

The Pennsylvania State University
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Department of Education Policy Studies

**CONCEPTIONS OF TIME AND COMPETING PRIORITIES
IN THE PRINCIPALSHIP:
THE CHALLENGE OF STAYING FOCUSED ON LEARNING**

A Thesis in
Educational Leadership
by
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ABSTRACT

The accountability associated with the No Child Left Behind legislation has increased principals' responsibilities and affected principals' use of time. This study examines strategies principals use to manage their time so as to maintain a focus on instruction when time is in short supply, priorities compete, and there are multiple expectations. Specifically, the researcher was interested in discovering how principals maintain a focus on instruction while mediating multiple expectations. A review of three categories of representative literature was made: the principal's evolving role in instruction, conceptions of time, and the instructional leader acting in the best interest of learning and the learner.

Prior to the carrying out of the research, a conceptual framework was designed based on the literature review. The framework was amended after the research was conducted. The initial conceptual framework portrayed time in a linear fashion and intersecting with perceptions of instructional leadership, which were impacted by three influences: personal, school and community, and policy and mandates. The revised conceptual framework portrays time moving in a linear fashion and intersecting with principals' perceptions of and role as instructional leader, which were impacted by four factors: personal attributes, professional influences, human interactions, and instructional context.

Qualitative data collection methods allowed for rich and in-depth illustration of principals' perceptions about time usage in support of instructional leadership. Semistructured, open-ended interviews were conducted to encourage participants to share their own stories, ideas, and observations; the interviews provided rich, descriptive examples of respondents' perspectives. Data were collected from 22 principals working in public elementary schools across Pennsylvania.

The first research question investigated the ways Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time. Time in the principalship is spent in meetings, discussions with teachers, dealing with students with special needs, observations, students' arrival and dismissal, and announcements as well as on budget areas, discipline issues, environment checks, classroom visits, paperwork, parent organizations, assessment results, unexpected situations, and e-mail. Principals' view of time has changed based on experience as a principal, change in position, No Child Left Behind legislation, and not having enough time. Principals defined time by using metaphors, a clock, and body time perspective, as well as in geometric terms. The second research question looked at strategies principals employed to manage their time. Principals managed their time by using a calendar or scheduled events, prioritization, their secretary, extra hours put in, technology, lists and notes, color coding, paperwork management, delegation of responsibilities, and literature. The third research question looked at what principals considered the most important and least important uses of their time. The most important uses of time involved people, curriculum and instruction, and having a presence in the school. The least important uses of time involved dealing with parents, paperwork, meetings, and e-mail.

The fourth research question looked at how principals define instructional leadership and how the context of accountability changed the definition. Principals defined instructional leadership based on the learner, learning, and professional development. Based on literature and feedback from participants in research study, a definition of instructional leadership was developed. An instructional leader serves the best interests of the learner and learning, of professional development, and of instructional decision making. Serving the best interest of the learner, an instructional leader focuses on teaching and learning,

involved in curriculum development that promotes an instructional program conducive to successful learning by all students. Serving the best interest of learning, an instructional leader considers learning a central role of schooling; encourages instruction to follow academic standards; promotes instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction, and inclusionary practices; does scheduling to provide maximum time for learning; locates resources to support learning; observes teachers to ensure that curricula are being implemented; and provides feedback for improvement of instruction. Serving the best interest of professional development, an instructional leader creates a school culture of continuous learning for all adults (self, faculty and staff, parents) that is tied to student learning and other school goals. This adult learning culture emphasizes study of teaching and learning, collaboration and coaching relationships, program redesign, and action research. Serving the best interest of instructional decision making, an instructional leader uses multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement.

The fifth and sixth research questions looked at the extent to which and the ways principals perceived the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practices as an instructional leader and the contextual forces and influences facilitating or hindering their use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement. Half of the principals were impacted by the absence of time, but the other half of the principals' role as instructional leader was not impacted by the availability or absence of time. Forces hindering time usage included meetings and people. However, principals who were not impacted by the availability or absence of time felt they controlled their own time and that instructional leadership was important. When discussing time for curriculum, principals mentioned being knowledgeable about the reading, writing, and mathematics curricula and having information, being aware of concerns, supporting teaching, and making decisions. When discussing time specific to student achievement, principals discussed results of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), improving student outcomes on the PSSA, and pressures, tensions, and stress.

Findings from this study show there are specific implications for practice and future research within the areas of time, instructional leadership, and leadership. Related to time, future research might examine how ethnicity or geographic location affects an individual's definition and use of time. Related to instructional leadership, future research needs to confirm the instructional leadership definition developed through review of the literature and research. The study provides practitioners with a list of 10 areas of advice for new principals and 10 time management strategies for practicing administrators.

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CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The role of the school principal as an instructional leader is continually evolving in response to a range of societal influences, social trends, and changing expectations. Indeed, alternating patterns of social stability and flux generate a paradox in terms of organizational expectations and their impact on the school leadership role. During periods of societal or national stability, school principals are able to act creatively and if they choose to, comfortably exercising leadership within established and unchallenged patterns of practice. The irony is that at a time when creativity comes easily, there is less social or organizational press for it. However, during periods of societal flux and social turmoil, school principals recede back to more conservative managerial modes of practice in response to organizational expectations, and are expected to act as managers bringing order and control within the school context despite the turbulent societal context. Again, the irony in a reversed form is that periods of social flux are the time when creative responses to educational issues are perhaps most necessary, yet least easily executed. Understanding these dynamics comes down to understanding how principals think of and use their time in response to social, professional, and organizational influences on their work and role.

In order to detect and understand these evolving and cyclical dynamics in the role of school principals, one must look back over time. While the term “instructional leader” does not appear in the literature until the 1980s, it can be seen as an emphasis as far back as the 1920s and has continued as a priority through and including the 2000s. Role expectations in the 1960s required principals to respond to managerial tasks rather than focus on instruction. The humanitarian lens characteristic of the 1970s required principals to successfully relate to people and “facilitate positive interactions among and between students and teachers.” In the 1980s, principals were expected by their school districts to be

instructional leaders, who solve problems and provide resources in order to promote positive teaching and learning experiences for students and teachers (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986). More recently, principal standards from the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) all include discussion about the principal's role in instruction.

Having an impact on instruction is a role that most principals' feel is important. However, managerial tasks and reactively putting out fires has always created a challenge of finding time to carry out this role they view as important. Professional principal standards from ISSLC, PDE, and NAESP may hold principals accountable to acting in the best interest of the learner and learning (i.e., act as an instructional leader), however, given the competing priorities that principals must attend to, finding time to fulfill this role is challenging.

A more recent example of this challenge of finding time for instructional matters was observed during the researcher's 180-hour principal internship during the summer of 2002. The researcher's observations occurred at two different educational placements while working with practicing administrators in a suburban Pennsylvania school district. The internship experience aligned with ISSLC standards is required by the PDE to become a certified school administrator. During the internship experience, the researcher had the opportunity to job shadow three administrators: one was an experienced female elementary principal, the second was a male middle school principal with a couple years of experience, and the third was a male middle school assistant principal in his first year in the position.

Each principal manifested particular approaches to the use of time. As the internship progressed the researcher became increasingly intrigued with their alternate approaches to the use of time. They demonstrated a commonality in how they used their time; that is, to balance different political forces and

influences (teachers, parents, and the community) on them and the school. However, they had contrasting orientations on how to use their administrative time. While the researcher understood the political forces the principals faced, she questioned if using time in these ways was in the “best interest of the student” from the instructional perspective. The internship experiences stimulated her curiosity about how issues of limited time and competing priorities affect principals’ role as instructional leader with a focus on learning and the learner.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to examine strategies principals use to manage their time in a context of accountability. In particular, the researcher explored how principals establish priorities when time is in short supply or when priorities compete. The researcher was specifically interested in discovering how principals maintain a focus on instruction while mediating multiple expectations. Data was gathered from a sample of twenty-two elementary school principals working in Pennsylvania public school districts.

Research Questions

This research is structured by the following questions:

1. In what ways do Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time?
2. What strategies do these principals employ to manage their time?
3. What do these principals consider the most important uses of their time? Conversely, what do these principals consider the least important uses of their time?
4. How do these principals’ define instructional leadership? How, in their perception, has the context of accountability changed this definition?
5. To what extent and in what ways do these principals perceive the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practices as an instructional leader?
6. What contextual forces and influences facilitate or hinder principals’ use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement?

Organizing Conceptual Framework

After reviewing the literature, it became apparent that there was no one model or conceptual framework that adequately supported the implementation of this study. As a result, an organizing conceptual framework employing time conceptions, social expectations of the principalship, and principals' individual perceptions and practices about their role in instructional leadership will guide the investigation and analysis of the study.

The dynamic of time is a continuous movement of proactive and reactive decisions that principals make as they are faced with competing priorities of multiple influences. These influences include: personal, school & community, and policy & mandates.

Personal influences include their age, gender, ethnicity & culture, family makeup, critical incidents, certification, number of years of experience as a principal, and district wealth/type. School and community influences come from the taxpayers who keep the school running financially, parents who send their children to the school, and teachers who work with the students. Policy and mandate influences include local (superiors, school board, district), state standards for principal entrance into the profession (PA principal standards), national principal standards (ISSC, NAESP) and federal mandates (No Child Left Behind Legislation).

As a result, when there are time-constraints, principals' individual perceptions of their role as instructional leader are affected by these influences. Principals' perceptions of instructional leadership are understood through their images of the leader and their instructional pedagogy. Figure 1, on the next page, illustrates the conceptual framework.

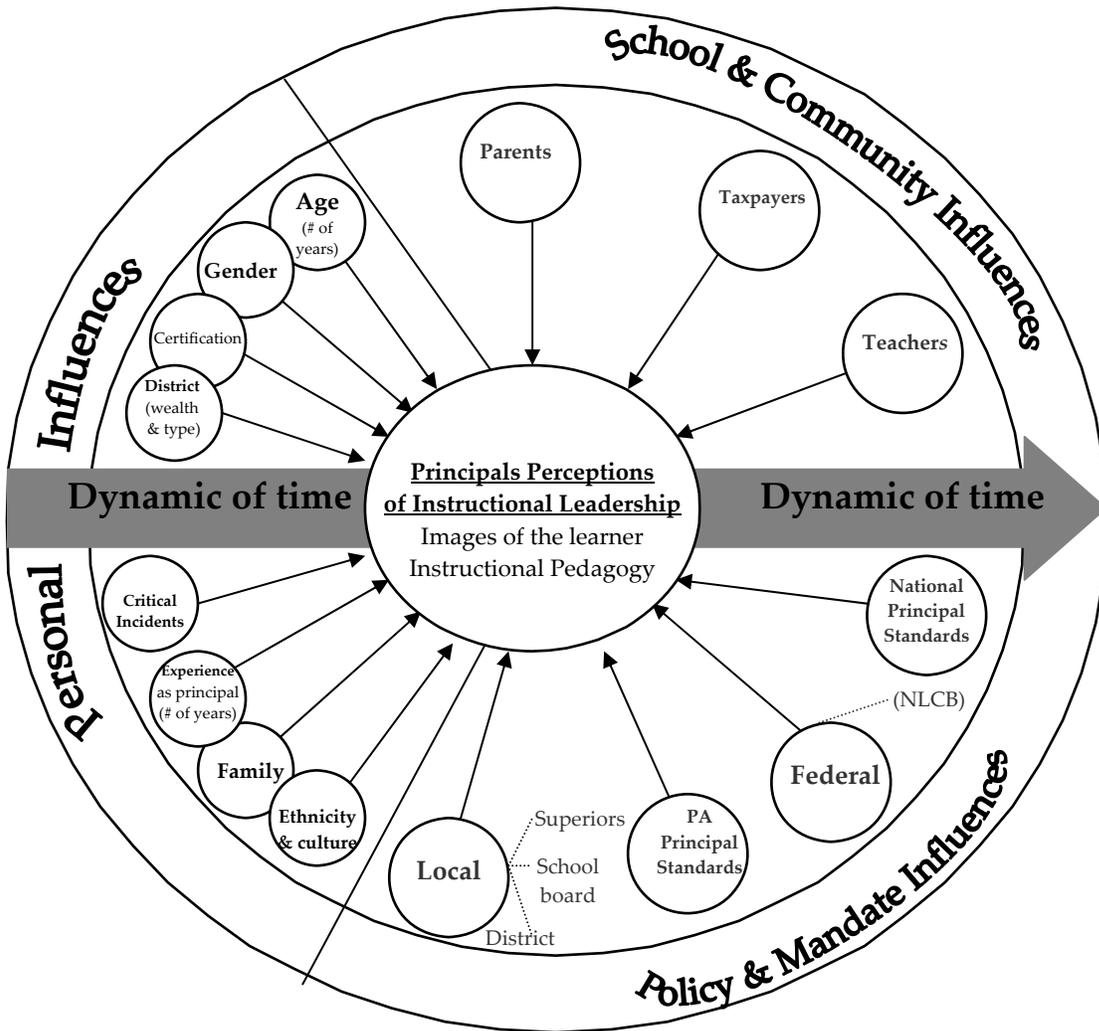


Figure 1: Dynamics of the Principalship

Significance of Study

This study will add to the current body of literature by grounding discussions of principals' instructional leadership practices in the current context of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability, which has increased principals' responsibilities and possibly caused their time to be in shorter supply.

Findings of this research will contribute to literature on understanding current principal management strategies, impact of availability or absence of time, beliefs about time allocation, and factors influencing principal's role as instructional leaders. It will serve to inform the public and the profession about the impact competing priorities and time contrasts has on the instructional leader role of Pennsylvania elementary school principals. Findings could drive district support of principals (personnel and/or expectations), professional development for principals, and graduate course information and teaching strategies. This research is important because "how leaders spend their time and where they focus attention sends strong signals about what they value" (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 91).

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter explores three categories of representative literature relevant to the study: the principal's evolving role in instruction, conceptions of time, and the instructional leader acting in the best interest of learning and the learner. First, a decade-by-decade (1920s to the present) analysis of the evolution of the principal as instructional leader is presented. Next, conceptions of time are examined, time is defined, and theoretical, descriptive, and applied conceptions of time are provided. Thirdly, instructional leadership is examined in detail as a concept, both theoretical and applied conceptions, leading up to a working definition. An organizing conceptual framework for the study, emerging from this literature review, materializes from this focused review of the literature and will be used to guide the investigation.

Principal's Evolving Role in Instruction

In order to understand the school principal's perspective on working in support of the best interest of the learner and learning, one must understand the evolution of the principalship. A decade-by-decade look back in time illustrates how social trends affected the role of the principal and their perceptions of how they were expected to act in the learner's and learning's best interest.

As a result of child labor laws, the education and schooling of children became a driving issue in the 1920s. The focus on education brought official recognition of the role of school principal facilitating the National Education Association (NEA) to create the Department of Elementary School Principals and Department of Secondary School Principals (Beck & Murphy, 1993). The principal was "considered the best and most talented teacher, or the principal teacher" (Drake & Roe, 1999, p. 23).

The 1920s began with the Volstead Act, making it illegal to purchase alcohol thus increasing gangster activity and crime. T. S. Eliot's book *The Wasteland* published at that time focused on the loss of personal, moral, and spiritual values during the 1920s and illustrates the perceived social need for values. Principals were "considered to be a link among values, the truths of science management, and their schools" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 47). The principal in the 1920s was expected to be a spiritual leader, scientific manager, social leader, and dignified leader (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

On Thursday, October 24th, 1929, the U.S. stock market crashed causing the Great Depression to begin. As the country dealt with the reality of the depression, "principals were charged with the shrewd and economic management of schools" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 197). Schools faced a constant migration of students as their families moved from town to town in search of work. The remaining students often came to school hungry or lived in temporary shelters since their family home had been lost. As a result of the societal chaos, principals needed to keep schools running constantly and orderly. They became bureaucratic organizer/supervisor within the business enterprise of education and were seen as professionals or executives (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

World War II ended the Great Depression, and establishing a "democratic world order [became the] chief national concern" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 197). As a result, in the 1940s, the federal government expanded its support in and of education with funding provided for veterans to go to college and forming a federal school lunch and milk program. Based on the societal context and the increased federal involvement, the school principal was seen as a democratic leader on the home front; curriculum developer, group coordinator, and supervisor; and public relations representative (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

The 1950s was a decade of great change for school leadership because the principalship was in a “transitional phase in terms of role definitions” (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 86). As a result of World War II, there was an “unbelievable growth of the school-age’ baby boomers population” (Drake & Roe, 1999, p. 23). Principals became managers in order to build additional facilities, hire teachers, and organize changing needs due to a growing student population (Drake & Roe, 1999). These changing needs lead to principals being seen as administrators, defender of educational practice, efficient manager of time, and the overseer of minute details (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

The social and political turbulence of the 1960s required changes to the status quo maintenance orientation held previously by principals (Hallinger, 1992). Prior to the 1960s, the federal government had almost no policy-making role in elementary or secondary education in United States (Timpane, 1978). However, in the mid-1960s, several acts increased federal involvement with schools focusing the educational mission on equal access. Specifically, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided schools with constitutional rights and in 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) established comprehensive programs to equalize opportunities for disadvantaged children. As the status quo was critiqued, school principals made great efforts to “maintain stability and a sense of normalcy in schools” (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 88). A principal was seen as bureaucrat, protector of bureaucracy, inhabitant of a role in conflict, accountable leader, and user of scientific strategies (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

In the 1970s, the Vietnam War brought a decade of civil unrest and left public education in shambles. Schools were ordered to be desegregated causing racial violence and white flight, communities fought over property taxes, and teachers went on strike. As a result, the leadership of schools during the 1970s reflected the thinking of times. Principals were seen as a community leader, imparter of meaning, a facilitator of positive relationships, and juggler of many roles (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

Schools of the 1970s were also faced with the effects of the Coleman Report (1966) and the disturbing assertion that “schools do not matter.” The Coleman Report noted that “differences between schools account for only a small fraction of differences in pupil achievement” (Clark, Lotto, & Astuto, 1984, p. 45). It set in motion an urgent search for “effective schools” and instructional practices effective with disadvantaged children (Boyd & Hartman, 1988). A school was considered instructionally effective if it had the following six characteristics:

(1) strong administrative leadership; (2) a climate for expectation for satisfactory student achievement; (3) an orderly but not oppressive school climate; (4) a focus on pupil acquisition of basic school skills; (5) a system for continuous monitoring of pupil progresses; and (6) resources that can be focused on the fundamental learning objectives of the school (Clark et al., 1984, pp. 47-48).

As a result of the Coleman Report, “compensatory education, bilingual education, education for the handicapped and other federal entitlements required implementation support from the school site administrator” (Hallinger, 1992, p. 36). Adding to their role responsibility, by mid-1970s, principals could not “ ‘avoid the responsibilities that came with programme and curriculum management,’ which were *implicitly* oriented towards school improvement and change” (Hallinger, 1992, p. 36).

The 1980s is frequently referred to as the era of excellence. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education produced the influential “A Nation at Risk” report. “A Nation at Risk” stated that U.S. students were achieving lower than students in other industrialized nations and if improvements were not made in school the United States would lose the position as a global competitor. It encouraged a continued focus on effective schools to address these national concerns. As a result, principals, in the 1980s, were required to be program focused, a problem solver and resource provider, a

visionary, a change agent, and an instructional leader (Beck & Murphy, 1993; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; 1986).

In 1990, the National Education Goals Panel called for six goals for American Education to be completed by 2000 (Drake & Roe, 1999). In 1994, President Clinton added two more initiatives to Goals 2000 making a total of eight national educational goals. Goals 2000 promoted standards-based education reforms and states were expected to create performance standards with aligned assessments. As a result of Goals 2000, schools and their principals were held accountable for “improved teaching and learning and high student achievement” (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). Additionally, principals in the 1990s were expected to be a leader, servant, educator, organizational and social architect, moral agent, and person in the community (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

Under President George W. Bush, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was reauthorized and renamed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. NCLB redefined the federal role in education and is considered to be the most significant and far-reaching federal policy thus far. The bureaucratic mandates of NCLB require school principals to increase student achievement through continuous improvement of instructional practice. While this is a large challenge, NCLB also requires principals to follow specific requirements that teachers (even those with many years’ experience) are highly qualified and support students (and their parents) right to transfer schools (Lashway, 2003). The school principal in the 2000s is a change agent as well as a community builder, who reaches out to help and support diverse student populations and their families.

The preceding decade-by-decade discussion shows the influence that major social, cultural, and political events have on changing roles and expectations for the role of the school principal (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Table 1 on the next page provides a brief summary of waxing and waning of principals’ role in instruction.

Table 1: Principals' Evolving Role in Instruction

1920's	National Education Association (NEA) creates the Department of Elementary School Principals and Department of Secondary School Principals Volstead Act: Principal as dignified leader of social problems
1930's	Great Depression: Principal as manager of pressing challenges
1940's	World War II: Principal as developer of curriculum on democracy
1950's	Baby Boomers: Principal as manager of details of overcrowding
1960's	Federal Government Involvement & Issues of Equal Access: Principal as leader providing stability and normalcy
1970's	Coleman Report: Principal focus on school improvement & change because "schools don't matter."
1980's	"A Nation at Risk": Principal as instructional leader building an effective school because U.S. schools were achieving lower than other countries.
1990's	Goals 2000: Introduced standards and held principals accountable for teaching, learning, and student achievement.
2000's	No Child Left Behind (NCLB): Principal required to show continuous improvement of instructional practice from highly qualified teachers.

The roles and expectations of the school principal today are quite different and substantially more complex than it has been the case in the past. In the '80s, several studies were done on principals' time management and time allocation; one such study was done by Martin & Willower (1981).

Studies provide a list of the specific tasks that principals perform during the school day analyzing which tasks receive more or less time and attention. However, they do not look at how the availability or lack of time allows specific tasks to receive attention. Since many of these studies were conducted during the 1980s, they are unable to address how accountability mandates effect principals' time. As a result, these studies do not provide an in-depth analysis of time spent to as instructional leaders or time spent to improve student achievement and instructional practice. This study will explore principals' conceptions of time influence their role as instructional leaders within the current context of accountability.

In order to look at how principals use time; we must understand how time is conceptualized. The next section will look at how time is conceptualized and examined in the literature.

Conceptions of Time

How time is defined depends on the individuals' perspective and "vary from culture to culture" (Newman & Smith, 1999, p. 1). Many cultures "think of time as uniform and unchangeable. "A minute is a minute no matter who you are or where you live [since] time ...is a human construction" (Newman & Smith, 1999, p. 1).

Time is extremely important to understand as a concept because it explains how people live, yet as a concept it is hard to describe (Birth, 2004). Early conceptions of time looked at it from the qualitative perspective, where an outside observer perceives time as discontinuous but for the community experiencing time it is marked by events, rites, or activities, rather than looking at time as a measurable duration (Pronovost, 1986).

Theoretical Conceptions of Time

Theorists have conceptualized time in different ways across the ages. Plato did not believe that time existed by itself because he saw time and the universe as one. Aristotle, a student of Plato, was concerned with the measurement of time and the relationship between time and motion. He determined that time was the measure of motion and could be expressed numerically. Isaac Newton built on Aristotle's theory of time as motion and created Newtonian dynamics. Newton defined the use of the lowercase "t" which represented the duration between events and provide a directionally based unit length. "After A. Einstein ... upset the Newtonian paradigm of absolute time and space, we saw the gradual identification of layers of time hitherto unknown to the sciences" (Filipcova & Filipec, 1986, p. 19).

Nobel laureate Ilya Prigogine proposed a new conception of physical time. Capital “T” was used to describe the broken symmetries of real events and express “irreversibility, directionality, and an essential difference between past and future” (Adam, 2004, p. 33). Immanuel Kant felt that time “precedes experience and perception” (Adam, 2004, p. 34) where Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel felt that time precedes consciousness because it is a condition of consciousness rather than a perception. Each of these theorists added their own twist on conceptions of time helping to understand it as a concept of both science and life.

Descriptive Research Conceptions of Time

Adam’s 2004 book on time also looked at body time, clock time, and social time. Body time looks at birth, regeneration, and death. Clock time is linear and represented by a specific repetition of the “same irrespective when and where” (Adam, 2004, p. 101). Birth (2004) felt that clock time:

functions on the basis of metaphorical conceptions of time: Analog clock faces express the passage of time by displaying the relative position of two hands in a defined space, and digital displays show the passage of time as an accumulating quantity (Birth, 2004, p. 71).

Social time is the combination of body and clock time.

Time can be discussed in geometric terms such as a cycle, spiral, circle, point, and line (Adam, 2004; Birth, 2004). A cycle describes time looks at a change continuum or the representation of the similar. A spiral represents time as a dynamic journey or development. Time is represented by a circle as the repetition of the same or the past and future in the present. A point represents time as the beginning and end or the eternal now. Time is represented by the line as before and after that is irreversible. “The discussion over whether time is a circle or a line demonstrates how the metaphors used to represent time

can themselves come be treated as concepts of time. ... The problem with such metaphors is that while concepts of time might be like a line, circle, spiral, or wave, time itself is not" (Birth, 2004, pp. 73-74).

In everyday language, specific metaphors or expressions are used to explain time. These metaphors include: "bedtime," "budget time," "family time," "free time," "overtime," "own time," "party time," "quitting time," "religious time," "school time," and "work time." These metaphors are important because they show that individuals in modern society live "in a plurality of temporal frameworks with differing [,] ... contradictory, or conflicting significances and contents" (Pronovost, 1986, p. 10).

In 2004, Birth wrote an article on studying the concepts of time in the journal, *Field Methods*. He found that "an important element for understanding ideas of time is exploring the dynamic relationship between externally imposed and locally emergent ideas of time" (Birth, 2004, p. 78). This means that our ideas of time are affected by both external factors (i.e., what society) and internal factors (i.e., what our culture and local community). In looking at how to study time, Birth proposed conducting a qualitative ethnographic study of time. This type of study "requires the development of methodology that capitalizes on the connection of cultural concepts of time to other issues" (Birth, 2004, p. 71).

Gilles Pronovost looked at the sociological and historical perspectives of time in the *International Social Science Journal* asked four questions regarding methodological approaches. These questions included:

How can time be studied? How can we see time gradually taking shape, assuming a pattern within organizations, according to activities and finding expression in value system? How can we detect that the relationships between times are changing? In what tangible forms are manifold categories of social time reflected and what signs reveal whether or not they are synchronized? (Pronovost, 1986, p. 14)

These questions could be used in the type of qualitative ethnographic study of time that Birth (2004) proposed.

There are a variety of descriptive methods available for conceptualizing and examining time including societal, cultural, occupational, and organizational conceptions. Societies are distinguished by their particular time culture" (Pronovost, 1986, p. 10). Conceptions of time in the United States differ from elsewhere in the world. Americans are very sensitive to time, where "days often consist of a series of précising scheduled episodes" (Newman & Smith, 1999, p. 1) determined by clock time. "Watches tell [Americans] when it is time to work and when it is time to play" (Newman & Smith, 1999, p. 2). As a result, Americans have been conditioned by the rules of punctuality, which require an apology or explanation when violated (Newman & Smith, 1999).

Cultural conceptions of time can also be examined by looking at age groups, life cycles, social roles, and social class (Pronovost, 1986). Younger individuals tend to want to do more in less time (i.e., quantity of activities in a given time) where older individuals tend to want to spend more time doing less (i.e., quality of activities in a given time). Conceptions of time are effected by life cycles from childhood to adolescence to retirement. A child wonders when school day will end, an adolescent when it is time to sneak out of the house, and a retiree when it is time for bed. Gender stereotypes typically drive social role conceptions of time. For example, a married woman with children who works full-time would have a different conception of time than a single women working full-time. Conceptions about time effect social class because "ideas and attitudes to time have a deep and undeniable impact on economic behaviour, political actions and relationships in the various sectors of society" (Rezsohazy, 1986, p. 33).

An individual's occupation can also determine how they conceptualize time. "Work life is often synonymous with the amount of time you spend on the job as well as the time you spend preparing for work, getting there, and getting back. Workdays are punctuated by time demands or deadlines"

(Newman & Smith, 1999, p. 1). As a result, active and working Americans complain about not having enough time to do everything or about a lack of time. These active individuals specifically include “executive staff and people in the liberal professions, ... primary and secondary teachers ... are the those who suffer the most from lack of time” (Rezsohazy, 1986, p. 37).

This section examined how time can be descriptively conceptualized from the perspective of the body, clock, culture, geometry, metaphors, society, occupation, and organization. These descriptive conceptions of time provide an understanding for research studies that have applied conceptions of time.

Applied Conceptions of Time

It is important to understand how previous research has examined applied conceptions of time. The intent of the following section is to highlight three studies: Hawkins & Klas (1997), Martin & Willower (1981), and Heck (1992) that examined applied conceptions of time either under the umbrella of occupations or the occupation of the principal.

Hawkins and Klas’s 1997 study looked at five studies, completed in the 10-year span from 1984 to 1994 that looked stress-causing factors for four groups of helping professionals.

Time and its effective management proved to be the most significant stressor category for all groups [because] ... there is not enough time to accomplish what is expected, not enough time to follow earlier contacts, not enough time to keep up on one’s professional reading. Time seems to be wasted or poorly managed (Hawkins & Klas, 1997, p. 2).

As a result, Hawkins & Klas found that lack of time or time management skills was key because “helping professional are expected to do more with the same of fewer resources ... [and] effective time management skills are increasingly important to the helping professional” (Hawkins & Klas, 1997, p. 5).

While the Rezsóhazy study on active individuals and the Hawkins & Klas study on helping professional did not specifically look at school principals, the principalship is both an active and helping profession and thus the logic applies. As a result, it is important to look at how school principals spend their time.

Descriptively time can be examined via the amount, as an investment, rate or speed of change, time on and time off, sequence of events, and the ownership of time (Peterson, 1999). These studies can be examined under the lens of the school principal. Studies looking amount of time may question “how much time do principals spend on instructional leadership?” Time as an investment studies may question “does the availability of time have an impact of principal’s professional practices?” Studies looking at the sequence of events over time may question “how do principals decide what to do with their time first, second, or not do?” Ownership of time studies might look at “whether decisions about principal’s time usage are their decision or the decision of the organization?” Time can also be examined from the organizational perspective. Organizational time:

level of analysis refers to the time generated by various organizations, who operation, timetables and scheduling of activities have the effect of structuring time in a way which may be specific to them. ... Such times interact with other levels ... [and] have their own relative specificity, as evidenced by their importance in the patterning of micro-social time (Pronovost, 1986, p. 11).

This type of time allocation study was conducted by Martin and Willower (1981), who looked at the managerial behavior of five high school principals. They found that principals participated in 13 tasks: desk work, meetings (scheduled, unscheduled, exchanges), simultaneous and interrupted tasks, correspondence, phone calls, personal contacts, monitoring, announcing, touring the building, trips, after-school activities, other activities, and personal time (Martin & Willower, 1981).

Martin & Willower also looked their task-performance and found six elements that laid the foundation for the managerial work of the principalship: (1) volume and pace, (2) variety, brevity, and fragmentation, (3) verbal media preference, (4) preference for live action, (5) the contact network, and (6) blend of rights and duties (Martin & Willower, 1981). Volume and pace looked at length of the principal's work week and the number of differing tasks that they performed during that time. Variety, brevity, and fragmentation again looks at the number of differing tasks but takes it a step further in analyzing the number of simultaneous tasks being conducted and the during of interruptions during those tasks. In the Martin & Willower study, principals were found to prefer verbal media where they were interacting face to face with people as well as preferring live action where they dealt with the most pressing issues. The contact network plays into the organizational perspective of studying time, due to the role teachers, students, secretaries, and the community play in principals' time allocation decisions. Unfortunately, Martin and Willower's study failed to look at principals' time spent as an instructional leader.

In 1992, Heck conducted a study to look at the most important instructional predictors of school achievement and how principal behavior effected the achievement. Heck found three dominating instructional leadership predictors: "amount of time principals spend directly observing classroom practices, promoting discussions about instructional issues [i.e., quality feedback], and emphasizing the use of test results for program improvement" (Heck, 1992, p. 30). The study found that "increasing principals' expertise as clinical supervisors, as well as the amount of time principals allocate to this activity, appears to be one policy choice that pays dividends in terms of school performance, especially within the elementary context" (Heck, 1992, p. 30). Thus Heck's conclusions support principals allocating time to instructional leadership in order and believe that it will support continued school performance.

Instructional Leadership

This section will examine theoretical and applied conceptions of instructional leadership as well as providing a research definition of instructional leadership that will guide the study.

Theoretical Conceptions of Instructional Leadership

As a result of the standards and accountability movements of the 1990s and 2000s, accountability standards were established for principal's preparation and evaluation of professional conduct once in the position. Principal standards from the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) all include discussion about the principal's role as an instructional leader who acts in the best interest of the learning and learning.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has also identified six standards for the specific actions that elementary principals, within the role of instructional leader, should be able to do. The six standards are:

- (1) Lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center.
- (2) Set high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults.
- (3) Demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed-upon academic standards.
- (4) Create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals.
- (5) Use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement.
- (6) Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success. (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.)

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) established six standards designed to regulate principal's entrance into the profession through a licensure exam as well as a method of

evaluating the performance of those already in the profession. Standard two focuses on the school leaders as instructional leader. “A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) principal certification standards fall within the three categories of: knowing the content, performance, and professionalism. Within the category of knowing the content, the role of the principal as an instructional leader, who focuses on teaching and learning, is discussed. Specifically, principals need to be “involved in curriculum development (including for special needs students), data driven decision-making and problem solving, instructional scheduling, instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction and inclusionary practices, and learning theory and student motivation” (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004).

The role of instructional leader is one that many principals have felt was important from the 1920s to today; however, managerial tasks and putting out fires left little to no time for the role. Professional principal standards from ISSLC, PDE, and NAESP now hold principals accountable to find time to be an instructional leader.

Descriptive Conceptions of Instructional Leadership

Research on instructional leadership “has typically focused on three areas: the attributes of the instructional leader, tasks of the instructional leader, and models of instructional leadership” (Harchar & Hyle, 1996, p. 15). Thus, before a decision about where the focus of the principal, as instructional leader, should be; it is important to establish attributes and skills of the instructional leader.

Southworth (2002) believes that instructional leaders should have “specific qualities and individual attributes ... such as high energy levels, resilience, determination, empathy, and optimism” (Southworth, 2002, p. 86). Instructional leaders also need to have the ability to establish a vision, develop

trust, foster collaboration, and demand respect for all in the school community (Harchar & Hyle, 1996). These attributes allow instructional leaders to successfully carry out tasks in a school environment where priorities compete and there are time constraints.

“Instructional leadership requires individuals to be highly competent in a variety of knowledge and skill areas including knowledge of curricula, pedagogy, student and adult learning in change management, group dynamics and interpersonal relations and communications” (Southworth, 2002, pp. 85-86). An effective instructional leader needs to “strategically apply knowledge to solve contextually specific problems and to achieve the purpose of schooling through others” (Krug, 1992, p. 434). This set of knowledge and skills provides the appropriate tools for addressing, handling, and following through with the complex tasks of instructional leadership.

Applied Conceptions of Instructional Leadership

This section will look at instructional leadership focusing on learning and teaching. “Educators are gradually redefining the role of the principal from instructional leader with a focus on teaching and learning to leader of a professional community with a focus on learning” (DuFour, 2002, p. 15). This focus on learning is achieved when “the principal collaborates with teachers to accomplish organizational goals for teaching and learning” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 377). Thus instructional leadership is “about leading teachers’ professional learning” (Southworth, 2002, p. 89).

Blase & Blase (2000) found that two major dimensions of effective instructional leadership are talking with teachers to promote reflection and professional growth. They also found 11 strategies for effective instructional leadership within these two major dimensions. Instructional leaders need to talk with teachers to promote reflection by making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling, using inquiry and soliciting advice & opinions, and giving praise. Professional growth is promoted by emphasizing the study of teaching & learning; supporting collaboration efforts among educators; developing coaching

relationships among educators; encouraging and supporting redesign of programs; applying the principals of adult learning; growth, & development to all phases of staff development; and implementing action research to inform instructional decision-making.

The work of Blase and Blase shows the importance of instructional leaders promoting reflection and professional growth of teachers. In this role, the instructional leader is acting a teacher. Thus “instructional leadership, emphasizing the technical core of instruction, curriculum, and assessment, provides direction and affects the day-to-day activities of teachers and students in schools” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 377). This vision of the principal as instructional leader reflects the origins of the principalship where the principal was the principal or best teacher. A principal, who remembers their roots as a teacher and is an effective instructional leader, needs to “find opportunities in their everyday activities and encounters to meet the unique needs of the teachers and students in their schools” (Krug, 1992, p. 436).

Unfortunately much of the literature on instructional leadership focuses solely on the principal’s knowledge and ability in the role. This “traditional perspective of principal instructional leadership and supervisory behavior [unfortunately] values principal knowledge and essentially marginalizes teacher knowledge” (Reitzug, 1997, p. 342). From this perspective, the principal uses instructional leadership as a mechanism to “influence over teachers’ instructional practices” (Spillane, Hallett, & Diamond, 2003, p. 4). It ignores the wealth of skills and knowledge that teachers can bring to instructional leadership.

Given the responsibility for instructional leadership assumed by teachers and senior teachers rather than by principals, it is critical that principals devote resources to nurturing teachers, communicating expectations, giving technical and personal support, and supervising, recognizing and rewarding high quality teaching performance (Wildy & Dimmock, 1993, p. 60).

Instructional leadership should be seen as an “innovative vehicle for fostering productive adult interaction in today’s schools” (Tallerico & Blumberg, 1991, p. 325). A more empowering image of instructional leadership and supervision portrays “primarily facilitate leadership in others and empower them to be leaders” (Kleine-Kracht, 1993, p. 211) in this environment “teachers and principals [act] as collaborative inquirers, educating (teaching) as problematic, and professional development (supervision) as sustained and ongoing” (Reitzug, 1997, p. 342). More specifically, “effective instructional leadership integrates collaboration, peer-coaching, inquiry, collegial study groups, and reflective discussion into a holistic approach to promote professional dialog among educators” (Blase & Blase, 2000, p. 137).

Research Definition of Instructional Leadership

Typically, when thinking about the principal’s role in instruction, the term “instructional leadership” is used. However, many feel that instructional leadership has not been clearly defined by researchers or practitioners, nor has an absolute set of traits been established. Moreover, conceptions of instructional leadership have evolved over time, ebbing and flowing in response to changing social expectations and new research (Harchar & Hyle, 1996; Heck, 1992; Lashway, 2003). The “earliest descriptions of instructional leadership seemed to highlight the direct effect of principals’ traits and actions, more recent views have focused on increasingly on indirect influences” (Lashway, 2003, p. 4). These indirect influences of instructional leadership are “usually characterized by the presence of a clearly articulated educational philosophy, extensive knowledge about effective educational practices, and a clear understanding of the policy environment framing the school’s purposes and practices” (Begley & Associates, 1995). Other definitions on instructional leadership focused on the teacher, defining instructional leadership as “the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students” (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999, p. 8).

More recent views of instructional leadership emphasize “the technical core of instruction, curriculum, and assessment, provides direction and affects the day-to-day activities of teachers and students in schools” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 377). Thus, teachers, students, and school communities will benefit if “principals function as *learning leaders* rather than instructional leaders” (DuFour, 2002, p. 13). In this context, the principal, as instructional or learning leader, can focus on providing a school climate where “everyone is a learner, and everyone is a teacher” (Wallman, 1991, p. 90), the focus on “leading teacher’s professional learning” (Southworth, 2002, p. 89) and building/encouraging leaders.

Based on the literature, the researcher has constructed a definition of instructional leadership, which will be used throughout the research. The definition, stated below, supports principal standards for instructional leadership by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), the Council of Chief State School Officers (creator of the ISSLC standards), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

An instructional leader serves the best interests of the learner and learning, professional development, and instructional decision-making:

- Serving the best interest of the learner, an instructional leader focus on “teaching and learning, involved in curriculum development” (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004), and promoting an instructional program conducive to the successful learning of all students (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).
- Serving the best interest of learning, an instructional leader considers learning a central role of schooling (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.); encourages instruction to follow academic standards (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.); promotes instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction and inclusionary practices (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004); and does scheduling to provide maximum time for learning (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004).
- Serving the best interest of professional development, an instructional leader creates a school culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.). This adult learning culture emphasizes study of teaching and learning, collaboration and coaching relationships, program redesign, and action research. (Blase & Blase, 2000).
- Serving the best interest of instructional decision-making, uses multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004) assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004)

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Restatement of Research Problem and Questions

The accountability associated with the No Child Left Behind legislation has increased principals' responsibilities and affected their use of time. This study examines strategies principals use to manage their time so as to maintain a focus on instruction when time is in short supply, priorities compete, and there are multiple expectations. The researcher designed an organizing conceptual framework employing time conceptions, social expectations of the principalship, and principals' individual perceptions about their role in instructional leadership to guide the investigation and analysis of the study. Six research questions structure the study:

1. In what ways do Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time?
2. What strategies do these principals employ to manage their time?
3. What do these principals consider the most important uses of their time? Conversely, what do these principals consider the least important uses of their time?
4. How do these principals define instructional leadership? How has the context of accountability changed that definition?
5. To what extent and in what ways do these principals perceive the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practice as an instructional leader?
6. What contextual forces and influences facilitate or hinder principals' use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement?

Logic and Justification for Qualitative Research and Multicase Studies

A paradigm is a system of thoughts or beliefs that help someone know or understand information. Two research paradigms, the functionalist or positivist and the interpretivist or postmodernist, are most often discussed and debated in educational research. The functionalist or positivist paradigm focuses on a concrete reality governed by laws, rules, and regulations. There is a concrete and tangible relationship between observable variables. "There are real things whose

characteristics are entirely independent of our opinions about [the characteristics]" (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 6). Since the variables are measurable, the researcher can be detached and objective. Therefore, quantitative research covers the functionalist or positivist paradigm. The interpretivist or postmodernist paradigm focuses on an understanding reality governed by the desire to interpret the meaning between and among participants. According to Blumer (1969), the interpretivist rests on three simple premises.

The first premise is that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with things he[*she*] encounters (Blumer, 1969, p. 2).

As a result, there is an intangible and subjective relationship between and among participants, which requires the researcher to be immersed in the study in order to understand the participants' perspective and thus cannot be detached from the participant. Therefore, the interpretivist or postmodernist paradigm is investigated via qualitative research.

Qualitative research allows rich descriptions in the participants' own language to answer the research question. "Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, ... the situational constraints that shape the inquiry[, and] ... answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning" (Denzin, 2000, p. 8). This study uses qualitative research to answer the question about how elementary principals create and give meaning to time. Each of the research questions poses a descriptive mode of inquiry. Questions utilizing descriptive inquiry assess the nature of existing conditions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). By its nature, qualitative research is

descriptive seeking to understand a phenomenon from the participant's perspective for explanatory purposes.

There are a number of approaches to qualitative research. John Creswell (2003) identified five approaches: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies. A biographical study is "the study of single individual and his or her experiences as told to the researcher or found in documents or archival materials" (Creswell, 2003, p. 57). Biographical studies can take the form of biographies, autobiographies, life histories, and oral histories. A phenomenological study involves the researcher in studying perceptions of a particular phenomenon. In a grounded-theory study, the researcher collects data and then generates a new theory, which is "grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed" (Creswell, 2003, p. 51). Ethnographic research documents everyday experiences of individuals to obtain a holistic understanding of a particular society, group, institution, setting, or situation. Case study research examines a "bounded system" or case over time in detail, employing multiple sources of data (Yin, 2003), and the research defines the case and its boundary.

The study of cases has been used in medicine, law, business, and education for training and professional development. A case study requires a description of the case, an analysis of the themes, and interpretations about the case. Guba and Lincoln (1989) call the interpretations "lessons learned," which thus provide the training and professional development. This qualitative study uses case study to investigate the "lesson learned" by practicing administrators in order to identify strategies and perspectives for providing training for new principals and professional development for other practicing administrators.

A case is selected because of its uniqueness or can be selected to illustrate an issue (Stake, 1997). The focus of a case study may be on one entity (a within-site study) or several entities (a multicase study). Robert Stake (1997) identified three types of case studies: intrinsic case study, instrumental case study,

and multiple- or collective case study. A researcher doing an intrinsic case study wants to understand a specific individual or situation. Instrumental case studies involve a researcher in studying a particular case with the goal of drawing conclusions that apply beyond the particular case. Multiple- or collective case studies involve the researcher in studying multiple cases at the same time.

Single and multiple-case studies have advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of a single case study offers the ability to look at a rare, unique, or special case. The advantage of multiple-case-study research is the ability to generalize information. The disadvantage of single-case-study research is the inability to generalize, and the disadvantage of multiple-case studies lies in the resources and time required. Despite the challenges of multiple-, or multicase, studies, this research study uses the multicase-study approach to qualitative research because it allows for greater generalization of information.

Site and Sample Selection

The sample population consisted of Pennsylvania elementary principals. The state of Pennsylvania was selected because of its rich educational history, demographics, and the researcher's access to principals within the state. Pennsylvania has a rich history and tradition of education. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site, in the year 2000, there were 130 colleges/universities and 323 privately licensed higher education schools in Pennsylvania. As a result, students have numerous opportunities of higher education institutions to attend, parents thus are more likely to have some form of higher education, and educators, including principals, have increased opportunities for continuing education. Individuals who are better educated are more likely to be aware of the context of accountability and the results-based mind-set.

Demographically, Pennsylvania has two major urban areas, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, which are surrounded by suburban communities. Numerous rural communities exist throughout the state. In fact, according to the Pennsylvania Rural Study Council, "Pennsylvania has the largest rural population

in any state in the nation.” The rural, suburban, urban district access is important to K-12 schools because the tax laws in Pennsylvania rely heavily on the local community and little state funding is available. This causes challenges for K-12 educators because the socioeconomic status of the local community determines funding.

As a result of the geographic diversity in the state of Pennsylvania, there are three geographic cases: urban principals, suburban principals, and rural principals. Urban schools are perceived as being complex and compartmentalized, with inadequate resources and a struggling student population. Suburban schools are perceived as offering an easier educational environment, with ample resources and good students. Rural schools are perceived as mirroring the community, with inadequate resources and providing students with a no-frills education. As a result, does context matter? Is principals’ use of time and ability to be instructional leaders impacted by the rural, suburban, or urban educational context?

