systematic collection of observable data and analysis of that information. Knowledge of the developmental nature of reading acquisition assists teachers in interpreting their observations. These interpretations are used to plan or modify instruction.

***Anecdotal Records**

Significant incidents or specific, observable behaviors can be recorded by teachers in anecdotal records. These records provide cumulative information about students' development in reading. By systematically collecting and analyzing anecdotal comments, teachers can evaluate students' progress and abilities to read and then plan appropriate instruction.

***Checklists and Rating Scales**

Check lists and rating scales list the specific behaviors, skills or objectives for teachers or students to observe and assess. Checklists usually offer a yes/no format while rating scales allow for the indication of the degree or frequency of the behavior. Checklists and rating scales can be designed to be used once or over an extended period of time to show development and progress. They offer systematic ways of collecting and organizing information about individual students or groups of students. Check lists may include P.A.S.S. objectives, teacher made lists, and student self evaluation checklists.

***Conferences**

Conferences with individual students are a valuable means of evaluating personal achievement and growth in reading. Conferences provide opportunities for personal, focused assessments of students' reading progress, as well as their reading behaviors, interests and attitudes. Teacher-student conferences may be held to hear a student read, gather information about students' knowledge of the reading process, discuss a student's reading selections, and to discuss responses to reading selections.

***Audio Tapes**

Audio recordings can provide fine records of reading development. When recording students, it is suggested that teachers ask students to read any story they choose first, and then one the teacher selects. In this way the teacher may collect both students' fluent reading of familiar material and an unrehearsed reading that demonstrates their use of reading strategies on more difficult or unfamiliar text.

***Video Records**

By using a video camera to record student's reading samples, teachers collect not only an accurate record but a visual one as well. Teachers can see how the book is held, where the eyes are looking, whether the page is turned on cue, etc. Video records offer a way of stimulating teachers' memories and interpreting the notes they take.

***Cloze Procedure**

Cloze procedure is a technique in which words are deleted from a passage according to a word-count formula or various other criteria. The passage is presented to students, who insert words as they read to complete and construct meaning from the text. This procedure can be used as a diagnostic reading assessment technique. By analyzing the words that students insert teachers can identify students' knowledge and understanding of the reading process, determine which cueing systems readers effectively employ to construct meaning form print, assess the extent of students' vocabularies and knowledge of a subject, encourage students to monitor for meaning while reading, and encourage students to think critically and analytically about text and content.

***Writing**

Writing samples are maintained by the students, Each folder should include completed writing as well as unfinished drafts, a list of topics for future writing and a writing record. Writing samples reflect the students' writing development, their knowledge of grapho phonics, spelling and vocabulary development, as well as their reading development.

***Students' Work Samples**

Teachers have students collect their work in folders to document learning during literature focus units and reading and writing workshop. Work samples might include reading logs where students keep track of the books that they have read, photos or projects, written work, projects such as puppet show scripts and oral presentations, and books students have written.

***Miscue Analysis**

Miscue analysis is a tool used to understand what strategies a student is employing while reading. With a running record, teachers calculate the percentage of words the student reads correctly and then analyze the miscues or errors. Teachers make a check mark on a sheet of paper as the child reads each work correctly. Teachers use other marks to inidicate words that the student substitutes, repeats, pronounces incorrectly, or doesn't know. Teachers can categorize students' miscues or errors according to the semantic, grapho phonic, and syntactic cueing systems in order to examine what word-identification strategies student are using. Miscue analysis gives teachers information to make important observations and ultimate decisions regarding a child's stage of reading development. Miscue analysis may be used informally or a as formal assessment tool.

Formal Assessments

Students should be evaluated on their own personal growth, as well as in comparison to widely held expectations for their particular grade level. Thus, more formal assessment techniques should be used to determine what knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes have developed over a period of time, to assist with summarizing student progress, and to report progress relative to the curriculum objectives. Formal assessments are usually commercially prepared and given at one or more specified intervals during the school year. Formal assessments appropriate for Grade K and 1 include:

*Report Cards
*Clay's Observation Survey
*Miscue Analysis
*Individual Reading Inventories
*Reading Textbook or unit tests
*Iowa Tests of Basic Skills
*Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests
*Mulitple Assessment Series for the Primary Grades
*Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery
*Diagnostic Assessments of Reading with Trail Teaching Strategies (DARTS)
*Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA)
*Phonemic Awareness in Young Children
*Rosner Deletion Task (test of auditory analysis skills)
*Sawyer Segmentation Test (test of awareness of language segments)
*Bear - The Assessment of Orthographic Development
*Computerized Assessment

Formal assessments appropriate of Grades 2 and 3 include:

*Report Cards
*IOWA Test of Basis Skills, including Survey Forms
*Computerized Assessment
*Clay's Observation Survey
*Title I Multiple Criteria Assessment Program
*Miscue Analysis
*Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests
*Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery
*Diagnostic Assessments of Reading with Trial Teaching Strategies (DARTS)
*Individual Reading Inventories
*Reading Textbook or unit tests
* Rosner Deletion Task (test of auditory analysis skills)
*Bear - The Assessment of Orthographic Development
*San Diego Quick
*Phonic Survey

When determining the reading level of students it is important to analyze data collected from both formal and informal assessment instruments. Thus, it is recommended that teachers use a minimum of three informal assessments and one formal assessment to determine the reading instructional level of students.

Requirements of Individual Site Plans

As specified in SECTION 3B of the Reading Sufficiency Act, each elementary school shall develop a plan which outlines how the school site will comply with the provisions of the Reading Sufficiency Act. The individual school plans should include the following:

*A list of Reading Sufficiency Plan Committee members;
*A description of informal and formal assessments that will be used to evaluate students' reading proficiency;
*An overview of classroom reading instructional programs and/or extended school day/year tutorial programs that will be implemented to enable students to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills (for example, describe your school's implementation of programs such as Reading Recovery, Guided Reading, Frameworks, Title I School Wide, Computer assisted instruction, or after school tutorial);
*A description of the reading methodologies to be addressed in the specialized programs of instruction (for example, reading for meaning, reading strategies instruction, explicit skill instruction, etc.);
*A description of professional development that will provide teachers with strategies to address the curriculum and instructional needs of their students.
*A description of specialized tutoring and/or grade placement recommendations that will be considered for all third grade students who, based on "multiple assessments including a nationally recognized reading assessment given mid-year," are not reading at grade level.

Requirements of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan

According to The Reading Sufficiency Act, every student found not to be reading at the appropriate grade level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which shall include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills, The Reading Sufficiency Personal Education Plan should include:

*a list of assessments used to determine grade level;
*the instructional programs, services and/or extended day/year to be implemented;
*the instructional focus to be targeted;
*signatures of committee members to include a classroom teacher, administrator, parent and reading specialist, if available;
*recommendations for continued services, if needed
*for grade three students who are determined to be below grade level, a description of specialized tutoring and/or recommendations for grade placement

The specific information required for the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan has been formatted on a form that will be completed for every student in grades one through three who according to data collected using multiple assessments, is below grade level in reading. A copy of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form is attached.

The Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan committee will meet a minimum of twice a year. Committee members should include the classroom teacher, an administrator, the parent or guardian, and a reading specialist (Title I teacher) if possible. The committee may also consist of others such as a special education teacher, tutor and/or teaching assistant.

The first committee meeting will occur at any time during the course of the school year when it is determined that a student is below grade level in reading. The first committee meeting will include:

*A review of the informal and formal assessments used to determine instructional reading level of student;
*A determination of a specialized program of instruction for the student;
*A determination of the instructional focus(es) to be addressed during the specialized program of instruction;
*A determination of the professionals who will be responsible for facilitating the specialized program of instruction and the instructional focus(es).
*Completion of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form to document the decision made during this committee meeting.
*Signing of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form by all committee members. In the event that a parent or guardian does not attend, a certified letter will be sent to the parent.

The second committee meeting will be held at the conclusion of the specialized program of instruction. This second meeting will include:

*A review of the informal and formal assessment used during the specialized program of instruction as well as at the conclusion of the program to determine current instructional reading level of student;
*Recommendations concerning whether the specialized program of instruction should continue or cease;
*Completion of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan form to document the decision made during this committee meeting.
*Signing of the reading Sufficiency Person Educational Plan form by all committee members.
*For any third grade student not reading at that grade level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally recognized reading assessment, a new reading assessment plan shall be developed which shall include specialized tutoring and recommendations for grade placement.

The Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan should be retained in the student's cumulative folder. Specialized services will continue until it is determined that the student is discontinued based upon the recommendation of the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan team committee.

Classroom Reading Instructional Program

In addition to a specialized program of instruction for students who, according to multiple assessments, are below grade level in reading, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide instruction that includes all of the components of an effective reading program. What works best in primary reading instruction is an interweaving of explicit strategy and skill instruction within the reading and writing of authentic texts. In other words, a balanced reading program—one that is balanced in the sense that skills and strategies are taught in the context of instruction that is driven by rich reading and writing experiences offer students their best chance for learning to read. A balanced reading program includes eight components. The eight components to an effective, balanced reading program include:

*Reading Aloud
*Shared Reading
*Guided Reading
*Independent Reading
*Shared Writing
*Interactive Writing
*Guided Writing or Writing Workshop
*Independent Writing

A description of each component and the supportive research is listed on the following pages.

Professional development in effective reading program components, the reading process, and reading assessment should be a continual process in all elementary schools.

The Five Essential Elements (phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency and comprehension) of reading instruction will be taught, and modeled through a combination of systematic, direct and explicit instruction in "phonics" as well as rich language and literature.