Rather than focusing on all principals in Pennsylvania, the researcher decided to focus on elementary school principals. The reason is that while there are common aspects to being either an elementary, middle, or high school principal, the position requires very different uses of time. According to the literature, elementary school principals are more likely to be instructional leaders than are high school principals. Therefore, it is more likely for elementary school principals to spend time on instructional leadership. Since the study is looking at principals’ time usage as instructional leaders, it made sense to focus on elementary principals. Additionally, the researcher is considering becoming a principal in the future. Based on her education, experience, and interest, she will likely work in an elementary school and would gain maximum benefit and knowledge from working with elementary school principals.

Participants in the study were stratified based on experience. An entry-level principal was deemed to have 0 to 5 years’ experience in the principalship; a midcareer principal, 6–12 years’

experience; and an experienced principal, more than 13 years' experience. In addition to career phase (entry-level, midcareer, and experienced), the study was also sensitive to the influence of federal policies on principal practices. For example, an entry-level principal would have begun his or her tenure during the time of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, a midcareer principal would have experienced the Goals 2000 Movement, and an experienced principal could be associated with the era of the "Nation at Risk" report. The experience level of the 22 participants was divided up as follows: 4 were entry-level, 10 were midcareer, and 8 were experienced.

There are two main reasons behind the decision to stratify participants based on experience. First, individuals with less experience are likely to be less familiar with the role and possess fewer options in their problem-handling bag than individuals with more experiences. Due to their newness in the position, it is likely that individuals with less experience need to spend more time taking care of daily tasks, leaving less time for more-complex, Big-Picture, and long-term tasks. Second, individuals who are new in the position have always worked in the role in the context of accountability. Since they have never known another context, it is likely that accountability mandates would not impact their use of time. It is possible that despite being familiar with the accountability context, they do not use their time as instructional leaders. Experienced individuals with 10 or more years' experience would have worked in an accountability context and a context that did not have the same accountability requirements. As a result of the difference, they may or may not be able to successfully work in the accountability context. Experienced principals may feel that accountability is just another passing trend and there is no reason to invest time in being an instructional leader because the accountability trend will quickly disappear.

Research Strategies and Instrumentation

Qualitative data collection methods "portray the richness and complexity" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p. 41) of principals' perceptions about time usage for instructional leadership. The

phenomenological approach was used to look at how principals make meaning (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003), and ethnomethodology will be used to investigate how these principals create, understand, and accomplish every daily routines in life (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) about their role as instructional leader given limited time and competing priorities.

Semistructured, open-ended interview questions were asked to encourage participants to “tell their story ... shar[ing] their own ideas and observations” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 99) and provided rich, descriptive examples of respondents’ perspective. The interview data was transcribed and analyzed via coding, allowing categories or themes to emerge.

Data Collection

Step 1: Pilot study of interview questions

The researcher originally planned to conduct a pilot study of the interview with several elementary principals who do not work in Pennsylvania. However, at the oral hearing for the research proposal, the committee expressed concerns about the pilot study’s using a target population (i.e., non-Pennsylvania principals) different from that of the research study (i.e., Pennsylvania principals). Three pilot study interviews were completed and were successful. After the pilot study, minimal revisions needed to be made to the interview protocol and questions. As a result of the valuable information shared in the pilot study, the interviews were included in the study.

Step 2: Locating participants for interviews

Twenty-two elementary principals were selected based on purposive sampling, a nonrandom method, to participate in the one-on-one interviews. The researcher located initial participants in the study via purposive sampling of current students or graduates of the Educational Leadership, formerly Educational Administration, program at The Pennsylvania State University. These individuals either were working toward or had received their master’s degree, principal certification, letter of

superintendency eligibility, or doctoral degrees from the program. The researcher then used the snowball method with these individuals to locate other elementary principals for participation in the study. To achieve greater stratification of participants, the researcher attended the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary Principals (PAESP) State Convention to locate additional elementary principals. The researcher also e-mailed, wrote letters, and called other Pennsylvania principals, requesting their consideration in participating in the study.

Step 3: Permission for participation

Each interviewee was contacted via e-mail or telephone and invited to participate in the study. Principals who agreed to participate in the study were mailed a letter (Appendix C), which was approved by Penn State's Office of Research Protections, reexplaining the study and formally requesting their written consent to participate.

Based on the intent of the study, the researcher did not need permission from participants' school district, since the study is investigating principals' perspective rather than a specific district's program or policy. Additionally, only one or two elementary principals from a district were interviewed, thus having little impact on the district as a whole. Due to a district policy, one principal requested that the researcher contact the district assistant superintendent to discuss the study and receive permission to speak with district personnel about the study. The assistant superintendent, who had previously been contacted by the principal, saw no problem with the study because it was investigating the perspective of a principal and whether or not to participate in the study was up to the principal.

Step 4: Open-ended, semistructured interviews

The researcher designed a preinterview questionnaire (Appendix A), which was sent to the participants prior to the interview. The questionnaire provided the researcher with background information about the participants, which is directly connected to variables within the personal influences

portion of the conceptual framework. The interview question schedule (Appendix B) was created based on the conceptual framework and research questions. Questions have been listed under the headings of dynamic of time and instructional leadership with policy/mandate and community influences questions embedded within each of the headings.

Step 5: Review of audio recordings and field notes

After each interview, the researcher either wrote or audio recorded notes critically reflecting on observations during the interview and the process of gathering data. The researcher then listened to the audio recording and in some situations made additional written or voice notes.

Step 6: Transcription of interviews

The researcher transcribed half of the interviews and hired a transcribing professional to transcribe the other half. The same transcribing professional did the 11 interviews and came highly recommended. Prior to the audio recordings of the interviews being given to the transcribing professional, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the qualitative methodology data was ongoing throughout the data collection. The researcher listened to the interview(s) prior to transcription to assist with data familiarity. The researcher wrote or verbally recorded notes and memos to document her initial thoughts on analysis. The interviews were transcribed within several weeks of the interview. This was done to prevent the interviews from piling up and causing the researcher to become overwhelmed or discouraged. It also helped the researcher begin to understand the perceptions that the subjects hold and “progressively focus interviews” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 76). The researcher was careful to make sure that early interviews did not bias the results of later interviews.

After interviews were transcribed, the researcher used the categorizing strategies of coding and thematic analysis. The researcher had originally considered using a computer software program, such as Ethnograph, to conduct coding on the computer screen. However, the researcher found that she preferred doing the coding and thematic analysis by hand and so did not use a computer software program. Memos were written after each interview was transcribed and coded to document the researcher's thoughts and insights at that particular stage in the research. Categorization and conceptualization were also used because "questions about similarities and differences among settings or individuals cannot be answered by exclusively a conceptualizing strategy" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 80).

Data validation were achieved through three routes of method triangulation. Triangulation consists of using multidata sources (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) to convey that the idea of a researcher is supported by more than one source of information.

Reliability and Validity Concerns

Validity seeks to find whether the measurement of a phenomenon measures what it purports to measure (Hunter & Brewer, 2003). Qualitative research methodology presents several plausible validity threats. First, the sample size of 22 subjects may not be sufficiently large to provide a meaningful result. The second threat lies in subjects' reporting bias. Subjects may provide responses that place themselves and the district in a positive light, or subjects may have the desire to please and provide the answer they think the researcher is looking for. Several methods were used to reduce validity issues during the study. These methods include member checks, use of rich data, and feedback. With participant consent, the researcher audio taped the interviews and transcribed them verbatim to increase the richness of the data collected.

Reliability seeks consistency of measurement (i.e., are measures free from error) and whether the results can be replicated. Specifically, "do repeated measurements of the same phenomenon produce

consistent results from one time to the next” (Hunter & Brewer, 2003, p. 581). “Qualitative researchers tend to view reliability as a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under the study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 36). The researcher is aware that data from interviews are vulnerable to self-report bias and worked to ensure that the data is credible. Interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The intent of the transcription was to reduce bias in the meaning and intent of principals’ words. During the analysis the researcher continued reviewing the research to ensure that her values are not being incorporated into the conclusion of the study.

Ethical Issues

Due to the nature of the proposed study, it does not present the likelihood of having serious ethical dilemmas. The researcher is looking at Pennsylvania elementary principals’ availability of time and completing priorities impacting their ability to be instructional leaders, which is a noncontroversial topic. So that the principals can avoid any possible repercussions from the interviews, all individuals and school districts will remain anonymous. The researcher will maintain strict confidentiality in the context of interviews, responses to survey, analysis of interviews and surveys, and dissemination of research results to ensure that all participants’ identities and responses are protected. If it is so requested, the final research documents will be made available to the research participants.

Limitations

The major limitation of this qualitative study is that multicase studies require extensive time and resources. While the researcher believes she was successful in the research, the researcher is a new entrant in the field of extensive qualitative research.

The researcher designed the conceptual framework based on the literature and her perceived relationships but did not have a formal theory to rely on. A formal theory would have strengthened the study. However, a formal theory might not have aligned as tightly with the research study and questions.

All of the participants in the study work in Pennsylvania, which limits generalizability of the study to other states. However, it will open the door for similar research to be conducted in the future in other states. Future research could make comparisons to this study to discuss differences between states.

The research is also limited because it focuses on elementary school principals. As a result, the study's findings cannot be generalized to middle or high school principals. However, a similar study could be conducted with middle or high school principals. A larger-scale study could also be done that would sample elementary, middle, and high school principals to make comparisons about time constraints and instructional leadership similarities and differences.

Despite the limitations, the research study presents multiple advantages in the information obtained from the study. As already mentioned, future research studies could be designed so limitations can be reduced. Future studies could also provide additional information on the topic of elementary principals' time available to be instructional leaders.

CHAPTER 4: RURAL PRINCIPALS

Background Information about Rural Principals

Eight of the 22 principals interviewed for this study identified themselves as working in rural school districts. The rural principals' personal backgrounds had a lot of similarities. Although participants in the study were not selected based on their ethnicity, all of the principals were Caucasian. Three of the principals were male and five of the principals were female. Their ages ranged from 39 to 59 years old; one principal was in her 30s, three were in their 40s, and four were in their 50s. Six of the principals were married, one was divorced, and one principal did not indicate a marital status. All of the principals had two to four children, and the ages of the children ranged from 3 to 34 years old. Half of the children were under 18 years old, and the other half were 18 or older .

Their educational experience is very varied and diverse. Two principals have associate degrees - one in social work and the other in behavioral sciences. Six of the principals had Bachelor of Arts degrees in subjects ranging from English literature, history, mathematics, music education, and two had degrees in psychology. One principal had a Bachelor of Science in elementary education. One principal did not indicate whether she had a Bachelors of Art or a Bachelors of Science but had specialized in special education. Their Masters degrees also differed. Four principals had Masters of Science degrees, three of these principals had specialized in education, and one in school administration. One principal had a Masters of Arts in School Administration degree. One principal had a Masters of Education in Educational Administration degree. One principal did not indicate whether they had a Masters of Art, Science, or Education but had specialized in Educational Leadership. One principal had two masters degree, a Masters of Arts in American Studies and a Masters of Science in Education. Additionally, one principal has their Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, one principal was a doctoral

candidate in Educational Leadership, and one principal was a doctoral student in Educational Leadership.

The professional experiences of the principals differed. Their total number of years working in education ranged from 18 to 34 years. Figure 2 illustrates the individual principals' varying number of years' experience in education. Five of the principals had only worked in the field of education and the three other principals had worked in other professions. These other professions included working in early invention, as a department store buyer, and in the military in Vietnam. They had worked in a total of one to four school districts. Two principals had only worked in one district, two principals had worked in two school districts, three principals had worked in four school districts and one principal had worked in multiple school districts due to the nature of their job.

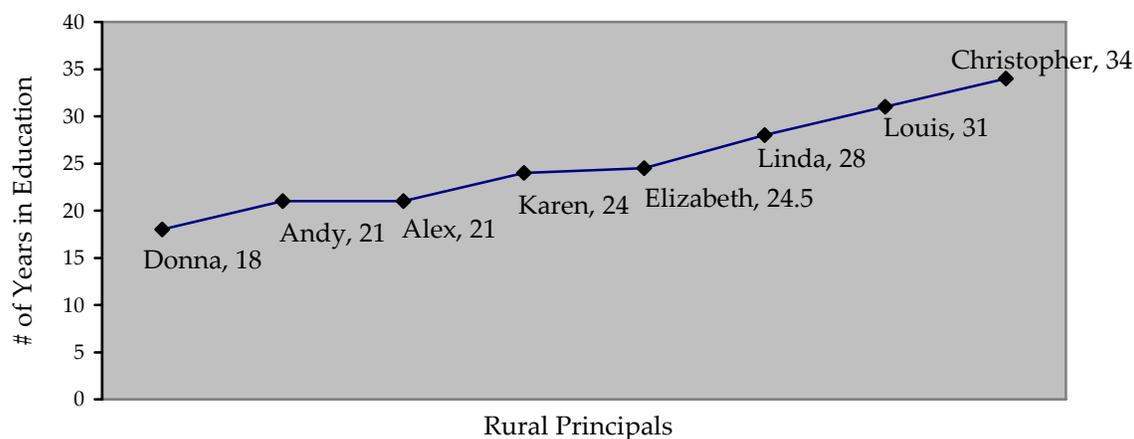


Figure 2: Rural Principals Number of Years in Education

Experience as a teacher ranged from no experience to 24 years' experience. The two principals with no experience as a teacher had both worked as school counselors. Figure 3 illustrates the individual principals' experience as a teacher.

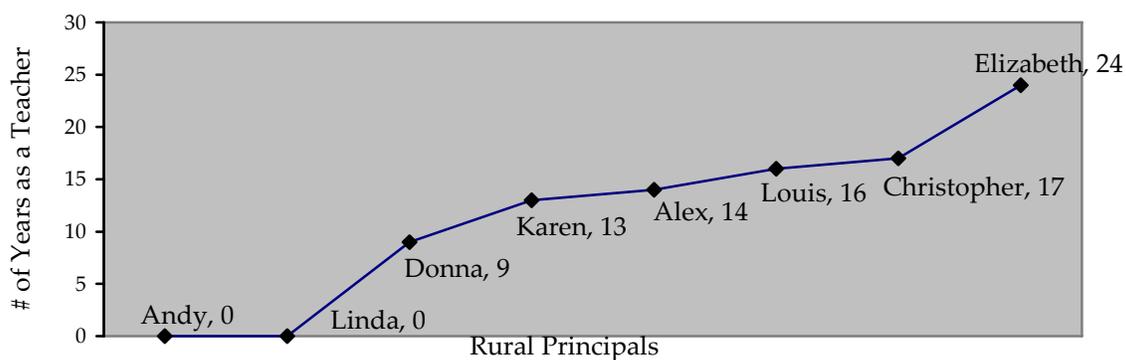


Figure 3: Rural Principals Years of Experience as a Teacher

Rural principals experience as an assistant principal or vice principal ranged from no experience to four years. Four principals had no experience, one principal had one year's experience, two principals had three year's experience, and one principal had four year's experience. Figure 4 illustrates the individual principals' experience as an assistant or vice principal. Two principals had three years' experience, and one principal had four years' experience as an assistant.

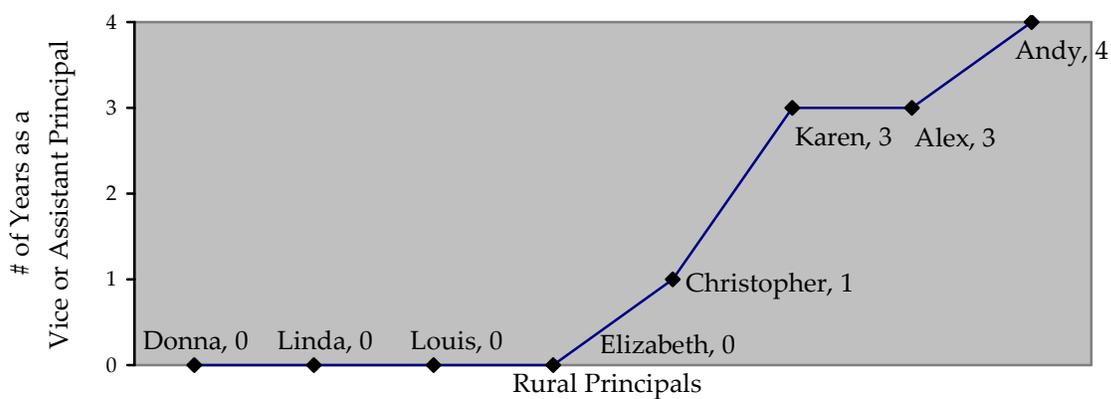


Figure 4: Rural Principals Years Experience as a Vice or Assistant Principal

Experience as a principal ranged from 3 months to 17 years. Figure 5 illustrates the individual principals' experience as a principal at their current school.

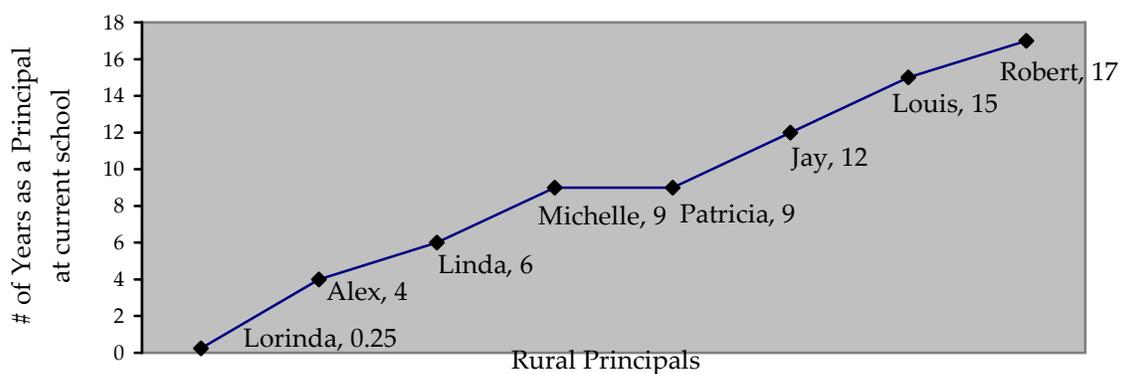


Figure 5: Rural Principals Years of Experience at their Current School

All but one principal, Karen, has worked at the same school for their principalship. Karen been in her current school for three years but has been a principal for an additional six years. They are responsible for one to four schools. Specifically, five principals are responsible for one school, two

principals are responsible for two schools, and one principal is responsible for four schools. Figure 6 illustrates the number of schools the individual principals' are responsible for.

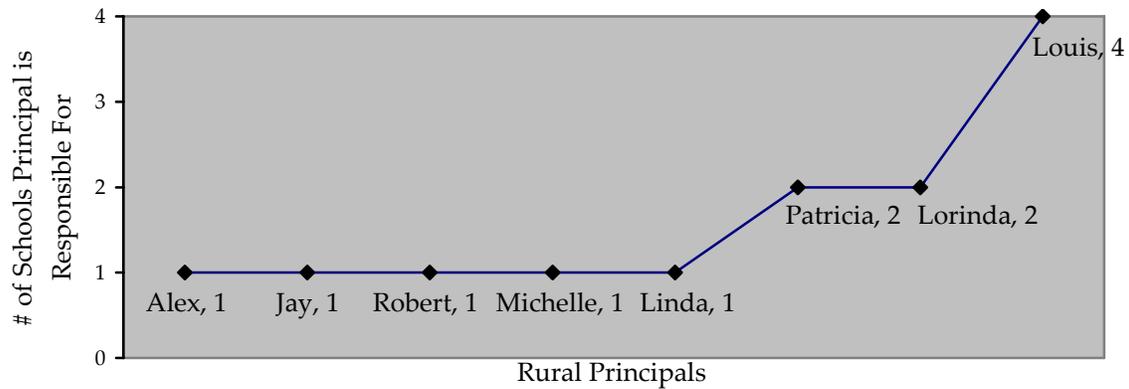


Figure 6: Number of schools rural principals are responsible for

Table 2 and Table 3 summarize background information, education, certification, and personal information for each suburban principal.

Table 2: Rural Principals Background Information

	Andy	Linda	Louis	Karen	Elizabeth	Christopher	Donna	Alex
# of years in position of principal	12	6	15	9	3 months	17	9	4
# of years in current position of principal	12	6	15	3	3 months	17	9	4
# of schools you are currently responsible for	1	1	4	2	2	1	1	1
# of years in position of vice or assistant principal	4	0	0	3	0	1	0	3
# of years as teacher	5 - counselor	0	16	13	24	17	9	14
Total # of years worked in education	21	28	31	24	24.5	34	18	21
Total # of schools worked in	2	Multiple due to nature of job	3	5	5	6	1	8
Total # of districts works in	1	Multiple due to nature of job	2	4	4	2	1	4
Ever worked in another career. If yes, career	No	School psychologist and early intervention coordinator	No	Department Store Buyer	No	in college, military (Vietnam)	No	No

Table 3: Rural Principals Education, Certification, and Personal Information

	Andy	Linda	Louis	Karen	Elizabeth	Christopher	Donna	Alex
Associate Degree			Elementary/ Social Work	Behavioral Sciences				
Bachelors	Arts in Mathematics	Arts in psychology	Science in Elementary Education	Arts in Psychology	Arts in History	Arts in English Literature	Special education	Arts in Music Education
Masters	Science in Education Cert. in School Psychology & Counseling	Science in Education	Science in School Administration	Science in Education	Arts in American Studies Science in Education	Arts in School Administration	Education in educational leadership	Education in Educational Administration
Doctorate	Doctoral Candidate in Educational Leadership	D.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction					Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership	
Certification	Math School Psych K-12 Guidance Elementary & Secondary Principal Letter of Eligibility	School psychologist Elementary & Secondary principal	Elementary Education Administration (K-12)	Instructional II in Secondary Social Studies Educational Specialist in Secondary Counseling Elementary Administration Secondary Administration	Social studies teacher K-12 Principal (Elementary & Secondary)	Elementary Education School Administration	Instructional II Supervisory II	Latin Choral & vocal music Elementary principal
Ethnicity	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female
Age	44	54	54	59	48	59	39	42
Marital status	Married	Married	Married	Not listed	Married	Divorced	Married	Married
Age of children	12,15	19 & 22	21, 24, 27	32, 34	21, 15, 7	21, 19	13, 10	17, 11, 7, 3

Alex Tori

Alex Tori is a 42- year-old Caucasian woman who is married, with four children from 3 to 17 years old. She always wanted to be a teacher. Along the way in school, she had some teachers tell her that they thought she would make a good teacher. She has always been in school from college to student teaching to teaching in the classroom to administration. She earned an Bachelor of Arts in music education and is certified to teach Latin, choral and vocal music. Alex taught Latin (grades first through fifth) and choral and vocal music (grades sixth through eighth) for 15 years. She earned her Masters of Education in Educational Administration. Alex was an assistant principal for three years prior to entering the principal position that she has been in for four years.

She is an elementary principal responsible for one elementary school in a rural school district where she has numerous responsibilities. Alex spends time with public relations, people, programs, discipline, the budget, attending or running meetings, doing paperwork, interviewing, and professional development. Interactions with people include giving out birthday pencils to students, supervising at lunch and recess, observing teachers, meeting with parents, placing new students, talking with the guidance counselors about student problems, sometimes calling Children and Youth, meeting with college professors, and dealing with student teachers. She makes time for teachers when they ask “got a minute?” Alex is the coordinator for Title III programs, which is for English language learners, and needs to fill out reports, keep statistics, and spend grants in an appropriate time and manner. She deals with bus, classroom, lunch, and recess discipline problems. Alex develops the budget, checks budget categories to determine remaining funds, and writes requisitions to order teacher supplies. She also leads faculty team meetings and attends team meetings for technology, discipline facing new professionals, and academic intervention. Alex deals with a lot of paperwork, including reports for the school board, quarterly reports on student progress, academic interventions for struggling students, and teacher

requests for conference attendance, absence, and personal days. She interviews candidates for teacher and aide vacancies. Alex also does personal professional development by reading books and e-mail updates from Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and National Association of Elementary and Secondary Principals (NAESP). As principal she also does public relations and when needed fills the role of receptionist or school nurse.

Strategies that Alex uses to manage her time include arriving early, staying late, scheduling events, maintaining a tickler file, blocking off pockets of time, and using time saving strategies on the phone. She arrives early and stays late to ensure that what has to be done gets done. Alex schedules things that she is obligated to attend and things that she wants to do. Alex uses deadlines to prioritize what needs to be done. She has a tickler file for what she needs to do every month. Prioritization is also aided by meeting her various teams to determine what is coming down the pike, what has come unraveled, and what needs to be tightened back up. Alex will block off "pockets of time" to get all kinds of tasks done. These tasks include time to return phone calls, return e-mails, format e-mails, and read. Alex will batch these tasks together and do them at once because it is easy for phone calls and e-mail to tie up more time than it should. She will also use the pockets of time, time when meeting attendees are late, and minutes between meetings to follow-up on things or get something done quickly. Alex also uses tactful time saving strategies when speaking with people. For example, when speaking with parents on the telephone, she will say "I just wanted to call you before I leave for the day" or "I have about 10 minutes." If the conversation takes more than 10 minutes, Alex will say "I see how important this is to you and I want to give you the proper amount of time to talk, how about if we continue this conversation on _____" and gives a time. These strategies let people know that she values their time and needs but is not taking away from what she needs to do at the moment.

Other strategies that Alex uses to manage her time include her secretary helping with mail and data entry, having letter templates, and accepting that she is not going to have down time. Alex has her secretary look through her mail and sort through items that are junk, the school has no interest in, or school already does. She fills out short discipline forms and her secretary records them in an electronic system called *Win School*¹. The concise form works well because it is a short paragraph about the situation, which does not require the secretary to decipher Alex's notes about who did what to whom. Her secretary recording the information allows for one less electronic recording that Alex has to do. She has a lot of premade templates for form letters and recommendation letters. These form letters allow her to cut, paste, add, and delete. Alex feels that the principalship is not a job where you have down time.

The most important use of Alex's time is interactions with students, being visible, and observing teachers. The least important is returning phone calls of unsolicited business vendors, who are looking to get Alex's business, and will not stop calling until they are told too. These vendors include Renaissance Learning, Clever Learning Space, RDJ Specialties, and others who sell magnets, calendars, and fund raisers.

Over the last several years, Alex has realized how quickly time passes and how unpredictable the job of principal is. She can go in with a to-do list of 10 or 15 things but never get to the 10 things that she wanted to do. As a result, she has a to-do list with much less than 10 things which are determined by the following questions. What are the most important things to do? What are the must haves? What does she

¹ According to Win School's Web site, it was "designed as a site-based Student Information System (SIS). Win School automates the repetitive administrative tasks performed on a day-to-day basis. Whether [an administrator is] ... entering attendance, recording discipline, enrolling new students, generating report cards and transcripts, or creating master and student timetables, Win School gives ... the capabilities to get the job done quickly and easily." *Win School* is made by Chancery Software Limited and made in Burnaby, BC, Canada. The telephone number for Win School is (800) 999-9931.

really have to get to the superintendent? What items cannot afford delay? Alex is not sure how she views time differently than she used to and whether it is the job or that she is older. However, in the last several years, Alex has learned the importance of scheduling family time, asking the superintendent to attend her child's activity rather than a board meeting, and learning to say no. Her ability to be given this time comes from her experience in the position and people knowing how dedicated she is to what she does.

Paperwork seems to control a lot of Alex's time usage. The paperwork requires time to complete, to find answers to, to research, to read, to approve, to add to, and to develop. A recent example of paperwork that she needs to do is developing a job description for a math coach. The paperwork associated with the Pennsylvania State Student Assessment² (PSSA) also affects her time usage. Her school has deadlines for McGraw Hill that they have to meet and supply data to the student database. It is time consuming to make sure all of the information is accurate. Alex becomes frustrated because she is just at the third grade level for PSSA but her teachers would like to know specifically where they need to concentrate. She does not feel that three questions to determine if a child has reading comprehension mastered is enough. The time it takes to drill down and get the answers that teachers need is frustrating for Alex. Alex does not think that the state of Pennsylvania understands that finding the answers is not as easy as looking through a report. She wishes that the PSSA tests were developed differently because they are too broad and look at too many different categories. It would make more sense if students were given

² According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site, "the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards based criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards while also determining the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 is assessed in reading and math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 5, 8 and 11 is assessed in writing." Information from http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/site/default.asp

a better shot than three questions to determine if they had mastered something. Alex shared that in 2005 there was one question on geometry so students either earned a 0% or 100% for geometry mastery. She does not know how that sort of data or testing is good for the student.

Instructional leadership for Alex is defined as researching and learning about the current trends in education, being able to speak to those trends, being able to talk to parents about the curriculum, and being able to find what teachers need for professional development for new things that are coming in. Alex feels that instructional leadership is more than just curriculum, it involves the safety of the school, setting the tone for the building, and being the cheerleader for the school.

Examples of recent instructional leadership include knowledge of curriculum, professional development, and informing academic and intervention teams. Alex feels that she is well versed in curriculum topics that affect her particular building including balanced literacy, writing, and mathematics. Her school is using the Houghton Mifflin Series for mathematics and their PSSAs for the past year was up to 95% proficient. In reading, they had 78% proficient. As an instructional leader, Alex knows that they are good numbers but will not always be good enough numbers so they cannot rest on their laurels and need to look at reading more. Her school is doing Kid Writing³ and she was able to bring the author of program in to train her staff over the summer. She also needs to do an appropriate job informing the academic and intervention teams. The teams have been working on methods to report

³ Kid Writing: A Systematic Approach to Phonics, Journals, and Writing Workshop was written by Eileen G. Feldgus and Isabell Cardonick and published by the Wright Group in 1999 and 2002. The book promotes that it can be to help to turn children who do not know the alphabet into “fluent, proficient, and confident writers” “by integrating phonics across instruction.” It is designed for the instruction of kindergarten through second graders but also promoted as being able to help English as a Second Language Learners and students in Special Education. Information about this book can be found at www.kidwriting.com.

information and how to do mediation interventions with students. As a result, she had brought in specialists to train her staff and provide information about schoolwide behavioral systems.

In order for instructional leaders to be successful, Alex feels that they need to feel supported by the teachers that they lead, by their superintendents, and school boards. Alex sometimes feels that she is walking a tightrope in order to lead the building in a direction where all students can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment. The challenge is also maintaining a good rapport with the superintendent and school board, who can often have their own agenda that can change. As a result of the changing agendas, principals need to be very careful in their interactions with them. She needs to come across positively to her staff and the community. It is not an option to say that she is too busy or does not have time.

Data from the PSSAs is driving some of Alex's decisions and is affecting her role as an instructional leader. These decisions include what needs to be done, what needs to be tightened up, what factors need to be concentrated on, how the curriculum should be mapped, and the development of the strategic plan. Over the past several years, her role as an instructional leader has changed because principals need to be more informed on curriculum. They need to be able to talk to the public about curriculum topics rather than deferring to a teacher. For example, principals need to understand what balanced literacy means and what is guided reading. It is Alex's impression that the expectations are more intense now than they were when she was a teacher. Alex feels that the public expects principals to know the curriculum more than they were in past years'.

Alex's absence of time impacts her ability to be an instructional leader. Alex's time is consumed with matters such as discipline, unanticipated parent meetings, and full day IEP meetings. These tasks make it tough to complete reports and read research. She also needs to fully understand new things, different things, or things being implemented in the building. For example, her school is doing six traits

of writing. Alex has read some about it and while she is expected to be well-versed in it, she is not. It is a real time crunch for Alex to read the book on the six traits of writing from front to back.

Time for Alex is a measure of events or the different things that you are doing with the amount of time from sunup to sundown. These events can be divided into chunks of time—an hour here, an hour there when she is working on projects, being with her family, or driving to and from school.

Alex offered advice for new principals related to time and instructional leadership. First, prioritize things that need to be done on a list and keep lists. Second, delegate some of the tasks that need to be done and trust others enough that they will do those tasks. Next, if you do not know something ask someone because decisions could have unknown ramifications and need to be thought through. Lastly, let your secretary know your schedule and schedule some time for yourself.

Andy Herrigel

Andy Herrigel is a 44-year-old Caucasian man who is married, with two teenage sons. He began college as a math major with a minor in computer science. During his junior year in college, Andy realized that neither mathematics nor computers allowed him with the degree of interaction with people that he needed and decided teaching secondary mathematics would be a better choice for him. As a result, he majored in math but minored in education so he could become certified in teaching. After graduating from college, Andy was offered a scholarship to do graduate work in educational psychology. In addition to his Masters' Degree in School Psychology, he also earned a Masters Degree in Elementary and Secondary Counseling.

Andy was an elementary counselor of five years and then moved onto the role of assistant principal. He decided to become an administrator because he thought he could have a greater impact with the relationships and greater authority. He worked as an assistant principal for four years and has been an elementary principal for the past 12 years. Andy has worked in the same rural Pennsylvania school district for his entire professional career. He was very proud of his relationships with students, parents, and the community, which has grown over the years. Andy considers them as friends and it is not based on his position but the rapport that he established within his position. At this time, Andy does not have any plans to leave the role of elementary principal because it is a job that he loves. However, to further his knowledge, he is pursuing his doctorate in educational administration.

Andy is the principal of a rural elementary school with three hundred students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. He has a 40-person staff of 23 teachers and 17 support staff. Within his job as principal, he is responsible for: behavior management, budgeting, educational leadership, ensuring end-of-year-progress, listening, ordering all instructional supplies, public relations, recruiting, interviewing, making hiring recommendations, and supervision/evaluation. As behavior manager in the

school, Andy handles day-to-day discipline problems and has done functional behavioral assessments on emotionally disturbed children in the school. As educational leader, Andy is the runner for curricular, instructional, or assessment changes that come “down the pike.” Andy also needs to ensure end-of-year-progress, dictated by NCLB, is met by moving instruction and curriculum in the best direction. In providing public relations, Andy sends out newsletters, meets with parents, and provides programs for parents after school. Andy is responsible for recruiting, interviewing, and making hiring recommendations for any open positions from classified staff to certified teachers. Once staff and teachers are hired, he is responsible for their supervision and evaluation.

How does he find time to do all that he is responsible for? He starts his day early, many days arriving no later than 6:30 or 6:45. Andy shared that there are days when he might have a list of five things that he feels need to be done. However, none of the five items get done and there are another five items added because there are days in the job of a principal where that the day dictates the principal and not the principal dictating the day. Andy acknowledges that since his priority is on the child and the children will always run his day, because he never knows if a bawling kid, an irate parent, or a teacher is going to need him. As a result, he feels that a principal can have their structure and schedule but sometimes you just have to go with the day. During the school day, Andy tries to delegate and work hard at what he does. However, when he has to, he takes work home. He meets with his superintendent once a week for two hours to make sure they are on the same page and can be most efficient in their relationship.

Andy believes that he has a different perspective than other principals in that he spends more time doing kid related duty than some principals do. What is important to Andy is that he knows the kids in his building, knows who they are as people, how they function academically and socially, and how to support the teachers in those things because of this knowledge. Five-days into the school year, Andy

shared that he was getting to know the kindergarteners names but knows the names of bulk of the first graders, and the names of all the other kids in the school. As a result, establishing rapport with students and having relationships with them is very important to him. Andy supports teachers and builds relationships with students by doing morning and afternoon bus duty. He is in the cafeteria or outside on lunch duty from 10:45 to 1 o'clock. This allows him to establish and keep a climate in the building that he thinks is better for kids because every single child in the building knows him and he knows the majority of the students.

Andy feels that as with anything else you find the time for what you feel is important. For Andy, paperwork and the political aspects of the job are not important. In regards to paperwork, Andy believes that the drawer is always full. Sometimes it is difficult to find the time to get things done and he might be last minute getting reports in but if there is a kid problem that is his first priority and then the paperwork gets done. Andy does not feel that he has the necessary time for what he wants. He shared that he needs to do item analysis on testing questions and break-down for students in Special Education and Title I on the tests for fourth grade from last year.

While Andy feels that teacher evaluation is very important, he spends a lot of up-front time in hiring top-shelf teachers, which takes a lot of time and energy away from the supervision and evaluation piece. In his 16 years as an administrator, he has hired dozens and dozens of people; he only regrets hiring one person and the verdict is still out on the other person. Andy prides himself on telling teachers what he expects, giving them the freedom to run, and not hovering over them. Andy believes that his job is to support his top-shelf teachers. He walks around every morning and asks teachers "what can I do," "what do you need from me today," and "what can I do to help or teach you." Sometimes teachers need Andy to call a technician to fix a printer, other days it involves calling a parent about a kid who was knocked in a coma, and another day its bigger fish to fry. Sometimes teachers have concerns or

complaints and Andy reminds them to keep talking to him because he needs to hear their concerns. Andy feels that these types of activities are important because they allow the teachers to do what they do best. Like his superintendent, Andy tries to have his finger in all of the pots in the building but he is not going to try to micro-manage. If a teacher has an idea, Andy is going to let them run with it but he also wants to be involved in it.

His prioritizing time to do bus and playground duties comes from research on teachers as professionals and the recommendation to take away noninstructional duties from teachers. Andy feels that it is vital for the climate of the school that his teachers feel that they are not only professional but that they are appreciated. Teachers' feelings of appreciation have gone miles for Andy. If he asks a teacher to do something for him now they cannot say well "no, I am not going to do this" because they know that they owe him "big time" and that he esteems them as professionals.

When discussing changes in time challenges, Andy talked about the time pressures his staff faces. He feels that if you made 36-hour days, they would be used. Andy shared the story of a teacher in his school who feels that she has no time any day and no wiggle room. This lack of time and wiggle room has increased tension and stress. Andy worries that teachers and students cannot relax. Andy feels that right now in education there is a more "phonetically frenzied" state than ever. The focus on No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and making adequate yearly progress (AYP) is a huge because nobody wants to be on the list. So much of education, even in a K-4 institution like Andy's school, is focused on the standards, focused on making sure principal's and their staff know what the anchors are, what the eligible content is, and teachers are teaching specifically to that. At Andy's school, they are working through programs

establishing Everyday Math⁴, Kid Writing⁵, and Writing Blocks⁶ so that the school can specifically meet those needs. This change in education has caused Andy to try to think differently – “work smarter not harder.” He believes that as principal, it is his job as good oil for the machine to try to find teachers more time because it is a precious, precious commodity.

Andy’s concept of time has changed tremendously over the past three years in that he could spend 24 hours in a day and still not be done. He has realized that it is better for him professionally if he takes care of himself personally. Andy takes a lot less work home now than he did three years ago because he knows that it is not good for him personally to take the work. Three years ago, he was spending all weekends and evenings working but now he limits the hours that he spends at school

⁴ Everyday Mathematics is mathematics curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and published by Wright Group/McGraw-Hill. The curriculum prides itself on real-life problem solving, balanced instruction, multiple methods for basic practice skills, emphasis on communication, home and school partnerships, and the use of technology. For additional information on Everyday Mathematics, visit <http://www.wrightgroup.com/index.php/programlanding?isbn=L000000004>.

⁵ Kid Writing: A Systematic Approach to Phonics, Journals, and Writing Workshop was written by Eileen G. Feldgus and Isabell Cardonick and published by the Wright Group in 1999 and 2002. The book promotes that it can be to help to turn children who do not know the alphabet into “fluent, proficient, and confident writers ... by integrating phonics across instruction.” It is designed for the instruction of kindergarten through second graders but also promoted as being able to help English as a Second Language Learners and students in Special Education. Information about this book can be found at www.kidwriting.com.

⁶ The Writing Blocks is designed to build students confidence as a writer. In the first part, there is a writing minilesson where the teachers write and model what writers do from selecting a topic, spelling challenging words, editing work, publishing work, and other elements of focused/process writing. The second part provides opportunity for students to write and conference with the teacher. This lasts 15 -20 minutes. The third and final part, students are allowed to share their writing and sit in the authors’ chair. The writing blocks last 30 – 45 minutes with the writing minilesson lasting 10 - 15 minutes, student writing lasting 15 -20 minutes, and sharing lasting 5 – 10 minutes.

because it is a whole lot better for him to be a dad, husband, and himself. Andy feels that he does a better job at school in less time than he did back when he was working more hours because he is now a happier person taking time to take care of himself. Andy knows that he can work his tail off but the long and the short of it is that if he dies or goes to a mental hospital that they are going to have someone else in the next day doing his job. As a result, he needs to take care of himself and that the consequence of that is taking care of the job.

According to Andy, there are a lot people in education who like putting in 14- or 15-hour days and there are days that he does that. Andy's self-discovery allowed him to realize that there is a whole lot more to him than just being an elementary principal. He is a good elementary principal, not a great principal but a good one; however, first and foremost, he is Andy. This self-discovery came as part of a sabbatical last year. Around a year before he took the sabbatical, he removed his considerable responsibilities as a teacher and leader in his place of worship. This was very difficult for him because as a man, he is known by what he does because it is part of his identity. When he went on sabbatical and left the principalship, he was no longer in a position of prestige, power, or authority. Stripping all of it away was an extremely good and healthy place for him because everyone knew him as Andy. The Andy that they knew was overbearing, a big-mouth, and a guy who used to be a principal.

When Andy looks at people in the administration profession, he sees many who get so wrapped up in being a principal that they forget who they are and he feels that this perspective is extremely unhealthy. His superintendent and boss, Glen, is physically unhealthy and is not taking care of himself because he is so wrapped up in the job. Glenn is doing a great job as superintendent but is not personally healthy. His marriage is not healthy and his relationship with his kids is not healthy. Since Glenn is caught up in being a good public school administrator that he has lost himself in the process and Andy

does not feel that it is right. Andy feels that if someone wants to be a good administrator then they should be healthy and be well with themselves.

As a principal, Andy feels that everyone always wants a piece of you. Depending on how delegation and prioritizing is done, Andy thinks that the required time needs can be met by the time available. He feels that principals' time needs to be their choice and they need to choose. As principal, Andy believes that it is his job to meet the needs of other people: kids, parents, and teachers. If a principal is not willing to meet the needs of other people, Andy is not sure why someone would go into administration.

As building administrator, Andy prioritizes his goals to be the oil that keeps the machine running smoothly and in order to do that he needs to support teachers. This support includes helping teachers in getting their teaching materials ready. If a first grade teacher says that they do not have time to count straws and cut them for a math lesson then Andy will spend his lunch unwrapping, counting, and cutting straws. Andy feels that it is important to meet teachers' needs because it allows the needs of his students to be met. As a building administrator, Andy could distance himself from his staff so they do not make those demands on his time but that is not being the type of administrator that he feels that he wants to be.

Andy has spent considerable time working with the paraprofessionals in his school. Over the past year, the climate in cafeteria has been horrific because the paraprofessionals felt that they were paper-tigers with all honor and responsibility but no authority. As a result, Andy has gone in and is retraining two staff members, which is taking a lot of his time. Andy then met with them to talk about the roles and the tenor he wants to see established in the cafeteria and outside on the playground. These kinds of conversations take considerable amounts of time but are important to Andy because of his goals for the climate and culture of the school.

From his perspective as building level administrator, Andy defines instructional leadership as synonymous with educational leadership in knowing students, teachers, and the curriculum in order to meet the needs of all of the students. Knowledge about students includes knowing their family, their background, and their instructional, personal, or social needs. Knowledge about teachers includes knowing their strengths and challenges and then encouraging them to strengthen all areas of who they are as a professional educator. Knowledge about the curriculum includes knowing the curricula, the direction that the curriculum is going, and not being an expert but knowing how it all works together. Knowledge about students, teachers, curriculum, and what you can do within all of those areas to meet the needs of all of your kids. Andy believes that the earmark of who he is as an instructional leader comes from his background as a counselor, a school psychologist, and his previous responsibility in special education.

The job as principal can be done as a manager and who sets up the schedules. If a principal chooses to do these things, it takes them away from the joy of meeting staff and talking about kids. These talks include questions about how the kids are, how is the school going to meet those kids educational or learning needs given the curriculum, instruction, and assessment pieces. If a principal has decided to be a manager, they are not going to know about the curriculum, instruction, and assessment pieces. Andy believes that instructional leadership is the differentiation between being a manager and educator. As manager, they are able to schedule and run something administratively. As an educator, they know all the different pieces, know the staff and kids, and can also run it effectively.

Previously, Andy was a manager. Several years ago, someone got in his face and said “you are a great manager but you are not an instructional leader.” As a result, Andy saw this as a choice to be made and decided to go back to reeducate himself. He attended the state reading conference for a number of years. He started doing a lot of reading on his own and getting retooled so he knew what was going on.

This allowed him to be able to talk intelligently with reading specialists about phonemic awareness, Maurie Clay's assessment, and "Words their Way" spelling inventory. He knows what the different assessments look like, could probably figure out how to give them, and how to interrupt them. Andy has instituted assessments as part of the regime at his school. He does not see himself as an expert and does not want to be the expert because he does not have the ability or time. Andy does not feel that he needs to be because he has experts out there.

Andy feels being a good instructional leader means hiring people that are better than you at being able to do the stuff. Andy hires teachers who he knows will be able to teach better than he could teach in any one of those classes. He could go in and model instruction but instead he has picked teachers that teach five-thousand times better than he does. In order to act as an instructional leader, Andy knows that he needs to be aware of what good, standards-based, healthy, balanced instruction look like.

Andy's definition of instructional leadership changed six or seven years ago when he had a conversation with the woman who told him "you do not know what you need to know to be an instructional leader." He realized that if he wanted to maintain himself as a manager, he could do that and the school would still run and be effective. However, he thinks his school is more effective because he knows his kids, his staff, and the stuff that they are doing. Andy thinks that the pressure is on in administration. As a result of the pressure, Andy thinks that it is one of the reasons so many administrators are getting out of the job: because they do not know the stuff that they need to know nor are they able to communicate on the same page as their staff.

Andy's role as instructional leader has been affected by his classroom teachers and specialists like his reading specialist. He goes to them as touchstones for assessment, instruction, and supervision. When Andy walks into a classroom and sees a teacher doing something that he questions or he sees instructional needs in that teachers' classroom, he picks the brains of the experts on how to best

encourage a teacher to become stronger in those areas before going back to the teacher. He finds encouragement out of his own people. Andy feels that principals need to be willing to ask the dumb questions and get the answers that are needed to be an instructional leader rather than a manager. Teachers are very willing to tell what needs to be done but the principals have to be able to open themselves up and ask. Andy shared that it is a very humbling thing to be able to say to a teacher “you are better at doing this than I am and you need to be able to help me understand.” As a result, Andy goes to teachers all the time asking them to help him understand what is going on in their classroom, help him understand what is going on with that kid, or ask what he needs to know. Andy does not feel an administrator should sit up in their ivory tower and dictate how it is going to be. He does not have all the answers nor does he want too. Since Andy’s goal as instructional leader is to create a climate within his school that is most conducive to helping kids then it is going to be community based. Having a lot of experts to teach him what he needs to know is a great thing because it allows his school culture and climate to be community based.

Andy feels that for the most part, he is very available with his time for his staff and to his kids. Over time, he has tried to make himself even more available. Given his priorities, he believes that he has increased his effectiveness as an instructional leader. He feels that it comes down to the choices that are made and the type of leader a principal wants to be. If a leader wants to be involved with the kids and their education and involved with the staff and the education of the kids then they are going to be available to the kids and teachers. However, Andy feels that it is a choice.

If Andy wanted to be a manager then he would lock himself in his office to churn out reports. If he wanted to have a magnificent, beautiful board report then he will be unavailable to his staff during that time that he is writing the report. If he wanted to have fancy demographic statistics on the kids then time spent doing number crunching would take his time away from his availability to kids and staff.

Andy does not want to solely be a manager, he wants to be there, be available, and be hands-on to ensure that he has the best impact on a kid, which requires his knowing the kid, teacher, and parents.

Andy feels that his choice to be there and available sets the climate or flavor for the whole school day. The first face that every kid sees every morning when they come through the door is his. This is the flavor that suits him because it is the way he wants it to be and the type of instructional leader that he wants to be. He shared the story of another elementary principal who he considers to be a phenomenal educator. While she might make some better theoretical educational decisions than he does, she is more distant and does not know her kids or families the way he does. As a result, it is a choice that is made. Andy feels that if the days are always running the person then they do not feel like they have a choice and the consequence will have an impact on the type of educational leader they are. He feels that the principal will become more inefficient and will end up having less of a positive effect on kids than if they make the choice to devote themselves to the needs of the kids, staff, and parents. However, if this decision is not done purposefully then the principal will be run by the yammering.

Influences on Andy's use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement include the students and teachers. Twice a month, Andy has "preteam" and grade level team meetings with teachers to discuss kids and topics specific to the grade level. These grade level team meetings help Andy learn the intricacies of the kids educationally and the difficulties that they are having. Andy is also part of the special education team so he has to know his kids that way. In order to know the kids, Andy has to be in "daily touch" with every teacher and kid. This daily touch can be accomplished by being a visible presence, source of encouragement, and providing access for conversation throughout the school every single day.

Andy shared the story of a fourth grade student, Marty, who has behavioral concerns and will "flip out" when things are not going his way. Andy makes a "daily touch" (a.k.a touch-base) with Marty.

He has established questions to ask Marty. "What kind of decisions are you going to make today?" "Are you going to act like a boy, a little boy, or are you going to act like a man?" While he is 10 or 11 years old, these questions appeal to Marty because he so desperately wants to be a man. On the first day of school, Marty was flipping out and had his head under the desk because he found out that in fourth grade that they were not going to have morning recess. When Andy walked in, all he said was "Mar, you have to make some man choices here. Now, you can chose to sit up and raise your head, wipe that scowl off your face and be a man in this classroom. Or you can chose to stick your head under the desk and be a boy. I want you to make a man choice now." Later in the day, the teacher caught up with Andy and said that she did not know what he had said to Marty but it worked. As a result, Andy's knowledge of his kids directly affects student achievement.

Andy's use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement is situated within test results. Whether it is the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) or new standards, Andy can see the kids that are on the bubble of basic and proficient. Andy would like to do something to take five kids in third grade this year and push them up over the edge. If he is able to do this, he makes adequate yearly progress (AYP) and his school looks good. In order to do this, Andy needs to know those five kids and who they are. As a result, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), AYP, and student proficiency are having an effect on his allocation of time. Andy makes it fit into his personal and professional goals for his job.

How does Andy conceptualize time? Andy sees time as being able to do things that other people cannot do. For example, knowing parents allows him to get on the phone with almost any parent, share what is going on, and get their help. Once their help is established, the parents can place responsibility on the kid at home to do "x, y, z." Andy knows that he is going to have more of an impact in making a five minute phone call then the teacher doing it. Andy is able to make this impact because he had a lot of the

parents of the kids in school as students. As a result, he can call up Mike Ingersaw, father of John, and say “hey listen, John was mouth off today and lied to his teacher today” and knows that Mike will take action with John tonight at home.

Andy warns educators that while everyone works hard, everyone needs to realize that they are here for the kids. As a result, everything possible needs to be focused on the kids. For Andy, this belief comes from his professional and personal perspective and the knowledge that the job will kill you if you let it. Andy feels the job will suck you dry of who you are if you let it. People will take bits and pieces of you until there is nothing left. Andy thinks to be a good and effective administrator does not necessarily mean that a principal has to live at school. He thinks they need to be a healthy person.

Christopher Stahl

Christopher Stahl is a 59-year-old, Caucasian man who is divorced, with two children who are 19 and 21 years old. When Christopher returned from Vietnam in 1968 or 1969, he decided to go back and finish school. He pursued his undergraduate degree at a school in California. During this time, he met a teacher in the apartment building that he lived in. The teacher taught photography, which Christopher was really interested in, and invited him to attend a photography class. Christopher really liked the class and that is how he got into education. He received a Bachelor of Arts in English literature and a Masters of Arts in English literature. Christopher is certified in elementary education and school administration. He taught for 17 years prior to entering administration. Christopher has worked in six elementary schools in two school districts. Christopher has been a principal at the same elementary school for the past 17 years. The school is located in a rural district and serves grades kindergarten through eighth grade.

Within his job as principal, Christopher shared common time usage patterns rather than a blow-by-blow or minute-by-minute description of every day. He arrives approximately 45 minutes before the teachers arrive. This allows him to go out into the school and check the grounds to make sure that everything looks okay. He then looks at the absentee sheet to make sure that there are enough teachers for the day and sufficient coverage for the playground. Christopher then looks at his own schedule for the day. He tries to stick to his schedule as much as he can but knows that during the day things will come up with student or parents and change his whole schedule. Christopher takes care of the things that have to be done and then tries to get back on schedule as much as he can.

Every morning, he greets kids at the door as they get off the bus. At the end of the day, he is outside with the buses as the kids are departing from school. The only time he is not with the kids in the morning or afternoon is if he is away at a conference or has another commitment but this does not happen often. On Monday mornings, Christopher meets separately with his administrative assistant and

guidance counselor. During these meetings, they go through their schedules to make sure the same things are on both of their schedules this includes child study meetings set-up for the week and other things are taken care of. He tries to visit each classroom twice a week.

Additionally, Christopher's elementary school has common planning time for every grade level each day. He shared that this is unusual for elementary schools but his school was able to work out this time each day. Teachers do not need to meet as a grade level each day but have the time available when they want to do unit planning or long-term planning. Since he has good teachers at his school and they have the time, they do a lot of team planning.

The most important use of Christopher's time is teacher observations and teacher conferences following the observations. This is important to Christopher because he hopes that he is able to help improve instruction. Prior to his current position, he worked in a school district where the assistant superintendent was Madeline Hunter's principal at her last school at UCLA. As a result, Madeline Hunter⁷ used their school district to do a lot research and would be in the district twice a week. Christopher would be teaching a lesson, look up and see Madeline Hunter sitting in the back of the room. Through Madeline Hunter's relationship with the school district, he went through extensive training both as teacher and as he entered administration. He feels very fortunate because the training has been a real help in providing him with a firm grasp of what is going on and how to improve instruction. As a result of the training, he knows how to try to make teachers discover how to improve instruction as opposed to telling them how to improve instruction.

⁷ Madeline Hunter is known for her seven-step direct instruction model that includes getting students set to learn (steps 1-3), instruction (step 4), checking for understanding (steps 5-6), and closure (step 7). The seven steps include (1) review, (2) anticipatory set, (3) objective(s), (4) teacher input and modeling, (5) checking for understanding via guided practice, (6) monitoring via independent practice, and (7) closure.

The least important use of Christopher's time is attending a lot of administrative meeting. The meetings are important because they provide a lot of information. However, Christopher sometimes sits there while people go on and on and on about things that have nothing to do with him. These items might have something to do with high school and he thinks there should be separate meeting. He acknowledges that he is also guilty of bringing up things that do not relate to high school but they have to listen too. As a result, he thinks that administrative meetings are least important.

Christopher understands how frustrating paperwork can be for other principals. However, he feels that paperwork can help with teacher evaluations. Paperwork also helps the school to receive grant or state money which helps to do more things in the school. His boss also does not overload him with a lot of junk. Christopher is given the things that need to be done such a state reports. He does not have to do reports for the federal government because someone else in the district takes care of it. Christopher also has his nurse and administrative assistant who help to take care a lot things. While he does have to do things, he does not feel that it as much as other principals have to do.

The two main strategies that Christopher employs to manage his time are planning ahead and leaving time for things to come up. At the beginning of the week, he looks at his schedule and anticipates how things are going to fit in. Christopher then tries to judge how much time it is going to take and how it is going to fit in. He leaves time in his schedule for things to things to come up. Each day, Christopher tries to map or figure out what he is going to do during the day. When plans change then he lets people know via e-mail that he will not be in the building. However, if he is supposed to do an observation and something comes up so he cannot do the observation then he calls the rooms. People, in the school, have been dealing with him long enough that they know that things come up. An example of things coming up is due to his school taking over a life skills class this year. There are a significant number of behavioral

concerns in the class. As a result, he needs to be able to go into the class to handle the concerns. The guidance counselor is also available to help with some of the concerns.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has changed his view of time because it more serious and takes more time than past testing efforts. Past testing efforts involved the basics looking at test results and determining if anything could be done with the results. NCLB requires more time because schools that do not score well on the test face difficulty. Christopher is not opposed to the idea of child left behind because it is making everyone think more and be more accountable. However, Christopher thinks that NCLB is too high stakes because schools can be doing all kinds of things really well and still end up in trouble. His school has been fortunate that they have ended up above the cut lines every year. Christopher knows of districts around his district that have not made the cut and as a result a lot of things have been changed. Christopher feels that his schools' results have not been just from luck but from the teachers' hard work. The teachers take a lot of time to work on student skills, look at anchor standards, prepare materials from the state, and give practice tests.

His view of time has also changed over the last several years because he volunteers to be on a lot of committees and programs throughout his county. One such program is called 'End of Day', which is a countrywide after-school day care program. He is part of the 'Big Brothers, Big Sisters' advisory committee, preschool committee for the country, and a parent advisory council at his daughters' college. He feels that he cannot complain about the about the nights that he spends out at meetings because he volunteers for the commitments and they are his problem. Within the role of principal, Christopher feels that it is easy to find yourself getting involved with different committees and programs. The prior week, he received a call asking him to organize and set-up a three-on-three basketball tournament for an organization at Christopher's school. Christopher shared with the caller that he was not going to do it for

them but he would help them with it. As a result, committees and programs involvement is more time consuming for him now than they were in the past.

Retirement and expansion in the district is a third factor changing his view of time. Within the last three years, Christopher has gotten around 13 new teachers in his elementary school. As a result, 13 of his staff of 35 is new. Next year, the school is looking to expand extended kindergarten to include four year olds. The expansion while needed will take quite a bit of his time.

While Christopher is comfortable with teacher observations, he finds the paperwork that goes along with it very time consuming. He knows a good number of principals who enter either choice A, B, or C into their computer in order to save a lot of time and complete state reports. However, Christopher tries to write each observation report personally. These reports also take a long time because he has to do two district reports and two state report for all nontenured teachers as well as two state reports for all tenured teachers. In order to do each report, an observation and a post-conference conference needs to occur. While it is time-consuming, he feels that if he invests the time, he gets some good results. Over time, he has had to identify some individuals, who he has had to give several unsatisfactory ratings in a row to before dismissing. Despite being time consuming, the paperwork for teacher observations is a worthwhile activity if it improves the quality of instruction as his time.

Christopher feels that he has a lot of control over his time usage. His time is directly impacted by the needs of teachers, students, superintendent, and school board. It is also impacted by kids' activities and evaluations. Christopher feels that these are things that one would normally expect to impact the time of a principal. Very seldom will he have last minute meetings called by his superintendent. While he does not hear much of his superintendent calling an immediate meeting, he knows some principals who do face that problem.

Instructional leadership for Christopher involves working in the areas of curriculum, in-service, and observation. An instructional leader needs to look at the curriculum then work with teachers to select curriculum replacements for older curriculum or curriculum that will better meet the standards. Then an instructional leader needs to provide in-service to allow teachers to be able to use the curriculum as fully as they can. The in-service needs to be supported by bringing in-service instructors back to the school to answer questions and ensure that teachers are not given in-service that are one day wonder. Lastly, the instructional leader needs to observe teacher to see if they are doing the curriculum. Christopher feels that his efforts as an instructional leader in these areas are impacting instruction.

He feels that teacher observation makes the biggest impact and it is important for the instructional leader to know how to do observations and making recommendations. Recently, at a student teachers' request he went into her classroom to observe her. He promised her that his feedback would stay between the two of them and not go anywhere. During the observation, Christopher noticed that she only asked questions on one side of the room focusing mainly on the students in front of her but ignoring the rest of the students. He asked if knew she was doing this and how she might deal with it. Christopher feels that through the observation process, he can impact instruction.

Another example for instructional leadership used by Christopher is having teachers observing other teachers. Since Christopher knows his teachers strengths, he will also get the newer teachers to go in and observe teachers with specific skills that they might need or are not comfortable with. As a result of his instructional leadership, teachers are very comfortable with other teachers coming in to do observations. As an instructional leader, Christopher feels that it is important to recognize what would benefit people and then make arrangements for those activities. These activities might occur at his school or at another school.

In-services help to address issues in the school. The instructional leader needs to use this information to find people, either at the district or elsewhere, to address these issues. This perspective comes from his time with Madeline Hunter and involves looking at the in-services that have been done and if it is not working then go back to regroup and see how the topic can be approached in another way a little later on. Two other examples of Christopher's role as an instructional leader included in-services looking at study skills and Kid Writing⁸.

One in-service program addressed study skills because the school did not have an organized study skill program within his school. The program was funded through a New York State grant. The initial program was for fourth through eighth grade teachers. The presenter of the program will come back and meet with each grade level separately to address what they are going to work on.

Five years ago, the school got a big 'Read to Succeed'⁹ grant from the state. Over a four year period, the grant provided the school with almost a half million dollars. The grant allowed the school to upgrade all of their materials. Every one of their teachers, kindergarten through third grade, and special education and title one teachers who work were provided with 'Kid Writing' in-service training. All of these teachers then went to Philadelphia to visit the classroom of the instructor and spent the day with

⁸ [Kid Writing: A Systematic Approach to Phonics, Journals, and Writing Workshop](#) was written by Eileen G. Feldgus and Isabell Cardonick and published by the Wright Group in 1999 and 2002. The book promotes that it can be to help to turn children who do not know the alphabet into "fluent, proficient, and confident writers" "by integrating phonics across instruction." It is designed for the instruction of kindergarten through second graders but also promoted as being able to help English as a Second Language Learners and students in Special Education. Information about this book can be found at www.kidwriting.com.

⁹ Read to Succeed (RTS) Grants provide school districts with funds to support intensive reading instruction programs. The grant proposals tend to address early literacy interventions for students who are not progressing toward the proficient level on the state standards for reading.

her. The instructor also came to their district for a couple of days and provided long-term instruction for the teachers.

A key part in Christopher's role as an instructional leader is providing the teachers with what they need. He does not feel that it would work to tell teachers that they need to make due with what they have. Christopher needs to find out what teachers need and then try to provide them with what is needed. While his district is not a rich district, they are good about coming up with money to provide teachers with things they need. An example of something that teachers might need is books to support students who are at lower or higher levels of guided reading groups. He will try to get them more books as quickly as he can. By providing teachers with what they need, helps teachers to instruct students, and keep the curriculum moving forward.

Christopher's role in instructional leadership has changed some but not significantly over the last several years. The change in his role occurred partly due to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) because his school looks at anchor standards but it is not the only thing taught. He emphasizes teachers covering all of the anchor standards before the PSSAs. Anchor standards are not just given to third and fifth grades, who take the PSSA, but also to kindergarten, first, and second grade. He asks kindergarten and first grade teachers to look at them and make sure they are teaching the skills that lead up to the anchor standards. His emphasis on anchor standards is how his role in instructional leadership has changed.

Christopher's role as an instructional leader has an impact. He proudly shared that the schools testing goals are up and their scores remain above the cut lines. Last year, 86% of their third graders were proficient or advanced in math and felt that it was wonderful. The school is also looking at how to break instruction into smaller groups for kids. For example, instead of teaching reading or doing guided reading with a whole group, they are trying to break the large group into smaller groups. A former Title I teacher, who became a principal, developed and organized reading and writing assessments that each

grade level can do three to six times a year. The assessments help to identify what skills students are lacking and then teachers can develop strategies to work with smaller groups. Lastly, Christopher spends time on instruction being in and around classrooms.

Time is defined by Christopher as organizing and fitting in all of the things that he needs to do into every given 24-hour period. This includes work-related items, family responsibilities, or personal time in getting away on his bicycle. As a result, time is trying to organize activities so he is able to get in what he needs to but not spend all of his time at work. This is important because if a principal spends all of their time at work, after a while it is going to really tell or wear on them.

Christopher's advice for new principals is to watch what is going on and make connections. After making connections, talk about making changes that will fit into the environment rather than solely deciding a whole bunch of things to be done and rushing in to do the changes. The changes will probably not work if the principal rushes in to make changes because they will get resistance from the staff. If a new principal enters a school and the staff buys into them then they will be pretty solid to put things in place. Once the staff sees that the principal can accomplish one thing, they can go to another task. However, it is important that a new principal sit and watches a bit rather than making all of the changes at once. He also recommends that new principals get to know their staff well, school, parents, community, and PTO/PTA. It is important for a new principal to be to be out in the community, let the community get to know you, and be visible. If the community knows the principal, they are more likely to see him or her as a person rather than as a principal, which helps the new principal in the role.

Donna Gaitonde

Donna Gaitonde is a 39-year-old Caucasian woman who is married, with children who are 10 and 13 years old. She always knew that she wanted to teach but just did not know exactly what she wanted to teach. As a high school student, Donna became friendly with a family that had a Downs Syndrome child and knew she wanted to teach. After spending a good amount of time with the young man, she settled on special education as her undergraduate major. Donna earned a Bachelor of Education in Special Education.

She taught in the classroom for approximately nine years. For approximately three years, Donna worked as an itinerant learning support teacher traveling between two buildings and working with students with learning disabilities. Around that time a local school district that had been contracting with a local intermediate unit for their special education program decided to pick them up. Donna decided to transfer to the district and taught uninterrupted for three years in the kindergarten through third grade in an EMR classroom. In the EMR classroom, she provided education for students with higher functioning mental retardation. Her last three years of teaching, she still had that teaching assignment but also did quasi administrative work. In the quasi administrative position, she was in-charge of serving as the LEA for the school district in all special education individual education program (IEP) meetings and took care of paperwork. After teaching for nine years, she was hired in the same district as an elementary principal.

When she began the principalship, she was responsible for four elementary schools. During her first year as principal, they consolidated two buildings into one school. They took two distinctly different cultures and with little to no preparation, threw them into the same building. The following year, Donna was responsible for consolidating the remaining three elementary schools into one facility, where they are currently located. They have been in the facility for six years but it took a good three to four years to create a blended school culture. When they first merged, parents would call and say they wanted their

child to have a teacher from a particular elementary school. Donna would correct them and explain that they had district elementary school teachers rather than teachers from a former elementary school. She had to stand firm on this position. Donna feels that they have taken the best of each school culture and blended them together

The school has two co-principals, Donna has a 12-month contract and her co-principal has a ten-month contract. The district has allowed the co-principals to develop their own job responsibilities based on their past teaching experience, undergraduate and graduate degrees, specialty areas, and individual skills. Her co-principal is responsible for the early childhood program for four year olds, the reading and writing curriculum, and assessments. Donna is responsible for the running of the facility and the daily operations of the school, transportation, and scheduling. She is responsible for personnel issues and anything dealing with employees, absences, and time sheets. Donna is the elementary special education supervisor for the school district. She is responsible for overseeing special education including the evaluation process, student transition from the early childhood process, all individual education plans (IEP), curriculum, supervision and related services for special education. Related services includes the student assistance program, the special assistant plan (SAP), the instructional support team process (IST), the child study team, and the mental health team. Donna shares curriculum with her co-principal taking the lead with content subjects (math, science, and social studies) and assists with reading. Table 4 illustrates each of their roles in the school.

Table 4: Sharing the Principalship - Division of Responsibilities in a Co-Principalship

Donna	Co-Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running the facility and daily operations - Personnel issues (anything dealing with employees, absences, and time sheets) - Transportation - Scheduling - Special education supervisor (evaluation, student transition, IEPs, curriculum, and supervision). - Related services for special education (student assistance program, SAP, instructional support team process (IST), child study team, mental health team). - Curriculum shared with co-principal, she takes the lead with content subjects (math, science, and social students) and assists her co-principal with reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early childhood program for four year olds - Curriculum (Reading and writing) - Assessments

She has been a principal for nine years and loves and enjoys her job. She has a passion for the job and wants to come in each day. Donna could spend the next 10 hours in the office just sorting through pieces of paper. She thrives a little bit on the challenge of the chaotic. As principal, she is willing to give the time, juggle the time, and accept the time limits. Donna has earned a Master of Education in Educational Leadership. She is pursuing a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership. Donna has permanent certification in instruction and supervision.

Donna works a 9- or 10-hour day and will also come in on the weekend to put a few hours in. She spends a lot of time in meetings that she either chairs or facilitates for the district; these meetings are for individual education plans, the student assistance program, the instructional support team, the child study team, and the mental health team. Donna and her co-principal spend a good bit of time meeting with staff and central administration (assistant superintendent or superintendent) to work on curriculum issues. The majority of these meetings take place in the office suite so it is literally very hard for her to get

out of the main office for big chunks of time. She is disappointed in her difficulty to get into classroom and spent more time with the teachers and children. This is not possible because her time is required in classrooms to do supervision. Since she is not completely satisfied with the time she spends in classroom, each year she tries to improve upon her time in classroom. Donna makes an effort to get out and about in the building everyday so she is visible to the children. She does not consider the time from when the staff and children arrive and until they leave as not being her time. The students are in the building for six and a half hours and the teachers are in the building for seven hours a day. While she does have scheduled meetings, they are often set aside due to the day-to-day realities of what is happening in the building. These realities include discipline issues, a call or need from the superintendent, an emergency, an unexpected invitation to a classroom play.

Strategies that Donna uses to manage her time include daily priority lists, reshuffling and juggling, arriving early in the morning and staying late in the evening, relying on her secretary, and monthly planning ahead meetings. Many afternoons, Donna will make a priority list to determine what needs to be done or accomplished the following day. While she always does what she needs to do on the priority lists, there are an infinite number of reasons why she does not necessary do the list during the school day. There is continual reshuffling and juggling of her priorities. What is a priority on the list one day might not be a priority the next day. This allows Donna to get done what needs to get done. Donna arrives early in the morning prior to the typical staff arrival when it is a very quiet time. One of her two secretaries is in the building and she gets a lot accomplished during the hour and a half before everyone arrives. Tasks that she works on first thing in the morning typically cannot be gotten back to until the end of the school day. This morning time is possible because her children are a little older and are a little more self-sufficient in the morning getting ready for school. She also stays in the evening from the end of the school day at 3:30 p.m. until 4:30 or 5 p.m. finishing things up. If she does not have meetings to attend,

she will use the time to address e-mails, return phone messages, address mail in the mailbox, type reports, or prepare materials for upcoming meetings. Donna relies heavily on her secretaries. They are very good at reminding her of what is coming up and what is on the docket for the next week or month.

She also plans ahead and has end of the month meetings with her secretaries, co-principal, IST coordinator, assistant superintendent and superintendent to plot out upcoming events. Donna meets with her secretaries to block out what is ahead in the next month. She meets with her co-principal to determine if there are meetings or in-service training that need to be scheduled or mapped out. Donna and her co-principal also determine what days they feel that they will need to have enough subs available to release staff. They will coordinate at when they will need to be out of the district. She will meet with the IST coordinator in person and via e-mail correspondence with her special education staff to determine what IST and IEP meetings are coming up in the following month so they can be plugged into the schedule. This allows her staff to contact parents and teachers and get the paperwork organized. After these meetings are scheduled, Donna can plug in what she needs to do for the month. Donna and her co-principal meet with the assistant superintendent and superintendent several times a month regarding supervision issues, curriculum, and planning ahead.

The most important use of Donna's time is tasks related to the curriculum and interacting with people. This includes meeting with the staff to revise, review, or implement a new curriculum. It also includes going into a classroom to observe the implementation or use of the new curriculum, watching teachers work with students, and being able to interact with students. She feels that getting out there and interacting with people is the most important piece.

The least important use of Donna's time is dealing with some of the day-to-day complaints that she receives. When complaints might be down the line on her list, she recognizes that she absolutely must address them. These complaints might come from staff members or from parents. It is extremely time

consuming to gather information, conduct investigations, and prepare rationales. These complaints take greatly away from Donna's opportunity to get out of the office, be with teachers and students, and pay attention to instruction. Donna works in a large facility; she directly supervises 130 individuals and has 800 children in the school. This means that there are 130 individuals that during a given week could come to her with a different concern, wish, need, or complain. Since the school has 800 children, there are 800 families that at any given time might be concerned, disgruntled, or downright angry about something that has or has not take place at the school.

A recent example of the complaints was related to inclement weather and a holiday concert. The school was in the middle of their holiday concert when the superintendent called on the radio and said that they were looking at an early dismissal. The superintendent wanted lunch started in the next 20 minutes and for the kindergarten and first grade to have lunch at the same time in the cafeteria. Donna then had to go up on the stage and when the choir director finished a number, could you come here for a minute. She then shared "I really hate to do this to you but I need to let kindergarten and first grade go. We will finish the concert with the remaining students and then run everyone to lunch." They then had to make a decision about the evening concert with parents and decided to cancel it. It was very hard to reschedule the concert because the auditorium was booked for the next month. Donna then had to quickly create a memo to send home with the fifth graders about the concert. The day before they had sent home a memo saying that they did not know if they could have the concert and it absolutely could not be rescheduled but if parents were available, they were welcome to attend the morning concert. It was great that about 100 parents came to the morning concert because they were not expecting that many parents.

The complaints started once the decision to cancel the concert was made. Parents wanted and demanded that the concert be rescheduled. Donna could not reschedule the concert because there was no

space available for the concert. Parents then wanted the concert rescheduled for the next month. Other parents said that they would not bring their child if it was rescheduled. The music department expressed concern that they needed to get ready for the spring concert because it takes considerable time and energy and are on a tight timeline. Donna had to try to balance what was fair to the children, public, and staff to come up with something that is halfway acceptable to everyone. She needed to hear the voice of her staff and what they need to do their job yet balance these needs with community public relations. They ended up creating and paying for a DVD of the performance that was given to families who could not attend the concert. In order to get to that point, there were a lot of conversations, phone calls, and e-mails. This is one example of how concerns or complaints can get in the way of the bigger picture.

Experience in the principalship has changed her view of time over the last several years. Donna feels that many people go into the principalship thinking that they are just going to get ahead, do more observation, and spend more time in the classrooms. However, she thinks that one quickly learns in the principalship that they are never going to get ahead. Principals quickly come the realization that there is not enough time available and they are never going to be caught up. The fact is that things are constantly being presented that are not on the nice to do list but need to be addressed. As a 12-month employee, Donna used to think that she would get caught up in the summer. However in the past five years, the nature of education has changed a lot and even in the summer it is not possible to get caught up.

She has to balance time relative to her priorities with time and the priorities of staff and parents. Often times what is a priority for one person is absolutely not on her priority list. However, Donna cannot put it low on her priority list because she runs the risk of not responding in a timely manner in terms of their perspective. As she has settled into the principalship, she has learned about time and balancing it. Occasionally someone will say to Donna "did you get my e-mail" and Donna will share that she had not but inquire when the e-mail was sent only to learn that it was sent that morning. She will

think to herself that she has 67 e-mails in her inbox. She has learned to talk to her staff and explain that she understands that something is important to them but she has a few other things on her plate. Donna will explain that while she knows an issue is important to them, it in the scope of the whole, big picture their issue is not at the top of her list right now. The other items on her list have to take priority over what they have asked her about. She will promise to get to their issue or concern just as soon as she can. Donna has found that the best thing she can do in regards to time is be honest with folks that she only has so much time and most of the time they are pretty understanding and accepting of it.

Professional staff and meetings control or influence her time. When Donna took the job as principal, she offered herself to staff and has always held to the promise. It is a rare occasion when her office door is closed and she prides herself on the open door policy. As the day-to-day manager of the operations of facilities and with 130 employees, she has a constant stream of people stopping by. The professional staff joke that they are going to get the little number tags that are handed out in the grocery store letting people know that they are 32 in the queue. This is because there are frequently a line of three or four people who want to pop in. As a result, without a doubt, her staff controls the majority of her time. Beyond staff needs, the day-to-day job responsibilities particularly meeting facilitation influence her time. She is responsible to be at the table for meetings and run meetings. Since she is responsible for special education at the elementary level, she has to follow federal guidelines for meeting attendance. As a result, meetings also dictate a lot of her time.

Donna defines instructional leadership as a constant, ongoing, and evolving process of knowing and having a very clear and good grasp of the curriculum and empowering the staff to improve as they go along. As an instructional leader, she needs to know the curriculum that the school district has adopted and what she is asking her professional staff to use in the classroom. As an instructional leader, she needs to know and understand that her new reading series comes with a practice language workbook

and a spelling component. She needs to know that within the lesson there is the word building piece and there is the fluency piece. It would not be fair for her to go into the classroom to observe or supervise teachers if she did not know the curriculum. If the instructional leader goes into the classroom and does not know what they is talking about or does not know the series about they lose credibility. As a result, the instructional leader needs to know not only the little pieces but also how they come together and what constraints teachers face in the delivery of the curriculum.

Donna is a people person and as an instructional leader likes to spend time with the teaching staff. When she first entered the principalship, she originated academic core teams. Each staff member has to spend three years on an academic core team: reading, writing, math, science, social studies, health, school climate, and bully prevention. The teams contain a cross representation of grades, K-4 and 5th grade. The teams meet two or three times a year during the school day or after school and make decisions together. The teacher contract allows her to hold staff at the end of the day. If the committee decides to create a checklist, they are going to create it together. If the committee decides they need a new series, they are going to bring in sales people and decide together. The academic core teams help the fifth grade to understand the K-4 piece and K-4 to understand the fifth grade piece. Donna feels that this is important because while everyone knows what they do in their own grade level, they might only know a little about what comes before or after. Sometimes the third grade teachers will question if the second grade teachers were doing their job last year. The academic teams help teachers to spend time working together and collaborating reducing these types of comments. The academic teams allow Donna as an instructional leader to empower her staff rather than having a checklist for submitting things.

As an instructional leader, Donna feels that her role in professional development or training is important. She needs to make sure that teachers are set for the training and that either Donna or her co-principal also attends the training. Donna does not believe in just send teachers to in-service days or

workshops and administration staying in the office to do paperwork. If teachers are being taught about the craft of writing, Donna is going to be taught the craft of writing. If teachers are taught effective management techniques for working with ADHD children, then Donna is going to attend the workshop. As an instructional leader, she feels that it is important that she is trained side-by-side with the teachers. If Donna is sent out of the district for training, she feels that it is her responsibility to bring something back to teach to her staff. Donna thinks that the train-the-trainer model serves as an effective cost saving measure. If she has the skills to teach the topic and is confident in giving the instruction, is better for her to teach the staff then paying a two or three thousand dollar honorarium for a day of training. The district also sends the teaching staff out for training and has them serve as trainers to other teachers.

Donna's role as an instructional leader has changed over the last several years due to No Child Left Behind and Pennsylvania State Student Assessment (PSSA) testing. Whether or not a principal philosophically agrees or disagrees with the tenets of NCLB or the configuration of the PSSA test, they are a reality of public education and are not going away. While there might be some relief with the structure, the structure itself is not going to go away. As instructional leaders, Donna and her co-principal have spent a lot of time letting their staff vent about disagreeing or being displeased with NCLB or PSSA testing. This allows them to get their feelings out, be up front, be honest, and then put aside the feelings to get the job done. Donna and her co-principal facilitate teachers getting beyond sticking their heads in the sand and saying "we are just not going to do this." The reality was that they could face punitive action down the road if they did not face the reality of the situation. Since schools are going to live or die by their PSSA math and reading scores, they had to some prioritizing. While they still honor health, social studies, and special subjects like fine arts and have not taken them out of the curriculum; teachers clearly understand the need to plan and prepare in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. They will start placing more emphasis on science because the PSSA science tests will be piloted next year. They

stood firm on avoiding the practice of getting rid of one thing such as library to double up on something else such as reading. Teachers cannot look at curriculum and instruction the way they used to look at it. Special units such as the pilgrims need to be taught in a three or four day miniunit rather than spending eight weeks on the topic. After the miniunit is taught, teachers need to move on to something that is testable and the school is held accountable for. This has been a big change for the staff. As an instructional leader, Donna has the responsibility to lead her staff in the change of focus.

Factors affecting her understanding of instructional leadership include her graduate work, community involvement, and educational literature. Her continuing education in a doctoral program has influenced her thoughts and knowledge base on instructional leadership. The community also influences her role as an instructional leader. It is becoming increasingly harder for her to get families to come in and participate. Many two parent families have both parents working out of the home and do not have the flexibility to come in and participate. When it is possible, they like the community to offer guidance about the curriculum. They also provide the community with curriculum development for wellness education and bullying prevention. Lastly, the public school has a constant flow of educational literature, research, and data. While she does not read all of the information that she is inundated with, she will skim it so she is familiar with the different pieces of literature from a host of different resources. Donna current reading pile includes educational literature from a legal firm, an intermediate unit, a national conference, PennLink, and a special education task force. Since she received information from every possible arena, she needs to sift through it, prioritize, and recognize that it is not all gospel. The review of educational literature allows her to keep abreast of what is out there and pull information that is reasonable or worthy to share with her staff.

Donna finds an absence of time for instructional leadership due to the other job responsibilities. As an instructional leader, she needs to find ways and opportunities to interact with staff that isn't

necessarily in the classroom. She thinks that it is important to hire really well and then put faith in your staff. The reality is that a principal is not going to be in the classroom as much as they would like to and need to be confident in the teachers they put in the classroom. Hiring well allows principals to know that the teachers come from a very strong educational background and their vision is compatible with your vision. As an instructional leader, she needs to make tough decision about what will be on teachers plates for the instructional minutes in the school day. These tough decisions require an understanding of what will get done and what may not get done or may not get done as thoroughly as desired.

Time for Donna is a snowball that once it gets going gets faster and bigger. When the day begins, Donna feel like she has a little itsy-bitsy speck of snow. As they move along at a nice pace, it gets faster and faster. As the day continues it gets bigger and bigger until it is the end of the day. Time within the principalship is very energetic, powerful, and fast.

Donna offered advice for new principals on their use of time and role as an instructional leader related to listening, learning, and waiting to make changes. New principals need to really spend time listening, learning, and interacting with their staff. It is important to sit back and listen to your professional teachers, secretaries, bus drives, custodians, and cooks. During this time, it is important to learn little things like people's names and their role in the school system. When listening a new principal needs to understand the perspective of the person that they are talking to. A teacher will speak with very tunnel vision about their classroom, their children, or their world. However, a secretary, nurse, custodian, cafeteria worker, or bus driver are looking at the bigger picture. It is important to listen to what they are most proud of and what they are complaining about in order to get a sense of the culture that underpins the school or organization. Listening, learning, and interacting provide more insight into the system as a whole and allow the new principal to learn what is going on. While listening and learning takes time, it is important to contemplate and reflect on stuff otherwise new principals will do themselves real quick.

New principals need to give themselves time to settle in to the leadership role and not go into the position with both guns blazing. While they might want to affect change right away, the change may not be warranted. As a result, they should pick one or two targets that they want to address near the beginning part of their new experience. If new principals want to be effective, they need to treat time as their best friend.

Elizabeth Cook

Elizabeth Cook is a 48-year-old Caucasian woman who is married, with three children. Her oldest child is 21, her middle child is 15, and her youngest is 7 years old. She lives in the district where she works and both her 7- and 15-year-olds go to school in the district. When Elizabeth went to college in western Pennsylvania, she had no idea what she wanted to do in college. She took an interest survey and scored the highest in education. Elizabeth decided to take some education courses and transferred to a University in the northeastern part of Pennsylvania. She knew that she could always go back to her original school if she did not like the new school. Elizabeth received her Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies and certification as a social studies teacher. Since Elizabeth has social studies teaching certification under the old certification, she was able to teach classes that she had never taken undergraduate or graduate courses in. As a result she taught both anthropology and sociology with no prior experience.

She taught seventh and eighth grade in the southeastern part of Pennsylvania. Elizabeth also worked a summer job at a military park 20 miles away. The summer job helped her to realize that she would rather teach kids than work with adults because they can be very annoying. During her first three years of teaching, she also coached the junior varsity (JV) hockey and basketball in a middle school. Elizabeth moved to central Pennsylvania and taught high school for 21 years. In this position, she continued coaching JV hockey and taught advanced placement courses to high school juniors and seniors. During this time, she received two masters degree, a Masters of Arts in American Studies and a Masters of Science in Education.

After teaching in a classroom for 24 years, she has only been in the principalship for three months. Since she does not having any experience as an assistant or vice principal and is new into the position, she is still learning a lot about being a principal in an elementary school. As a middle and high school teacher of 24 years, the hiring committee was concerned with her lack of experience at the

elementary level. However, Elizabeth feels that good teaching is good teaching no matter what grade level one is working at. As an elementary principal, if she goes in to observe a second grade teacher, it is not vastly different than a high school administrator not speaking French but going in to observe a French class. As a former high school teacher, Elizabeth feels that it is easier for her to make the transition to administration because she is familiar with talking to children. An elementary school teacher making the transition to administration would be familiar with the elementary context but has the experience talking to children rather than adults. This difference is important because administrators spend more time talking to adults (parents or teachers) than children.

As a parent, each of her children responded differently to her decision to move from teaching to administration. Her oldest son, who is in college, said “go for it Mom.” Her middle son, who was a freshman in high school at the time, wanted to know what school she would be at most of the time. When he learned where she would be, he said “okay, good idea Mom.” He thought it was a good idea because he is 16 years old and was excited to drive her to school on his permit. Her youngest child, who is in second grade at one of the schools that Elizabeth is responsible for, has struggled with her mom’s new position. During her first week as principal, Elizabeth ignored her own daughter until the other kids started warming up to her. Once the other kids started waving or hugging Elizabeth, her daughter struggled with whether to call her Mommy or Mrs. Cook. As a result, her daughter avoids talking to her and having to give her a name. However, her daughter will wave or hug her like the other children do. Also, working in a district where her children went to school and knowing a lot of people in the district, there were other pluses and minuses in entering her current principalship position.

As an elementary principal, she is responsible for two K-2 schools in a rural school district. During the school day, Elizabeth tries to make a real effort to get out and see the kids. She will spend 20 minutes to a half-hour every day going to classrooms to give every kid a sticker for their birthday and

talking to them. Elizabeth has also gone out at recess and played with the kids. Seeing kids is important to her because she does not want the kids to think that she only sees them for bad things. Some days, she will spend a lot of time on bus discipline. The worst bus discipline situation required spending an entire day tracking everybody down about one problem.

Elizabeth's school district is on a six-day cycle. She currently spends a good portion of the cycle in meetings. The majority of those meetings are instructional support team (IST) meetings. Her last two IST meetings have lasted from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.. Every other week, she has district administrative meetings that last anywhere from an hour to an hour and a half. On the off week of the administrative meetings, she tries to meet with the intermediate school principal. She also spends a lot of time talking to him on the phone and together they are able to figure things out. These conversations are possible because she did her principal internship with him and he has become her mentor. Teachers in her school have the option of either being observed or doing an action plan. Since the teachers have decided what option they want to pursue, she recently started doing the observations.

The most important use of Elizabeth's time is to see the kids for any reason. As a teacher for 24 years, Elizabeth feels that her relationships with her students are some of the most valuable relationships she has had in her educational career. Sometimes she goes home and comes up with a variety of reasons that she should have just stayed in the classroom. However, she knows that she needed a change but still wants to have a relationship with students in the principalship. She has had kids come and read to her to ensure that they view school as a positive experience. Elizabeth believes that if kids do not start out believing that school is a good experience then they are being set-up for failure down the road. She is proud that kids will come up to her in the hall to give her a hug and talk. However, they know that there are limitations. To help her know what is going on, she also sees teachers. As a former high school

teacher, Elizabeth did not realize the “we are all in this together” community based philosophy of elementary schools. As a result, she focuses her time on the kids.

The least important uses of her time are paperwork and parents not following protocol of going to the teacher first. Paperwork drives her nuts because she wonders why she is doing it. Elizabeth is frustrated by paperwork that she has to finish things that were supposed to be finished at the end of last year. She is also accountable for information on completed paperwork, such as a report on violence in schools, but has no knowledge of the report and did not generate the information. As a result, she spends a lot of time finding things that people thinks she knows but she does not know. Elizabeth is frustrated that information was not left for her nor is it easy to find. She wishes that she had done the paperwork in the past and could pull it out and say this is what we need. The paperwork has also required her to learn things that she previously knew nothing about. For example, information needed to do state forms requires coding. Elizabeth struggled to find the codes because it was not left for her and no one at the school had the codes.

Elizabeth also gets frustrated by parents going to her before talking to the teacher about what is going on or finding a resolution to a situation. She will often ask parents if they have talked to the teacher. If they have not talked to the teacher, she explains that she would like the teacher to contact them first and offers to give the teacher the parents’ phone number and/or e-mail address. Elizabeth tells parents if they do not have the information that they need or get the response that they need that she will also talk to the teacher. Once the parent has talked to Elizabeth, she feels it is important that she goes to the teacher and share the conversation that occurred, what they discussed, and that the parent has been sent back to the teacher. This strategy is used by Elizabeth’s superintendent. For example, if a parent decides to call him first about a situation, he will call Elizabeth and ask “do you know what is going on with this?” Situations were the parent calls the superintendent first has only happened twice in

Elizabeth's three months on the job. The first time she knew exactly what was going on because the parent had called everybody they could think of in the district, including Elizabeth. The other time, she was absolutely clueless about the situation. However, the situation could have been resolved if the parent talked to the teacher first. As a result, the parent got refereed from the superintendent to Elizabeth and from Elizabeth to the teacher. As with most educators, Elizabeth is driven a bit nuts by excuses parents have for their kids or wanting to get kids out of something. As a parent of a second grader to a college student, she feels that she is in the minority of the belief that kids are on their own when they screw-up.

Strategies that Elizabeth uses to manage her time include using after school time to catch-up on work, having an open door policy yet shutting her door when work needs to be done, and being organized with calendars to keep teachers informed. Elizabeth is not a morning person. The man, who was the acting principal at the school last year, arrived between six and seven every morning. While he was a morning person and arrived very early, he also left at the end of the day. As a result, Elizabeth feels that you are either a morning or afternoon person. She is an afternoon person, which is convenient for her as a parent. Her daughter is at one district elementary school and attends an after school care program at the other elementary school. Elizabeth is principal of both elementary schools. Since her daughter likes playing with her friends after school, Elizabeth uses the hour and half from the time the last bus leaves until 5 o'clock to e-mail teachers and do her paperwork. Typically during the school day, her office door is wide open. Her office can be seen as soon as one enters the office. Teachers are encouraged to stop in her office and do all the time. Once during the six day cycle¹⁰, Elizabeth will tell

¹⁰ A six day cycle or week involves school activities revolving around a six day "1-2-3-4-5-6" cycle or instead of the "normal" five day, Monday through Friday weeks. The six day cycle allows for equitable distribution of subject areas and continuity of specials (art, music, gym, etc.) due to holidays or snow days:

the women in the office that she has work to do. She will shut her office door so she is not distracted, sit and plug away at worthwhile work, and finish the rest after school. The office staff knows that their interrupting her, if someone needs her, is not an issue but shutting the door is effective at shutting the door to finish a few things. Since she came from the high school environment where they deal with lots of sports and assemblies, she is very organized with calendars. Teachers have complimented her ability to make sure that everyone knows what is going on and happening. This helps teachers with their instruction because it allows them time to plan.

In Elizabeth's district, she is not allowed to have faculty meetings after school. This is because teachers have exchange days, teachers who attend conferences or training during the summer do not have to come to school during in-service days. If she wants to have faculty meetings after school, she can make the meetings voluntary giving teachers the option of showing up. This is hard for Elizabeth because in her old district, teachers by contract had to attend a one-hour faculty meeting once a month. Her old school had also adopted the policy of morning meeting several years prior and that was when they had their faculty meetings. At her current school, she wishes she had the capability to pull all of the teachers together at the same place at the same time. Since this is not possible, Elizabeth has had to find creative ways to get information out to teachers in a timely fashion. Her first strategy for information communication is e-mail. Once a week, usually on Fridays or Mondays, she sends out a e-mail sharing reminders of what is happening. Her teachers make fun of the amount of e-mail she sends, however, it is the only way she can effectively get the same information to everyone at the same time. Her other strategy is giving information to the coordinating teachers once a month. The coordinating teachers give the information to the other teachers.

Elizabeth's perception of time is changing due to her change of position from teacher to principal. As a teacher, she did not have night meetings unless she chose to attend them. However, as a

principal, she has two board meetings a month, two PTSO (parent teacher school organization) meetings every other month, committee meetings and open houses for both schools. As a teacher, she was only responsible to attend one open house meeting and now has to attend both of them. While the evening meetings stink for Elizabeth, she now does not have to correct papers or do grades in the evening so when she does not have meetings, she can do more things with her family. As a teacher at the end of the marking period, she would have to stay up late figuring out grades and entering grades. However, as a principal, she does not have to stress about getting everything corrected and getting grades done. As a result, Elizabeth thinks the differences in time from teaching to the principalship is a trade off and she needs to make the time differences work most effectively for her.

Elizabeth feels that she has been able to make a lot of the decisions about how she uses her time. She understands that her time usage will change over the next two years because of two initiatives that the district has coming "down the pike." The first is the possibility of having full-day kindergarten and the second is construction on one or both of the elementary schools. If they decide to have full-day kindergarten, her time will change because of the meetings necessary to set up the program and visiting other full-day programs. Both of the elementary buildings are older and have had very little work done to them. The district needs to decide if they are going to do major renovation on both building or one building or if they are going to build a new structure and close both buildings. As the board gets to the point of making a decision about construction, she sees a lot of her time being mandated to accommodate the decisions that are made. Elizabeth does not feel that her school board controls her time. She knows that they could be much more involved in trying to tell principals what they need to do. While the superintendent has certain meetings that principals must attend, he lets principals run their buildings the way they feel the building should be run. He also does not micro-manage or step-in on what principals are doing.

Elizabeth taught an educational psychology class at a local University and shared that she could give a real textbook definition of instructional leadership but instead stated what she did rather than what she taught. Instructional leadership for Elizabeth is leading by example to make sure that kids are getting the best possible education that they can. As an instructional leader, it is Elizabeth responsibility to show and explain to parents or teachers when changes need to be made to ensure that children are getting educated in a manner that is appropriate for them right now. While instructional leaders can lead by textbook knowledge or by convincing people how they should be teacher, she feels that it is more important to lead by example.

Since Elizabeth is still learning about instructional leadership, she was unable to provide specific examples of her instructional leadership. Elizabeth considers herself a 'learning leader' because she entered the elementary principalship with seventh grade being the lowest grade that she had every taught. Since her experience has been entirely at the middle and high school, she is not comfortable saying that she is an instructional leader of anyone at the elementary level. Elizabeth is not at the point where she can go into teachers' classrooms and say the kids are not really learning, do not teach that way. However, she is learning from teachers the best way to provide an education to elementary students. Elizabeth is building her knowledge about instruction at the elementary level by attending conferences with her mentor.

Elizabeth does not think that her understanding of instructional leadership has changed since she entered the principalship. She thinks that her experience as an elementary principal has given her a deeper appreciation for difference styles of instruction. As a high school classroom teacher, she knows that she had a particular style of teaching and was a good teacher. Since she just left teaching, she is not sure that she is open to other people's teaching styles. In her principalship, she has had the opportunity to go into classrooms with the guidance counselor and discuss the teachers that children had. The

conversations have helped her to look at first grade students and decide what second grade teacher would be best for them. These decisions are possible she has learned what teaching style is better for what type of children. As an instructional leader, her ability to understand the importance of teaching style has grown since entering the principalship.

Since accountability mandates are very new, she is still coming to grips with them and as a result they have not affected her role as an instructional leader. Elizabeth also does not have any Pennsylvania State Student Assessments (PSSA) testing in her school because they start in third grade and she works in a K-2 school. While poor results in third grade can be attributed to a lack of instruction in first or second grade, it is hard to say that first or second grade teachers are not meeting specific standards. As a result, she does not feel the same panic or pressure that is felt from the third grade up. However, her teachers are already yelling about No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and do not want kids to be assessment experiments. As a result, Elizabeth knows that pressure in K-2 will arrive.

Accountability mandates are affecting assessment and curriculum decisions in her district. Her district does do the TerraNova¹¹ in the first grade and the DIBELS test¹² in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. She attended a conference on intervention about looking at changes in DIBELS scores over a year and has talked to the Title I and curriculum people about doing that. Elizabeth hopes that looking at the DIBELS scores will allow her to use some means of accountability to change instruction. Her district

¹¹ The TerraNova is a test designed to measure achievement in the basic skills taught in schools throughout the nation. The test measures the basic content and skills that are most common to curricula throughout the country. The subject areas measured include Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Word Analysis, Vocabulary, Language Mechanics Mathematics Computation, and Spelling. Information from Testing Information Web site: <http://www.intidea.org/handbook/testing.htm>.

¹² Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels) Series of Tests developed by the University of Oregon. It measures reading fluency and verbal story comprehension.

has also adopted a new reading series because it is based on scientific measures. However, Elizabeth knows that teachers will continue using reading strategies that they know are successful.

Since Elizabeth is only three months into the principalship, she does not think that her availability or absence of time affects her ability to be an instructional leader. Elizabeth feels that as she gains more experience, she will change a little bit in how she spends her time. Her previous two days were spent entirely in meetings. One meeting lasted so long that she only had 10 minutes to grab something to eat before going to the next meeting and ate her lunch in the meeting since there were no parents involved in the meeting. As a result of days like the past two, Elizabeth has begun to curtail keeping her office door open as much. Since she is shutting her door to do paperwork, Elizabeth has found that she needs to go out and see teachers more. Recently, she started going into classrooms to watch teachers. With time and experience, Elizabeth knows that her time usage is going to change but is not really sure how it will change because she is still learning.

Time is defined by Elizabeth as either being your friend or your enemy in a love or hate relationship depending on how one chooses to use it. Time can be a friend if an individual realizes that they have a certain amount of time and know how much they have to get accomplished. Time limitations keeps them on-task rather than drawing things out forever and ever. Elizabeth shared examples of her definition of time in practice from the perspectives of an individual, parent, and teacher. As an individual, she has found that if you have too much time, you tend to waste your time. However, if you have a set amount of time, you tend to use the time better than if you felt that time was never ending. As a parent, time is her enemy because she is losing her children too fast. She has a son who is a senior in college and will be graduating, and wonders where all of the time went from when he was in second grade like his sister. As a teacher, she taught a lot of semester courses and would think, "Eighteen weeks and I'm done." In this case, time was her friend because she would not have to be with students for so

long. However, within the given semester timeframe, it was her enemy because she only had one semester to impart information to students. Elizabeth would try to make sure that she imparted as much as she could or got as close as she could to the goal. As a history teacher for 21 years, it was a lot easier to get farther 20 years ago than it was last year. Elizabeth thinks that a lot of teachers feel that way right now because more and more is being pushed farther into lower grade levels and teachers want to accomplish more. Since kids are coming in with more experiences and knowledge than they had previously, teachers are able to use time more wisely. However, time can be the enemy when kids talk about their birthday party or Halloween in school because they are wasting their time to learn.

Elizabeth offered advice for new principals regarding time usage and instructional leadership. First, she would recommend that anyone interested in administration actually teach for seven or eight years before entering administration. Elizabeth thinks that guidance counselors should also have to teach before entering administration. She thinks the state requirement of five years of teaching for administration certification is not sufficient. The first two years of teaching involves teachers just keeping their head above water, teachers become tenured after the third year, the fourth and fifth years of teaching help teachers become more comfortable. However, Elizabeth does not think that teachers start taking chances until after their fifth year of teaching. Elizabeth feels that while entering administration early might make monetary sense for many people, they are missing out. When individuals enter the principalship at 27 or 28, they can either decide to then pursue the superintendency or spend 25–30 years as a school administrator. She feels that entering administration too early does not give individuals the time to determine if they really like education. Elizabeth worries that people enter administration early because they are trying to escape teaching but still want to stay in education. As a result, she does not recommend people making the leap from teaching to the principalship after five years rather waiting seven or eight years.

Additional advice included having teaching experience or knowledge about the environment that you are going to be a principal in, staying current, and asking for help. Elizabeth recommends elementary principals have experience in elementary schools or have taken classes on the specifics of the level. While she had never taught at an elementary school, she wishes that she had taken more classes looking at elementary schools rather than just taking administration classes. She thinks that classes on working in an elementary school would have helped her to have a better understanding of it. Elizabeth recommends staying current and keep checking school code, special education regulations, and laws. It is important for new principals to ask for help. For example, Elizabeth has learned a lot from their special education person and from her mentor.

Other advice included realizing that you do not know everything, being a parent, being aware of teacher clicks, having a sense of humor, be nice to the secretary and custodian, and do not make major changes in the first year. A new principal should not assume that they know more than the teachers. Elizabeth thinks that being a parent and having children of your own helps to see and understand where parents are coming from. Most parents know that they would advocate for their own child but it is hard for those without children to understand this. Also, even though teachers are adults of varying ages, sometimes a principal has to take on the Mom or Dad role and say "I do not care if you do not want to do this, you have to do this." Elizabeth feels that teachers are terrible students and can develop clichés. These teacher clicks can develop a "me verse them" attitude. As a principal, Elizabeth feels that it is important to be aware of these clicks. Elizabeth recommends having a sense of humor. Elizabeth's teachers have complimented her ability to laugh about things and not get upset. As a new principal, she thinks she has found that being able to admit that she does not know something or laugh when she does not know something and then make a note about it really helps. Elizabeth also thinks that it helps that while she takes other seriously, she does not take herself seriously. She recommends being nice to the custodians

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and the secretaries because they are the keeper of the keys. Lastly, do not make major changes in the first year rather get to know the staff, kids, and how the school operates. As a principal learns about the school, things that did not make sense will start to make sense. This year of learning also prevents new principals from trying to fix things that are not really broken in the first place.

Linda Bagley

Dr. Linda Bagley is a 54-year-old Caucasian woman, who is married with two college-aged children. She began college as a French secondary education major, which required students to study abroad. Since Linda had gotten married during college, she realized that studying abroad was no longer a good move. Linda decided to drop out of college for a couple of years so she could work and figure out where she was going. She then met someone who was teaching an animal psychology class and suggested that she sit in the class. Linda loved the class and found her niche in psychology. She was even able to use some of her education courses towards her degree. After graduating from college, she realized that she needed to go to graduate school because there is not an awful lot that can be done with a degree in psychology. She began investigating an animal research program at a local university but was encouraged to check out the school psychology department because of her clinical psychology work. Linda found it more appealing to work with children than monkeys because children are able to provide feedback.

After receiving her Masters of Science in School Psychology, Linda worked as a school psychologist in a public school district for seven years. She then decided to work as a psychologist in early intervention and do consultations for Head Start. Linda moved into the administration role where she set-up center-based early intervention and childcare programs for Head Start. She worked in this position for a long time. When she entered her doctorate program in curriculum and instruction, she realized that she wanted a different career opportunity if she was going to stay in education until retirement.

The day Linda made the decision to look for principal jobs; she saw an ad for a job at her former school and the school she currently works at. She knew it was the perfect place for her because she loved the school, the district, and the district was on the brink of big changes. Linda is currently in her sixth

year as elementary principal and really enjoys her job. The school is in a rural district and has about 350 students. She enjoys her conversations with older children, which was not possible in early intervention and being able to work in one environment rather than have to travel around five counties.

Linda has received her doctorate in curriculum and supervision. Her focus was on the curriculum and supervision of early childhood students. However, if she had to do it again, she would have taken more classes on teaching of reading or math and on elementary school curriculum. Since Linda did not take these classes, she has taught herself the material. After being in the role of principal for a year, she was asked to be a curriculum coordinator/supervisor but did not want the job. While she would like the additional money, she would feel too removed from children in a central office position and enjoys being able to see the fruits of her work. Linda would never want to be a superintendent because the position involves too many balls in the air.

In her role as principal, Linda shared that she could spend all day sitting in her office and never getting anything accomplished but that is not where she wants to be. As a result, Linda tries during the school day to spend that time as much as possible in and around classrooms because this is where she thinks she will be the most effective to make change. This means that Linda is in or around classrooms from 7:30 a.m. when the school doors open and the kids come into the building until 3:30 when the last of the kids leave. She likes to be with the kids in the morning to see what is going on, who is eating breakfast or not getting done, who is having problems on the playground, and determine what is going on. Linda also uses this time to check-in with the teachers to see how things are going and ask if there is anything they need to talk about.

Once the school day has begun, Linda wanders the halls because her management style is management by walking around. Sometimes, she will slip in and sit in on a class through part or all of a lesson. At another point in time, she will do more structured walk through observations and regular

teacher observations. While Linda knows that a lot of principals spend a lot of time with discipline, she only sees the hard-core cases. This is possible due to schoolwide rules and consequences. While she likes to spend as much time as possible in classrooms, she also has a lot of parent work to do.

Working with parents has been a big focus for them. For example, on the day of our conversation, Linda had a 40-minute morning parent conference and afternoon conference at 1:40 p.m., 2:30 p.m., and 3 p.m. The afternoon conferences were the result of an interim report going home and parents having questions or concerns about the information. Sometimes it is just nice for Linda to sit with parents. Linda's background as a school psychologist, working in early intervention, and working with Head Start has been a big help for her working with parents. Linda learned the most about dealing with parents after sitting down with parents to explain that their child has a learning disability or is mentally retarded. As a result of her previous experience, on the day of the conversation, she was able to set-up behavior plans in two different locations. These behavior plans involve teachers doing at school what they need to do and parents following-through at home. Since the community is so small, Linda tries to meet with new parents when they come in to register their children. She is also active with the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and goes to those meetings. Linda does the school fair and tries to come to activity night to be with the kids.

Linda also spends time during the school day with teachers. Teachers will ask Linda to "come look at this kid" or "could you help me with this problem" or "how could we work to make this better." Linda feels that these conversations are important and part of her job. They will also say "we are having a luncheon for so-and-so who is pregnant, so make sure you clear your calendar so you can come down and eat with us." Linda enjoys going to these types of events because it allows her to have a relationship with the teachers.

She gave two examples of time spent with teachers on the day of the conversation. Around 10:30 a.m., the staff learned that a former colleague had died the previous day. One teacher in particular was strongly affected by the news because she had been very close to the colleague who passed away and his wife had taught in the building for 20 years. Linda shared that she was going to wait until lunch time to share the news because she did not want to disrupt the teachers instructional time. However, the teacher learned the news earlier than intended and came out into the hallway sobbing. Linda asked what she could do to help her and the teacher said that she was. While the central office had suggested that Linda just send out an e-mail to share the news, Linda did not think that it was appropriate method of sharing news. As a result, Linda spent at least three hours talking to every teacher in the building and helping them work through their feelings. While Linda does not think this shows her role as an instructional leader, she thinks it shows that she is a good human who thinks how her staff is doing is important. During this time, she met with some of the grade level teams over lunch to talk about the new math curriculum, how it was working, and what needs to be done to make it more successful.

Linda also spends time looking at PSSA results. This is not a day-to-day task for her but, rather, something that is done once a year. As a result, she spends an entire weekend taking the paper product and putting it into spread sheets so she can look at and manipulate the numbers. Linda was extremely excited about the super-super job that was done on their third grade tests and wanted to share the results with the staff right away. She made an announcement sharing that the “test results were back, they were great and you should give yourself applause for the amazing job.” After celebrating the results, Linda presented a PowerPoint® presentation with the analyzed data at a faculty meeting. She thinks that it is important to present the data to the teachers in a way that they can understand it and then let the teachers think through the results. Linda then developed an individual remediation plan for every child who needed one.

The instructional budget for the school takes her two weeks to design and get her instructional material orders ready. During her first year in the position of principal, Linda struggled with the budget. Linda struggled while no one had told her what to do and her budget class did not even come close to looking like what she was working with. She shared that it was a good thing that the budget was on the computer and could be changed on a regular basis. Linda was glad that she only had to work with her own instructional budget of about \$95,000. Previously, each year teachers were given a 30-page list of instructional materials that they could order. However, Linda questioned who in their right mind gave teachers so many options. She compared it to giving people a department store catalog and saying "you can have whatever you want." Linda asked her peers about why it was done; they said it was what they had always done. When she asked them why they always did it, they said "that's what we have always done." While it was what had always been done, Linda did not feel that it made management sense and reduced the number of options to six pages. She just puts a written description of each option and does not put pretty pictures. While it was hard for some teachers to hear, "we are not going to order 100 different kinds of blue pens. This is what we are ordering. These are your choices and if you don't like this, you know where to find Staples." Linda felt this decision was important because sometimes principals cater too much to that kind of time-consuming stuff.

She typically takes care of the piles of paperwork on her desk after everyone is gone. Linda always thought that the desk needed to be clean when she arrives in the morning or she would never want to come back. As a result, she would always put it in the drawer. However, at week five in the school year, the drawer is full and she cannot fit one more thing in the drawer. Since nothing else can fit in her drawer, all of the piles of things that she needs to accomplish are spread out over the desk. Linda typically stays until 4:30 or 5 o'clock every day to finish the paperwork. On nights that there is a school board meeting, she will stay until the meeting starts at 7 p.m. Most of the time after school time is quiet

time. However, there are teachers at the school that are around until 5 p.m. and Linda will get caught in the hall because they saw that her light was on. As a result, Linda spends a lot of time doing work outside of the school day and needs to use strategies to manage her time.

Linda shared that she has tools to manage her time, some work and others do not. She is a big fan of the day timer and has used their system. She color-codes events such as in-service days, important meetings, vacation days, and book fair or recycling week. Color-coding these events helps with the working of the building. While she has a Palm Pilot, right now she cannot find it and thinks it is lost in her briefcase! Sometimes she finds herself reduced to little pieces of paper because it is nice to cross things off. The things that are not important just do not get finished. She manages paperwork by either putting in a "to do" pile or a pile to "put in a file folder and put away." Her time management is also managed and helped by her really competent secretary. Since Linda's kids are grown-up and in college, she takes a lot of work home or she stays late to get it done. Linda also knows in her head what needs to be done every day. She also knows that her priorities are to the kids, staff, and families and that is where she wants to spend her time. What does Linda consider as important and less important uses of her time?

Important uses of Linda's time include knowing that students in the school are learning, keeping everyone safe, preventative meeting with parents to work with them, and supporting the staff. In order to ensure that students are learning and everyone is safe, Linda uses her time to walk-through the building. This helps her to know that everyone is doing what they are supposed to be doing in the way that they are supposed to be doing it. Preventative meetings with parents allows parents and the school to work together to help students having academic or behavioral problems. Linda believes that if she can get a child's behavior under control in the classroom and the parents can do it at home then the child is ready to learn. She supports staff in their staff development and with the new curriculum. In order to illustrate how she supports teachers with the new curriculum, Linda shared a recent example.

The previous week, Linda was in the first grade hallway and ended up staying in two of the classrooms to help with a lesson that was very successful. The lesson involved kids cutting out clock faces, pasting them on a paper plate, cutting out an hour and minute hand, and using a paper brad to attach the hands through the middle. The lesson was not successful because clock hands and glue ended up everywhere. Since the other two first grade teachers teach math in the afternoon, Linda talked to them over lunch. They used the conversation for professional reflection and collegiality to determine how the lesson could be fixed. As a result, the teachers used card stock rather than copy paper for the clock hands. Linda shared that this effort to support her teachers only took an hour of a time, half an hour in the morning with the lesson and half an hour over lunch to determine how the lesson could be improved.

Paperwork that has to be done for the state is a less important use of time for Linda. In the next 12 days, she had three Pennsylvania Department of Education reports due. Linda's secretary helps her to generate data from a student database which she uses to do analysis. She started the same report three days last week but never finished it. It will have to get done but it would likely just not get done that evening. She went on to explain other Pennsylvania Department of Education reports that she needs to do for multiple observations on nontenured teachers in her building. These reports are needed to help the teachers receive their level-two certification.

Outside of paperwork for the state, other paper work includes a health summary that just came out, two parent letters that need a response, PTO approval form for the purchase of Slim-Good-Body, form to approve orthodontist day for the second grade, and deciding and informing when recycling and Red Ribbon Week will be. This paperwork is not the most important for Linda. She does delegate some of the paperwork to her secretary, who can sit down and get it done in a block of time. Her secretary thus helps her not get bogged down with the paperwork.

Over the past several years, Linda's view and understanding of time has changed a lot. She thinks that time is running out and she needs more hours in the day. Linda thinks that being an administrator today is more difficult than anyone knows until they sit in the chair. She does not know if time has real relevance all of the time. She shared that many days she does not know how it got to be 3:30 and the whole day has slipped away. Or she will get engrossed in what she is doing and suddenly realize that it is 7 o'clock and she better get home and eat. Factors that have led to her change in perspective about time include her taking on more and the minutia part of the job.

Linda feels that she only has herself to blame for controlling her time usage. The school board and her superintendent give Linda this control over her time. The school board just wants to know that she is doing her job to justify what they pay her. For the most part, her superintendent understands about what happens during the day because he faces similar challenges. Linda knows that there are people who do a much better at the job or choose different things during the day. If paperwork was really important to Linda that is where she would spend her time; however being out and about, meeting with parents, and supporting teachers are important to her. She likes that teachers' want her but do not need her to sit in meetings with parents because two people working with or dealing with an upset parent works better. Linda is glad that her teachers want her there because they have a good rapport as colleagues.

Linda sees herself as an instructional or educational leader in what she does every day and feels that it is part of her job responsibility. She feels that she could tell teachers that she wants them to do a new math curriculum, hand them the books with the supplies, and never have any more to do with it. However, that is not what she wants. Linda feels that it is important that she is in the classroom and is able to ask kids, "what did you do today, what did you learn?" These types of questions allow her to know if the teacher has effectively delivered the lesson. Whether or not the teacher taught an effective lesson is another point of discussion. Linda share that she had never gone in and said "this is how I want

you to teach, watch me teach.” As long as they all are going in the same direction and doing what needs to be done, she does not care much how they get there. Linda believes that teachers all need to go their own way and does not think they need to teach the same way. She believes that teachers are basically all working on the same things within their grade level since there is a lot of continuity in the building among grade level teams and between grade level teams. They have a lot of dialogue about continuity and about children who are having trouble learning. By brain-storming ways to help a teacher work with that child and by modeling a collegial working relationship, she thinks she can enforce being an instructional leader.

Linda thinks that her role as an instructional leader has grown and expanded over the last several years rather than her definition changing. Since Linda’s background is in early childhood and her doctorate is in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in early childhood, she feels that there was a lot that she did not know. She negotiated more money in her salary and spent it all at Amazon.com buying books about teaching reading. Linda feels that she has been lucky enough to attend in-service training to build her knowledge and not have to do it totally on her own. Her district has a working relationship with a local University and she has been able to sit-in on some nice training sessions. Linda has also helped to plan in-service training for kindergarten, first and second grade teachers which she will attend. She thinks that it is important for her to learn what they learn so when she sees these topics in their classroom, she can reinforce them.

She feels that her growth as instructional leader has helped her to become a better leader. Linda shared that she graduated from college in 1976 and education has changed a lot since then. In order for her to model what she thinks needs to be done, she needs to learn some new tricks. She feels that it is helpful that she can show and tell her teachers “here is the old dog, learning some new tricks, you can

too." This is important because she has teachers, who are her age and have been in education for 35 years, and need help or encouragement to make changes.

Efforts with the new math curriculum are a good example of her instructional leadership. The changes to the math curriculum were known about seven to eight months prior to implementation allowing them to start putting it into place. Linda was able to do a lot of public relations in advance by talking to parents, who have a power base within the school and in the community, to share the benefits based on research of the program. They wanted to get into the program a little bit before they met with parents so to say "here is what we are doing in the classroom everyday." Now that the program has been implemented, the next step is to have an evening meeting for parents hosted by the staff. They will have large group instruction about the program and then invite parents go to the individual classroom to learn more about what they are doing. Linda feels that by keeping parents informed, keeps them on your side. A lot of times, she will say to parents: "we are working together to ..." raise our PSSA scores, improve discipline problems on the playground, etc. Linda also makes sure things are positively phrased so parents know that it is proactive rather than reactive and helps them buy into the system because there are no secrets. Linda feels that these efforts with parents help her to act as an instructional leader.

Linda does not think that her availability or absence of time has had an impact on her professional practices as an instructional leader because she needs to make that time. However, she does think that her availability or absence of time has had an impact on her personal life. In her job as principal, things come up and take over the day. The minutia part of the job gets done when it has to get done because you find the time to do it. Sometimes, Linda finds it is the end of the school year and things are still not done because it was not important enough to have to be dealt with right away.

If Linda could see time as a visual, it would be the drawer that is full and the stuff that is still out since what goes on is not spent in the office but out in the school. Linda believes that while time

management is discussed all the time in educational leadership and administration but you cannot understand the position until you are actually doing it and you are the person responsible. She believes that the picture you paint is not always the picture that you come away with.

Louis Tate

Louis Tate is a 54-year-old Caucasian man, who is married with three children who are in their 20s. He started off college in forestry but there were not a lot of opportunities in forestry. After his first year, he talked to a couple of professors, looked into different programs, and took a career evaluation test. Louis became interested in social work and education. After doing observations, he became interested in working at the elementary level. Louis received an associates' degree in elementary/social work and then received a bachelors of science in elementary education.

Louis student taught in kindergarten. After graduating from college, he worked in a rural elementary school in his home school district and taught a combined second and third grade class. In addition to the second and fourth grade combination class, he also taught first grade math. The school was only open for a year and then closed down because the district opened up a new middle school the following year. Louis was moved to the new school and taught third grade during his second year of teaching. His wife is from the district, where he currently works, so he applied to the district and was hired to teach third grade. He taught third then fourth grades, both for a couple of years. As a result, in his 12 years of teaching, Louis taught kindergarten through fourth grade before entering administration. He holds a Masters of Science in School Administration and is certified in elementary education and K-12 administration.

His first administrative position was created by his superintendent and is what Louis considered to be a quasi-administrative position. In this position, he was responsible for federal programs and had an office in the middle school where he taught some fifth and sixth grade reading classes. This position provided him with teaching experience in the upper grades and the opportunity to teach kindergarten through sixth grade. Louis moved from this position into the principalship, where he has worked for the last 15 years.

He is responsible for four elementary schools. The largest school has approximately 550 students. Each of the smaller schools has approximately a hundred students at each school with one class in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. Louis is responsible for getting to each of the buildings and tries to get there at least once a week. On the week of the conversation, he had been to all four of the schools by Wednesday. Louis also has three parent associations and tries to attend all of their meetings. The PTO meetings are either on Tuesday or Thursday evenings and often Louis has meetings on Tuesday and Thursday.

The most important use of Louis's time is being in the classroom seeing that programs are properly implemented and that teachers have the resources they need to do that. The least productive uses of Louis's time are dealing with lots of petty odds and ends that pop up during his day. An example is parents' who does not take the effort to contact a teacher about a concern and instead call Louis who has them contact the teacher. In these situations, the teacher will usually call and explain to the parent what happened, which brings a good solution to the problem. A parent calling Louis does not happen often but it does happen. Louis addresses the petty things that some adults cannot handle.

Another example of things popping up was a parents association having an upcoming Friday and Saturday event for the kids but the ladies in charge of the event did not make arrangements for the building to be available and open. As a result, Louis spent time making the arrangements that ladies should have made prior to two weeks before the event. A third example of things popping up, Louis had a scheduled appointment but parents of a student that they needed to talk to could only meet slightly before the meeting. Since Louis' number one priority is the needs of the child, he rescheduled his appointment in order to meet with the parents. This was important because in order to address the child's needs, they needed parent cooperation. During the conversation, Louis explained to the parents what could or could not be done for their child and shared the resources that were available to address

the needs of the child. Louis knows that these types of things happen all the time when you deal with people.

Strategies that Louis uses to manage his time are (1) arriving early and staying late, (2) coming to school on the weekend to prioritize for the following week, (3) addressing specific situations that deal with the child's needs, (4) putting kids first then adults, and (5) being flexible about things popping up. He also manages his time by (6) not reinventing the wheel or starting anything from scratch and (7) using existing files on his computer to revise tasks. Louis feels that there is not enough time. He arrives at work early and stays late. He also takes home items to look or read over, when he does not have something occurring at home. Louis usually comes to school on Sunday afternoons or evenings to get geared up for the upcoming week. During his Sunday time, he tries to prioritize what he needs to do for the week. On the week of the conversation, he had come in on Sunday and had his plans for Monday. However, first thing Monday morning, there were concerns about a possible abuse situation and Children & Youth Services¹³ had to be called. As a result, Louis's best laid plans were put to the side because they needed to address child's needs right then. Since Louis feels his focus needs to be with kids needs, his plans for Monday were taken care of by someone else on Tuesday.

Louis's view of time has changed in regard to his being more efficient at using available time. He sometimes finds himself frustrated at home when something comes up and figuring out how it is going to get taken care of. The previous evening he had a house full of guests (his mom, aunts, and cousins) and they needed to figure out transportation to get some people home. Louis saw the easiest solution being

¹³ Children and Youth Services has been renamed Office of Children, Youth and Families in many areas. The office was created to comply with federal and state laws requiring that child abuse be investigated and protect children from abuse or neglect by parents/caregivers.

their riding home with his aunts since it was on their way. However, Louis found that it took forever to get the point across. Louis did not get upset or anything but found it funny sitting and listening to folks when he saw the problem and best solution. He thought to himself, there are a couple of solutions to the transportation but saw the aunts' driving as the easiest to implement and wanted to do that solution. Louis saw the difference in perspective as his relatives have not had the opportunity to schedule and to make the most of the time that they have so it takes a little bit longer to sort or clear solutions out.

Louis believes that his ability to be more efficient has come from his experience. For years, Louis worked for a landscaper during the summer. The landscaper had a very efficient way of doing things. Louis believes that his example might have been the start of helping him to be more efficient. Examples of his efficiency on the day of the conversation included generating two of three math tests in response to a problem, meeting with two teachers about observations from the previous week, and observing two other teachers. Louis was proud of his accomplishments because there were still several more hours in the day. While he still had the third math test to generate, he was okay that it would not get done until the evening.

The generation of math tests is due to the school having a new math program, *Everyday Mathematics*¹⁴. The program does not offer assessments that offer parents with information that could go directly home and provide parents with an idea of how their kid is progressing. As a result, Louis is generating some quizzes or tests that are based on the resources available with the unit for the teachers to give. The math program is broken up into units and each unit has many lessons. For example, if the unit

¹⁴ *Everyday Mathematics* is mathematics curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and published by Wright Group/McGraw-Hill. The curriculum prides itself on real-life problem solving, balanced instruction, multiple methods for basic practice skills, emphasis on communication, home and school partnerships, and the use of technology. For additional information on *Everyday Mathematics*, visit <http://www.wrightgroup.com/index.php/programlanding?isbn=L000000004>.

has 12 lessons three quizzes would be given. The first quiz, given after the fourth lesson, will not go home to parents. The second quiz, given after the eighth lesson, will go home to parents. The third and final quiz or end of the lesson quiz will not go home and will be kept by the teacher.

The math program, Everyday Math, was selected because it is geared towards the state standards. They have a report card supplement that goes home to parents, which identifies specific concepts in the math program, shows how they are tied into the state standards and anchors for the grade level. Everyday Math is particularly tied to the third grade anchors. Louis prepared the report card supplement and shared it with the teachers at a faculty meeting. The teachers had some suggestions for changes to the supplement and he already made those changes. Louis then gave the document to the secretaries to type up. As a result, the decisions for the new math program, to make the quizzes, and to create a report card supplement were connected to standards. Louis feels that his preparation of the quizzes and report card is something that he has to do.

Louis's time is being controlled by his family, periodically by the superintendent, by himself, and when situations that come up. His family is pretty used to his schedule and can be pretty flexible. However, if there is something specific coming up then Louis gives it priority. Louis tries to stay away from the district office as much as possible because every time he leaves there he has something else to do. The superintendent will come up with something that he thinks needs addressed or has a priority that needs to be addressed. Other than family or superintendent needs, his time is primarily being controlled by him. However, situations in the buildings can also dictate his time. Louis typically learns of pressing needs via little notes on his desk or someone to talk to him.

Another example of a situation in the building dictating his time involved another case worker from Children and Youth coming in to talk to a student about another situation. Louis went from one school to another to make sure that he got back in time to be available to meet with and talk to the social

worker after she talked to the little one. He was concerned because the little one is very hard to get information from. This was important to him because if he was not comfortable with what the case worker found out, he was going to sit down and talk to the student. Louis believes the social worker got the true story and did not need to meet with the student. Louis feels that as long as he is at the particular school, his time will be dictated by the needs of his kids. While this situation was handled, he was pleased to share that at the time, he did not know of any thing pressing. He did intend to look into someone getting hurt on the playground.

Individual parents affect Louis's time usage because he finds that at least once a day something pops up with a parent. Some days are quieter than other days. During the previous day, he had four different parent concerns. The first was from a woman, who was upset about misinformation, and Louis talked to her. The second parent called because her child had a problem on the bus. Louis believes that the parent had been told about the problem but somewhere along the line she did not get the whole message. Once Louis explained to her what happened, she was fine with the situation. He also had a half an hour conversation with a third parent and a several day ongoing conversation with a fourth parent. Louis feels that the amount of time it takes to address the parent concern depends on the situation. Sometimes he can take care of situations over the phone, sometimes he has to check on things to get or gather information in order to get back to them, and sometimes he just has to talk to the teacher and the teacher will make the phone call. Louis sometimes has the teacher respond to the parents because they have all the information and can explain it better than he can.

The home/school associations (PTAs) also affect Louis's time usage. Each of the four schools has a couple of ladies that do a real good job of running the PTA. As a result of the PTA's efforts, they are doing some really neat things. When the PTA comes up with things, they run it by Louis because that is what is good for the kids. One of the schools had a Red Ribbon Week coming up and the PTA assumed

responsibility to put on some programs. Each school has a memory book or yearbook that the PTA has representatives who work together on the project and are just getting started on. Louis works with them on the project and it requires a lot of his time.

Louis describes or defines instructional leadership as knowing the programs and teacher needs based on the program. An instructional leader needs to be familiar with the programs that are being used in and at the different grade levels in the school. In the case of principal as instructional leader, this allows them they sit and observe teachers to know whether or not the program is being properly implemented. When teachers come to the principal with particular needs or supply requests, as instructional leaders they know whether or not those particular items are worthwhile for the program. In order to make the decision about supply requests being worthwhile for the program, the principal needs to know the program.

Louis gave two examples of his role as an instructional leader in action, one looks at curriculum and the other with the community. Louis is an instructional leader when working with the new math program. He has sat in on all of the trainings for the math program and has the materials around but the different tasks he has taken on has given him the opportunity to know it a little bit better. First, he knew that they did not have any information going home to inform parents how their kid(s) are progressing. Based on this knowledge, Louis came up with a solution to the missing information. Second, since the teachers have a full plate implementing the new math program, Louis has decided to generate the next couple of quizzes for each grade level. As the teachers become more comfortable with the program, they will be able to generate the tests. Since Louis is creating and providing the quizzes, he is also learning the program better. Third, knowledge of the math program has helped with observing teachers. During two recent observations, one teacher did a great job and the other was struggling a bit with her presentation. Since Louis knows the math program, he has some suggestions for her to try to see how they work.

As an instructional leader of the community, Louis makes sure that people are aware of the different opportunities and invite them to come in to see what is going on. Opportunities are also offered to parents. During National Education Week, parents are welcome to come into the school to observe. The school simply asks that they call and make arrangements. The intent is to make sure that parents feel comfortable asking staff at the school about what is going on.

Louis does not know if his view of instructional leadership has changed over the last several years. However, he believes that his knowledge about resources has improved his implementation of instructional leadership. He has been trying to get into different classrooms since he has teachers at each grade level. By the time, he has been in four or five of different classrooms of the same grade level; he has a real good feel for where the teachers are at and how successful they are being. If a teacher is struggling, he has a lot of different options. One option is recommending that the struggling teacher sit and observe instruction in a specific individual class depending on where the teachers' strengths lie. Since Louis works with four different schools, he can arrange for the teacher go to another school or stay at their school to observe a lesson taught by a colleague. There is a certain degree of confidentiality for teachers because unless they tell a colleague about going to observe another teacher, no one is going to know because nobody needs to know why they are observing another teacher. While this is an option to assist struggling teachers, Louis makes the offer to observe another teacher all the time to his entire staff. However, there are a lot of teachers who will not take advantage of the offer to observe other teachers unless he recommends it. Louis believes that not taking advantage of the offer is part of human nature. If a teacher wants to observe someone else, Louis brings in a substitute to take their place. While he does not know if his outlook on instructional leadership has changed a whole lot, he has realized that he has more resources to draw from now to help people. The knowledge of resources to draw from provides him, as an instructional leader, with opportunities to help people.

As an instructional leader, Louis needs to make sure the teachers are aware, informed, and applying the state standards. However, he does not know if the standards required a variation or different approach to instructional leadership. In third grade, Louis needed to make sure that teachers knew the specific standards and anchors for the grade. Specifically, he wanted to ensure that teachers were providing kids with the appropriate concepts and prepared them for the Pennsylvania State System Assessment (PSSA). His colleagues in neighboring districts will take special steps to prepare students for the PSSA assessment two or three weeks ahead of time. These steps include purchasing preparation books. In Louis's district, they have never done that. They simply stop instruction for two or three days to give the PSSAs and then pick-up where they left off and continue with instruction. The difference between Louis's district and his neighboring district is a philosophical approach.

Since the school is kindergarten through fourth grade, they have given the third grade test for three years now but last year was the first year it really counted. The four schools scores have been very good and Louis credits his staff with the scores. He proudly shared that the staff has been working for years to make sure that they were aware of the concepts that the kids need to be comfortable with by the time the third grade assessment comes along.

Neither his superintendent nor school board imposes any requirements on how he uses his time. The school board in Louis's district does not impose that much that much on his time because they are primarily policy setters. He feels that he is fortunate with his board because they really do not micro-manage. To some extent, Louis's superintendent does micro-manage but for the most part it is because he is a hands-on type person.

All of the administrators in the district develop general objectives for each school year for review by the superintendent. Once the superintendent and Louis agree on the objectives he is expected to meet them through the course of the year. The final version of his objectives for the year was recently

approved. Other than that, his time is the stuff that Louis has to do. Currently, he needs to use his time to make sure that the math program is properly implemented. He also needs to make sure that teachers are following through with the writing program. This year, in addition to his normal responsibilities, he needs to use his time to revise the report cards. While revising the report card is something that he is determined to do, he needs to find the time to do it.

Last summer, Louis was going to work on the new report cards but his superintendent came up with another project for him to do. The other project involved looking at scheduling changes and took a good bit of his time. As a result, Louis knew that he could not do both the report card and scheduling changes projects and asked the superintendent where the priority was. The superintendent selected scheduling changes as the priority. Louis was frustrated with the scheduling change project because he knew it was not going to work and it did not work so he essentially wasted his time over the summer. Louis said that it was okay because he thinks the superintendent now better understands the scheduling situation with a new intermediate school opening up. The assistant middle school principal is going to be the principal of the new intermediate school. The scheduling change task that was done this summer now allows Louis and the new principal to share staff members. The following week they planned to meet to start a preliminary schedule that works between the buildings, which is something that Louis has been talking about having for a while. He is glad that it is finally happening and some good came out of his summer work. Louis feels that you always have to find something positive in every situation.

To help with his future project, he has created a file of report cards from different places to help with his new report card creation. Louis now needs to look through them, pick the “best” ones, and then compiles the ideas that will work for his district. While one report card may not necessarily suit the districts needs, Louis is picking and choosing different parts report cards that might make the whole process go quicker. He finds this easier than sitting down all by himself and creating something from

scratch. He believes this strategy is a better and more productive use of his time since the materials come from respected and proven programs. Louis current problem is finding the time to do the task. Since the school year had already started and the old report cards were being used, Louis knows that he has until next year to complete the task.

Louis feels that his district is pretty fortunate because they have been using the reading program for a couple of years. The program came to be because teachers were expressing concerns about the old program causing kids to fall though the cracks and not have their reading needs met. As a result, Louis started looking into things at the same time that the curriculum coordinator was looking into the same things. Louis and the curriculum coordinator came up with the same ideas and were in the right ballpark. This did not surprise Louis because the curriculum coordinator is very conscientious.

His district started looking for a new math program because the old program involved a lot of drill and practice and did not appropriately address the state standards. Again, the curriculum coordinator started looking into programs and tracked down information about Everyday Math program. The superintendent in a neighboring district, who used to teach in Louis's district, was using Everyday Math. As a result, they made arrangements to visit her and talk about the Everyday Math program. Louis found this to be a great opportunity to use time to find out what going on in other districts rather than doing their own research or reinventing the wheel.

Louis does not believe that his availability or absence of time has had an impact on his professional practices as an instructional leader. This is because Louis believes that he first takes care of things that need to be done pertaining to the educational program, student or teacher needs. Busy work such as paper to go through and sign gets taken care of after school or in the evening. The availability or absence of time usually depends on what he feels is the priority that needs to be addressed. The other

stuff usually gets done. On occasion, Louis is faced with lot of paper but he does not find it hard to get paperwork. Since Louis is not big on taking vacation, it seems like he is working all the time.

Time is defined by Louis as a continuum where a person has to fit things within a reasonable spacing. Anything related to kids in Louis' work continuum is between eight and three. Louis has found that time on the parent continuum is best accomplished by calling Sunday morning, afternoon, or evening. If the issue involving the parent continuum is busy work then it can be done after school or when on the weekend. The parent continuum of time is changed if there is a real pressing issue and parents need to be called based on the situation.

Louis' time-saving advice for new principals is to accept that the first couple of years will be overwhelming. He would be lost without his computer because it contains schedules and certain programs used year after year. Since the schedules are already made, he can bring them up and just make the changes that are needed. However, the first couple years generating that information that took a great deal of time but now he has it. While it took time initially having it around helps.

Another area of help is organization. Organization provides a starting point and does not mean that the same thing is done the same way year after year. Organization allows a new principal to access how it was done last year and whether or not it worked. If it worked then the principal can do it again in a similar fashion. If it did not work to look at notes on problems and access "what do changes need to be made." Louis recommends keeping notes so this type of assessment can be done. As a result, a certain amount of organization skill helps a new principal.

The ability to ask others their opinion or ask for help is also good for new principals. In Louis' school, he has some folks that are great at helping. Each of his schools has a building coordinator. This individual is a classroom teacher that assumes additional responsibilities like supervising kids in the morning when they arrive from the buses and after school when they're waiting for their buses. If they

have any problems, they call Louis and let him know. Louis is also willing to listen to them if they have a suggestion. The coordinator in one building is named Connor. Since Connor works in the biggest building, he has an office in the elementary office and a classroom. He teaches reading and math approximately two thirds of the day and then is available in the office. Louis is able to pass things onto Connor. On the day of the conversation there were three little girls who were waiting for Louis with some sort of a problem. Since Louis was busy, Connor was dealing with the situation. Louis feels that the building coordinator works out pretty well.

Louis believes that it is very important for principals to stay current and review professional materials. He thinks that it is important to attend a conference here and there to see what is going on. Louis also thinks it is important for principals to talk to their colleagues or generate contacts to talk to if you are working on something. Louis has built up a rapport with an elementary principal and an intermediary principal in two neighboring school districts. They call Louis and Louis calls them about different situations.

Karen Kish

Karen Kish is a 59-year-old Caucasian female who has two children in their 30s. She has worked in education for 24 years working in five different schools in four different school districts. Working in and being involved in education was always an interest for Karen and something that she wanted to do. However, she entered teaching after having two children. While raising two children, she worked as a buyer for a local department store.

Prior to entering an undergraduate education program, Karen worked as an adviser with an Act 101¹⁵ and continuing education program for women at a college in the Pittsburgh area. She then began teaching, tutoring, and doing a variety of other things. Some of the professors at the college prompted her to go into teaching and she decided to give it a try. Karen began subbing and teaching and went to another university to get her teaching certification. She earned an associates degree in behavioral sciences, a bachelors of arts in psychology, and permanent secondary social studies teaching certification. Karen taught social studies and social sciences at the high school level for 13 years.

Karen continued her education earning a Masters of Science in Education, certification as a secondary educational specialist in school counseling, and became a school counselor. Karen then received permanent elementary and secondary administration certification and entered administration. She worked as junior high assistant principal for three years and has been a principal for nine years. Her

¹⁵ “The Pennsylvania legislature established the Higher Education Equal Opportunity Program (*Act 101*) in 1971. The program provides support services for undergraduate students whose cultural, economic and educational disadvantages might impede their ability to pursue higher education opportunities successfully. Through a program of tutoring, counseling, curricular innovation, and cultural enrichment activities, students develop as campus leaders and graduate with marketable skills. ... The Act 101 program is coordinated through a central office within the Office of Equal Educational Opportunity at the Pennsylvania Department of Education.” Information from the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site on the Act 101 Program: <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/higher/cwp/view.asp?A=12&Q=41415>

first six years as principal was in a junior high school. Karen has been in her current principalship for the past three years. She is responsible for two suburban elementary schools, which are 12.5 miles apart, in a rural school district.

Her time management, whether or not she wants it to be, evolves around time being of the essence. In order to deal with the stress of the position, Karen needs to plan things out and make sure nothing conflicts. She does not do anything without her planner because everything has to be planned out. At the beginning of the school year, she plans out events with the parent teacher association (PTA) at each school to ensure that the schools schedules do not conflict. The PTA in each building typically wants to run about 80 functions per year. When she first arrived in the position, the schedules were already set and it was very hectic. After the PTA schedules are established, she feeds in the teacher schedules for different programs and fieldtrips. She then feeds in the other programs, guest speakers and assemblies, into the schedule. It is important during this planning to ensure that plans do not disrupt the academic day. It is also very time consuming as the building principal has to plan everything out. When planning teacher plans and school programs, Karen needs to make sure that things are spaced out and do not conflict between the buildings because she needs to attend both in-house and out of school programs. It is a real balancing act to set and follow the schedule to be at the right place at the right time.

In addition to planning for the year, she also tries to plan out the schedule for the semester, for the month, biweekly, and daily. Due to conflicts arising, part of the schedule is planned semester by semester. One month prior, she will look at the calendar and determine what is happening or going on the next month. Karen then has to plan every other week for the student support/assist process, the old instructional support team (IST) process, because the school psychologist is only available every other week. Everything that gets put onto the calendar has to get done.

Karen also has a personal day planner. If it is not in her day planner, she does not do it. If someone asks why she did not come to something, she will ask if they told her about it because if it is not on her calendar, they should not expect her to do it because she cannot remember everything that is going on. She also marks everything off or writes everything in the planner. While according to Karen, her day planner “looks messy”; it includes meeting notes, custodian action, student assist meeting notes, referrals, and anything else that is happening. These items are either marked in red or another color or circled to make them stand out and are added on the weekend. She feels that no one else would be able to make sense out of the information but it makes sense to her. Karen places information in days in order to understand what is going on. In the planner, she marks off when she will be out of the district and when there are school breaks. When things get cancelled, she marked it out by placing white labels over the event or meeting. Sometimes she does not get a chance to mark out cancelled event but it is the best way to make sense of things and create more space. The system allows her to be able to go back, check and track on what happened during the whole year. Since the information is in her day planner, Karen can identify on this day, this was done and follow-up was done on this day. If she lost the day planner, she should not be expected to remember all that needs to happen.

Another part of the time management is balancing time at the two schools. While it would be nice to spend every other day at a specific school, switching days between schools, it does not work that way. Karen needs to balance plans out between everything that is going on. If she lost her planner, she would not be able to get everything done because she would have no idea what is going on. Her secretaries at each school are both aware of the schedule and often get very hectic when she is going from one activity to another. Activities include student observation, teacher observation, school meetings, and central office meetings. All of these activities need to be blocked into her schedule so that it does not take time from something else. However, the whole calendar goes out the window when a crisis arises and needs to be

dealt with. After dealing with the crisis, she figures out where she left off, what she needs to do to pick-up, what she needs to transfer or rearrange. The ability to regroup and plan so that there are not conflicts allows her to maintain her sanity, not have a nervous breakdown, and manage everything.

As a teacher of learning styles and differentiated instructional techniques, she tried color coding her school calendars. However, she found that it was not possible to carry different colored pens with her. To carry color coded pen and everything else with her was disastrous because she needed two carts to carry everything. She does not get frustrated dragging around a traveling cart on wheels, she uses it to have access to that she needs. This is important because Karen does not leave things at one building and get to the other building only to find that she needs or does not have information. The cart contains a Pennsylvania school notebook, an address book, parent/community issue notebook, and a school manual. The Pennsylvania school notebook and her regular address book provides her with contact information for different schools and helps in planning events for various different organizations that she heads up. Karen has a special notebook for parent or community issues related to or affecting the school.

Since she cannot remember everything off the top of her head and needs to have information at her finger tips, she has a manual for the two buildings that travels with her. Schedules in the manual include those for each school, individual teachers, the cafeteria, busing, title one, learning support, and special activities. She has a list of different codes and passwords needed for both buildings for computer entry or scanning including teacher observation and district math/science programs. Included in the manual is a list of staffing for the district and her building as well as teacher and sub contact information. Karen has a list of all service agreement processes, a custodial list, log-ins for south team and reporting incidents, emergency contacts, and a call off list for school break-down or closing. Also included are building plans, copies of report cards, academic standards, student postures and PSSA achievement scores for both building. Karen also has a notebook for administrative team meetings, which gets cleaned

and updated. As a result, if a question comes up, everything is in her manual because she never knows when different information will be needed.

The most important use of Karen's time is showing a presence in the building and the least important use of her time is checking e-mails because it takes a lot of time. Her presence is shown by being in the classroom, seeing the kids, watching the teachers, making sure everything is running the way it is supposed to be running, answering the questions if they have any, and making sure she gets out into the building every single day. Even if she is only in the building for a half day, Karen makes sure that she walks around, stops or peaks in on each room to see what is going on and let students/teachers know that she is in the building. In addition to showing a presence, she feels that everything she does is important in one aspect or another. Checking e-mail is a least important use of her time because some days she will check her e-mail and have 20 or 25 e-mails that she needs to answer. Karen scans through the e-mails and responds to important e-mails right away. If the e-mail is not that important or does not look that important or is a report, Karen will let it sit until she can get to it. When she does not have time during the day, she will e-mail it to her home account so she can look them in the evening. Karen has to do this because everything cannot be managed during one school day when other things are going on.

No one other than Karen controls and manages her time. Periodically, one controlling factor is when a district meeting is called and has to rearrange, redo, reschedule, or cancel items on her set calendar so she can attend the meeting. This happens because the district office could not possibly know what is on everyone's calendar.

Karen defined instructional leadership with examples of how she is an instructional leader. These examples include sharing information, providing support and encouragement, meeting one-on-one with teachers, speaking with grade level departments heads, scheduling common planning time for grade level department meetings, observations, professional development, and discussions about student

achievement. Karen provides teachers with updated information. She keeps them abreast of what is going on with math, science, and reading curriculum. Karen explains what is going on with local, state, and federal laws that will affect them and how it will affect them. She also keeps them updated about what is going on in the community. Karen provides follow-up, encouragement, and support for what tasks need to be accomplished. She meets one-on-one with teachers to address different needs and improve their instructional process. Karen speaks with grade level departments head so they can go back and work with the grade level. She has scheduled twice a week structured common planning time allowing grade level departments to meet with her. During these meetings, they discuss what is happening with math at grade two and three, what is happening with reading in grade three, and discuss pacing of mathematics.

Prior to teacher observations, teachers are asked to complete a preobservation form explaining what they will be doing. Karen then does the observation. After the observation, she has them complete a self-observation comment sheet share good qualities of the lesson, what they would change, why they would make these changes, and what they could have done better in different areas. Karen then collaborates with the teacher to determine what needs to be strengthened or what they might restructure. Teachers are asked to try the ideas somewhere done the line and let her know when they are being tried so she can come in to see it. Professional development monitoring is nominally done through the assistant superintendents office but third and fourth grade teachers are attending MSP Science Workshops which are followed-up at the grade level.

Karen talks with teachers about student achievement and asks a variety of questions. What is happening here? What are we doing here? What is going on here? Are we hitting and missing this? How are the students achieving? Where are we defining assessment processes? Where are we falling down? How do we improve this group and bring this up? These questions are important because even though

they had 100% proficiency, three or four of the student were just at proficiency. These students are special needs student and they need to do item analysis for the questions to determine what questions they missed. After discussing what is happening and what needs to happen, teachers go back and do what they need to do. As an instructional leader, Karen feels that it is important to bring their awareness to facts, see how to use assessments to look at deficiencies, and increase student performance.

Karen's schools have been using the Everyday Mathematics¹⁶ program for several years. The district phased in the program. Third grade was the first to use the program and are in their fourth year. Each grade level has been phased in as they went along. During their first year using the program, teachers were stressed because the program is hands-on and teachers are not used to teaching that way. As a result, it is hard for teachers to restructure their techniques and strategies. However, once they get through a semester, it gets easier, and by the end of the year, they know what they are doing. Karen feels that Everyday Math is a very good program and last year, the third grade had 100% math efficiency/proficiency on the PSSAs so she knows that they are doing well and something is working.

This year, Karen's schools adopted and purchased a new reading program, Harcourt Reading Series¹⁷. The program is different than what they previously used and involves a lot more writing. Since

¹⁶ *Everyday Mathematics* is mathematics curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and published by Wright Group/McGraw-Hill. The curriculum prides itself on real-life problem solving, balanced instruction, multiple methods for basic practice skills, emphasis on communication, home and school partnerships, and the use of technology. For additional information on *Everyday Mathematics*, visit <http://www.wrightgroup.com/index.php/programlanding?isbn=L000000004>.

¹⁷ Harcourt's *Trophies Reading Series* is a "research-based, developmental reading/language arts program." It offers "explicit phonics instruction, direct reading instruction, guided reading strategies, phonemic awareness instruction, systematic intervention strategies, integrated language arts components, and state-

the program is new, teachers need to get a feel for the program to learn what they do or do not need to know and what can or cannot be eliminated. As a result, this year will require pacing through the year. She predicts that teachers will have a handle on the program after a semester and after a year know what they are doing. It takes time but teachers' confidence builds and they know that they can handle the hands on activities. As an instructional leader, Karen needs to give them lots of support by saying "wow that was a good job" or putting candy bars in their mailbox or doing other things to let them know that they are doing okay. This also involves helping to reduce teacher stress levels by reminding them not to worry if they are only at 1.95 on the pacing chart and should be at 2.0 on the pacing chart. Reminding teachers that some things are more difficult, some things are easier, and they will pick up the pace. Karen also predicts that the program will allow them to achieve an awful lot. Prior to the new program, they had 96% proficiency in reading. With the new program, which integrates writing, Karen is expecting improved in scores.

Her role as instructional leader has not changed over the last several years. Karen has been teaching differentiated instruction for 18 years. She shared that she was teaching differentiation before it was even popular. Karen would have teachers take a self-assessment on their own teaching learning style and then do the assessment with students within the classroom. This allowed teachers to look at what learning styles they were hitting and missing. As an instructional leader, Karen feels that it is her responsibility to look at what teachers are missing in the classroom. This is important because teachers know what they are hitting but are not always aware of what they are missing. Teachers think that they are getting everything and are always surprised to see what they are missing in the process. As an

instructional leader, Karen feels that she needs to gear teachers towards what they are hitting and missing, what they need to be doing, what they are not doing, what they need to change, what they need to do better, and what they need to do. Karen considers this strategy as asking the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions to find the answers that need to be found or determined as an instructional leader. Prior to entering the principalship, Karen was a counselor and brings this background into the position. She has always looked at a situation from all angles, all parts, and determined how they feed into the whole. As a result, looking at differentiation and determining improvement has always been her focus so she does not think anything has changed.

Karen feels that there is not nearly enough time to be in classrooms and around the building more. As principal different appointments, meetings, emergency situations, problems at whatever school she is not at, and other tasks crop-up pulling her away from what she is doing or needs to be doing. Karen needs to be doing observations of teaching, working with the teaching staff, working with the parents and community, working with assessment and evaluations. She remembers what it was like to be an assistant principal or principal working in one building. Karen believes that when you are only responsible for one building, you can control things that crop up a little bit more. However, when a principal works with two buildings, things crop-up and go on at both buildings causing there not to be enough time in the day to do everything. As a result, Karen cannot sit in individual education plan (IEP) meetings all day. She will float into the meetings, stay for the important parts, and leave after it is taken care of. Karen also takes care of things that need to be written or done right now and cannot be put off at night after working a 12-, 13-, or 14-hour day.

Summary of Findings Regarding Rural Principals

Most Important Use of Time

Four principals mentioned interactions with students, being in the classroom, and supporting teachers as the most important use of their time. Three principals mentioned student learning, proper implementation of programs and curriculum, and observing teachers as the most important use of their time. Other important uses of time included being visible, having a presence in the building, preventative meetings with parents, and safety.

Least Important Use of Time

Three principals mentioned paperwork as being the least important use of their time. Two principals mentioned parents not following protocol of going to the teacher first as the least important use of their time. Other least important uses of time included administrative meetings, checking e-mails, day-to-day complaints, petty odds and ends that pop up, and returning phone calls from unsolicited business vendors.

Strategies to Manage Time

The principals used a variety of strategies to manage their time. The most common strategy for managing time was arriving early, mentioned by three principals, and staying late, mentioned by four principals. Two principals also mentioned coming to school on the weekend to get work done and taking work home. Three principals also mentioned using their secretary to help manage time. One principal specifically mentioned her secretary helping to sort mail and do data entry. Three principals also mentioned using a calendar or day timer/planner and color coding events. Two principals mentioned using calendars to keep teachers and the school community (PTA) informed of events. Two principals mentioned planning ahead for events. Other strategies included maintaining a tickler file, scheduling

events, using preplanned and unplanned pockets of time, lists on paper, daily priority list, and paper piles based on importance. Principals also used templates for letter formation, establishing the shortness of time at start of conversation, having an open door policy but shutting the door when work needs to be done, having a manual with important must knows to be taken between schools, and a cart of wheels with important manuals. One principal mentioned managing his time by putting kids before adults and always addressing student specific situations. Technology time-saving strategies included weekly e-mail updates to teachers, Palm Pilot, and using existing computer files. Principals also mentioned acceptance of no down time and things coming up, flexibility in things that come up, and reshuffling and juggling priorities.

Changes in Time Perspective

When discussing changes in time perspective over the last several years, two themes emerged looking at the passage of time and experience. Four principals made comments about time passing quickly, running out of time and needing more hours in the day, not having enough time and never going to get ahead or caught up, and the unpredictable nature of position. Two principals mentioned their efficiency in using available time. Three experienced principals mentioned their experience in the position changing their perspective of time. A principal new to the principalship mentioned that the transition from being a teacher to principal changed her perspective of time. Neither theme of the passage of time or experience included comments about time pressures on staff, district expansion nor retirement, volunteering with various committees and programs, nor the self-discovery of importance of taking care of self personally will help professionally.

Factors Controlling or Influencing Time Usage

Four of the seven rural principals mentioned that they control or influence their own time usage. A common comment was “I only have myself to blame.” Two principals mentioned staff controlling or influencing their time, one principal mentioned the professional staff and the other principal mentioned his paraprofessionals. Other controlling or influencing factors included changes coming down pike, individual parents and PTA, meetings, paperwork, own family, random situations, and the superintendent.

Instructional Leadership Defined

Definitions of instructional leadership were varied and diverse. However, they can be examined based on the best interests of the learner, learning, professional development, and instructional decision-making. Comments about acting in the best interest of the learner included taking the responsibility to show or explain to parents or teachers when changes need to be made to ensure that children are getting educated in a manner that is appropriate for them right now. Other comments included leading by example to make sure that kids are getting the best possible education that they can, having dialogue about children who are having trouble learning, and knowing students, teachers, and the curriculum in order to meet the needs of all of the students.

In the area of the best interest of learning, principals talked about having a presence in the classroom, knowing the programs and teacher needs based on the program, being able to speak to those trends, and being able to talk to parents about the curriculum. Louis talked about being familiar with the programs that are being used in and at the different grade levels in the school and knowing whether or not those particular items or needs are worthwhile for the program. Donna shared that instructional leadership is a constant, ongoing, and evolving process of having a very clear grasp of the curriculum

and empowering the staff to improve as they go along. She went on to talk about knowing the curriculum that the school district has adopted, what she is asking her professional staff to use in the classroom, how the little pieces come together, and what constraints teachers face in the delivery of the curriculum. Karen talked about scheduling common planning time for grade level department meetings. Louis talked about looking at the curriculum then working with teachers to select curriculum replacements for older curriculum or curriculum that will better meet the standards.

Principals placed considerable emphasis on the best interest of professional development and helping teachers. Alex, Donna, Karen, and Christopher all talked about professional development. Christopher talked about providing in-service to allow teachers to be able to use the curriculum as fully as they can. He went on to talk about the importance of follow-up in bringing in-service instructors back to the school to answer questions and ensure that teachers are not given in-service that are one day wonder. Principals also discussed one-on-one discussions with teachers. Linda talked about brainstorming ways to help a teacher work with that child and by modeling a collegial working relationship. Karen talked about meeting one-on-one with teachers and speaking with grade level departments heads. Karen and Christopher talked about observing teachers. Christopher talked about these observations being used to know whether or not the program and curriculum are being properly implemented and making recommendations for improvement. Donna talked about spending time with the teaching staff and empowering them. This is similar to Karen's comments about providing follow-up, encouragement, and support for the tasks teachers need to accomplish. More important than professional development, Andy talked about hiring people that are better than he is at doing stuff and Christopher talked about utilizing teacher strengths by having teacher observe other teachers.

Principals also defined instructional leadership based on the best interest of instructional decision making. Karen talked about discussions about student achievement. Alex talked about researching and learning about the current trends in education. Christopher talked about making decisions to ensure that teachers are provided with what they need to instruct students and keep the curriculum moving forward.

Changes in Instructional Leadership

Professional growth and accountability mandates have caused changes in principals' definition or role in instructional leadership over the last several years. Several years ago, Andy had a conversation with a woman who challenged whether he was a manager or an instructional leader, he realized that he was a manager but wanted to be an instructional leader. As a result, he retooled himself to become an instructional leader. Linda has grown as an instructional leader by buying books and reading, attending in-service training, and planning in-service training. Neither Donna nor Louis believed that their understanding or view of instructional leadership has changed. However, Donna mentioned having a deeper appreciation for different styles of learning since entering the principalship. Louis feels that his knowledge of available resources has grown, which has improved his implementation of instructional leadership. Louis also talked about making sure teachers are aware, informed, and applying state standards to ensure that kids are prepared for the Pennsylvania State Student Assessment (PSSA). This is similar to Donna and Christopher's role as an instructional leader being affected by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the PSSAs.

Impact of Availability or Absence of Time on Instructional Leadership

Principals were asked whether the availability or absence of time has affected their role as an instructional leader. Alex, Donna, and Karen talked about other job responsibilities affecting their time for instructional leadership. Alex shared that matters such as discipline, unanticipated parent meetings,

and full day IEP meetings makes it difficult to complete reports and read research. Donna also talked about the other job responsibilities taking away from her time for instructional leadership but the need to use creativity to find those opportunities and the importance of hiring well. Karen talked about not having nearly enough time to be in classrooms or around the building because of various job needs. Andy, Linda, Donna, Louis, and Christopher did not think that the absence of time was affecting their role in instructional leadership. Andy feels that he is very available time-wise to his staff and kids, which has increased his effectiveness as an instructional leader. While the absence of time has had an impact on Linda's personal life, it has not impacted her role in instructional leadership because she needs to make the time. Since Donna is new in the position of principal, she is still learning how to be an instructional leader and believes that her time usage will change with experience. Louis believes that he first takes care of things that need to be done pertaining to the educational program, student or teacher needs. While Christopher is very comfortable doing teacher observations, he finds the paperwork for the observations to be very time consuming but knows that if he invests the time, he will get good results from teachers.

Time Defined

Definitions of time were varied and diverse. Five of the principals defined time based solely on professional practices and two principals included their family in the definition. One principal, Alex, who mentioned family in her definition shared that time is a measure of events or chunks of time that determine what is done from sunup to sundown. The other principal, Christopher, defined time as organizing and fitting in all of the things that need to be done in a given 24-hour period. This definition is similar to Louis's definition. Louis saw time as a continuum where a person has to fit things within a reasonable spacing. Three principals, who were all women, used analogies to define time. Linda saw time

as a drawer that is full because her time is not spent in the office. Donna saw time as either being your friend or your enemy in a love or hate relationship depending on how one choose to use it. Donna saw time as a snowball that gets bigger and moves faster. The last principal, Andy, saw time as being able to do things that others cannot do.

Advice for New Principals

Rural principals offered new principals seven areas of advice including the purpose of the principalship, need for personal time, getting to know the school community, understanding the process needed for change, need for prior experience, staying current, and other time saving tips. The purpose of the principalship, according to Andy, is the students and ensuring that every decision is focused on their best interests.

Since the principalship can be a time intensive job, four rural principals (Alex, Andy, Elizabeth, and Louis) recommended strategies to ensure a principal's personal time, health, and sanity was maintained. Louis encouraged new principals to accept that the first couple of years will be overwhelming and Alex recommended scheduling personal time. Andy feels that a principal does not have to live at their school to be a good principal because being a healthy and sane person is critical to the overall effectiveness of the school. He feels that the job of principal will suck a principal dry of who they are or could even kill them if allowed. Andy warns new principals not to let people steal bits and pieces of who they are until there is nothing left. A final word of advice, by Elizabeth, about a principal's sanity is to maintain a sense of humor, not to take self too seriously, and be able to laugh when something is unknown or uncertain.

Five rural principals (Alex, Christopher, Donna, Elizabeth, and Louis) talked about getting to know the school community (parents, teachers, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, members of the PTO/PTA, and members of the school board), listening to what they have to say, learning from them, and

interacting with them. Donna encourages new principals to get to know little things like people's names and their role in the school system. She believes this information will help a new principal understand the perspective of the person that they are talking too. Donna recommend listening to learn what they are most proud of or what they are complaining about because it can help a new principal get a sense of the culture that underpins the school or organization. Christopher feels that if the school community sees and knows the principal, they are more like to see the principal as a person rather than a position, which helps the person with acclimation to the position. He also feels that it is important for new principals to sit, watch, and learn about the school community. Elizabeth stressed the importance of relationships with school staff such as custodians and secretaries because they are the "keeper of the keys" and understand the bigger picture of the working of the school. Elizabeth also thinks it is important for a new principals to understand clichés that can occur in a school and when necessary step in to ensure that the individuals are working in the best interests of students. She also advises new principals not to be overconfident and think that they know more than a parent or teacher. Alex encouraged a new principal to always let their secretary know their schedule because they are extremely valuable to the running of the school. Louis feels that it is important to listen to teachers and others when they have a question or concern. The overall message from these five rural principals was to establish relationships and listen to individuals in the school community.

Four rural principals (Alex, Christopher, Donna, and Elizabeth) encouraged new principals to always reflect on information to ensure the timing for change is correct and decision to make the change is appropriate. Alex encouraged new principals to always talk to others to gather additional information before making decisions, which always need to be thought through and unknown ramifications learned. Similarly, Donna recommended that new principals give themselves time to settle into the leadership role and not go into the position with both guns blazing. She feels that if they do not reflect on information

and determine if the change is really warranted then the new principal runs the risk of doing themselves in very quickly. Christopher encouraged new principals to gather conscience and buy-in prior to making considerable changes. Sometimes it is beneficial to make changes in phases to ensure successful acclimation of the project or idea by the staff. However, if a principal rushes in and makes decisions without conscience or staff buy-in they face considerable resistance. Like Christopher, Elizabeth recommends waiting until the second year of being in the position before making any major changes at a school. She believes this waiting will ensure that a principal does not try to fix things that were not broken in the first place. These recommendations to new principals indicate the importance of waiting or providing time to understand the reasons behinds an action or activity before making a major decision

Two principals, Elizabeth and Louis, encouraged new principals to stay current and review professional materials. Elizabeth mentioned the importance of staying current with school code, laws, and special education regulations. Louis thinks that it is important for new principals to attend professional conferences to learn what it is going on. These conferences provide new principals with the opportunity to talk to colleagues to learn about their particular school context and establish professional contacts. While ongoing professional development was not specifically mentioned by rural principals, the aspect of staying current by reading or attending professional conferences is an important and easily done form of professional development.

Only one rural principal, Elizabeth, talked about the importance of new principals having prior experience in teaching as well as teaching in the particular context that they become a principal in. She feels that while Pennsylvania requires five years of teaching experience before entering the principalship, it is not a sufficient amount of experience because teachers are normally not confident taking chances until after their fifth year of teaching. As a result, she believes that principals need to have taught for seven or eight years. She also feels that it is very wrong that guidance counselors can enter administration

without having taught. Elizabeth expressed concern about teachers leaving teaching and entering administration because they did not like teaching. She thinks it is really important that principals really like and value education. Since Elizabeth never taught or worked at the elementary level, she thinks that it is very important for new principals to have taught or have formal training in the educational context that they are working in. It is unclear whether Elizabeth's thoughts were complaints about the current context of school administrators and/or personal regrets or insecurities about her own background. Whatever the cause for her perspective, it is beneficial information for a principal candidate to reflect on.

Lastly, two principals, Alex and Louis, offered time management tips to new principals. Louis focused on using technology and getting organized while Alex recommended keeping lists and delegating tasks. Louis maintains files on his computer and then revises them as needed. He said that these files took a great deal of time to develop in his first few years as a principal; however, they now save him considerable time. Based on Louis's suggestion, new principals to speak to other principals to see if they are willing to share existing computer documents to help save them time. He also highly recommends new principals getting organized because it allows a new principal to access how something was done the previous year and determine whether or not it worked. If it worked then the principal can do it again in a similar fashion. If it did not work to look at notes on problems and access "what do changes need to be made." Louis recommends keeping notes so this type of assessment can be done. Similar to keeping notes, Alex suggests that new principals keep lists to prioritize what needs to get done. He also suggests delegating some of the tasks that need to be done and trust others enough that they will do those tasks. While these tips were offered as time management strategies, Alex and Louis believed that they were important because time management is something that new principals often struggle with.

CHAPTER 5: SUBURBAN PRINCIPALS

Background Information about Suburban Principals

Seven of the 22 principals interviewed for this study work in suburban school districts. The suburban principals' personal backgrounds have a lot of similarities. All of the principals are Caucasian and female, however, they were not selected based on their ethnicity or gender. Their ages range from 41 to 61 years old and are illustrated in Figure 7. Two principals are in their 40s, three are in their 50s, one is in her 60s, and one did not volunteer her age. All of the principals are married and have one to three children. The ages of the children ranged from 2 to 37 years old. Half of the children are under 20 years old, and the other half are 20 or older.

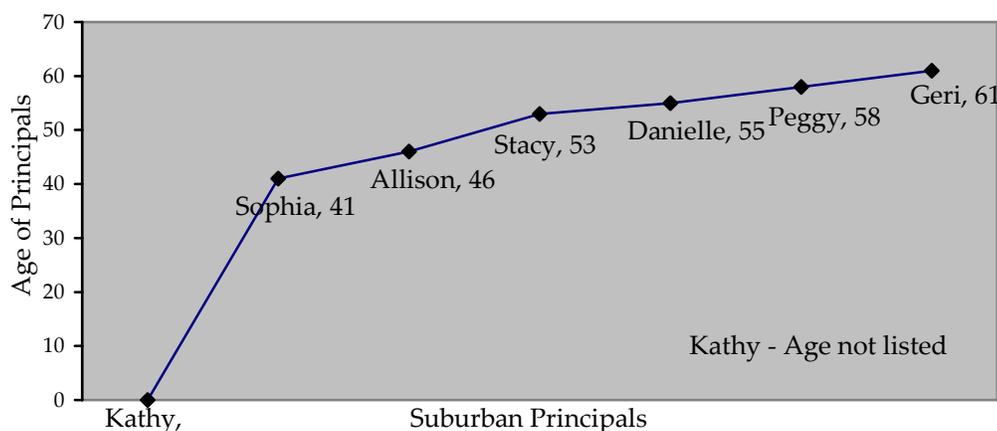


Figure 7: Age of Suburban Principals

The educational experiences of the principals is varied and diverse. Two principals have associates degrees, one in the arts and the other in language arts. All but one of the principals have Bachelor of Science degrees ranging in subject area from education (one principal), elementary education (three principals), elementary and kindergarten education (one principal), and psychology/biology (one

principal). One of the six suburban principals holds a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education. The suburban principals' Masters degrees also differed. Three principals hold Masters of Science degrees: one in communication disorders (special education) and the other is in special education. One principal holds two Masters of Science degrees: one in elementary education and other in educational leadership. One principal has Masters of Arts in Exceptional Students Education. Two principals have a Masters of Education: one in Elementary Education and the other in Special Education. One principal did not indicate whether they had a Masters of Art, Science, or Education but had specialized in counseling and administration. It is important to note that while their Masters degrees have different titles, special education was the emphasis of four of the seven degrees. Additionally, one principal has earned her Ph.D. in Community Systems Planning and Development. Four of the principals are advanced doctoral students.

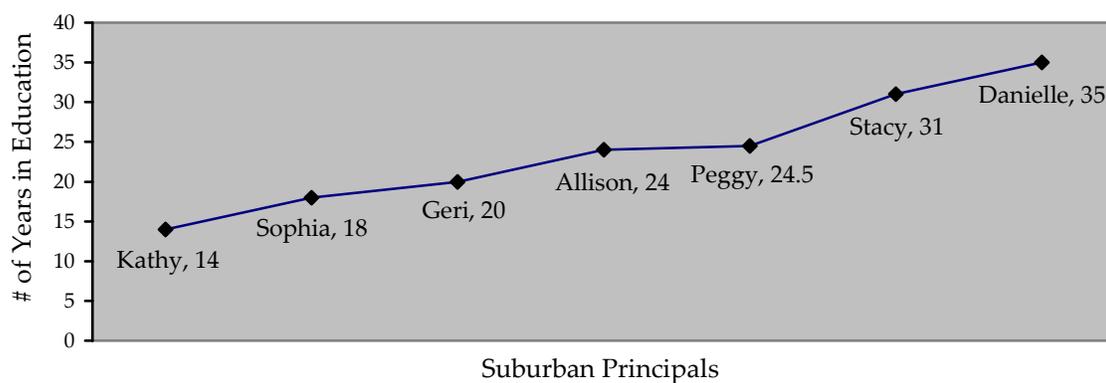


Figure 8: Suburban Principals Number of Years in Education

Principals' experience in education differed. Their total number of years working in education ranged from 14 to 35 years. Figure 8 illustrates the individual principals varying number of years' experience in education. Five of the principals have only worked in the field of education and the other

two principals had worked in other professions. These other professions include working as a preschool administrator, retail department store manager, and in computer keyboarding. They have worked in a total of two to four school districts. Three principals have worked in two districts, three principals have worked in three school districts, and one principal has worked in four school districts.

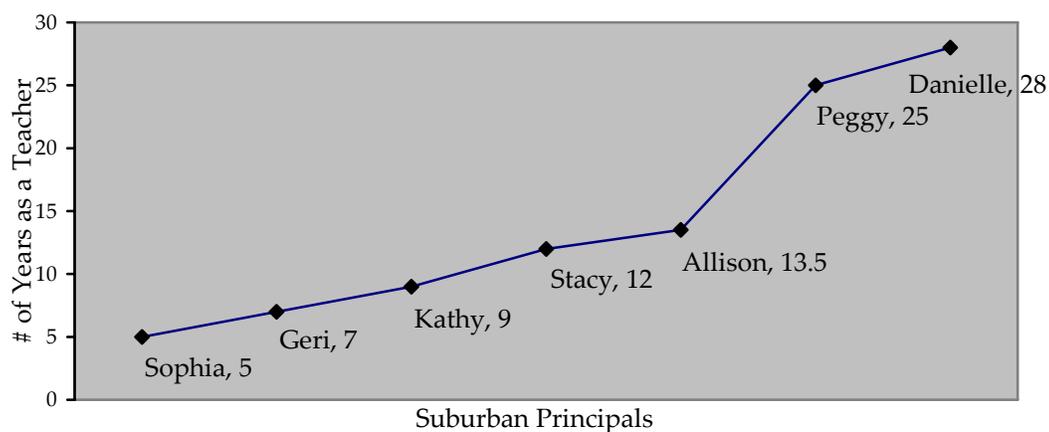


Figure 9: Suburban Principals Years of Experience as a Teacher

Experience as a teacher ranges from five to 28 years' experience. Figure 9, above, illustrates the individual principals' experience as a teacher. Experience as an assistant or vice principal ranged from no experience to eight years. Four principals have no experience, one principal has a half year of experience, one principal has five years of experience, and one principal has eight years' experience as a vice or assistant principal. Figure 10, on the next page, illustrates the individual principals' experience as an assistant or vice principal. Total experience as a principal ranges from 3 months to 19 years. Three of the principals (Allison, Danielle, Sophia) were principals in other schools before entering their current position. Figure 11, on the next page, illustrates the individual principals' total years of experience as a principal.

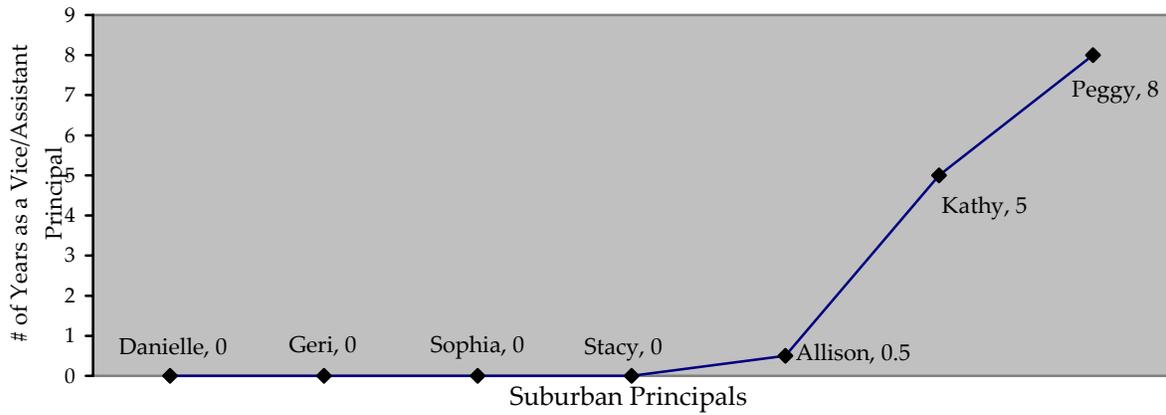


Figure 10: Suburban Principals Years Experience as a Vice/Assistant Principal

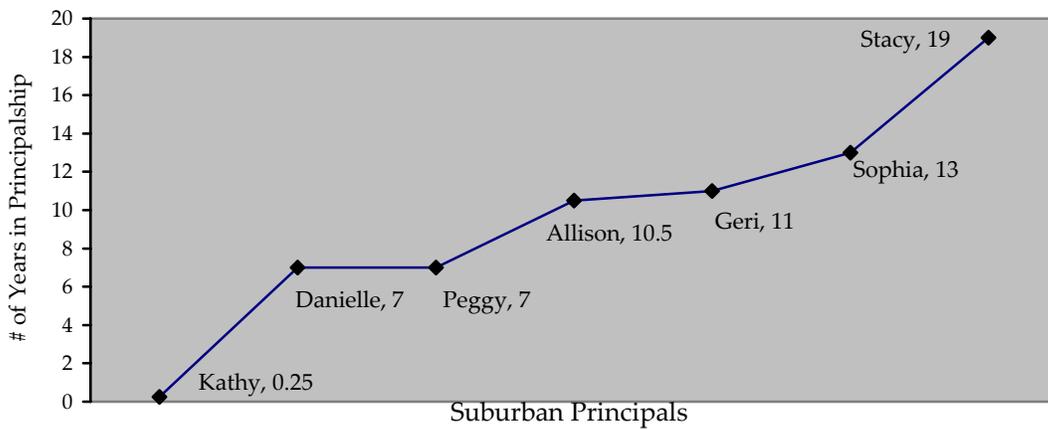


Figure 11: Suburban Principals Years of Experience in Principalship

Figure 12 illustrates the individual principals' experience as a principal at their current school. They are responsible for one or two schools. Specifically, five principals (Allison, Geri, Kathy, Sophia, and Stacy) are responsible for one school and two (Danielle and Peggy) principals are responsible for two schools.

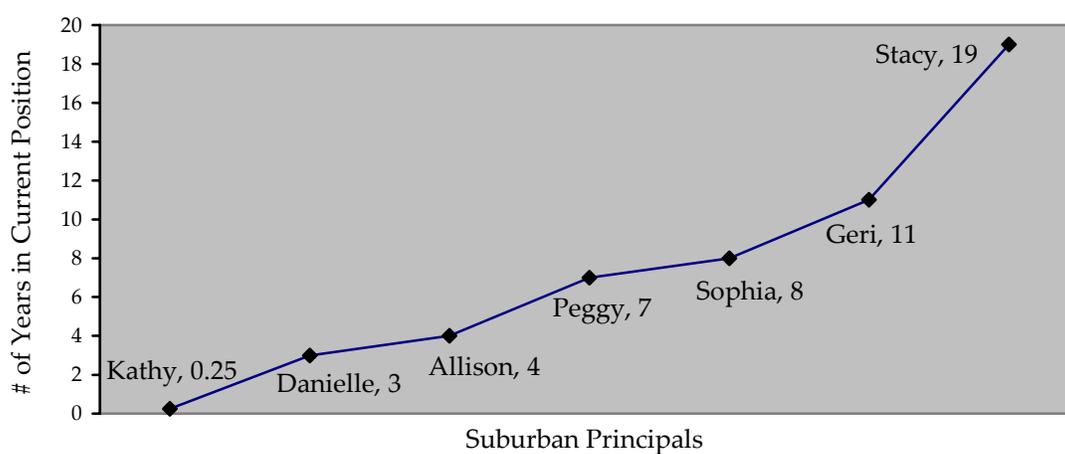


Figure 12: Suburban Principals Years of Experience in Current Position

Table 5 and Table 6 summarize background information, education, certification, and personal information for each suburban principal.

Table 5: Background Information about Suburban Principals

	Allison Dillon	Danielle Finney	Dr. Geri Bose	Kathy Fisher	Peggy Fulmer	Sophia Ward	Stacy Spahr
# of years in position of principal	10.5	7	11	0.25	7	13	19
# of years in current position of principal	4	3	11	3 months	7	8	19
# of schools you are currently responsible for	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
# of years in position of vice or assistant principal	0.5	0	0	5	8	0	0
# of years as teacher	13.5	28	7	9	24.5	5	12
Total # of years worked in education	24	35	20	14	24.5	18	31
Total # of schools worked in	9	3	3	4	8	5	3
Total # of districts works in	3	2	3	2	4	3	2
Ever worked in another career. If yes, career	No	No	No	Preschool administrator, Retail dept. manager	Computer Keyboarding	No	No

Table 6: Suburban Principals Education, Certification, and Personal Information

	Allison Dillon	Danielle Finney	Dr. Geri Bose	Kathy Fisher	Peggy Fulmer	Sophia Ward	Stacy Spahr
Associate degree				Arts	Language Arts		
Bachelors of	Arts in Early Childhood Education	Science in Elementary Education	Science in Elementary and Kindergarten Education	Science in Education	Science in Elementary Education	Science in Psychology/ Biology	Science in elementary education
Masters of	Education in Elementary Education	Science in Elementary Education Science in Educational Leadership	Arts in Exceptional Students Education	Education in Special Education	Science in Communication Disorders (Special Education)	Science in Special Education	??? in counseling ??? In administration
Doctorate		ABD Administration - Elem. Ed.	Ph.D. in Community Systems Planning and Development	D.Ed. candidate	D.Ed. (ABD) in Ed. Admin.	D.Ed candidate in Ed. Leadership	
Certification	Principal Certification II	Admin I & II	EK.ED. Instructional II Administrative Certification K-6	K-12 Principal Letter of Eligibility	Elementary Education (K-6) Special Education (K-12) Special Education Supervisor (K-2) Administrative (K-12) Letter of Eligibility	Special education Elementary principal Special education supervisor Letter of Eligibility	Reading specialist certificate, Counseling, Administration
Ethnicity	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
Age	46	55	61	Not listed	58	41	53
Marital status	Single	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married
Age of children	14	12, 19	31, 31, 35	26	37	2	11, 6

Allison Dillon

Allison Dillon is a 46-year-old Caucasian woman, who is recently single, and has a 14-year-old daughter. She started college as a Sociology major but during her sophomore year took an elective on mainstreaming and loved it. Allison then decided to switch her major to education with a math minor. She graduated college with a Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education. After graduating from college, she worked for a year in a private kindergarten classroom and also worked at the day care center. Allison worked as a graduate assistant at a higher education institution in Pennsylvania for two years, where she taught a four year old kindergarten class at the lab school. She absolutely loved the experience and had lots of fun. Allison then moved into public education teaching kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. She taught for 13 and a half years before entering administration. Alison worked for a half year as a vice or assistant principal. Over her 24- year career in education, she has worked in three school districts and nine schools.

She is in her fourth year as principal of her current suburban elementary school but she has 10 total years of experience as a principal. Even though Allison works in a suburban district, her school is one of the furthest schools from the main school campuses and is in a rural area. Allison believes that one of the neat things about the principalship is that everyday is different. It is not a predictable job and can be overwhelming. She usually gets to school around 7 a.m. so she has a good hour of quiet time catching up on e-mail and other correspondence. The teachers arrive by 8:10 a.m. Once the students are in the building, they help with announcements to begin the day. Allison spends some time in the office making sure that things are settled. She will then do some building walk-throughs greeting teachers and students and showing her presence in the building. Allison will also do informal and formal classroom walk-throughs. Formal walk-throughs involve her using note paper to record what is actually happening in the classroom. She then may need to attend an IEP or district office meeting. At the end of every day, she

tries very hard to be the person to lead dismissal announcements. After the announcements, she also likes to greet the students in the bus line so the day can be concluded with their knowing that she is still in the building. However, everyday is different for Allison and she really does not have a typical day.

Strategies that Allison uses to manage her time include having two well-trained secretaries, good procedures for schoolwide discipline, daily prioritization, and maintenance of own schedule. Allison has trained her two secretaries that she does not want to take every single call that comes in during the day. The secretaries are encouraged to try to answer parents questions the best they can. For example, if a parent calls about something that has happened in a classroom, the secretary directs the parent to back the classroom teacher. This is important training for the parents because Allison wants parents to talk to the teacher first before jumping over the teacher and going to her. The secretaries fielding calls allows Allison to not have to pick-up the phone and answer every single call. This is a time management strategy because if Allison has a half hour period of time to get caught up on a formal lesson plan, she is able to have quiet, think time to complete the task rather than being interrupted for phone calls. During this time, her office door will be open but her secretaries are fielding a lot of stuff that she does not have to be bothered with. Allison's time is also helped by having really good procedures and a system in place for schoolwide discipline. This is important because if the children know what is expected of them and the teachers know how to handle situations then Allison does not have to spend her day running from classroom to classroom for trivial things. The procedures and system for schoolwide discipline helps her to be available to teachers and available when other things come up throughout the day. Allison also tries to prioritize her day based on what needs to get done and what is occurring. She does not let someone else manage her time and does her own scheduling of appointments. Allison finds these strategies very helpful in managing her time.

Allison believes that her experience as a principal has helped her learn time management skills. She believes that experience is one of the best teachers. When Allison was taking classes towards her principalship, she read the book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*¹⁸ in one of her first classes. The book helped her to put things into perspective about what is important and prevent herself from consistently getting herself into situations where she is just spinning her wheels. She has learned to keep those things in mind and prioritize as she goes.

The most important use of her time is being in the building and classrooms and being available to the teachers and students. The functioning of the school during the day and teachers needing help with classroom discipline are all important to Allison. Phone calls to parents or even the superintendent can be done either before the teachers and students arrive or after they have gone for the day.

The least important use of Allison's time is documentation and rude or disrespectful parents. She does not have many incidents with rude or disrespectful parents but when they happen, they are very time consuming. A recent example happened two days occurred prior when an irate woman came in at quarter to eight in the morning screaming, yelling, and causing a scene in the office. The woman was irate because the school had reported her to Children and Youth because there was physical evidence that she was abusing her son. As a result of her actions in the office, Allison had to call the police. Even though the incident only took 40 minutes after the police and women left, Allison then had to spend hours documenting the incident and doing the appropriate paperwork. For example, she had to contact the

¹⁸ *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* was written by Stephen R. Covey. The seven habits include being (1) proactive, (2) beginning with the end in mind, (3) putting first things first, (4) thinking about the win/win, (5) seeking to understand then being understood, (6) synergize, and (7) sharpening the saw. These habits are based on seven principals of personal vision, personal leadership, personal management, interpersonal leadership, empathic communication, creative cooperation, and balanced self-renewal.

superintendent so he could approve a trespass letter. This type of documentation is less important to Allison because it takes her away from what she should be doing for the kids and teachers.

Allison's view of time has changed over the last several years from the pressure of standardized testing. As a result of these pressures, she had to make sure that not only she but the building as a whole was using instructional time properly. During her first year in the building, she realized that the school community was very supportive but was running a lot of in-school events. Allison started looking at all of the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) events that are occurring. As enjoyable as some of the events are, they occurred over multiple days. Two examples of these PTO events include Grandparents Days and the Holiday Shop. Grandparents Days ran for two days straight, causing lots of instructional time to be lost. The Holiday Shop would occur over an entire week and kids are pulled from class to shop for little trinkets. As a result, Allison still wanted to have the fun PTO events but did not want to lose instructional time. The Holiday Shop now occurs on a Friday night and Saturday so it does not interrupt instructional time. As a result of standardized testing, Allison is very conscious of time usage.

The district administration, superintendent, and school board are very supportive and have not affected Allison's use of time. Allison gave the other principals in the district a presentation about instructional time and use of time. She feels that the presentation helped to enlighten them. As a result of the presentation, she has received a lot of support from the other principals about what she is doing, the changes that she has made based on the needs of the school, and where they need to be instructionally. The superintendent has set the tone for the school board. As a result, the school board is incredibly supportive and just responds to the administration. Unless a member of the school board has a child or grandchild in the school, they do not come to the school. They are also not pushy and do not make any kind of demands. Allison is able to use her time to do her job making teachers, students, and the PTO her main focus because of the very strong administrative staff.

The PTO and specific special education needs children control or influence Allison's use of time. Allison feels pressure from the PTO to do certain things in the building. In the 2005-06 school year, the PTO has consumed a lot of her time because of vandalism and theft of PTO money from the PTO treasurer. Since the school is not located in a little town, community groups do not come to the school. Also, in the 2005-06 school year, there was an autistic child who was extremely violent. This child consumed hours and hours of Allison's time. During the child's violent temper tantrums, Allison had to move children, secure areas, and close down parts of the building until the child's mother or someone else could remove the child from the school. After each incident, Allison had to document the events and then attend the follow-up meetings. Allison was finally able to move the child to a more restrictive environment, which is a better placement with more intensive supports. She has found that one or two special needs kids can consume in a single day 90% of her time. During these emergency situations that consume her time, everything else gets pushed to the back burner and later she has to play catch-up or juggle the other things that have to get done. After an emergency situation, anything with a deadline, directives from the superintendent, or immediate needs of classroom teachers gets immediate prioritization. She will stay late or come in early to get caught-up.

Instructional leadership, for Allison, is being able to look at the building as a whole and as principal not only talk the talk but walk the walk. Every year, she makes an effort to ask teachers what they think their needs are instructionally for staff development. She then assesses them and looks at where she sees their needs. Allison then tries to mesh the two. Allison thinks that she not only needs to be aware of what they want but also be able to find someone who can support them if she cannot provide that instructional leadership. She does not want to say "here is the presenter, I will see you when you are finished" so she sits through every single training for every member of the staff. Allison believes that supporting the action being taken allows her to be a strong instructional leader.

A recent example of Allison's instructional leadership occurred over the past two and half years in working very hard to improve the literacy program. When she started at the school, she looked at the student population and realized that they had very low socioeconomic poverty levels compared to the rest of the district. She knew that the teachers are not doing something wrong but the information was not being put together correctly for students. Very slowly they started analyzing what happened, what was going on, looked at instructional practices, and determined how they could intensify and streamline instructional practices. As a result, they started using Project Read¹⁹, which is a very multisensory approach for whole group instruction. It was instructionally important to Allison that the whole building really wanted to be part of Project Read and they are not just training a grade level or the primary group. This allowed a common language of understanding to be built.

They started with the phonology piece of Project Read, which is geared to kindergarten to half-way through second grade and sometimes into third grade. Despite the grade level focus of Project Read phonology, the whole building (kindergarten to sixth grade teachers and specialist teachers) wanted to be involved and sit through the staff development. Allison also built in a lot of ongoing staff development time. Since the district has very few staff development days, which always seem to be consumed by other things then what the building needs, she requested a couple of days each year where substitutes could come in while teachers received additional staff development. She had three or four substitutes come in over a four day period and brought in an intermediate unit (IU) specialist, who was doing the Project

¹⁹ According to <http://projectread.com/>, Project Read is a research-based language arts program that meets the National Reading Panel's five essential components of effective reading instruction. Project Read's five curriculum strands include (1) Phonology, (2) Linguistics, (3) Reading Comprehension – Report Form, (4) Reading Comprehension in Story Form and Literature Connection, and (5) Written Expression. The strands are integrated at all grade levels, but specific strands are emphasized at certain grade levels. Project Read provides curricula with lessons built on direct concept teaching, multisensory processing, systematic instruction, and higher level thinking skills.

Read training. On the morning of the first day of the continued staff development, she had all of the first grade teachers, first grade learning support teachers and reading support teachers do a three-hour follow-up to the initial Project Read training. This provided teachers with the opportunity to get questions answered, discuss what they loved and what they hated, and then work through frustrations in a risk-free environment, which allowed the Project Read work to keep going. The substitutes that are in the first grade classes in the morning would rotate to the second grade classes in the afternoon so Allison could work with the second grade teachers. During the second day, she worked with the third and fourth grade teachers and during the third day, she worked with the fifth and sixth grade teachers. After the four day period, Allison has worked through the entire staff and provided them with real intensive support. If teachers are having specific problems with a specific type of lesson, the IU trainer would come back to the school to model or co-teach a lesson for the teacher. After two and a half months, the four-day staff development process was done again.

Over the two and a half year period they provided teachers with that model of instructional support. After they had established the phonology, they built in the K-6 comprehension block then the K-6 writing piece, and finally the linguistics piece which is the upper elementary into high school follow-up to the phonology. As an instructional leader, Allison found that this intensive practice over a two-and-a-half-year period, allowed her to change instructional practices and the mind-set of teachers. As a result of their efforts, the school has had a nice steady line of improvement in all of their test scores. This is really fulfilling for all of the teachers, who are able to see that all of their hard work is making a huge difference for the children.

Her role as an instructional leader has changed over the last several years in realizing that she needs to focus on little pieces at a time. This involves focusing on the most important, intense needs in the building and the providing the ongoing support. Allison knows that she cannot provide teachers with a

workshop in August and then follow-up with the workshop in June and ask “how do you think it went?” She knows that she needs to provide ongoing support. If she does not provide the ongoing support, the effort will fall apart and people will become frustrated closing their doors saying “I am not going to do that again.” Over the last several years, Allison has realized that as an instructional leader she needs to keep the conversation going.

Her role as instructional leader has been affected by mandates from Pennsylvania System of School Assessment²⁰ (PSSA) and literature available from the state. The accountability and mandates from PSSA is always on their mind. When she looks at the building’s PSSA scores, she likes to look at them over time. Allison does this because sometimes PSSA has negative connotations. However, she thinks that it has helped them to realize that they need to raise the bar. It has also helped them to realize that children in one building are not smarter than children in another building rather they need to improve their instructional practices to help children meet their potential. As a result, Allison believes that PSSA has helped them to improve their instructional practices. The in-depth changes that they have made in their instructional practices have been inspired by the most recent things coming out of the state. This literature includes information on literacy and governor institutes.

Allison has always been interested in helping teachers develop and grow; she does not think particular things have led her to become more involved in instruction. This interest has been influenced by her continued reading of research on literacy practices and school improvement. She thinks that it is

²⁰ According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site, “the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards based criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student’s attainment of the academic standards while also determining the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 is assessed in reading and math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 5, 8 and 11 is assessed in writing.” Information from http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/site/default.asp

really important to hear about the success schools out there and the strategies that they use over time to improve the quality of instruction and student achievement. This is important to Allison because they are examples of what she is trying to implement at the school. She knows that these efforts take time. Allison has been conscientious to tell the staff that they are not doing something wrong but, rather, that things are being put together in the wrong way and things just need to get aligned. She helps teachers to grow but giving the positive feedback all the time and taking time to celebrate success.

A special education class and additional responsibilities have caused an absence of time and impacted her role as an instructional leader. The learning support class was very time consuming and has caused less time to be available to the staff. In spring of 2005, Allison did a superintendency internship with her superintendent, who is in his second year in the position. As a result, the superintendent calls on her to do a lot of different things causing time to be taken away from the building. She is also involved in several committees and has started to help with Home Education across the district so she gets called to different meetings.

Allison's definition of time was determined by a comment at a recent conference. While everyone says that there is not enough time, time is the same every day and time never changes. However, what matters to Allison is how that time is used and being conscientious of making the best use of the time that is available. Allison is really conscientious of doing that.

Her advice for new principals related to time and their role as an instructional leader is to find a good mentor within the system that they are working. The mentor can help them to learn expectations of the job, parents, and community, which help them to manage their time and not get blind sided all of the time. Allison believes that it is easier for a new principal to work in system that they are already familiar with. If they know the system already, the job of principal is less challenging. However, if a principal is new to a district, school, and the job, it can be overwhelming.

Danielle Finney

Danielle Finney is a 55-year-old married woman with two children, who are 12 and 19. Education has been Danielle's focus for her entire life. When she grew-up playing school and was the teacher. She also enjoyed and was good at educational pursuits. It allowed her to be positive, charged, and provided a life's breath. Danielle earned a Bachelor of Elementary Education. Later, she went back to school, earning two Master's degrees and multiple certifications. Danielle has a Master of Science in Elementary Education and a Master of Science in Educational Leadership. She just needs to write her dissertation in order to get a doctoral degree in administration.

She began teaching as an elementary school second grade teacher. However, she has taught everything from kindergarten through graduate school. From the elementary classroom, she moved into the position of K-8 Gifted Coordinator. After a suitable amount of time with gifted education, she wanted to go back to the classroom. She went back to the classroom for a year or so and then went into administration. Danielle has worked as a teacher for 28 and a half years working in elementary education, gifted education, and in higher education. Including the principalship, she has worked in education for 35 years.

Danielle spent much of her life working with the second grade population and loved it. As a principal, she now fights for developmentally appropriate practices to be honored in the second grade. She is not necessarily fighting with her teachers but with the administrative hierarchy. Danielle is the only administrator in the district who has taught primary and elementary school from the beginning of their career. Administrators often have the authority to make decisions about things that they do not know about. She gets frustrated when decisions are made regarding instructing children out of the confines of how they learn because more is not necessarily better. She thinks that this is why some of her staff has embraced her. Danielle understands the number of repetitions it takes for a child to understand

what a “ba” is. However, other principals take for granted that children can read or do the times tables. They do not understand that research says that it takes at least 32 repetitions for an average concept to be learned. A teacher needs time to provide the repetitions and children need time to move. Danielle feels that many do not understand that movement or noise within a class is not necessarily a bad thing.

Danielle has been a principal for seven years. In her previous principal assignment, she was responsible for one school building. She has been in her current principal assignment for three years and is responsible for two elementary buildings with extremely different cultures. Each building requires different roles and strengths from Danielle. When Danielle came to school A, there are approximately 340 students, 17 teachers but nearly 50 individuals to supervise. School B has approximately 210 students, but has lost several students along the way, and now has approximately 180 students. School B has 10 classrooms and a staff of 30. School A has a much younger faculty, which is more progressive in nature, and predominantly nouveau rich culture. School B has a very close-knit community with very old and established rules, which are written and unwritten. School A is the largest school of four elementary schools in the district. The other two elementary schools, run by another principal, have populations of approximately 170 and 190 students. As a result, school B is a similar size to her compadres’, and school A, with 340 students, is almost the size of her compadres’ two schools. So, it is almost as if she has three schools as opposed to her compadres two schools. Table 7 summarizes this information allowing for easy comparison of the differences between the two schools.

Table 7: Differences in School Cultures

	School A	School B
Students	340	180
Staff	50	30
	Younger faculty	Older faculty
Culture	Progressive culture Predominantly nouveau	Close-knit community Very old and established rules

Danielle spent her first year in the position learning the culture. This was important to her because she thinks that you learn how to be a better leader by letting the culture speak to and teach the individual how things have been run in the past. Knowing where the school has been can help the leader improve, guide, and direct the school culture. She thinks one of the reasons that she has been well-received by everyone is that she taught for 28 and a half years. The teachers know that she walked the walk and Danielle knows that she was a good teacher before entering the principalship. Danielle likes to tell her teachers that she is not a principal but a teacher three doors down from them. Danielle also thinks that she was very well received when she came into her current position because her predecessor was not meeting the demands of the two buildings. Her predecessor chose to delegate but it never came back full cycle. Projects were started but they did not necessarily have beginning, middle, and end. Since Danielle was in a classroom for many years, she wants projects to have a beginning, middle, and end. She wants her staff to know that they going to get a goal, feel the successes of the project, and not spin their wheels working on the project. Danielle started making changes with the help of the staff set-up a participatory management system and a hierarchy of how things are done. The hierarchy includes department chairs and grade level chairs to provide niches of power.

It is very difficult for Danielle to find time for everything that her job requires but she loves her staff. She feels very blessed to work in a very positive environment, which is a lot more positive than the

environment that she came from. Previously she worked in a rural school, with 460 students, very little technology, and a staff that was happy to remain a pencil and paper school. The school was lucky if they had word processors. When Danielle came to her current suburban district, she entered a paperless environment which involves e-mail, cell phones, Palm Pilots, and online minimeetings. As result, she had a bit of a technology culture shock in her first year.

To help manage the schedules at both schools, she uses calendars to share upcoming events. Danielle does an overall annual calendar with both of her Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA). The calendar is planned in the middle of June for the next entire school year. This allows the two schools to share days so that they can share Danielle. By putting everything in the mix on the calendars so they get equal time, equal respect, and Danielle's undivided attention. The day prior, Danielle issued a tentative calendar for the next 30 days. It shared the meetings that are occurring during the month and the location. However, she never knows when there is going to be an individual education plan (IEP) or Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE) meeting. As a result, she will send an update/revision of the calendar to the staff in the building every week. She also meets with all of the organizations that support their team once a month. Danielle meets with the entire staff once a month and meets with them individually as a group or grade level once a month. A recent example of such a meeting was with the third grade staff about their curriculum for a mega day project called "Pittsburgh Days." The planning ahead and monthly meetings allows everyone to be on the same page.

Danielle has in-person, whole staff meetings, to allow the staff to come together once a month as a large group and keep a sense of community. Another principal in the district schedules meetings from four until 6 p.m.. Danielle does not want to overwhelm her staff with an hour-long meetings once a week. She believes that she needs to be fair to her staff because they put in an 8-hour-and-15-minute workday and then take papers home with them. When she does have a staff meeting, everyone initials their

attendance, which signifies who has and has not attended the meeting. The name of anyone, who did not attend the meeting, is highlighted and they are given a packet of information detailing any information they missed at the meeting. Before they officially start staff meetings, they do thank-yous, congratulations, and accolades. Danielle thinks this is important because teachers are isolated in their own classrooms and need to come together to celebrate their successes. She then follows the agenda of items to be updated or discussed to allow input to be given. Sometimes she follows-up about problems that have occurred. A recent problem is people calling out sick on the day that they have duty coverage. This is not fair to the Good Samaritan, who covers their duty, and feels that they are getting nailed. While they do not associate names with the discussion, they do bring the topic out into the open to be discussed.

Danielle finds that a sense of humor helps to manage all of the time commitments. She laughs that a "big black book" determines how her life is reckoned. Sometimes events are in her black book but she is unable to go to them because she has something else that needs to be done. When she worked as a gifted coordinator, she was told that she had a tolerance for ambiguity. However, she has learned that as principal, you need to prioritize items initially but then reprioritize even the best laid plans on a beautiful calendar.

She shared several examples of reprioritizing plans based on unplanned situations. While Danielle has been at one school, a child at the other school has had an epileptic seizure or threatened to kill themselves. However, there is no one at the other building, who can help with the situation. As a result, she needs to be at the school literally in two minutes. She has also had parents who show up with ankle bracelets letting Danielle know that they are a committed felon out of parole and are at the school to get their child. One of the schools has a Santa Store each year at Christmas, which is staffed by parents. In order for the parents to volunteer, they need to have Act 34 and 151 clearances. One of the clearances for one parent was rejected the day prior. As a result, Danielle had to leave one school to go to the other

school and share the news with the parent. Time was of the essence because she could not let an individual without child abuse clearance into the school but promised to research the cause of the rejection. As a result, Danielle plans the best she can but knows there are situations that she cannot plan for and she is lucky that the schools are only a few miles apart.

Her school and time has been affected by budget cuts. She had more personnel cuts in her two buildings last spring than there were in any other building in the district. As a result the (IST) position and library support was lost. Since library support was lost, her libraries are only open two to three days a week. She was able to keep her school counselor. She also lost federal funding for the Title I program in one of her buildings, which was the building with the biggest need. As a result, she also lost two Title I specialists. The Title I and IST teachers were key individuals in doing student observations and now the task has come back to Danielle. Her second or third grade teaching staffs have helped Danielle out by taking on some of these responsibilities by doing in-class observations of a specific child. The school has also had to close some of their programs because they could only be run with volunteers and the district collective bargaining agreements prohibit volunteers coming in.

As a result of the budget cuts, the school does lots of fundraising. As principal, Danielle has done \$28,000 worth of fund raising in the past two and a half months. The school raises all monies for fieldtrips, programs, and speakers. They also fund community outreach program, which provides children with additional teaching. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is a marvelous organization that has done unbelievable things. School A did a Jog-A-Thon under the umbrella of the PTA and raised \$16,000, which will be used to support student programs. The PTA is paying for all of the field trip busing and admissions. This ensures that no child is denied access to a peak experience. A variety of community organizations and businesses have come to the schools and said "we know you are doing these projects and we would like to bequeath something to the school." Such an example was a

community member, who offered to donate VCRs and/or DVDs for rooms instead of flower bereavements to honor a lost life. At Christmas time, parents are asked to pledge to give books to the school and classroom libraries. Danielle is an eternal optimist who believes that if they keep putting themselves out there, people will recognize what is being done and be supportive

Strategies that Danielle uses to manage her time include: division of labor, calendar, and communication via technology. As previously mentioned Danielle delegates tasks to her staff at both schools to help get things done. She makes sure that staff can see a beginning, middle, and end of the task. Calendars for events at each schools shared with the entire school community and calendar with upcoming meetings shared with the school staff. Danielle also delegates tasks to individuals. Danielle uses the technology of the Palm Pilot, cell phones, and online minimeetings to communicate with people. She has a communication network through e-mail and can get people messages in a heartbeat and they in turn back to her. There is never a situation where she does not return a telephone call, fax, or e-mail question within a day. Whether she responds from home or the office, she always responds within eight hours of the next calendar day. She prides herself on being able to answer questions if the individual is in dire need of an answer in order to be productive. Danielle thinks that it is important that she is in tune with people's needs to communicate and get an answer from communication.

Another strategy that Danielle uses to manage her time is using her Palm Pilot to do teacher observations. For each standard that teachers must assume as part of their responsibilities, she has generated a generic paragraph for outstanding, good, average, and in need of help. She selects the description that fits the standard and then goes back and enters specific information from the class that she observed and makes a statement relative to the individual. Individual observations are normally three to six pages long regarding what they are doing. Danielle thinks that the length is important because it is not just an evaluation or a reflection of their performance but, rather, a professional growth

opportunity. This perspective of moving from point A to point B rather than observation as critique was something that she had to work hard to establish with teachers. Danielle is extremely reflective and shared that she is rubbing off on her cohorts. The teachers now understand that the reason for the questions is to determine where they are wishing to go. Her use of technology has allowed observations to no longer just be DEBE 333 forms but, rather, allowed teachers to take ownership of the observation. Danielle believes that the observations allow teachers to first validate what they are already doing and then extend it to what they are striving to do.

Since Danielle has offices in two different locations and needs to have data from both buildings at her buildings, she has created a portable office as a strategy to save time and have things with her at all times. The portable office includes pay periods, class schedules, and numbers of kids in each class. She has created walk through forms that are very specific to the content that she is trying to encourage. She had done walk through forms for math, reading, and room set-up. At the beginning of the year, she will do a walk through to make sure certain things that help a good classroom hit the ground running from day one. Examples include: a small group activity area, a large group activity area, and schedules on the wall. Danielle will check off anything that is positive and leave anything that is not positive blank. She wants the teachers to ask about why it is blank and does not want to write anything negative on the walk through form. She also does not ever say anything negative to her teachers about the walk through form. Her teachers will come to her to seek information and say “you did not say anything about this or this.” Danielle will ask them where it was in their lesson. She believes this is a way of modeling reflectivity. Danielle will give teachers 30 days to make changes and then check in. She might say, “I came back to look at x, y, or z again” or she might give them a head up that she will be stopping up. She believes that if she keeps stopping up, it will end up showing up.

A strategy that Danielle uses to help manage her teacher's time is to provide them with e-mail miniupdates or announcements for the week rather than having a staff meeting. She uses e-mail return receipt to ensure that they received the information. Teachers are asked to respond if they have any questions. Normally, teachers just read the e-mail and send back an "A-OK" to acknowledge that they received it. Danielle does this because she knows that her staff is busy and wants to let them know items that are coming down the pike. She also does e-mail updates because her staff does not have a planning period. Their only time away from the children during the entire week is their half an hour of duty free lunch and if they have a special (music, art, or gym). However, if the district does not call a sub for the special, they do not have that break. As a result, Danielle feels that it is important that she is respectful of every minute of their time.

The most important use of Danielle's time is doing something to positively affect the lives of kids. She also has a tremendous staff that does a variety of things for the kids to let the natural juices flow. As principal, Danielle feels that it is important that she guides the school so kids are give every option they can have to be successful. She also wants to give teachers all of the tools and support that they need. While Danielle procures what they need to know, teachers are in the classroom by themselves. Her job is to funnel to teachers what they need to be successful. They espouse to create well-educated children, who have a chance, and doing well on the state exams is gravy.

The least important use of Danielle's time is the nuisance complaints with which she gets extremely frustrated. This frustration is explained by the old adage "10% takes 90% of your time." While she does not mean to trivialize the complaints, she often gets complaints about things that are not her job. She shared a recent example of such complaints. Danielle had lots of people beating her door picketing, protesting, screaming, and carrying on about bus 55 not getting to stop eight until 4:25 p.m. She has no control over busing for the district because bus transportation and the central office determine the

number of buses and how many stops each bus makes. Such situations, which are out of Danielle's control, takes up a ton of time that could be used for more tasks. Danielle would much rather be using her time to deal with kids or the curriculum. Another example of a parent complaint was a parent who came in and said that the bus driver smacked their child in the face. As a result of the cameras on the bus, the claim proved to be unfounded. Danielle was frustrated that there was no apology to the bus driver. While Danielle knows that these complaints are a sign of the time, they are very frustrating.

She is also frustrated by complaints taken to the nth degree about something that they feel is a legitimate or legal problem. These complaints involve people wanting their day in court, wishing to sue over something, or wanting monetary compensations over an injustice. A recent example of such a situation was an eight-year-old girl who went out of the bus and motioned over her head accidentally "snipped" the hat of a seven-year-old boy. The incident was videotaped on the bus. The father of the boy came into the school alleging assault and battery. Danielle then showed the parent the videotape and shared that it was not assault. The father said that his son was grimacing in pain and it was an assault. The father went from Danielle's office to the central office to the magistrate's office to the district attorney's office. As a result, Danielle had to attend meeting after meetings, which took at least 40 hours of her time. Danielle can think of much better things that she could have done with the same amount of time.

Time for Danielle is being controlled or influenced top down from the federal to the state to the local governments issuing mandates with no financial backing. It can be overwhelming to find time to assemble databases to deal with No Child Left Behind (NCLB). She wonders how does find time to do this when they suffer from a lack of time? Danielle cognizant of having lost time in her personal life from giving time to others and is probably more respectful of her staff's time. Danielle wants to make sure that her teachers have a quality of life besides school that is being fulfilled.

The local government supporting Danielle's district has no infrastructure for building and thus influences Danielle's time. Their tax base is the highest in their county; however, the tax payers are predominantly retired. Since the tax payers are being oppressed with higher taxes, they want more services. As a result, Danielle will lose at least 12 members of her staff next year and class sizes will go from 18 to 27 students. The special education learning support classes will double in size as class sizes get larger and children do not perform causing parents to want increased services. She knows that the bus runs will get longer and she will have more complaints. As a result of the trickle down, Danielle's people are stressed to the max and are getting tired from everything they are doing.

As a result, of external forces placed on Danielle's school, she is spending her time being a cheerleader supporting her staff. She sees herself as a catalyst, who keeps people up and going. Danielle uses the book [If You Don't Feed the Teachers They Eat the Students!](#)²¹ as her Bible to look up positive ways to reinforce her staff. She uses these reinforcement strategies to keep her staff going and share positive ways to rethink challenging situations. Danielle shared the importance of being positive until her last day on earth because it is the only way that she knows how to be. She feels that God put her here to help people. Previously she worked in a rural impoverished district and then came to her current "rich" suburban district. When her staff gets maxed out to the *n*th degree, she will admit that they have more on their plate but remind them of a different slant and they will admit that they cannot complain. They use a 95/5 rule. 95% of the time, they do what they can to get things done, and the other 5% of the time, they are

²¹ [If You Don't Feed the Teacher They Eat the Students!: A Guide to Success for Administrators and Teachers](#) was edited by Neila E. Connors and Jennifer J. Streams was published by Incentive Publications in February 2000. The book discusses the editors' experiences in education and then offers inspiration for administrators on improving the school climate. There is also a video version of the book. <http://www.incentivepublications.com/details.asp?ip=457-2>.

allowed to vent. However, when they are done venting, they need to determine how they can work together to make things right.

She asks teachers to invite her to celebrations of learning. As a result, she is often invited to be a reader or observer in a play. Every grade level does a community outreach program and they involve Danielle in the outreach. In the upcoming week, Danielle will be locked up for muscular dystrophy. She is being locked up because she is a kind soul with the crime of smiling too much. The kids have to raise bail money for muscular dystrophy to get her out. The first day, they are allowed to wear hats for a penny. The second day, they are allowed to wear their pajamas for a nickel. The third day, they are allowed to wear any kind of sports gear for a dime. The fourth day, they wear mismatched clothes for a quarter. Parents are then invited to send in a donation check. This is one example of things done to encourage fund raising. The school also has programs to celebrate reading. The kids spend the year reading themselves to the movies. Danielle then buys the kids a full-length movie and popcorn and they are invited to bring blankets and pillows. Danielle believes that it is important to get everyone involved in the celebration of learning.

Danielle's school uses Everyday Math where the kids have hands-on math up to their ears and are doing really well. The school is in their third year of using Everyday Math. Danielle's personal philosophical bent is that with any adoption it takes three years to proceed through the adoption. The first year is just survival. The second year involves monitoring and adjusting like a mad hunter. By the third year, teachers are comfortable to make changes. Since they are in their third year, teachers are making changes to suit their individual style of teaching and learning in order to get everybody where they need to be. As a result, during the last three years, acclimation to the Everyday Math program has taken a lot of her time.

The school also got a brand new reading series, Harcourt Brace Trophies, that they labored long and hard to determine which one to get. It is a language based series, which has age appropriate materials and a developmentally appropriate connection. They did a complete analysis, using statistics from Oregon reading research, and came to consensus on the top two reading programs. They piloted each program, at each grade level, until they got the data to support the right program which was then adopted. Currently, they are in their first year of using the reading series. They are not doing assessments on the reading program because students are assessed to death; rather, they are prioritizing what are the most important items of concern. However, they have picked pivotal assessments that teachers are going to do along the way to generate data to see what they need more or less of.

She considers herself a statistics crazy woman. Her school does a great deal of analysis regarding how they are doing, why they are doing it, and where they are going. Danielle physically checks their lesson plans each week so she knows where they are. She feels that she cannot help teachers to affect changes if she does not know where everybody is. If teachers are comfortable with technology, they are welcome to e-mail her their plans so she can react and send back feedback. Other teachers prefer to give her their red plan book for feedback. Additionally, since Danielle cannot be in every room to tell teachers where they need to be, she gives them a pacing chart. Each grade level has a pacing chart explaining what lesson they need to be on at a certain time of the year to hit all of the standards and give their kids a fighting chance on the state exams. Danielle keeps a record of where their anticipated progress should be and where their actual progress is. This is not to say that teachers need to be on track for a particular day because there are fluctuations but, rather, to determine when the pacing is or is not on track. Each of the classes is different and they need to talk about which of the classes has learning support students. After students have quarterly exams, Danielle personally does an item analysis on every test given in everyone of her classrooms to see what standards are being addressed and with what standards they are having

problems. Danielle has a little bit of data regarding their success. They had 100% proficiency or advancement on the third grade Pennsylvania State Student Assessment (PSSA) and nobody was below that level. They did not receive this success because they have super, genius kids but, rather, because the school has given them the opportunity to make the most of their learning. As educators, Danielle feels that this is what they have been asked to do.

Each Christmas season the school is visited by Reginald the Elf, who marks the days before Christmas. Reginald looks in on the children to see if they were good or bad. The children know that Reginald has been there because he leaves a trail of glitter where he has been. The school board wanted to bar the use of glitter in the building because it was unsanitary and dangerous to the health of children. Danielle did not understand this concern because the glitter was not in any students' desk. The goal of the glitter was to approach the Christmas season in a manner that was childlike, innocent, and motivational to children. Danielle believes that schools cannot simply look at standards all the time and lose track of Santa or Reginald. She feels that some people do not understand or appreciate that children have to go through learning stages. Danielle feels that it is important for kids to remain kids even if every standard is not covered 100% and feels that her school is doing a pretty good job trying to get some of the other stuff into the mix.

Instructional leadership, for Danielle, is a multifaceted model of what is expected of people and the positive manner for dealing with and teaching children, staff, and parents. Instructional leadership is not top down rather it means being a teacher of everybody in the community so they can be brought together. Examples of Danielle's instructional leadership involved, writing grants for the environment and ecology section of the science curriculum. She tried to get input from each grade level so everyone had a voice in it. Danielle has written other grants and done fundraising to get teachers the materials that they need. When the school does their analysis for math, they brought parents in and did a series of

workshops to teach them about math, reading, and Title I. Danielle also shares articles with the community to present research and results in a nonjudgmental way. As an instructional leader, she also believes in giving her staff the wherewithal to be who they are in individual style, demeanor, speed, and then bring them along.

Danielle feels that they are in this together and everything they do impacts instruction. As a result, it is not about just being well-prepared but the instructional leader thinking enough to read and react to teacher lesson plans. In order to do this, instructional leaders need to create easier templates to make lesson plans. This was done for the math curriculum in Danielle's school. There are templates that have things written out so teachers do not have to write over and over again rather than they can abbreviate. For example, if there are eight parts to a lesson, they are written on the plan and the teacher only has to specify what they have to do within each part, they have been saved a ton of work.

As an instructional leader, last year, Danielle gave her staff a pacing chart as a guideline that they could use to monitor progress. When she gave it to them, they were hitting the areas as well as they could, however, Danielle wanted make sure that their time was being used on task. The teachers are stressed out to the n^{th} degree about the pacing chart. However, Danielle wanted the pacing charts to be an internalized, intrinsic, positive process for teachers. Teachers would come to her and say "I am two days behind, am I all right." She shared with them that of course they are all right. Every four and a half weeks when the teachers turn in their lesson plans, Danielle quietly keeps track of their progress. She believes that her efforts are working.

Her role as an instructional leader changed in the last several years when she moved from her old school to her current school. She thinks that she has had a much more positive impact in her current school but did more in her previous situation. In her initial service as an administrator, she was promoted from within the district. She was held in very high regard by the community in her role as lead teacher.

Within her old district, she did some really impressive things that were not necessarily well-received. These things included a grant for a third to a half million dollars for the neighborhood. The teachers in the rural district did not embrace technology or want to move forward. She did a lot of self-serving to see if she was doing anything arrogant. Danielle wondered why she was not being effective, if she did not have any more to give, perhaps she should retire. She realized that it was not the time or place for these events in that particular rural district. Danielle decided to give the principalship another try in another venue to see if she could be more effective. When Danielle came to her current school, there was a better personality and style match because the staff was hungry for someone to move them forward. She feels that she has been more effective because of the audience. When she was able to get computers and other things for her staff, she was pleased when they took it and ran with it. Danielle believes that changing schools allowed her instructional leadership to go from a 60 to maybe an 85.

The PSSAs and Cyber School are affecting Danielle's role as an instructional leader. High stakes testing is making it very difficult to provide learning support children with all they need in an environment of dwindling funds. At school A, Danielle has one full-time learning support teacher and one teacher for two hours a day. As a result, there is no way that she can give the students all that they need because the numbers are rigged: huge numbers of students and a dwindling staff. Danielle wonders how they can do it and how can do it better. She knows that it requires reexamining at different ways to address their problems. They are also being financially affected by the Cyber School. The Cyber School is taking away huge amounts of resources from the district. The district pays \$13,000 a year for each Cyber School child to get individual use of a computer. As a result of the Cyber School, Danielle cannot spend the same amount of money on the children, who remain within the building and do not attend Cyber School, which is causing an inequity for these children.

The availability or absence of time is impacting Danielle's role as an instructional leader because they are not necessarily in the timetable that they want. Her superiors would like to have a new adaptation of a different subject each year. However, they do not realize that there is a cycle of time needed for implementation. She feels that enough time needs to be put in to ensure the success of one program before moving onto another program. As a result, she did not want to start a new reading program until the math program was in its third year, the independent year, of implementation. This is important because Danielle needs to do the analysis to help people through the implementation.

For the new reading series, she stayed out of the mix in deciding what program to use. The teachers chose the program that was very good and Danielle would have chosen. She was very knowledgeable about the company and the product that they choose. As an old teacher, colleague, and building principal, Danielle goes in and does miniworkshops on the areas that the teachers did not understand. Her classroom experience, knowledge of the project, and wherewithal allowed her to provide the appropriate training that her staff finds very comfortable.

As an instructional leader, she gets frustrated with the central office in her current district because there is time to do things over but never time to do it right. The central office teases her about being the queen of her schools. However, as the instructional leader, she believes that it is important to look at how to spend time so it is more effective. By doing things effectively up front, there is less replication to do things over and over again. Danielle wants to give her great staff the opportunity to put together a cohesive curriculum. This can be done with thematic units or working with reading units to be inclusive of all subjects. In kindergarten, first, and second grades focus is predominately on reading and math with the other subjects as peripherals. However, if the other subjects can be put into the reading mix, instruction will be more effective. Danielle's superiors in her current district are facing an acclimation period because they have never had someone as vocal, as she is, about putting the curriculum

together and making it hands-on. She does not see herself as dominating rather as guiding, directing, and giving input, into where they are going so things are not done over and over again. As an instructional leader, Danielle wants to do things once and right the first time.

As an instructional leader, Danielle feels that she needs to teach her staff to work smarter, not harder. The assistant superintendent in her district wanted the school to start the new reading program in August and be ready to pilot a new science series in February. Danielle did not feel this was the proper time warp for teachers. Since Danielle respects teachers, she knew that starting a new reading series is like their first year of teaching all over again because everything needs to be changed. As a result, she suggested building a science component into the reading series according to the standards. Danielle felt that this was possible because 60% of the new reading stories in the series have an ecology or science base. She suggested looking at how much of the science standards could be addressed with an extension activity that goes with the reading series. Danielle also thought that the science standards could be addressed using a Foss or STC kit. She wondered about the point of doing all new work for a science series when the reading series is right for K-2. Danielle believes that by creating a cross-curricular unit between reading and science would be a better use of time so the children's time was not fragmented and could be more hands-on.

Time, for Danielle, is something to be valued more than anything. Time is a resource that is not written about in a book. Her definition of time was deeply affected by less-than-positive life circumstance when she lost a child in her 20s. Danielle does not want to be wasteful or negative with time because her sorrow has taught her that you do not get a second chance for anything. She believes that no life is positive or well-spent if it is not done in a manner and for whom it is supposed to be done for. Danielle does not have time for gossip or negativity that can impact lives and believes that time should be used to write off the negatives and save the positives. Her husband taught her an Indian adage that says "if you

do one good thing for others, it will come back to you fivefold in positives.” As a result, she wants to make sure that she values time when being paid to help other people and value the people who work for her. When teachers leave the school, they need to be a mom or dad, a son or a daughter, to those with whom they interact. Danielle wants to use her time to be caring, considerate, kind, loving, positive, and add consistency to the lives of the individuals at the school.

Danielle’s advice for new principals is to get more experience as a teacher. Danielle sees many individuals who enter the principalship lacking the knowledge base that only experience as a teacher can provide. She worries that many principals come into the position for the wrong reasons. Danielle waited a very long time to leave the role of teacher because she loved the classroom more than being a principal. She feels that principal preparation programs are not the 54 credits they used to be rather today one can become a principal in an extremely short amount of time attending classes one night a week. Danielle explained that her principal internship was a year long, where principal internships are now only 200 hours long and are the completed. She cannot imagine how someone can learn the nuances of the job in such a short period of time. While these new principals are intellectually prepared and great with technology, they have not seen or done enough. Danielle realized that what principals have learned needs to be shared with the next generation to give back to those who lack experience.

Geri Bose

Dr. Geri Bose is a 61-year-old Caucasian woman, who is married with three children in their 30s. Geri did her undergraduate education in kindergarten and elementary education and became a teacher. She chose to become a teacher because during that era that was your only option. Geri was also drawn to education because she came from a family of educators - both her aunt and sister were teachers. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary and Kindergarten Education and also earned a Masters of Arts in Exceptional Students Education. Geri taught full-time and did substitute teaching while she was raising a family and traveling around the country because of her husband's job.

When she moved to the University town where she currently lives, she did not expect to be hired back into education. As a result, she went back to school to retool for a career in social services. In the process of writing her dissertation, she received a telephone call about a sixth grade contracted teaching position in the district. She took the position and learned how to be a teacher again. Her dissertation was put on the back burner for one year so she could become acclimated to the position. In her first year of teaching in the district, she had 36 kids in her class and 13 of them were non-English speaking. Geri has learned a lot about teaching children with special needs and those who were non-English speaking. She had to learn to accept that the absolute opposite of what you would expect and care about the person. Geri had to let go of her own ego, not defend it, and admit that she had no idea how to do what she was asked to do. Her character encouraged her to want someone to teach her. She knew she would learn with them. The following year she continued to teach but finished the dissertation, which she defended in 1992 and earned her Ph.D. in Community Systems Planning and Development. Geri continued to teach after earning her Ph.D.

Her husband said to her that if she knew she was going to go back into education, she could have taken some courses towards her administrative certificate because she had to take so many research

courses for her Ph.D. Her husband wanted her to have options if her back was against the wall and the principalship was the only job she could get. His thoughts made sense and she thought that she might as well try it. When she looked into administrative certification, she realized that she only needed five courses. Geri started taking one course a semester and earned her certification. However, she never intended to become a principal.

She did her principal internship at her new school and the principal retired. Geri did not want the job and the district brought in a new principal. The principal stayed only for a half of a year and left. The district came to Geri and asked if she would finish the year as a half-time teacher and half-time principal. She really enjoyed being principal and at the end of the year when the job was advertised, she competed for it and was offered the position of half-time principal. For the next year, she worked as a half-time principal and a half-time sixth grader teacher. The district then built a middle school. Geri had to make the decision whether to go back to teaching or stay in the principalship, she decided to stay in the principalship. She spent the next two years as a half-time instructional support teacher and half-time principal. When the principal left another school in the district, she got both elementary buildings and became a full-time principal. The district then built a new elementary building and moved both faculties to the new building. It is her fourth year in the new building. In total, she was a teacher for seven years and has been a principal for 11 years.

Geri works in a very well-endowed district that has numerous physical resources and outstanding people from the top down. Geri views the superintendent of the district as an incredible person. As a middle manager, she feels blessed to have a boss who would drop whatever she was doing if Geri went to see her. As a principal, Geri feels that she emulates her superintendent. This is why she does not feel quite so guilty about what she does because she knows her superintendent would drop everything to help any of them. As a result, Geri knows that she works in a unique setting because of her

superintendent, good gene pool of the children, and low poverty. She knows that her thoughts are very different from a principal without the resources she has access too. However, sometimes it is a challenge to find the time to figure out how to manage all of the resources.

She loves her job as principal and feels that it has been a great job for her. She loves making a difference and knows that she has made a difference. Geri knows that she will be missed when she leaves. She knows who ever takes over her position will do it well but it might not be the same things that she did well. The first thing she does in the morning is walk through the building propping open and unlocking doors so people do not have to struggle. She then checks on the things that she needs to touch base with different people about. The phone will begin ringing off the wall and since Geri is the only one in the school, she will pick it up and take messages. She will leave notes for the attendance officer about which children will be out. Her secretary then comes in and they are both busy. Many mornings someone has called in sick so Geri and her secretary are on the phone looking for paraprofessionals to replace the ones who will be absent. Geri then plays a key role in the quick process of getting the kids in the building. Nine busses drop off the kids quickly and Geri and her staff get them upstairs. She spends the first 45–50 minutes in these kinds of duties before the morning begins.

Geri then checks her book to see what is already on her schedule. On the day of the conversation, she had two individual education plan (IEP) meetings, a quick discussion with the school psychologist, and an afternoon principal meeting from noon until 4:30 p.m. The day prior she did not have much on her calendar and did not have a lot of interruptions so she was able to get lots of evaluation paperwork done. She hates doing the paperwork but it has to get done. She sat at her desk and forced herself to work on the nasty tasks that she was determined would get done. Geri was in and out of the office a few times to deal with a couple of children, who need guidance and encouragement, and to follow-up on a couple of lunchroom incidents.

Out of the 370 students in the school, there are one hundred and seven children for whom English is not their native language. The English as a Second Language (ESL) are at various levels and not all brand new speakers. Students do not learn the English language in one year rather it takes the entire elementary career. The school has a wonderful ESL teacher. The classroom teachers have to assimilate these children into their classroom.

Her school has three special education classes. They have a multihandicapped class, two learning support classrooms, and a support teacher for autistic children. The emotional support children are mainstreamed. The building has five therapeutic staff assistants (TSSs) that come out of the agencies to support children, who have severe behavior problems. Due to the large number of special education children needing different meetings, there is the constant need to bring multiple groups of people together to coordinate their schedules and set-up meetings. She is one of three people that has to attend all individual education plan (IEP) and evaluation report (ER) meetings for students with in special education. Geri also has to attend all instructional support team meetings related to all children, who are not identified in special education, but are at the prereferral stage. The team is watching and gathering data about these students to rule out problem and make sure they are being taught in the best way so there is not a variable contributing to their failures. For a several month period, these meetings presented the greatest demand on her time, taking up about 60% of her time.

They are busy with special education from September until December. While maintenance is ongoing and they do a little bit more identification, they then have a lull and things settle out a bit. Since the school year began, they had new students come in every week and have totaled 25 new children. Five of the students are from the hurricane in the Gulf States. The school has done extra things to help them make the transition to the new environment. Since Geri works in a University town, in January, they have

a huge turnover of children and a whole new batch of students will come in. As a result, the school is constantly in a flow and flux.

In February and March, the Pennsylvania State Student Assessment (PSSA) testing will begin. The school faces challenges because the youngsters with learning difficulties and non-English speakers need accommodations. As the leader, Geri has to have good scores. She needs to make sure that student accommodations occur and are done consistently so the test is not invalid. Geri will gather helpers to meet in two rooms in the office and supervise the special needs children as they go through the PSSA tests. These accommodations will be harder this year because the PSSAs are now taken in third, fourth, and fifth grades. Within their total population 25 kids between grades three and five will need accommodations. In April things level out, they enjoy watching how much they have grown. As a principal, in April and May, Geri assists with the interview process for a new pool of candidates for their next round of retirements. She will be out of the building for many days interviewing candidates in teams of three.

During each month, she is taken out of the building for seven or eight different district meetings each for two to four hours. Two days a month, she spends all day sitting in instructional support team meetings where they case children and have an open forum for teachers to come in. They hire substitutes to go from class to class. These meetings are not hard for Geri because she is in the building. While it is not a major responsibility, she assists with the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) to ensure it keeps going.

Each week the teachers meet for division meetings and Geri touches base after those meetings. Teachers also attend unit planning meetings every time they change their thematic unit. For these meetings, teachers and specialists are released for a half day to plan the unit. Geri sometimes sits in those meetings but not regularly because someone is always knocking on the door about different telephone

calls. She does try to make an appearance at these meetings. Geri feels that if she was a perfect principal she would be at all of these meetings but is not perfect. She holds a staff meeting once a month, usually one in the morning and one after school.

As an elementary principal, Geri does not have an assistant. She relies on her main secretary to support her in any way she can. Geri also has a guidance counselor, who is in the building two or three days a week, and can be called upon. The guidance counselor works at two schools so she spends three days in a week at whatever school has more going on. Geri does have an instructional support teacher, who is somewhat of a right hand person and is the closest person to an assistant that she has. The teacher and Geri work in very close tandem about children. The teacher is in charge of facilitating the parent team, teacher team, and whole team for every child from kindergarten to fifth grade, who seems to be at-risk but has not been identified as a special education student. As a result, the teacher is a very busy person with lots of things on her plate. Since she does not have a class standing in front of her, she can stop doing something and come to Geri's rescue if there is an emergency. Geri and the teacher spend a fair amount of time, usually from 3:30 to 5:30, dialoging and strategizing about different children. Sometimes the school psychologist and/or the guidance counselor joins in the strategizing. Half of the challenge of dealing with teachers, parents, and at-risk youngsters is the mental strategizing required to successfully resolve the issue. They need to strategize about how to be a change agent, how to meet the needs of children, how to help the parent feel safe and trust the staff, and how to translate information to the parent who has every right to fight for their child. They also strategize about how to find resources, how meet the needs of teachers, help the teachers trust them, and control the teacher's response to a child being in their world and making life harder for them.

The most important use of Geri's time is anything that has to do with the needs of children, teachers, and parents. It is important to Geri to touch base with kids in the lunchroom. She likes to be

visible in the school and will answer her e-mail on her wireless notebook in the hall rather than sitting in the office and shutting her door so she does not hear what is going on out in the school. If a parent, who is coming apart at the seams, shows up at the school because their youngster is failing in school, Geri will drop everything and spend time with that parent. If a teacher, who is trying to hold it together, has a problem with a student, comes unglued, and goes to the office, Geri will spend time counseling the teacher. While they may not be able to find solutions to the problem, Geri will try to support the teacher as much as she can. Geri also spends a lot of time positively reinforcing the teachers from personal contact to e-mail to other ways. She feels this is important because the teachers are really hard on themselves. However, Geri knows that she is a spitting image of them and really hard on herself. She tells them to “do as I say not as I do” and really puts a lot of time into reinforcing teachers.

As she reflects back on her training as an educational leader, she recalls discussions of monitoring the curriculum. She goes to bed at night feeling guilty that she did not spend that time because of competing priorities. However, she does not need to spend a lot of time on curriculum because her district has wonderful curriculum base. Geri totally trusts them and is on a need to know basis. She tries to stay current on changes occurring in the area of curriculum. If teachers are asked to do something new or different, Geri enters the scene a little more. She puts a little more pressure on them, praises them for trying when they feel inadequate, and helps them not to panic so they throw it out because it is something new.

Paperwork, managerial, organizational tasks are the least important for Geri. She considers these tasks more of what principals in the old days did when they were primarily managers. When Geri was 25 or 30, she would come back to school every night and work. She would use her extra hours in the evening and on the weekend to get things managed or prepared. However, she cannot do that any more because she is too tired.

Geri does not think she has come up with good ways to manage her time and is searching for a system of management. She did share a few strategies that she uses, including a hardback schedule book and “sticky-tag management.” Geri likes to keep a plain, hardback book of her schedule and prefers not to do it online. The back of the book contains a big clip where she clips “stuff” to ensure that she never loses or misplaces them. Geri lives in a world full of sticky tags, which help her to manage her time. She writes everything on the stickies and puts them in one place. Geri will then shuffle the stickies around in order to reprioritize tasks. When tasks are completed, she gets a thrill out of crumpling them up and pitching them into the garbage. She also uses different colored stickies to follow the Covey System. Green stickies are nice to-dos and pink stickies are the things she really has to do. Geri also uses little pieces of stickies to hold dates for special education evaluation report (ER) meetings. This is important because the meetings involve eight different people, who have different schedules, and they need to find a common meeting time. If Geri does not hold the date and time in her book, another appointment or event could be scheduled. Once the date is confirmed, Geri pulls out the other stickies. Occasionally, the stickies will come unstuck only to be sat on or get stuck to the bottom of a shoe. Provided that she does not lose any of her stickies, the system works great.

Other strategies that she uses to manage her time include not writing lists, prioritizing baskets, and color coding e-mail. She does not care for writing lists of things to do. Geri describes individuals who cross items off a list as “very Machiavellian.” As a result, she is not the type of person who likes to write a list and check items off the list. Geri has three baskets that she had labeled for a time but no longer needs the labels. The three baskets include “nice to know – look at in the future,” “time dated must do,” “needs to be done sometime.” She got the idea of prioritizing from a book on the Covey System. From time to time, Geri will shuffle through the baskets to reprioritize and clean out or throw out items in the baskets. This is important because while there are things that she would like to read, things can pile up.

Occasionally, she will pull out an item from the basket and read it before working on something else. Geri will color code her e-mail based on the ones that she wants to come back too. She will then go back to the e-mail at home or on the weekends when she had time to do the technology piece.

Geri thinks that she uses a time management strategy called “muddling though” that she learned about while doing her Ph.D. in Community Systems Planning and Development. An individual uses this strategy to get where they need to be over time. This strategy works for Geri because she is not an individual who needs to have all of her ducks in a row. She functions very well in chaos. While sometimes she feels guilty, it does not bother or frustrate Geri that she gets drawn off her plan for the day. She does get hard on herself and try to find the energy to do the other things that she did not get to do. Geri is learning how and getting better at managing herself by not getting upset or being self-critical by a personal error. While she does muddle through, she can also get very compulsive when she decides too. For example, she will save tidbits of totally unimportant and unnecessary items that would be nice if she did but will not stop anyone’s realm if she abandons it.

Geri read a book on the Covey System²². In this system, boxes are placed indicating immediate or important but not immediate tasks. She makes a concerted effort to go to the important box even when it is not immediate. Geri does this because she is aware of the need to do that. When Geri took care of the evaluations during the prior day, she viewed it as important but not immediate. Since there were not tasks that needed to be taken care of immediately and there was not anything on her schedule, she was able to complete the evaluations.

²² While Geri did not share the name of the book she read, it is believed that she read the book The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. This book was written by Stephen R. Covey. However, there is also a popular planner system called the “*Franklin Covey*” planner. This planner system was created through the merging of the FranklinQuest (created by Hyrum W. Smith) and the Covey Leadership Center (created by Stephen R. Covey) in 1997.

She shared an example of her using the Covey System. Each year, the staff puts together a Martin Luther King celebration with a birthday party, which includes a birthday edible treat after a gift of service and caring has been given. Despite the event being months away, Geri is already getting pressure about planning the celebration. Right now, Geri cannot put the celebration into a priority box but at the first of the year, everything else will move out of important intermediate and it will be there. The committee will work, meet together, and devote their time to the celebration for a couple of weeks. Geri is confident that they will pull off a really great celebration as they do every year. This example shows that what Geri needs to get done now is different than it would be in a few months. As a result, whatever is on the calendar, on her plate, or demanded of her is what she needs to attend to.

Geri feels that she is totally controlling her time usage but the district and children influence her time usage. Except for her eight district meetings a month, as principal, she determines most of her time usage. She would have more time if she decided not to do something. Indirectly her district influences her time usage because she knows how they think and what they value. Geri works hard to carry out the district values, however, she has control to pick and choose what and how she wants to do. The children and their incidents influence Geri's time because that is why she is supposed to be at the school. She shared several examples of situations that required her time but she did not have control over. The week prior a kindergartener fell off the monkey bars right before school let out. They were concerned about a back injury because the child hardly felt like she could move. As a result, Geri had to stop everything she was doing to go to the child. She had no control over the time needed for the situation but it needed to be handled. When a teacher needs to meet with her, she makes time to meet with them. This is important because she is the only principal in the building and does not have a helper to assist with these situations. Since Geri makes her own schedule, she is able to give the kids and teachers the time.

Instructional leadership, for Geri, is defined as monitoring that teachers are implementing the curriculum and standards as intended or designed, providing the resources needed for delivery, providing best practice innovations, and ensuring that no staff member is overburdened with physical constraints. As an instructional leader, Geri needs to act as a resource gatherer and ask teachers if they have what is needed to do the job and deliver the curriculum. As principal, Geri controls the site-based budget and gives teachers the responsibility for a fair piece of the budget; however, as an instructional leader, she controls the piece of the budget related to the curriculum. From year to year, she will look at initiatives so that money is being spent around different things. Geri will dialogue with teachers to see if there is a certain set of books they want to enhance guided reading and then makes the determination about how to get the money to buy the books. She supervises the teachers as they pick the books. An instructional leader needs to keep a watchful eye for best practice innovations. She then needs to look at the innovations so she can translate and “finesse” them for her teachers, who already have enough pressures. Geri also needs to keep a watchful eye that teachers realize that the innovations are value and trying them rather than blowing them off. This is important because some people accept things or see the merit of things quicker so they want to do them.

In Geri’s district, there is a lot of curriculum and unit development done by district staff. Geri asks her staff to keep her informed of their instruction but she does not hammer them to tell her. The staff knows that they can keep her informed via e-mail. She will also look at the classroom atmosphere and the children, who are in the mix. This is important because if the instruction is bad or less demanding, it is not going to help the group of youngsters. Evaluations are usually left for last because it comes at the end. Geri thinks that as times have changed in elementary schools. As a result, educators have learned to look at the process of learning better and use a more scientific approach to assess along the way whether or not the process of learning is occurring. For example, first and second grade primary classroom

teachers do running records every three or four weeks as a quick way to know if the child is learning and then “tinker” with strategies to improve instruction. Without running records being done, Geri feels that learning time would be wasted, if teachers waited 9, 10, or 11 weeks to discover what students are not learning or do not know.

Technology is a big part of their world right now because it is being forced down on them by the world culture. She has to go in and encourage teachers to create a web page because they are under the radar and being watched from above. Geri considers herself one of the most technology aware principals. Fifteen years ago as a teacher she had a modem attached to an old Apple II GS so her classroom could be on the web. While Geri values technology, she is also defensive of it and does not want teachers spending a lot of time doing it. She sees it overtaking schools and pulling teachers in one more direction away from instruction and children.

Over the last several years, the Pennsylvania State Student Assessments (PSSAs) have totally changed what Geri does as an instructional leader. Geri’s district is way above the state average for PSSA scores. However, her district consists of an academic community where people read the numbers in the newspaper. They do not know whether 70 is a whole lot different than 80 nor do they understand what it means. Geri knows that the tests count and mean something. However, it is her job not to go off the deep end and teach to the test, cheat, or use other strategies to raise the scores. She hopes that they will not lose teachers delivering a curriculum in a very thematic way. Geri does not want to have instruction that consists solely of drill and practice and test-taking. However, she has to force teachers to go part of the way there because otherwise her scores will be lower than any other school in the district.

PSSA scores are a concern for Geri because her school has 107 kids, who do not speak English as their first language, and speak 18 different languages. A child may have just arrived in the states from another country and know not a single word of English but still have to take the PSSAs. Schools are now

allowed to read students directions in their native language. However, Geri wonders what the good of reading directions on a reading test that has to be taken in English by a non-English speaker.

The PSSAs have forced her to no longer defend or pooh-pooh tests and the damage that she thinks it creates. Since her Ph.D. is in community systems, she understands why the assessments are happening and thinks it is a good thing. However, she also realizes that there are 501 school districts in the state of Pennsylvania that are not as well-endowed as her school district. This puts pressure on educators to do the best they can with the resources they have. Educators then need to find more resources to make things better and utilize best practices, which creates changes in learning. As a result, she has crossed over to the dark side, put her arguments to rest, and joined the ranks of supports about why the testing is a good thing. When she has to present information to her teachers, she tries to manipulate them to believe that it is a good thing so they do not get frustrated or defensive, which is not effective. Geri preaches to her staff about accepting things, not throwing up defenses against them, and “gleaning” from the part that is good. She feels that she has done a good job crossing over. Geri wants her teachers to feel that she is comforting them, not watching over them, and not panicking them.

Geri just did an entire analysis of the fifth graders PSSA scores from last year compared to every other school in the district on different variables. These variables included socioeconomic status, English as a Second Language (ESL) learner, special education learning, and whether or not the child had been in the school the whole time. She also looked at the kids who came in second grade, third grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade. There were 21 students who fell below proficient. A third had come to the school in the last year, a third had come in third grade, and a third had come in fourth grade. Nine of the 21 students fell into the low SES category. 12 of the 21 students came from single parent families. Only three of the 21 students are in special education. Geri’s fellow schools had 13 or 14 students in special

education, who fell below proficient. These factors on the PSSAs affect their use of time and increase stress.

Geri knows that the schools low test scores are not because of the teachers but, rather, a multiple of many other forces. As a result, these other forces, not individuals, have promoted Geri's change in practices as an instructional leader. Some of this change is good and some represents a loss. As instructional leader, Geri has to make sure that she is doing everything she can to make an impact and hope that her scores are better. She does not know when they will or will not get better but knows that they are not bad and quite high compared to the state. However, her scores are not as high as a school across town that does not have ESL children. Her paranoia makes her worry that people will ask why their scores are the lowest. While some would say it is ridiculous to point to the principal, it goes with the territory as instructional leader.

If Geri had more time, she would do more evaluations, sit in on more classes, watch teachers more looking for best practices, look for indicators of learning, and write meaningful evaluations that are informative to teachers. If she had more time, she could attend all of the trainings that teachers are attending in order to understand guided reading or new math investigations better. If she had more time, she could become more aware and study more about the best practices. However, she does not have time to do those things because her energy level is too low and she is too personally exhausted. If she did not have all the other stressors, her energy level might not be that low and she would be a better educational leader. She could go with her gut instincts but she is not sure whether they are right or not. The cause of her insecurity is not having time to study and become totally comfortable with what instruction should absolutely look like.

On the other side of the coin, Geri argues for the education of at risk youngsters because the mission should be to educate all children. The line cannot be drawn above a certain set of children

making the best practices there for those children and not for the other children. Geri's district has a real strong commitment for differentiated instruction and is starting an initiative in January to study and understand what is being done. The cause of the study is that they are currently muddling through differentiated instruction for children. When the time comes, Geri will jump on the bandwagon of the study because she has an interest in it. She thinks that special education kids and their families, in the state of Pennsylvania, are finally getting their day in the sun. Geri sees them getting even more in the next five years. This is important to Geri because her daughter is profoundly deaf and they fought the whole way through her education. They never had that chance to have the opportunities that are now being afforded. However, her experiences taught her to have a tolerance for everything.

Time, for Geri, is not a frame of hours but the amount of energy available to do the job.

Geri's advice for new principals is to follow their passion. Geri thinks that a person's passion can lead them as a principal. She is the parent of a special needs child. As a result, her passion is to fight for youngsters, who are at risk or almost at risk, of getting a label. However, another principal might be really passionate about evaluations and be really good at evaluations.

Kathy Fisher

Kathy Fisher is a Caucasian woman, who is married with a child in their late 20s. When Kathy was in college, she wanted to do something human services related or in social work. She thought it would be an opportunity to have in-demand career in society and the job market. Her friends talked her out of it because they thought social work would be too depressing and too hard. Kathy earned an associates degree in the arts. She worked as a preschool administrator and as a retail department store manager. Kathy then earned a Bachelor of Science in Education and Masters of Education in Special Education and taught for nine years. She has worked in four schools in two different school districts. Kathy has her letter of eligibility certification and is a doctoral student.

Kathy was an assistant principal at a middle school for five years. As assistant principal, she was more on-demand than she is now as elementary principal. If there were attendance issues, she could not control them but, rather, needed to respond to them. If there were bus discipline issues, she could not control when it would happen but, rather, needed to respond to them. However, as an assistant principal, she had some control over behavioral issues. Kathy volunteered to take on having a Girls Night Out activity, where all of the girls in the building were allowed to stay at school over night. The event squeezed into her personal time but it was okay in her eyes because she knew that she demanded others to squeeze volunteering into their personal time. The event required an overwhelming amount of time in order to do it right.

She has been in her current position as principal for three months or a quarter of a school year and absolutely loves the job that she finds fascinating. Kathy takes the educational leadership aspect of the principalship to heart. She always looks for way where she can model behaviors for teachers to use with their students. Without fail, Kathy will work with a teacher to help him or her have a satisfying job. She will also pick up whatever pieces need to be picked up in order to for the teachers to do the job well.

As an educational leader, Kathy serves the educational community, keeps the school environment safe, and is responsible for student safety within and among each other.

Kathy shared what a typical day as principal involves. She begins the day with a mental construct of what she needs to do. She always makes sure that anything that needs to be tended to immediately are attended to. This typically includes putting out anything she considers to be a “brush fire.” If there is a parent in the office, she will ask what she can do for them. This might mean giving them a short answer to their question or providing a time when she can sit down and have a focused conversation with them. She spends an initial 30-40 minutes prior to service of the school day with students and teachers. Once the “before 8 a.m. children” start arriving, Kathy goes to the cafeteria, which holds children, to circulate and say hello. This is important to her because she wants to be where the children are. Kathy will also meets with teachers before children arrive at school and before are dismissed to their classroom. She will ask how they are doing or what their needs are. Sometimes she will also follow-up on directives that she has given to make sure that they understand each other. Kathy will discuss what would improve what is going on in a particular class or session.

Once the school day begins, she makes prescribed announcements. She has a mental design of the announcements that she follows faithfully. Kathy always uses the announcements to give instruction in the form of “Words of Wisdom.” It gives exposure to such topics as having respect for each other, respect for education, self-respect, and how to treat one another. Kathy has an office assistant, who is only in the building for the first few hours of the day. As a result, she likes to make sure that she is available to work with, communicate with, and have a face-to-face with her assistant. Kathy will make sure she understands what she is expected to do, inquire what is going on, and share what she will be doing before they go their separate directions. She will make sure that office responsibilities are attended to

from substitute needs, returning phone calls, signing paperwork, attending to paperwork issues, and assigning tasks. Throughout the day, Kathy will attend to any disciplinary action that comes her way.

Kathy does not like going to e-mail first thing in the morning because a principal never knows what will come their way and it can change the whole slant of their day. As a result, contrary to what most principals do, she will avoid checking e-mail first thing. Kathy's orientation is towards people and being active and involved in the environment. Once the school day has started smoothly and after lunch, she will attend to e-mail messages and go in whatever direction she needs to go in. The after lunch checking of e-mail allows her to check on whatever is being planned. She has found that the elementary teachers do not spend a lot of time on e-mail. Sometimes e-mail will take an hour or hour and a half to respond to so she will target those e-mail at the end of her day after student dismissal.

After office tasks are taken care of, she likes to get out in the classrooms and thoroughly enjoys sitting in classrooms making observations. During the lunch period of time, she is sensitive to the fact that every student in the building will be going to lunch. As a result, she will either be in the cafeteria attending to it or a short distance away making sure that whatever needs to be done is done. After lunch, she will make contact with each teacher and all students in their classrooms. She will also make contact with the support and special education teachers. Contact with the special education teachers is important because she has life skills and emotional support classes in her school. She likes to find out about issues that may not have already gotten her attention. If there are student behaviors that need to be redirected, she will see how she can help redirect them. Kathy will try to get another observation done in the afternoon. These daily touches with teachers are important because of her new involvement with the job. She is very sensitive to what she thinks she needs to do to build up trust between teachers, staff, and her. She wants the staff to lean on her if there is an issue and she wants to help them find solutions to their problems.

At the end of the day, there is a very structured dismissal process, which starts with an afternoon announcement. This is Kathy's chance to wrap-up the day. If something has gone wrong in the building, she likes to draw the attention to it so their behavior can be sharpened up. For example, there were lots and lots of paper towels taken out of the dispenser in one wing of the building. With the goal of ending this activity, she drew the student's attention to her perspective that it was not a good thing and to let her know if they knew anything about who was involved in the activity. At the end of the day a student came to her to inform who he thought was removing the paper towels. She also likes to share something really positive that happened during the day in the building. Afterwards, she will start the formal dismissal process to get the students out of the building in a certain way. As the students leave, she is there to say goodbye and wishes them a good day. Kathy thinks that this contact is important. It shows students that she is glad to see them, school is a good place to be, and positively represent the school to the public.

While these tasks chew up a typical day, Kathy has a designated day with the school psychologists and other principals for the individual education plan (IEP) meetings. When other meetings pop up, she is able to clear the day or time and make sure she goes to the meeting. She makes sure that she is totally accessible. Kathy encourages people to contact her and reminds the secretaries that whatever happens in the building is more important than whatever she is doing out of the building. Since her masters is in special education, it is near and dear to her heart and something she thrives on. Kathy has been designing differentiated instruction and has started an inclusion program in the school.

Kathy feels that she is personally accountable to herself for maximizing her use of time. The job as principal has made her more conscious of this accountability when she sees teachers, parents, or students and does not feel that she did the best that she could do. If they ask her questions about what is going on, she wants to be able to say whether or not she is aware of it. If she is not aware of the problem, she feels very strongly about being honest people. Kathy wants them to know that it is not because she is

not paying attention but, rather, she lost track of time or was not aware of it to pursue it. Kathy is very competitive and likes to be able to say that she did the best that she could. Sometimes it can really frustrate her but then she just takes a step back and accepts that it was just the way it was or the best she could do. As a result, she is very conscious of when she is not using her time wisely and is disappointed if she does not maximize her use of time.

Interactions with parents and teachers are the most important use of Kathy's time. She thinks that it is very important that when parents come in or call that she sits down or returns the call and talks to them one-on-one. This does not mean that she has long conversations with the parents. If needed, at the beginning of all conversations, she will set forth at the beginning of the meeting that she needs to keep it short. However, she likes to find out how things are going for the child, especially if the child is new to the building. Kathy does not like to sit in her office if a teacher needs something. For example, if a teacher needs books, she will get the books and make personal verbal contact with the teacher. This is important because she wants to gain more feedback when it comes to priorities and takes the opportunity to make personal touches with teachers.

Responding to e-mail is the least important use of Kathy's time. She tries not to dwell on e-mail yet always tries to respond to e-mail quickly. If an e-mail is related to a directive, she will print the e-mail to take it home so she can really attend to it.

Kathy has developed a number of strategies to manage her time. These strategies include treating the environment as a business, not engaging in negative conversations, not spending time in social settings, following up requests immediately, answering special education questions quickly, jotting down notes, and learning to depend on others. While she tries to treat every situation as humanly as possible, she treats the environment as a business. Kathy does not engage herself in conversations of a destructive nature and avoids or quickly cuts off gossip. While she enjoys talking to the faculty, she wants to make

sure that conversations stay on issues that she can help them with. While she is a social person, she does not spend time in social settings of the building. For example, she will not go to the faculty room for lunch rather she eats lunch alone. This is not because she does not enjoy the company at lunch but, rather, because she wants to stay on top of the business end of the job. It can be very frustrating for her because she is very social. She tries to follow-up on every request or work with teachers immediately. For example, if someone wants data on a child, she will make sure she attends to it or reminds the secretary to give it to her. If a question is related to something she enjoys like special education, she can usually formulate a constructive answer very quickly. She always keeps a tablet with her and will jot down notes. If someone asks a question and she honestly cannot answer it, she will give them a range of time when she will get back to them. Kathy is trying to learn to depend on others to help with tasks but it will take a while because she is new in the position. She feels that she needs to learn where the limits are and establish them with her staff. Kathy also feels that she does not have a good handle on her time.

She also manages her time by utilizing individual strengths of her secretaries. Kathy tells her two secretaries that they are in this together. Each of the secretaries has different strengths, one secretary will play on Kathy's strengths and the other secretary will take the initiative in other areas. As an assistant, she worked with one of the secretaries. Kathy will share what she needs to do and will ask if they can help her. Sometimes they will say that they can line something up or call someone. Since she is new to the building, Kathy will also ask them if she can do something. If she is writing a letter, she will ask one of the secretaries to "flesh it out." Kathy can also ask one of the secretaries to draft and send out letters on different topics. While one secretary can accomplish this task, the other secretary while extremely capable is not comfortable drafting letters.

Over the last two years, her overall perception of time has changed. In her role as assistant principal last year, she was part of an initiative to put advisories into the middle school. She devoted the

entire year to writing them, which took a lot of time. Before they were given out, she rewrote them to make sure that the advisories suit the time factor. She was very fussy about the tasks and knew what she wanted to do but felt frustrated by the tugs and pulls. The task also interfered with her role as assistant principal. Kathy wondered if she used her time correctly and if she used her time correctly. Then she realized that activities like this are what leadership is about. Since the front-end time was put into the activity, it can be replicated and will be a piece of cake. To improve running of the event, the school will ask someone to volunteer to be a secretary. As a new principal, she has to dedicate her time gradually and needs to be conscious of time. Kathy feels that sometimes individuals do not put enough demands on themselves and do not use their time or talents well.

Her perception of time has also changed this year because she went back to school to finish her doctoral program. She now needs to get out of the building, not necessarily in the time she wants, but much earlier in order to attend class on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This has also been good for her because she is limiting her time in the building and knows that the school program can run without her. As a result, she is more conscious of where she spends her time because she has more responsibilities. If she was not spending a lot of time on her graduate education, she hopes that she would be spending time on a project or hobby.

As principal, she feels that she has more control over her time usage. She feels relieved to be principal because the role of assistant principal is more of an on-demand job. However, Kathy thinks that she really does not have control over her time because of the needs of teachers, parents, and children. While she enjoys interactions, she decides how much time she is going to invest into her responses. Kathy feels that it is an interesting reciprocal thing. She plans to let more people have control over what she does and what she does with them.

Instructional or educational leadership, for Kathy, means continuing professional development so the needs of the community can be served. A recent example of her role in instructional leadership involved professional development for teachers on inclusion. As instructional leader, she researched and prepared a professional development program on inclusion. Kathy spent hours preparing the handouts, brochures, and PowerPoint. She did this because she feels that inclusion is the right thing to do and wants to see it set-up in the school. Kathy held the program in the summertime on a voluntary basis. Thirty staff members attended the professional development to learn what it was all about. This professional development will help because better integrated programs and adaptations made in the classroom will allow children to maximize their learning abilities.

Kathy also feels that the instructional leader needs to be professionally well-prepared to answer the educational needs of the school. She has continued her own professional development by going back to school for a doctorate of education. In graduate school, Kathy has spent time researching student grade level retention. She is very committed to the topic because it is something that she works on day in and day out. Kathy feels that it is important for the instructional leader to walk the walk in order to talk the talk.

Her definition of instructional or educational leadership has changed over the last several years but she has always had the same concept and wanted to act of it. Kathy not being in a good school has kept her from doing educational leadership the way she wanted to do. Within her role as assistant principal, her educational leadership involved disciplinary actions. She worked very hard to empower teachers to take care of disciplinary actions in a constructive way so the teachers could keep the power and reduce conflict with students. Kathy believes that conflict with students came from students not knowing their boundaries. As a result, she helped to redesign how things are done and introduced a positive reinforcement system. The system had incredibly positive affects on teacher, student, and

teacher/student relationships. In this situation, her educational leadership was targeted towards teacher/student behaviors and interactions with the emphasis on promoting academic learning and achievement. She felt this was time well-spent because from her figures there was a reduction in the amount of suspensions and retentions.

Literature and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) have affected her role as an instructional leader. Literature on behavior management and inclusion for special education programs has impacted her role as an instructional leader. Kathy looks at literature on NCLB and IDEA and literature or information from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). She believes that NCLB implies a need for instructional leadership and the administration is paying attention to that. As a result, NCLB is driving most of what goes on in school.

NCLB has made her pay attention to the statistics and the outcomes of the PSSAs. She has had to “hone” her skills on how to read reports so she can help teachers understand the strengths and weaknesses in the building. She has become the champion of particular curricular designs, anchor assessments, and triggers to stay on target with the standards. Kathy has had to sharpen her understanding, skills, and ability to provide explanations. She has had to work very hard to understand her own perceptions and others perceptions in order to figure out where they are going. While she pays attention to standardized tests, this is not an area that she would have chosen to pay attention to. As a result, it has caused a lot of frustration and has interfered with teachers being able to concentrate on what they do best. She thinks that NCLB is throwing many teachers off and hurting their self-confidence in their job.

Her personal bent is to promote the social/emotional needs of the children in contrast to constantly finding ways to improve or promote high student achievement. As a result, student spirits and child development have also affected her role as an instructional leader. Kathy finds ways to bring out

the spirit of the students. She plans pep assemblies to help bring out the fun and social side of the child. Kathy feels it is important for teachers to remember that their students are just children and remember the importance of child development. She also feels sorry for students, who do not have someone at home encouraging them to play a game, read a book, build something, or have a hobby. Kathy perceives that while a lot of families spend time together going to meals or going to the movies, they never construct something together. She thinks that society over time has lost their project and production orientation and it is a shame.

The absence or lack of time to develop in-service or professional development for teachers has impacted her role as an instructional leader. She feels that there is a lot more building administrators could share with teachers if they had more time in building meetings, small group meetings, and with teachers for feedback. Kathy does not like having after school meetings because of the constraints and restraints on teachers. She would like to have them during the school day. Kathy would like to have the luxury of mentoring during the school day. She does not like professional programs that are not pull together or well-constructed and do not ask for teacher feedback. Her lack of being able to put something together that she feels is done very thoughtfully is very frustrating to her.

Time, for Kathy, is defined as a gift that disappears. It is a gift in how it is used and needs to be enjoyed and respected. Time is fluid and people cannot get their hands on it. While you cannot touch it every day, people need to use it in the best constructive way. Kathy respects every minute of the day and feels that the day should be filled with something that is going to reflect what she thinks is the best thing to do.

As a new principal, Kathy has had the experience of assistant principal to help. As an assistant principal, she had the opportunity to work with a principal who let her do as much as she wanted too. As a result, she emulated as much as she could of the administrative job. Kathy took over every

responsibility that she could manage in a day in order to see if she would be able to handle the job of principal. She had a great training ground but sometimes she got frustrated when she realized how much she took on. Her experiences as an assistant principal have prepared her really well for her current role as principal. Now when she walks away from work, she can feel that she did her job. This has helped her be much happier at home and away from it.

Additionally as a new principal, she does not look for mentorship. She ask questions but not all the time because of the fast pace of the job. Kathy tries to be very self-reliant. Prior to working in education, she was a manager of a retail store. Since she has a little different background, she thinks that she sees the business of public school education different than others who have only been in the classroom and in administration. As a result, she tries to think outside of the box to find solutions and if she cannot determine a solution, she will ask teachers which way they want to go. Geri feels that unlike other administrators who think top-down, she works collaboratively and has teams to work on a project. When teams want to make a decision, they need a coach and Kathy wants to be that coach. Kathy feels she needs to get more on-the-job training because she likes to reflect on what they see as a need and then assemble all of the pieces into a new plan.

Peggy Fulmer

Peggy Fulmer is a 58-year-old Caucasian woman, who is married with a grown son. During Peggy's childhood, she had a crush on her sixth grade male teacher. This teacher was the first male teacher she ever had. As a result of her interactions with this teacher, she realized that she wanted to be a teacher because it appealed to her and was something she had a burning desire to do. Additionally, Peggy shared that when she was growing up, most women were expected to be homemakers, secretaries, or teachers. As a result, in high school, she belonged to the Future Teachers of America organization and volunteered in the classroom of her old sixth grade teacher. After high school, she worked as a computer keyboarder and received her associates' degree in language arts. Peggy also received a Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education and a Masters of Science in Communication Disorders (i.e., special education). She is certified in elementary education (K-6) and special education (K-12), as a special education supervisor (K-12), administratively as a principal (K-12), and has her letter of eligibility to be a superintendent.

She worked as a teacher before entering the role of assistant principal for eight years. Peggy is currently in her seventh year as a principal in a suburban Pennsylvania school district and is responsible for two elementary schools. She did not share the specifics of any post-principalship plans but is currently writing her doctoral dissertation. When answering a question about the number of years she was a teacher, Peggy listed the same number of years that she has worked in education. It is believed that Peggy views herself as a teacher in all roles of education.

Besides the other responsibilities, the worst aspect of her job as principal/administrator is not getting the same vacations she got as a teacher. She misses and hates not getting the summers off anymore. Peggy is at the school all the time unless she takes vacation. When it comes to winter or spring break, she has to work or take vacation days. On snow days, she has to work or take a vacation day.

Other than vacations, Peggy does not find the role of principal that different from being a teacher because she is really just a lead teacher.

In her roles as principal of two suburban schools, the bulk of her day is spent on responding to parent and teacher concerns via stop-by-visits, telephone, or e-mail. Peggy shared that if she is in her office, both parents and teachers are encouraged to knock on her door with a question or concern. If she has the time then she tries to give them the time to talk about the concern. Peggy also spends time answering telephone inquires or concerns from parents, answering millions of e-mail. Peggy shared the importance of answering an e-mail promptly to prevent getting another e-mail stating “you didn’t answer my e-mail.”

She tries to make a sweep of the building, walking the hallways and stopping in classrooms, everyday in order to ensure that she has a presence with the children. When Peggy was only responsible for one school, she would go into the kindergarten room for a half-hour and sit or “do stuff” with the children. These classroom visits helped her to feel more involved. Peggy shared that discipline is a very minor part of her day but she does spend time doing course observations, teacher observations and evaluations. Additionally, she spends a considerable amount of time in meetings and working on or responding to the budget.

Peggy discussed the amount of time she spends in meetings. Each month she has four definite meetings. Two of the meetings are administrative team meetings called A-team. One consists of just the administrators and the other is a larger meeting where districtwide policies and information are discussed by all key stakeholders from facilities, food, personnel, transportation, and administration. The third is a meeting for elementary principals, who meet with the elementary supervisor, to discuss topics and make decisions. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the principals to be more cohesive thus do things as uniformly as possible. Topics discussed include the budget, curriculum matters, and curriculum

monitoring. The fourth meeting is related to a professional development program that Peggy's district has with a local University.

She also spends time with the district and school budget. The districtwide elementary budget determination involves the elementary principals, music director, physical education director, and art director. They meet to look all pieces of the pie, what they are going to do with it, and how much is going to put into a contingency fund for things that might come up. After Peggy determines her piece of the pie, she develops her individual school budget to determine where the money will be spent that year. Peggy has to approve and sign off for every purchase. Teachers go to her with their credit requests for what they want to spend their money on. Sometimes she can approve the request, sometimes they share the cost of the request, and other times it is not possible.

Peggy likes that she can develop a relationship with teachers. Peggy does not want to storm around like she is all that, better than the teachers, and that is why the teachers have to listen to her. She knows that if she acts better than all of the teachers and feels that is why they have to listen to her that she is not going to get anywhere with her staff. Since she was a teacher for many, many years, she asks that teachers do not go into the teachers lounge if there is something that they are upset with her about. She asks them to come and share their concerns face-to-face with her because she will share her concerns in-person. Peggy sees herself as a very open and up-front person. She has had to tell teachers "you are not doing your job and here's what you have to do. I know you are capable so here is what I expect." As a result, she expects teachers to come to her and say "Peggy, you know you did that wrong" or "that was not a good decision to make and here is why I feel that way." Peggy feels that she then might be able to give the teacher some information that they did not understand about why the decision was made or she might say, "Gee, you're right," and take a step back to think about the situation. She feels that the give and take with teachers is important because it allows them to have a real, open relationship. In this

relationship with teachers, if a teacher needs to leave early due to an emergency and Peggy is in the building, she will say “don’t worry about it, you go.” She will go into the classroom and teach a lesson. Peggy thinks that it is important to be seen in the teaching role because it shows that she is involved and part of the teaching process.

When working with the school community, Peggy tries to work with the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and asks that her teachers not send anything home without her seeing it first. She tries to honor requests from the PTO that are not a big deal. However, when the requests are going to be an intrusion, Peggy will say no and shared the PTO is okay with her decisions. Peggy requires that teachers do not send anything without her seeing it to ensure that communication is free of typos and includes the appropriate political correctness.

For Peggy, the most important use of her time is the children because she is a child lover. When she taught her students became her kids and she became mom. In the role of principal, Peggy values making sure everything is right for the children and that she is doing everything she can to make sure their learning situation better and safe. When teachers come to her and say “oh I can’t,” she reminds them that “its not about you, it’s about the children.” However, when students get in trouble or have to see her about a discipline matter, Peggy shared that she can also be really direct with the students. She will ask them to tell her “why do you think you did this? and then ask “do you think I am really happy with this?” or tell them “you have really disappointed me.” Peggy feels that telling a child that they have disappointed her is sometimes the worst thing you can tell them and you do not have to yell or scream.

This year, Peggy has six children in the same grade level with severe food allergies. The allergies are so severe that if one child ate peanut butter and put their hands on a table, then the children with allergies would have an allergic reaction if they placed their hands on the same table. As a result, the class with the most health problems has to eat in the cafeteria rather than in the classroom as the rest of the

school does. The food allergies have caused teachers and students to learn new information, habits, and routines. The adjustment to these habits and routines has taken considerable amounts of time.

The least important uses of her time are paperwork, meetings, and responding to petty concerns by parents. Peggy thinks that paperwork is the least important use her time because all of the little things you have to do to make it go. She would rather stay at school than attend so many meetings. The least favorite part of her job is some of things that parents come to her about. Sometimes she wonders “if this is the biggest thing in their life” then she would “hate to see what would happen if a crisis occurred.”

While Peggy knows that their hearts are in the right place, she shared that it is very competitive out there and she thinks that it is important to keep a good balance because you do not want parents driving their kids crazy. She once had a parent who came in and asked “what is my child’s class ranking?” Peggy shared with the parent that this is just elementary school and class rankings are not done until high school. As a result, Peggy listens to parents but also tries to make them realistic about their child. She will get parents who say that their child is very bright and should skip a grade in math. After she listens, she tries to bring some perspective and explain the process of building foundations for children who are solid. After the evaluation process has taken place, she has explained to parents that their child was looked at by the specialist and that are there gaps. Peggy explains that she cannot justify their child skipping a grade in math and she will not approve it. This is hard because parents talk. If she had two children, who legitimately needed to go to another grade for math, she would have parents galore from that same grade level in her office because their child should also be advanced. While it might be the toughest part of her job, it is the least of her priorities. As a result, she listens and gets stuff done but gets it done her way.

Parents also come to her regarding concerns that are just based on their individual situation and are legitimate. For example, Peggy had a parent who came to her asking that other parents who walk

their kids to school do not have their dogs come up to the door. Their child was afraid of the dog(s). Peggy could see their concerns because if their child got bit, even if they may have done something wrong to the dog, then it would be her responsibility. Since Peggy viewed this as a legitimate concern, she took action but did not feel pressured to do so.

How has her view of time changed over the past several years? This is her fourth year being responsible for two K-5 schools. When she first started in the district, she worked part-time because the elementary school was not big enough for a full-time principal. During her first, another principal became ill and she was given responsibility for both schools. The next two years, she worked part-time as a principal and part-time in the area office where she worked on major committees and did strategic planning. Due to the nature of the position, she was able to do her work from the elementary school and was able to be in classrooms more as well as greeting the kids at the front door. When she was given a second school, she had to change that whole piece and is now in classrooms less than she would like to be. Since she did not know that she was going to have a second school, she had signed up for an intensive program to help her fulfill the residency portion of her doctoral program. The combination of the second school and the graduate program caused her perspective on time to change.

Who is controlling her time? Peggy feels that she is the one who has control over her time even though there are certain things that might come down from the district that have to get done. She feels that she probably gives away more of her time than she really should but does not feel that one particular thing really overrides anything else. Peggy feels that it is up to her to prioritize. Sometimes she might not prioritize for everything but feels that she makes everything important and wants to get it all done. Peggy's district does not have a specific management structure to help her manage her time. Teachers' contracts read "your time is when you have the job done, you know that's when you go, when you leave,

when you think you have the job done.” As a result, Peggy feels that her district is pretty broad and open about time because “whatever it takes to get the job done, that’s your time.”

How does Peggy define instructional leadership? She defines it as ensuring that the teachers are meeting the needs of all of the children, teachers are following and staying on track with the curriculum, making sure that that teachers go for the appropriate training, and encouraging teachers to turn out a good product, which is the children. In her role as an instructional leader, Peggy sees herself as the one who needs to lead the instruction and make sure that the teachers are doing what they are supposed to do. In her district, Peggy sees herself as being very fortunate. District curriculum is developed by the curriculum office and the teachers are very dedicated.

At the beginning of the year, Peggy has an important discussion with teachers and reminds them they are jugglers. A core of the children will learn easily given the instruction, which they can follow along and they will learn. There is also a core of children that really need to be boosted up, given differentiated instruction, and time. They also have students at the other end of the spectrum that they cannot forget about because they need to be kept motivated and challenged. Peggy knows that it is very difficult for teachers to keep all those balls in the air. When teachers come to her with a problem, she redirects them so they can have look at the whole picture. She asks them to tell her what they are doing and if it works. Then she makes suggestions, if you did “x” with this child, would it present too much of a difficulty in your classroom?

Has Peggy’s view of instructional leadership changed over the last several years? She does not think it has because for her it has always been about the children. Every new employee is given a “Children First” pin and lanyard to wear on their badge as a reminder that the reason we are here is the product that we are producing – the children. Peggy has also feels that a “village is needed to accomplish producing children.”

Peggy knows that a lot of people would say that the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is driving a lot of the issues in the district. She shared that 80% of the children will always be proficient or above but it is a hand-core of 20% of the children who are not proficient. As a result, districtwide, Peggy feels that more is being done for the lowest achieving children. Previously, Title One was reading support in second through sixth grades. However, Title One has now added math for third and fourth grades to help with those children improve their test scores. The district has also created a summer program to provide academic support for the lowest achieving children in order to really work with them and keep up their skills. As a result, the district has been blessed with the fact that the PSSA standards really are hugely outcomes of that the district had for its students.

As the principal of two buildings, who's students are overall ahead of the state curve by at least 20 or 30 points. However, she reminds her teachers to really look at the children on an individual basis and move them as far as they can. Peggy asks them to use the mathematical terminology that is used on the PSSAs. She wants to make sure that when the assessment asks children to identify an addend or a factor that the vocabulary is familiar for students. She wants to make sure that kindergarten teachers are using proper adjectives not juicy words so the students hear the terminology. Peggy thinks that it is the vocabulary that trips up the children more than anything. She believes that the children have the knowledge and the teachers need to make sure that they use the vocabulary. Peggy also asks the teachers to occasionally, not every day, not once a week, have the kids bubble in answers to questions. She believes that bubbling in answers is a test taking skill that has to be taught and learned. Peggy has directed teachers to make sure that they hit geometry. Typically, geometry is the last thing that is taught during the school year and if teachers do not get to it, they say "oh well, the students will get it next year." Unfortunately, it becomes a reoccurring process from year to year causing the students to not be taught geometry. As a result, Peggy wants to make sure that students have exposure to geometry every

year. Peggy feels that if teachers teach the curriculum and teach it the way it is set-up then the students should do well.

Peggy shared that she has not changed that much as a result of PSSA. She has said that teachers need to do two hours of math a day. However, some teachers, without being asked, will do an extra math period once or twice a month. They do this because children are tested in March on topics that are not typically taught until April or May. Teachers will spend an extra half hour to introduce some of that material so it is familiar and students have tried a problem or two. After the test, teachers do the normal full instruction. These decisions are made by the teacher and not by the direction of Peggy.

How has the availability or absence of time had an impact on Peggy's professional practices as an instructional leader? Since Peggy has two buildings, she does not think she has enough time and feels that the personal crunch of her time is beyond her control. She feels like she is shortchanging both schools because they only have her half-time. Peggy finds it frustrating because she has experienced the position of the principal running only one school.

At her other school, where she has worked for four years, she does not feel that she has full control or her foothold yet. Peggy feels that the problems at this school are because she did not have time to set things really well. As a result, she wants to sit down with the staff and brainstorm about basic expectations for every child in the building. Peggy shared that she wants to work collaboratively with them to get a better hold at the school. For example, Peggy would like to see quiet lines in the hallway so classes are not interrupted by hallway noise. Peggy plans to go to and present her ideas to the staff. Then she will ask "do you think it would be better this way or that way?" She knows that her staff might have a better idea and she will go with it. However, depending on the conversation, she might have to say "no, this is not a choice, this has to be done." As a result, Peggy does feel short changed in regard to time but says that there is nothing she can do about it.

How does Peggy define time? She defines time as her ability to interact with the kids. Peggy knows that as an administrator, one becomes further and further removed as they go. As a result, they need to make decisions about what will be given up and what will not be given up. For Peggy, her ability to spend time interacting and being with the children is important. Peggy would love to spend more time greeting kids and saying goodbye but it does not ever work. Why? The number of Individual Education Plan (IEPs) that she needs to attend have doubled because she has to do IEP meetings at both schools. As a result, Peggy has to give away time at 8:30 a.m. for IEP meetings, when she might be at the door. She does not like not being able to be there and interact with students. Peggy shared that she has a little fourth grader, who she recently told, "I remember I used to call you giggles as you came through the door as a kindergartener." These kinds of relationships that she makes are important to her. It is also important to her that students know that when they come to the office it is serious but that they also see the side of her where she is interacting with them. This interaction is how she defines time.

Peggy's advice for new principals is not to come into the position and go gung ho. She shared that new principals come in and think they are going to be a change agent and want it their way. Peggy warned that you need to read the situation and do things gradually if things need to be changed. She recommends having an open door policy and a relationship with the community. Peggy shared the importance of knowing the community really well and finding somebody who has been around for a long time. She warned not to take everything that the person shares at face value because they might have an ax to grind. Peggy also recommended listening, walking around, observing, being dedicated to children and not your career.

Sophia Ward

Sophia Ward is a 41-year-old Caucasian woman who is married with a 2-year-old daughter. She always wanted to be a teacher. When she was little, she did things during the summer and went to church school. When she was in high school, she talked to the guidance counselor about career plans. Since she was good at and liked science, her guidance counselor advised her not to go into education because there would not be jobs in education. As a result, she ended up as biology major in a small liberal arts college. During college, she decided to pair her biology major with a psychology major. In her senior year of college, she realized that the only way anything could be done with a Bachelors of Science in Biology and Psychology was to go to graduate school. A University came to her college to recruit students and offered to pay her way in earning a Masters in Science in Special Education. The Masters degree allowed her to be a teacher like she always wanted to be.

Sophia taught for five years and during that time became interested in being a director of special education. An advisor at another University encouraged her to get her principal certification. Sophia did not think she wanted to be a principal and just wanted to stay in special education but decided to earn certification in both special education supervision and the principalship. During her fifth year of teaching, her principal became ill so Sophia filled in the position for a couple months, loved it, and has not looked back. Sophia is in her 13th year as an elementary principal and in her 8th year at her current school. Sophia has earned her letter of eligibility to be a superintendent. She is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership, at the university where she received her masters, and just needs to take her qualifying exams and write her dissertation.

Within her job as principal in a Pennsylvania suburban district, Sophia finds every single day to be different. She spends a good portion of her job meeting with people. These include district administrative meetings, IST and IEP meetings, teacher evaluation meetings, and teacher and parent

problem-solving meetings. District meetings include a twice a month administrative meetings, once a month elementary principal meetings, and once a month curriculum council meetings. She schedules school meetings, such as instructional support team (IST) meetings and individual educational plan (IEP) meetings, which allows her to control her time and calendar. She schedules IST meetings two or three times a month on Friday mornings, using the entire morning. Sophia also has IEP evaluation meetings, which are federally mandated, and she must attend. Within the area of school meetings, Sophia also needs to meet with teachers about their evaluations. During these meetings she meets with teachers to set goals and go over lessons that the teachers have done. She asks teachers to provide a lot of feedback on how they thought the lesson went and things that they would like to highlight. Sophia feels that it is important that she does a good job with her charge of teacher evaluation meetings. She meets with parents, teachers, and both parents and teachers to problem solve.

Out of all things that she does, the most important use of her time is setting up her time and finding that time to be with, see, and connect with kids. Sophia rarely has to meet with kids in the school about discipline issues so she structures other time to see kids. Once a week, she meets over lunch with the "Students of the Week," who are selected by each classroom. The goal is to have every student be a student of the week by the end of the school year. She uses the lunch meeting time to connect with the kids and get to know their names. Knowing students names helps to build connections with them. Sophia can say the names of all the fourth and fifth graders, and almost all of the third graders first and last names. She is now working on learning the kindergarten, first, and second graders names. This is taking time because there are so many new first graders. They also do a Monday morning newsstand sharing the weather and announcing events for the week from conference to the book fair. Another way she gets to meet kids is by announcing birthdays for the week. The birthday kids come to the office every Monday to get their birthday buttons. Sophia thinks that it is most important that she can connect with kids. She

makes an effort to keep herself honest about keeping track of her classroom participation and sticking to the guidelines that she sets for herself for classroom participation. Classroom visits help her to make connections with kids and teachers. While other principals might disagree with her, Sophia thinks that evaluation meetings and individual education plan (IEP) meetings are important. She wants to be a part of these meetings because they allow her to connect with people and build relationships. As a result, Sophia thinks anytime that she spends time with kids, parents, teachers working together to solve problems or to celebrate a success is important.

The least important use of Sophia's time is administrative meetings, which she feels are a waste of her time. It has nothing to do with the people at the meetings, whom she likes, or her superintendent, whom she adores, but, rather, feeling that there has to be a better way to structure the meeting time. During these meetings, she is frustrated by the amount of time spent discussing secondary issues, which do not apply to elementary level. These discussions are frustrating for her because she does not always see direct relevance in discussions. Sometimes she wishes that they would send information via e-mail and ask about their basic opinion rather than discussing it in meetings. Within these administrative meetings, policy reviews are important because she can give her input before policies are implemented but do not find it as exciting as building relationships.

Sophia manages her time by being a clock watcher, focusing others, not overscheduling herself, utilizing her secretary and e-mail. During meetings, she is a clock watcher and likes to help people cut to the chase and focus on the agenda of the meeting. She does not hesitate to refocus conversation or bring people back to agenda of the particular meeting. For example, when she has instructional support team (IST) meetings, they need to fit six meetings in a 3-hour meeting leaving 30 minutes for each meeting. Since parents often have to take time from their work to come to the IST meetings, Sophia does not think it is fair to make people wait as they might wait in a dentist or doctor's office. As a result, she does not

think it is appropriate to keep the talking going and kill the topic so she will let them know that they need to wrap it up. Since people know that about her, they do not drone on and on.

She also tries not to overschedule herself. Sophia's secretary is a wonderful scheduler. She saves time by having people go through her secretary to schedule appointments rather than going back and forth on e-mail to get something scheduled. Despite cursing it at times, Sophia thinks that e-mail is a great help because she can access it from home. This allows her to send or receive e-mail even when she is not at work. Sophia thinks the whole definition of work is really changing because technology is allowing things to become more blended. As a result, Sophia does not think that she could do the job of principal could be done without e-mail. While e-mail is a curse causing her to get 20 e-mail at once, she would rather have lots of e-mail because parents now rarely call her. Sophia does feel that you need to balance technology because relationships and connecting with folks is really important and not everything should be done through e-mail.

Sophia's view of time has changed over the last several years with age, experience, and prioritization. She thinks that as you get older every year, one really values every minute they have. When she first began as a principal, she was even more task focused and to-do list oriented than she is now because she felt obligated if somebody asked her to do something. Now she tries to not sweat the small stuff, worry about things she cannot control, let go a little more, and focus on what is important. This change in perspective has come from having responsibility to complete things. Each year she finds it more important to spend time building relationships with people. This is more important than anything else because she does not feel you can get the tasks done if the relationships have not been built. As a result, her idea of time has changed in where she spends her time.

Factors leading to this change in perspective about time include family and relationships as a priority. The importance of family has been a priority for Sophia but has been additionally impacted by

her two year old daughter. While family has always been number one for her, her daughter has reinforced that idea. She thinks that understanding priorities better and knowing that time spent with people will be remembered more than the other stuff that a principal does. As a result, she tries to spend time in the faculty room at lunchtime connecting with people but also eats in her office. This provides a relaxed give and take time with people.

Sophia has more control over her time than her teachers have because they have to schedule reading, writing, and math during a structured school day. In her role as principal, Sophia likes that every day is different, she has different meetings to attend and different people who she gets to meet. Within her control of her time, there are a lot of obligations and certain responsibilities that she needs to meet, do, and fit into her day. Whether she does these things at school or at home, they are under her control. Before working in her current district, she was a principal in a district with fewer externally imposed meetings. The district that she currently works in has administrative meeting, elementary principal meetings, curriculum council meetings, and half-day IST meetings which Sophia has to attend but does not have control over. When she began the principalship and saw all of the externally imposed meetings, she wondered how she would be able to do it. However, she was able to figure out how to do it. Outside of the externally imposed meetings, Sophia thinks she has a lot of control over her time.

She defines instructional leadership as being aware of what is going in the classroom, knowing the culture of the school or district, and providing teachers with leadership opportunities. As a result, Sophia spends a lot of time in classrooms because that is where it is at, where things come alive, and can be seen. Even if she is only able to be in a classroom for five minutes, she is able to get a tone for the classroom and a good feel for what is going on. Sophia can then build on the informal observations when doing the formal observations. She feels that the culture of the district and building is critical in determining the instructional leadership needs because no one person can be the instructional leader. In

her previous district, administrators needed to be the one with the ideas and needed to go into classrooms to help teachers implement new programs.

However, teachers in her current school have really good ideas about instructional practices and she looks to all teachers to be instructional leaders in their classroom. The coming together of the teachers and Sophia allows instructional leadership to be created in the building. The difference in school cultures was a shift for Sophia and required her to change her strategies for being an instructional leader. In her current school, Sophia looks to the teachers to be instructional leaders in their classrooms. As a result, Sophia tries to help and/or support them by creating leadership opportunities where they can run with their ideas. For example, this is the second year that the primary teachers are using a math program and they wanted to throw a parent night. The teachers planned the entire program and had 50 parents in the audience. Sophia thinks that the math program should hire them to go around the country selling the program because they did such a good job and she was so proud of them. Sophia's role in the parent night was meeting with the teacher who was the impetus behind and planned the parent night. She was an instructional leader in the parent night because she was supportive and a cheerleader for the implementation.

Sophia's definition of instructional leadership has been changed largely by coming to the district that she currently works in. The district really focuses on "teachers as leaders" and has helped her to understand the term. Her district also runs a professional development school (PDS) in coordination with a local University. The PDS has been an incredible avenue and mechanism by which teachers have risen in leadership positions. These leadership positions are informally designated and have allowed teachers to write curriculum addendums that have been implemented across the district. As a result, the teachers have done an incredible job focusing on inquiry and determining how they can do things better in their classroom. The inquiry process has helped them to ask great questions about their practice and how they

can do a better job with their instruction. As a result, Sophia does not need to go into classrooms and ask teachers why they are not doing a better job because the teachers are already asking themselves 20 questions. She thinks that the teachers' actions are incredible. Sophia worries a little about the teachers working in a high achieving district that always has to do better. She feels that it is important that they find a balance with looking at self improvement and not going overboard with it.

Her definition of instructional leadership has also changed from the external influences of expectations of standards and No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Sophia does not mind high expectations but does not think that it is statistically possible to have 100% of kids proficient by 2014. She finds it concerning that other people, who are not even educators, are trying to assume instructional leadership roles. Sophia wishes that they would get teachers together because they will tell policymakers what is needed. As an instructional leader, there is not a time when she meets with teachers and does not think they know the answer. Sometimes as an instructional leader she just has to help teachers find the answer.

Sophia is very frustrated by high stakes accountability and disagrees with the unrealistic expectations. The expectations are not always appropriate for the kids being served. Sophia's district has the luxury of having very high test scores because their clientele. However, her district does have a large group of limited or non-English-speaking students and students with learning disabilities, who test two years below their reading level. If a child cannot speak English, they cannot read it. It is not the fault of the students or the teachers. As a result, she has written instructional letters to the governor, secretary of education, and the legislators. Sophia also tries not to focus on the high stakes nature of the PSSAs or put pressure on teachers because they put so much pressure on themselves. She also tries to soft pedal the high stakes accountability because teachers are aware of accountability demands and do not need elevate their anxieties any more than they already are. While she does not discuss PSSA scores in a faculty meeting, she discusses the scores in small grade-level groups. The small groups allow them to discuss

what they need to do or where they need to celebrate. It also allows them to focus on the kids who are on the bubble and try to push them over the proficient level.

Sophia's role as an instructional leader has also been affected during graduate work towards her doctorate. Within her graduate work, she has been strongly influenced by her interactions with a Professor at the University. The Professor is someone that she has grown to respect and one of her favorite people. He has been instrumental in her thinking about what education is, what teaching is about, and what being a leader is about. As a rule follower, Sophia used to feel responsible to thoroughly complete teacher evaluation forms. If the form asked for three things that teachers needed to do better, she felt that she better tell them. However, the Professor really pushed her thinking and asked her why she was trying to control the evaluations because she did not have any control over it anyway. She realized that he was right because she is only in classrooms four times a year to do a formal observation. However, teachers are in the classrooms all the time, they need to be doing the reflecting and thinking. Sophia considers her conversations with the Professor as a defining moment in how she thinks about instructional leadership, supervision, and evaluation. Now, everyday she is in school, she learns something new or how to do something better.

Examples of how Sophia uses her times as instructional leader include classroom and teacher time, discussions about curriculum, and data collection. Sophia spends time in classrooms talking with teachers about how they are implementing new programs, curriculum, or standards. Related to curriculum discussions, Sophia meets with parents about curriculum, discusses in IST meetings how curriculum impacts how kids are learning, and asks questions about the curriculum. These questions include how is the curriculum impacting lower achieving kids who really struggle with learning? How are advanced students receiving the acceleration and enrichment that they need? Are students in between the low and advanced achieving students also achieving? Sophia also collects data on students'

achievement. This data collection includes district reading assessments, district learning records for reading, and PSSA scores. She then meets with the teachers to discuss kids who possibly might score basic on the PSSA and what they can do to help them these kids.

Sophia's availability or absence of time has impacted her professional practices as an instructional leader. She is always frustrated that she cannot spend more time in classrooms talking with teachers. Finding times when teachers and Sophia are both available to sit down and talk about things is difficult because they are busy teaching. Sophia often looks at her calendar and thinks that it looks pretty good because it does not contain back-to-back meetings. However, a number of different things can come up that she cannot plan for. A teacher or parent will come in and ask "do you have a minute," "I have a question," "can I see you for a second," or "could I come in"? These different situations make the job exciting because you do not know what will come through the door during a day. However, the unexpected makes it difficult to be able to plan time to spend in classrooms. Sophia cannot always do what she feels she needs to do and as a result puts more pressure on herself. She worries that people might feel frustrated that they could not see her during the day because she was in a meeting. They might wonder why she is sent to district meetings when she is needed at the school rather than at the meetings. However, technology has allowed people to always have access to her. Sophia is an immediate responder to e-mail and does not let e-mail sit in her inbox. She either responds to the message or does something with it so it is handled. Sophia thinks that prompt response to e-mail and telephone calls is an important communication piece because it helps people feel connected.

Time is defined by Sophia based on the words of a song "days and nights are long but the years are fast." When in the moment one wonders "I have to do this again" but when they look back in time they realize how long they have been in education, been a principal, or a parent. Time disappears in a

heartbeat and ones perspective on time changes based on where they are. Sophia thinks that it is important to appreciate the day-to-day stuff because time goes by so quickly.

In order for new or aspiring principals to use their time to be successful in the role, Sophia recommends not getting bogged down with the admin-is-trivia, carve out time on the calendar to be in classrooms and for yourself. She recommends getting to know the kids names because it helps to build connections with them. Sophia encourages new principals to be available for teachers at the beginning and end of the day, listen to the teachers, have fun with teachers, and spend time development relationships with a teacher who can be trusted. A trusted teacher can tell you like it is and give a principal heads up when there is a problem in the building so it can be dealt with before it gets bigger. Personally, she encourages new principals not to be too hard on themselves and not to worry about the small stuff. The principalship can be a hard job because you often do not know what hat needs to be worn at different times. The principalship is also an exciting job that a new principal should have fun with. During Sophia's first year as a principal, she stayed at school until midnight after putting in a full day. She did not feel she even knew what she did not know and did not feel she had a clue. Sophia also faced the challenge of assuming the role of principalship and being the youngest person on the staff. Mentors that she had in her previous and current district were very instrumental in her being successful in navigating the culture of the school district. As a result, Sophia recommends new principals seek out a mentor.

Stacy Spahr

Stacy Spahr is a 53-year-old Caucasian woman who is married with two school-aged children. When Stacy was in high school and college, she worked with elementary and middle school children in different aspects. She determined that she wanted to go into teaching and received a bachelor of science in elementary education. She is certified as a classroom teacher, as a reading specialist, and taught for 12 years. Stacy then took classes in counseling as an extra back-up to teaching and earned a masters degree. She also earned a masters degree in administration and entered the role of principal. Stacy has been a principal for 19 years. She has worked in three different schools in two different districts.

Table 8: Breakdown of a 9-Hour (8 a.m.–5 p.m.) Workday for Stacy

Description	Amount of Time	Percentage of Time
Student Contact	2 hours	22 %
Paperwork	2 hours	22 %
Teacher Questions	½ hour	5 %
Parent	1 hour	11 %
Discussions about Students	1 hour	11 %
Observations	½ hour	5 %
Meetings	1 hour	11 %
Miscellaneous	1 hour	11 %

Within her job as principal, if she broke a day into a nine hour block of time, student contact would take up the largest amount of time. She estimates that student contact involves 22% of her time. Interactions with parents involve 11% of her time. The amount of time spent for observations and teachers is about 10% of time, a much lower amount that she would ideally like to spend. Paperwork takes 11% of her time and involves anything that needs to be prepared, planned, or handled. Meetings in and out of the school related to educational matters, construction issues, or other topics take 11% of her time. The remaining 13% of her time is grouped under miscellaneous because she does not know where

that time goes other than to random and odd situations. Odd situations include setting up a playground, which the school did not have due to construction. Table 6 illustrates the number of hours and percentage breakdown of time during a nine hour school day for Stacy.

Stacy considers her time management strategies to be rather traditional in nature. Stacy likes to know what is happening during the day. This might include a meeting with grade level teachers about strategies to improve student comprehension. She makes to-do lists prior to the start of the day in order to look at and write out the big goals for the day. Stacy arrives early so that she can start the day out by taking care of things that can be handled before the main majority of people arrive. She also stays late to take care of the things that did not get handed. She arrives early and stays late so that her days are flexible and can be adjusted depending on the needs of the day. While she might have a specific goal on her to-do list such as watching lessons in classrooms, she might have to see students about bus behavior. There are a lot of opportunities attended to or missed based on the flow of the day. Her goal is to be willing and able to go with the needs of the students, parents, teachers, and whoever else is in the building.

The most important use of Stacy's time is interactions with people and the least important use of her time is paperwork. Anything related to interactions with the students, parents, or teachers is the most important use of her time and the aspect involving the highest priority. These interactions are important to Stacy because they set a climate for the school. The second highest priority is anything that has to do with instruction and improving instruction. It is important for her to have a conversation about a specific student and how to improve their instruction or to have a conversation about general comprehension strategies in the second grade. The least important use of Stacy time is paperwork. She shared that it needs to get done in order to function. However, she can push the paperwork to the side and get it done at 5, on Sunday afternoons, or at another time.

Stacy has accepted that there is never going to be enough time and there is never going to be a time when she is caught up with everything. She is realistic in the fact that she has never been able to complete all of the tasks that she feel need to be done. Over the years, she has learned that not everything can possibly go according to plan or that what expect will happen. She has also reflected on how to be more efficient with the time that she has. Stacy also thinks that she has learned a couple of tips over the years on how to be efficient with the use of time. However, she thinks that she has only learned some from experience and feels that there are more demands on her time. Stacy thinks that no matter what the crunch is, the most important goals need to get priority.

When Stacy looks at technology designed to save time, she realizes that it does not decrease the demand on time because it has increased the number of ways people can communicate. Technology increases the demand on time because there are more e-mail and voice mail messages to respond too. The increase in modes of communication has increased the demand on Stacy's time.

She feels that more time is being spent growing or improving what is done to help children succeed. The focus on children's success requires more time to develop plans, to talk about students, and to talk about developing more individualized plans for children. These child success focus talks take her time to interaction with parents, teachers, IST people, and counselors. As the needs of children increase, there are more demands on Stacy's time to meet new and continued needs.

Stacy feels that she controls her time usage but allows her time to be interrupted at times. Administrative controls include attendance at meetings with the superintendent or director of curriculum where certain things need to be handled. She knows that she will have "x" number of meetings with her superintendent and director of curriculum in a given period. Stacy does not find administrative meetings in her district to be excessive. When things are happening in the building, she could choose to shut her door and do whatever needs to be done. However, she is not going to choose that rather allow for things

that need her. As a result, while she controls the use of her time, she is going to allow for the needs of the parents, students, and teachers to take and need her time.

Instructional leadership is a high priority for Stacy because it helps to determine the success of students. She defines instructional leadership as helping teachers learn strategies to help students be successful. This might include big picture items like in-service or staff development that she plans or helps to plan. It also might include looking at grade level goals when looking at individual school improvement and asking what do they want to do to improve in a specific grade level. These grade level conversations include talking about individual students and how to help them be successful. As a result, instructional leadership goes from the big picture and funnels down to the individual student and involves many different pieces that fit together.

Examples of Stacy's instructional leadership include working with in-service groups and making presentations, talking to grade level groups to set goals, developing strategies for individual students, determining what works and what does not work in a lesson, and setting building goals and determining how they will be accomplished. She walks through classrooms and will sit down for 10 or 15 minutes to see what is happening. Stacy is able to use the time to talk to students, look at lesson plans and technology indicator plans. The new teachers require more intensive instructional leadership help. As a result, she attends teacher induction meetings with them and provides input during formal observation. Stacy also tries to help connect new teachers with other people who could possibly serve as coaches and help make sure they get the support they need. She tells teachers about books she is reading, shares books that would be a good resource for them, and shares article or newspaper clippings that taught about something new. Stacy feels that she needs to be attending workshops so she can learn what is happening in research, come back to school, and share it with her staff. The books, articles, and workshops help them to look at what needs to be done to move ahead. Stacy feels that teachers are happy when they hear her

talk about or share new resources. She feels that when instructional leadership is really in place, it involves teachers having the daily routine of having conversations about instruction.

Stacy does not think that her definition of instructional leadership has changed over the last several years but thinks it has become more intensified or targeted. She feels that instructional leadership has always been a key piece of why she is a principal. The reason that instructional leadership has intensified is due to the belief that all students can succeed and the needs placed on schools by state mandates. Stacy thinks that she is realizing that she needs specific skills as an individual and needs to know what the right pieces to follow. Within education, there are many areas that an individual, school, or district could go in. However, as an instructional leader they need to know the path that they are going to choose and help teachers choose or follow the right paths. The only way to know if you are following the right path is by staying in tune with what the research is saying. As an individual, an instructional leader needs to understand what the current research says and make appropriate choices so that they can lead everyone in the right path. As an instructional leader, you can also not lead them in the right path because they are swinging one way and then another way with the research. As a result, an instructional leader needs to keep a watch and know the path that they want to help people develop.

Her definition of instructional leadership has been affected by state mandates. Since the state mandates have been set, schools need to look at what else they can do and how it can be done. Sometimes this involves thinking again and becoming more efficient or effective. An example of state mandates in her school involves embracing Eileen G. Feldgus and Isabell Cardonick writing and materials in their book, *Kid Writing*²³. This work has led to teacher's embracing kids writing and has thus affected all

²³ *Kid Writing: A Systematic Approach to Phonics, Journals, and Writing Workshop* was written by Eileen G. Feldgus and Isabell Cardonick and published by the Wright Group in 1999 and 2002. The book

writing in kindergarten and first grade. While one book might really affect the way they look at a program, they do not generally pick a book and use it as the program. However, Feldgus and Cardonick's work was used and made a significant impact on all elementary writing. Stacy recommends instructional leaders being watchful of the current information, evaluate it, try it out, and pilot it in a small way before expanding it to be part of the program.

Stacy feels that her being available to the school community has had an impact on her practices as an instructional leader. She does not feel that she can choose to be absent minded. Stacy needs to make it a forefront to bring change and help make change more comfortable for people because some people are comfortable staying where they are. New ideas and thoughts bring imbalance so it is important for an instructional leader to reinforce efforts made to make change. Conversations about change help to make the change successful. As a result, if a principal does not have the time or has an absence of time then it is hard to be a leader let alone an instructional leader.

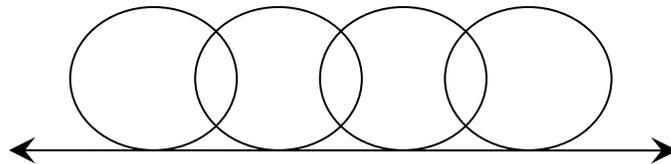


Figure 13: Time Defined as Intersecting Events for Stacy

Time is defined by Stacy as being an infinite thing and drew a picture to illustrate her conception, which is illustrated in Figure 13. She sees time as circles that keep intersecting each other almost like a

promotes that it can be to help to turn children who do not know the alphabet into “fluent, proficient, and confident writers” “by integrating phonics across instruction.” It is designed for the instruction of kindergarten through second graders but also promoted as being able to help English as a Second Language Learners and students in Special Education. Information about this book can be found at www.kidwriting.com.

van diagram. The reason that the circles intersect each other is because nothing is independent of each other in time. Every circle intersects because there is always a commonality between the things that are happening and there is never separateness between things. When working on one thing it is often impacting on something else, there is a common thread that one often does not realize until they identify the thread. In Stacy's case, her time is not just school time because she has a 6-year-old and an 11-year-old. When Stacy is at a soccer game for her child, she also may see a student or students at the game. As a result, the circles of professional time are also impacted by outside forces such as family and the circles are always intersecting.

Stacy's advice for new principal is to realize that there will never be enough time and when you choose what you do with your time, it is important to choose essential things to make a difference for students. This is important because the students are the reason that principals are at school and in their role. When the plan that you thought you had disappears, it is okay because the real plan is the students. Sometimes other paths not on a to-do list have to be taken to help the students.

Summary of Findings Regarding Suburban Principals

Suburban principals' responses were varied and diverse. However upon analysis, common themes can be found in their responses. The following sections look at suburban principals' responses to questions about time and instructional leadership.

Most Important Use of Time

Teachers mentioned four areas (school, teachers, students, and parents) as being the most important to their use of time. Two teachers, Alison and Geri, talked about the school as being an important use of time. Allison mentioned the building and classrooms and Geri talked about being visible in the school. Five teachers talked about teachers as being an important use of time. For Allison, it is being available to teachers and for Kathy, it is human interactions with teachers. Danielle and Geri mentioned about supporting the needs of teachers. Geri also talked supporting them by providing positive reinforcement. Peggy mentioned about reminding teachers to do what needs to be done for children and Sophia talked about working with teachers to solve problems or celebrate success. Five teachers talked about students as being an important use of time. Allison talked about being available to students, Danielle mentioned positively affecting kids' lives, and Geri talked about anything to do with the needs of children. Peggy mentioned making sure that everything is right for children's learning situation and it is safe because she is a child lover. Sophia talked about being with, seeing, and connecting with kids. Three teachers talked about parents being an important use of time. For Geri it is anything to do with the needs of parents, for Kathy it is the human interactions with parents, and for Sophia it is working with parents to solve problems or celebrate success.

Least Important Use of Time

Principals talked about office tasks, parents, and meetings as being the least important use of their time. Office tasks mentioned by five principals included documentation (Allison), managerial and organizational tasks (Geri), responding to e-mail (Kathy), and paperwork (Geri, Peggy, and Stacy). Danielle talked about nuisance complaints being the least important use of her time. Two principals, Allison and Peggy, talked about parents being the least important use of their time. For Allison it is rude or disrespectful parents and for Peggy it is their petty concerns. Two principals, Peggy and Sophia, talked about administrative meetings being the least important use of their time.

Time Management Strategies

The principals used very diverse strategies to manage their time. Three principals, Allison, Kathy, and Sophia mentioned their secretary being a strategy to manage time. For Sophia it is utilizing her secretary, for Allison it is providing the secretary with the appropriate training, and for Kathy it is utilizing the individual strengths of the secretary. Three principals, Allison, Danielle, and Stacy mentioned daily prioritization (Allison), reprioritization (Danielle), and going with the flow of the day (Stacy). Two secretaries talked about calendars or schedules. Danielle provides the PTA and teachers at each school with a calendar of events. Geri has a hardback schedule book of her appointments. Allison maintains her own schedule and Sophia tries not to over schedule herself. Three principals use lists and notes: Geri writes lists, Kathy writes notes as the day goes on, and Stacy writes to-do-lists prior to the start of the day. Two principals have read books to help manage their time, Geri read about the Covey System but did not share the name of the book and Allison read the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Covey. Two principals talked about “others” as a time management strategy, Kathy is learning to depend on others and Sophia focuses others by being a “clock watcher.” Two principals talked about

time management for e-mail, Geri mentioned color coding e-mail based on response need and Sophia talked about responding to e-mail from home. Danielle limits the number of staff meetings that her staff is asked to attend and has an agenda for meetings. She handles the demands on her time with a sense of humor. Geri utilizes sticky-tag management to write notes and reprioritize what needs to get done. She also has prioritizing baskets to manage paperwork. Kathy manages her time by staying positive. She likes to maintain a business environment, avoid negative conversations, limit time in social settings, and immediately follow-up on requests or questions. Last, Allison's school has good procedures for schoolwide discipline and thinks her experience as a principal has helped her to manage her time.

Factors Changing Time Perspective

The suburban principals shared factors changing their perspective of time over the last several years. These factors include pressures from standardized testing, experience, and continued education. Allison and Geri both mentioned pressures from standardized testing affecting their perspective on time. For Allison, it promoted a focus on instruction. Kathy's perspective on time was influenced when she moved from position of middle school assistant principal to position of elementary school principal. She found that a principal has more control over their time than an assistant principal. Age and experience has influenced Sophia's time perspective and taught her not to sweat the small stuff, worry about things she cannot control, and focus on what is important. Experience has also taught her to prioritize relationships and her family. Continued education has affected Kathy and Peggy's perspective on time. Continued education was complicated for Peggy because the year she had intensive graduate responsibilities, a second elementary school was also added to her responsibilities.

Factors Controlling or Influencing Time

When looking at factors controlling or influencing time, two distinct patterns emerged. First, four principals (Geri, Kathy, Sophia, and Stacy) felt that they controlled their own time. Kathy mentioned having more control over her time as principal than she had as vice principal. Sophia talked about having more control over her time than her teachers. Stacy discussed about controlling her own time but allowing that time to be interrupted. Second, all of the suburban principals talked about factors influencing their time. Four of the principals mentioned children influencing their time. For Allison it is specific special needs children, for Geri it is incidents that children are involved in, for Kathy it is the needs of the children, and for Peggy it is six children in one grade level with severe food allergies. Two principals talked about parents needs (Kathy) and the needs of the PTO (Allison). Two principals talked about teachers, Kathy mentioned addressing their needs and Danielle discussed acting as their cheerleader due to accountability demands. Danielle also mentioned mandates issued by the federal, state, and local government without financial support influenced her time because she needs to create databases and deal with larger class sizes due to lack of funding. Two principals, Sophia and Stacy, talked about meetings influencing their time. Lastly, Peggy discussed her time being influenced because she does not have full-control over one of her two schools.

Instructional Leadership Definition

Principals' definitions of instructional leadership had similarities and differences. Four principals (Allison, Danielle, Kathy, and Sophia) stated specific characteristics principals need to have in order to be instructional leaders. For Allison, it is not only talking the talk but being able to walk the walk. Danielle believes that the principal needs to be the teacher of everyone in the community. For Kathy, principals need to be professionally well-prepared to answer the educational needs of the school. Sophia believes

that the principals need to know the culture of the school or district. The principals' responses can be grouped into the instructional leader serving the best interests of the learner, learning, professional development, and instructional decision-making.

Peggy, Sophia, and Stacy talked about the instructional leader serving the best interest of the learner. As an instructional leader, Peggy encourages teachers to turn out a good child product and ensured that they are meeting the needs of all the children. Sophia believes an instructional leader needs to be aware of what is going on in the classroom and talk with teachers about curriculum. As an instructional leader, Stacy believes it is helping teachers learn strategies to help individual students be successful. Their ideas look at promoting teaching and learning conducive to the successful learning of all students.

Three principals (Danielle and Peggy) talked about the instructional leader serving the best interests of learning. Danielle see instructional leadership as a multifaceted model of what is expected of people and the positive manner for dealing with teaching children and staff because they are in this together and everything they do impacts instruction. Peggy also focused on the curriculum defining instructional leadership as ensuring that teachers are following and staying on track with the curriculum and making sure they go for appropriate training.

Three principals (Allison, Kathy, and Stacy) talked about instructional leaders serving the best interest of professional development. As an instructional leader, Kathy believes that the needs of the community can be served by continued professional development. Stacy meets these needs by helping to plan or planning in-service or staff development for teachers. Allison asks teachers their instructional needs for staff development, determines where she sees their needs, and then incorporates the two. She

then finds creative strategies to provide teachers with staff development opportunities and attends every staff development opportunity.

Four principals (Danielle, Peggy, Sophia, and Stacy) looked at the best interests of instructional decision-making when defining instructional decision making. Danielle has helped her teachers with instructional decision-making by giving them a pacing chart as a guideline to monitor progress. Peggy believes that a principal, as instructional leader, needs to take the lead instruction and make sure teachers are doing what they are supposed to do. Sophia comes together with teachers and providing them with leadership opportunities so they can run with different instructional ideas. She also uses data collection regarding district assessments and PSSA scores to aid in instructional decision-making. Stacy helps with instructional decision-making by talking with grade level groups to set goals and then works with individual teachers to determine what works in a lesson.

Changing View of Instructional Leadership

When looking at the cause of changes in perspective about instructional leadership suburban principals talked about moving to a different school or district, experience, the financial cuts affecting their roles as instructional leader. Three principals (Danielle, Kathy, and Sophia) talked about changes in school or district environment as being the cause for their change in perspective about instructional leadership. For Danielle, moving from one school to another has changed her role as an instructional leader. In her old school, teachers did not embrace her ideas for instructional leadership but her current school is better match in style and the teachers are hungry for someone to move them forward. Kathy also talked about moving from one school to another as affecting her role as an instructional leader. Her old school, where she worked as an assistant principal, did not allow her to do educational leadership as she wanted to. The district that Sophia currently works in focuses on “teachers as leaders” allowing teachers

to use inquiry to determine how to do things better in their classroom. As a result, as an instructional leader, Sophia does not need to go into classroom and ask teachers to do things better because they are already asking these questions. For Allison, experience has helped her to learn to focus on little pieces at a time, focus on what is important, focus on the intense needs in the building, and to provide ongoing support. These actions help her to act as an instructional leader in her building. The PSSAs and Cyber School has affected Danielle's role as an instructional leader. The high stakes testing is making it difficult for instructional leaders to provide learning support children with all they need in an environment of dwindling funds. The lack of financial support is also affected by the Cyber School which is taking away huge amounts of resources from the district.

Factors Affecting Role as an Instructional Leader

Factors affecting suburban principals' role as instructional leader include reading literature, graduate work, and PSSAs. Allison has done continued reading of research on literacy practices and school improvement as well as literature available from the state. Sophia's role as an instructional leader has been affected by graduate work and conversations/interactions with a faculty member in the graduate program. For Allison, the PSSAs and scores on the PSSAs are always on the school's mind but she likes to look at the scores over time. She hopes that the emphasis on the PSSA will help them to improve instructional practices. For Geri, she can no longer negate the PSSAs and has had to cross-over to help teachers accept the testing. For Kathy, NCLB has made her pay attention to statistics and the outcomes of PSSA. She now needs to read reports so she can help teachers understand strengths and weaknesses in the building. Kathy has become a champion of curricular designs, anchor assessments, and triggers to stay on target with the standards. While Kathy has become a champion of these needs, her personal bent is to promote social and emotional needs of the children. For Peggy, the PSSAs is also

affecting her role as instructional leader and ensuring that more is being done for the lowest achieving children. As a result, she reminds teachers to look at children on an individual basis to move them forward. For Sophia, the unrealistic expectation of high stakes accountability is very frustrating. As an instructional leader, she does not discuss PSSA scores in a faculty meeting but does discuss them in small grade-level groups.

Availability or Absence of Time for Instructional Leadership

When discussing the availability or absence of time affecting instructional leadership, the suburban principals discussed frustrations with not having enough time. Allison's frustrations stem from a time consuming learning support classroom and additional responsibilities given by the superintendent. Peggy's frustrations stem from having two elementary schools. Peggy does not feel that she has enough time to act as an instructional leader because of a personal crunch of her time, which is beyond her control. Sophia's frustrations stem from not being able to spend more time in classrooms talking to teachers. She struggles to find time when she and the teachers are both available to sit down and talk. This is because teachers are busy teaching and she needs to respond to different meetings or handle different situations. Rather than discussing their personal time constraints, Danielle, Kathy, and Stacy discussed how district policies or procedures create time challenges. Danielle is frustrated that her district superiors like to adopt new programs each year and find time to do things over again but never find the time to do it right. She believes that it is important to look at how to spend time so it is effective and encourages her teachers to work smarter not harder. Kathy is frustrated that building administrators do not have enough time to share ideas and concepts with teachers in building meetings, small group meetings, and for feedback. Stacy expressed frustration in that she does not have the option of not having the time or being absent minded. As principal, Stacy has to be at the forefront to bring change, share new

ideas and thoughts, help make change comfortable for others, and encourage conversations about change so it is successful.

Time Defined by Principals

Definitions of time are varied and diverse but some commonality and differences can be found in the information shared. For example, Allison shared that time is the same every day and never changes; however, Sophia feels that an individual's perspective on time changes based on where they are. This definition of time can be seen in Geri's life stage and definition. Geri talked about being tired and someone younger with more energy coming to the job. As a result, for Geri, time is not a frame of hours but, rather, the amount of energy available to do the job. Allison shared the importance of using time in the best manner, which is similar to Danielle's thoughts on the importance of not being wasteful with time. This idea of using time in the best matter and not being wasteful with it is similar to Sophia's perspective of appreciating day-to-day activities because time goes by so quickly. Rather than looking at appreciation, Danielle looked at respecting time by writing off the negatives and saving the positives. Sophia saw time as a gift that needs to be enjoyed and respected because it disappears. Sophia also talked about time disappearing in a heartbeat. Kathy and Stacy provided a more theoretical definition for time. Kathy sees time as something fluid that people cannot get their hands on. Stacy shared that time is infinite connecting circles showing that there is not a separate but, rather, a commonality between things because nothing is independent. She then put this theoretical example into practice sharing how it applied in her personal and professional life.

Advice for New Principals

The suburban principals offered advice for new principals. Danielle talked about spending more time as a teacher and making sure to enter administration for the right reasons. Kathy also felt that it is

beneficial to have experience as an assistant principal. Once in the position, Peggy recommends not becoming gung-ho to make changes rather than reading the situation to determine what changes need to be made and making them gradually. Three principals talked about finding a mentor. Allison believes that a new principal should find a good mentor within the system to learn expectations of job, parents, and community, which will prevent the new principal from being blind-sided. Peggy recommends finding someone, who has been around for a long time, to go to for help but to be careful not to listen to everything they say because they may have an ax to grind. Sophia suggested finding a mentor and developing a relationship with a teacher who can be trusted. Geri and Sophia talk about the new principal's spirit. Geri recommended their following their passion and Sophia encourage them to have fun in the new position and with teachers. Within the building, Peggy and Sophia had recommendations. Peggy encouraged new principals to build a relationship with the community, have an open door policy, listen, walk-around, observe, and be dedicated to children rather than your career. Within the building Sophia encouraged new principals to be available to teachers at the beginning and end of the day and listen to teachers. Kathy and Sophia talked about getting the job done. Kathy encouraged new principals to ask questions, be self-reliant, and think outside the box. Sophia encouraged new principals not to get bogged down with "admin-is-trivia." She also encouraged them to carve out time on the calendar to be in classrooms and for themselves. Sophia also recommends new principals not to be too hard on themselves. This advice is very similar to Stacy's advice of acceptance. Stacy encouraged new principals to accept that there is never going to be enough time and spend their time doing the essential things to make a difference for students.

CHAPTER 6: URBAN PRINCIPALS

Background Information about Urban Principals

Seven of the 22 principals interviewed for this study work in urban school districts. The urban principals' personal backgrounds have a lot of similarities. All of the principals are Caucasian but were not selected based on their ethnicity or gender. Four of the principals are male and three principals are female. Their ages range from 53 to 62 years of age. Five principals are in their fifties and one is in their sixties. One principal did not list his age but appears to be 40–60 years of age. Two of the principals are single with no children, and five of the principals are married with one to four children. The ages of the children range from 18 to 36 years old.

The principals' educational experience is very varied and diverse. Unlike the rural and suburban school districts, none of the principals have associates degree. All of the principals have Bachelor of Science degrees ranging in subject area from education (one principal), elementary education (two principals), mathematics (one principal), and social studies (one principal). One principal did not indicate what her Bachelor of Science was in. One principal did not include information about his Bachelors degree but it is assumed that he has one because he holds a Masters Degree. Their Masters degrees also differ. Two principals have Masters of Science, one is in counselor education, and one is in educational leadership. Five of the principals have Masters of Education in education, speech pathology, educational administration, and reading/language arts. Additionally, two principals have their doctorates. One principal has his D.Ed. in Educational Administration and the other principal has her Ph.D. in Administrative and Policy Studies.

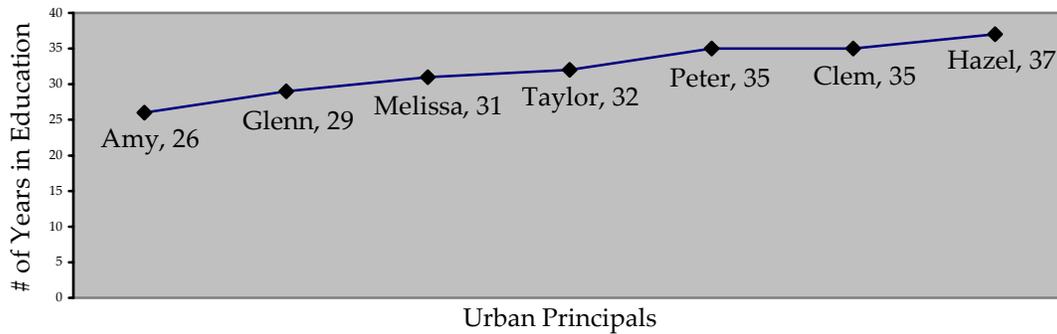


Figure 14: Urban Principals Number of Years in Education

The professional experiences of the principals differed. Their total number of years working in education range from 26 to 37 years. Figure 14 illustrates the individual principals' varying number of years' experience in education. All of the principals have only worked in education. They have worked in a total of one to five school districts. Four principals have worked in one district, one principal has worked in two districts, one principal has worked in three school districts, and one principal has worked in five school districts.

The principals have experience as a teacher ranging from 3 to 30 years. The principal, Peter, who had taught for three years, was also a school counselor for 12 years. Figure 15 illustrates the individual principals' experience as a teacher.

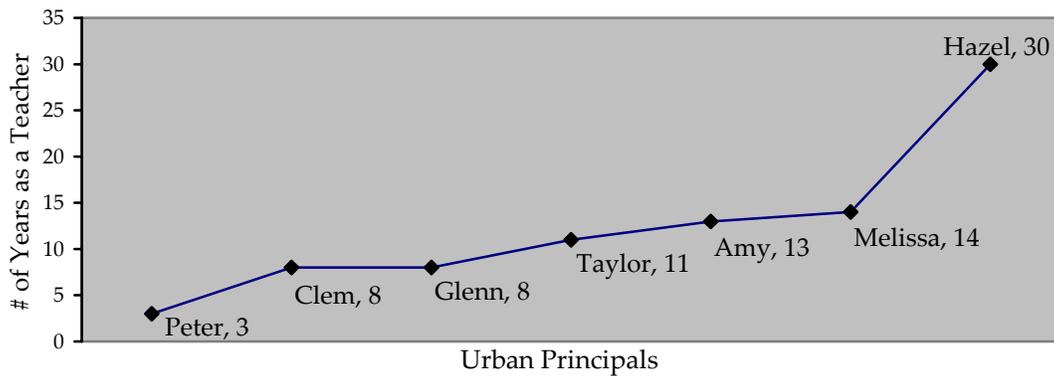


Figure 15: Urban Principals Number of Year Experience as a Teacher

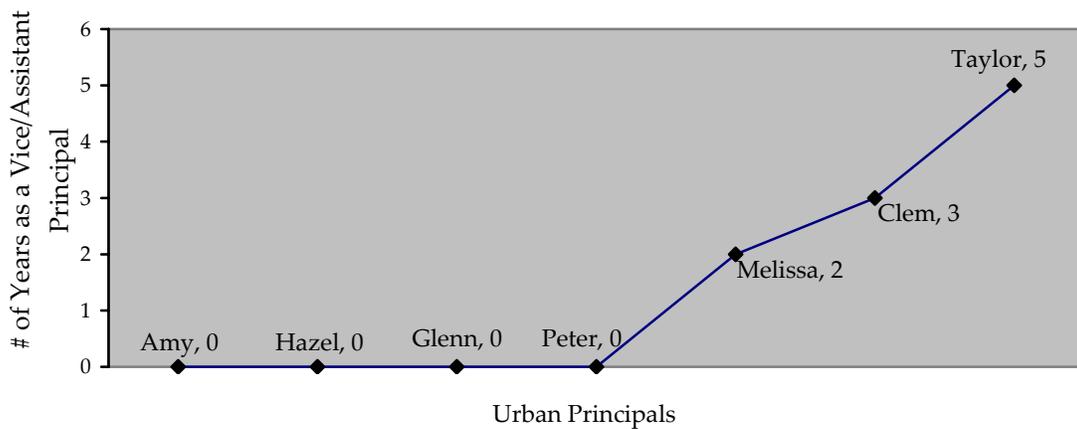


Figure 16: Urban Principals Years Experience as a Vice/Assistant Principal

The urban principals service as an assistant or vice principal ranges from no experience to five years (four have no experience, one has two years, one has three years, and one has five years). Figure 16 illustrates the individual principals' experience as an assistant or vice principal.

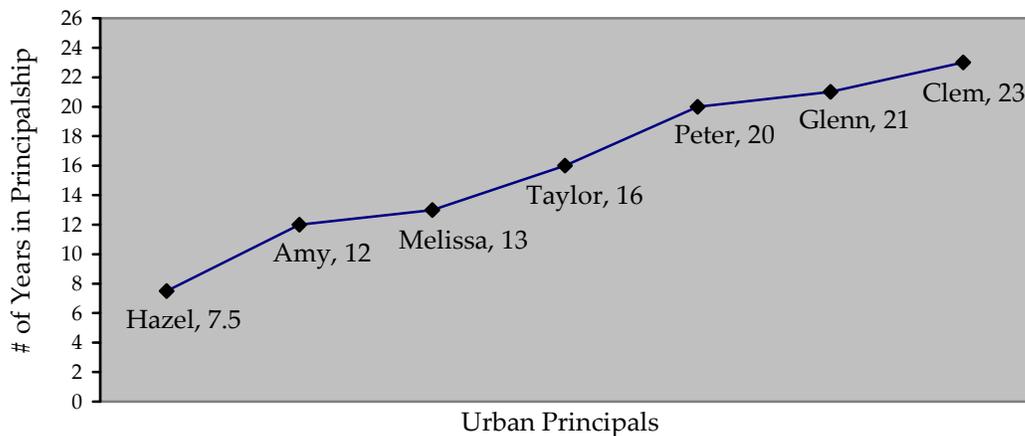


Figure 17: Urban Principals Years of Experience in Principalship

Total experience as a principal ranges from 7 and a half years to 23 years. Clem and Melissa are the only principals, who have worked in their current position for their entire experience in the principalship. Principals' experience in their current position ranges from half a year to 23 years. The differences between current experience and total experience in the principalship range from half a year to 10 years. Figure 17 illustrates the individual total years of experience as a principal and figure 18 illustrates the individual experience as a principal at their current school. Unlike principals in the suburban and rural districts, all of the urban principals are responsible for one school.

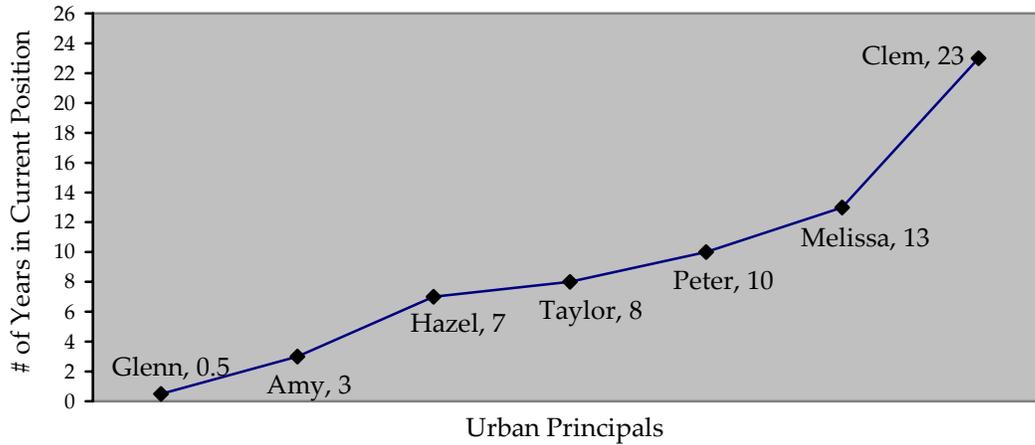


Figure 18: Urban Principals Years of Experience in Current Position

A summary of the information shared in this section are listed in table 9 and table 10. Table 9 provides background information and table 10 describes education, certification, and personal information.

Table 9: Urban Principals Background Information

	Amy Myers	Hazel Cavalerie	Glenn Andrews	Dr. Melissa Raegel	Dr. Peter Mundy	Taylor Sykes	Clem Rosser
# of years in position of principal	12	7.5	21	13	20	16	23
# of years in current position of principal	3	7	0.5	13	10	8	23
# of schools you are currently responsible for	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
# of years in position of vice or assistant principal	0	0	0	2	0	5	3
# of years as teacher	13	30	8	14	3 - teacher 12 - counselor	11	8
Total # of years worked in education	26	37	29	31	35	32	35
Total # of schools worked in	6	5	8	9	3	17	5
Total # of districts works in	5	2	3	1	1	1	1
Ever worked in another career. If yes, career	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Table 10: Urban Principals Education, Certification, & Personal Information

	Amy Myers	Hazel Cavelerie	Glenn Andrews	Dr. Melissa Raegel	Dr. Peter Mundy	Taylor Sykes	Clem Rosser
Associate degree							
Bachelors of	Science in Elementary Education	Science in Social Studies	Science in Education	Science in (not listed)	Science in Elementary Education		Science in Math
Masters of	Masters of Education in Education	Science in Educational Leadership	Education in Educational Administration	Education in Reading and Language Arts	Science in Counselor Education	Education in Speech Pathology	Education in Foundations of Education
Doctorate				Ph.D. in Administrative & Policy Studies	D.Ed. in Ed. Admin.		
Administrative Certification	Administrative Certification	K-6 Elementary Principal	Educational Administration	Elementary education, Reading specialist, Supervisor, Admin. K-8, Letter of Eligibility	Administrative Supervisory Counseling	Education of the Multiply Physically Handicapped Elementary Administration Secondary Administration	Elementary administration Letter of Eligibility Secondary Education Math teaching
Ethnicity	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian	Caucasian
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male	Male
Age	58	62	54	53	Not listed	53	57
Marital status	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Married	Married
Age of children	31, 32, 33, 36	No children	19, 23	No children	25	18, 24, 27	22, 29, 31

Amy Myers

Amy is a 58-year-old Caucasian woman, who is married with four children in their 30s. She shared that in her family there was no option about going to college, you just went to college. She got into education because of her father. He ran the maintenance department at a local University and convinced Amy that she would be a good teacher because she always related well to kids. While Amy had wanted to go into the sciences and research, she followed her dad's suggestion. She feels that it was a really good move for her because she loves her job. Amy earned a degree in Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education, a Masters of Education in Education, and is certified in administration.

She was in the classroom as a teacher for 10 years and taught every grade level, except first grade, full-time. Amy was then given a "quasi-administrative" position, where she worked for three years, running a state initiative supporting the inclusion of special education kids. She was selected for the position because they knew that she would be very self-motivated to find the information that they needed. In the position, she collected data, provided training to districts, and also designed, developed, and presented her own staff development. The position also provided her with the opportunity to do work at the national level. As a result of the position, she knew that she wanted more of a leadership role. This was not surprising for her because Amy knew when she went into teaching that she would probably end up in a leadership position.

Amy currently works in a Pennsylvania urban school district and is responsible for a school catering to a very low socioeconomic population. She has been a principal for 13 years, the last 3 of which were spent at her current school. During her career, she has worked in six different schools in five districts. For Amy, the principalship is one of those jobs where you walk in with the list of what you hope to complete for the day but the priorities have to get reshuffled because of the unexpected happening. Amy acknowledges that in the role of principal, nothing is ever finished or cleaned up at the end of the

day. She shared that a principal has to be satisfied in knowing that they did all that they could do in a day and to carry forward to the next day those tasks which could be completed. Amy believes that managing the building is the easiest part of the job but the tough part is finding time to truly be the educational leader. It is difficult to find time to be the educational leader because the management can override other aspects of the job of principal. However, Amy believes that her main purpose as principal is to make sure that all students and teachers achieve.

She walks in the building 6:30 or 7 in the morning and often finds that someone is coming into to see her in five minutes, something unexpected happens, or kids start arriving at 7 when they are not supposed to arrive until 7:30. As a result, her day is very busy from the beginning of the day. Before the major onslaught of people arrive in school or come into her office, she uses this time to gather her thoughts, organize what happened the previous day, and finishes what she may not have finished from the previous day. Amy also tries to use her morning time to organize her thoughts for the day, determine what is on her calendar or scheduled, and what she wants to get finished on the “when you have time” list. She thinks that it is important that she is aware of her building, knows what she might face during the day, and where she can fit in important paperwork or reports that need to be done.

Items on the “when you have time” list include items related to Title One, report cards, student assessment cards, and information for Child Study Team Meetings. The school staff writes their own plans for Title One and needs to keep a lot of data for data analysis. Teachers turn in report cards and testing information for her to screen. They also turn in assessment cards, which provide data on each child, so Amy knows what the children are doing. Amy also needs information on specific children regarding where they are struggling socially, emotionally, or academically for Child Study Team Meetings.

Her district has two different start times, early and later, for elementary schools. Her school is a late start school beginning at 9 a.m. The majority of students are walkers but there are two buses that drop off students. Amy thinks that it is really important for the principal to be seen by parents greeting the kids at the beginning of the day. She makes statements and asks questions, including, "Good morning, I'm glad you're here," "Did you have breakfast?" "How are you doing?" and "Whatcha do last night?" Her ability to greet students and have them greet her allows relationships to form so they know that she cares about them but mean business when they do something wrong and have to come in and see her. While she thinks it is important to see and greet students at the start of the day and tries to be as consistent as possible in doing so, it is not always possible.

The greeting of students does not always happen because the morning "greeting time" from 8 – 8:20 is when teachers have planning time and are able to have meetings with parents. During this time, Amy also has parents who pop in at the last minute. Since meeting with parents is important, she usually tries to see them and attend to them immediately. Once in a while, when she is unable to meet with parents, she asks if they can wait or reschedule. Amy also has kids who come to the office and want to see her. She makes a point to