New Reading Assessment Plans

A "new reading assessment plan" shall be developed and implemented for any third grade student in need of remediation, as determined by multiple on-going assessments and teacher intervention practices and methods. This plan shall be developed by the reading assessment committee in conjunction with the parents or guardian of the student.

It is the philosophy of that children should work at a "level" at which they can be successful. As a student moves his way through the various grade levels teachers use a variety of materials and curriculum that is suitable for that particular student. In creating a "new reading assessment plan" this philosophy would be followed. As determined by the committee the student would continue working on reading skills at his level until such time that he can advance his skills. The student could receive "specialized tutoring before or after school or at other times deemed appropriate by the committee. Other options available for the committee could include, but not limited to the following:

1.) Limited pull-out time (spent with reading specialist - Title I)
2.) Retention (consultation with parent or guardian)
3.) Referral for further educational evaluation
4.) Use of alternative remediation techniques such as - Cloze procedures, Glass Analysis, Distar, etc.
5.) Remediation using alternative adult supervision (volunteers listening to students read)
6.) Peer Tutoring

The plan for continuing the Reading Sufficiency Personal Educational Plan will be determined at a year end committee meeting. Reading plans will be noted and maintained in cumulative folders following the student. Next year's teacher will be made aware of student progress and continue to follow the plan until new assessments are available to develop new plans and strategies.

Annual Updates

As specified in the Reading Sufficiency Act, the District Reading Sufficiency Plan and the Site Reading Sufficiency Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. The District Reading Sufficiency Plan will be reviewed and updated annually prior to August of the new year. A review of the District Plan will be shared with administrators during administrative meetings in August. The individual school sites will review and update their Site Plans in August and September of each school year. Revised copies of Site Plans will be sent to Central Office by October 15 of each school year.

Timelines for developing reading assessment plans for children in need of remediation

Weeks 1-5	multiple on-going assessments
Last week in September	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test - Grades 1 - 3
October	Students identified and placed on Reading Plan
(October 1)	Report to SDE the number of students on reading assessment plans http://sde.state.ok..us/rsa
January	Mid year assessment with Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test - Grades 2 - 3
March	IOWA -1,2,3
April	End of Year assessment with Gates-Macginitie Reading Test - Grades K -3
Last week of April	Student identified to continue on Reading Plan into next school year - conferences held
August of new year	Review District Reading Plan

Multiple assessment at the end of each nine weeks include skill check list and district CRT

Claims for first semester reimbursement must be submitted to the State Department of Education by **January 15, 2001.**

Proposed Expenditures for Reading Sufficiency Funds

1.) Remediation Materials for the classroom

2.) Computer Software

3.) Formal and Informal Testing Resources

4.) After School Tutoring

5.) Summer Tutoring

6.) Phonic Kits

Money expenditures could be more concrete if exact funding for Reading Sufficiency Act were known.

Reading Sufficiency Personal Education Plan
School Year 20__ to 20__

Student Name:_____School:_____Grade:___Classroom Teacher:_____

Levels of Service: Please select appropriate level(s) of services by indicating person(s) responsible.

____Nine Weeks

	Person(s) responsible				Please initial and date at each conference Areas of Concerns and/or Comments
	Title I	T	A	G	
Phonemic Awareness					
Shared Reading					
Guided Reading					
Independent Reading					
Specialized Instruction (explicit skills)					
In-class					
Computer Assisted Instruction					
Monitoring (Informal Assessment)					
Instructional Extended Day/Year					
Accelerated Reader					
Test Taking Skills Instruction					
Other (Specify)					
Instructional Focus:					
Vocabulary Building					
Reading Strategies (Specify)					
Reading for Meaning					
Writing					
Higher Level Thinking Skills					
PASS Review and Reinforcement					
Other (Specify)					
Reading Sufficiency Committee (sign appropriate title)					
Title I					
Classroom Teacher					
Administrator					
Guardian					

Appendix G

Institutional Review Board Approval

APPENDIX G



The University of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

June 25, 2001

Ms. Merrie Susan Foote
10704 Meadowlark Lane
Midwest City OK 73130

Dear Ms. Foote:

Your research application, "Principal Leadership in the Implementation of Externally-Mandated Change," has been reviewed according to the policies of the Institutional Review Board chaired by Dr. E. Laurette Taylor and found to be exempt from the requirements for full board review. Your project is approved under the regulations of the University of Oklahoma - Norman Campus Policies and Procedures for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research Activities.

Should you wish to deviate from the described protocol, you must notify me and obtain prior approval from the Board for the changes. If the research is to extend beyond 12 months, you must contact this office, in writing, noting any changes or revisions in the protocol and/or informed consent form, and request an extension of this ruling.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Wyatt Sedwick

Susan Wyatt Sedwick, Ph.D.
Administrative Officer
Institutional Review Board

SWS:pw
FY01-367

cc: Dr. E. Laurette Taylor, Chair, Institutional Review Board
Dr. Pamela Fry, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies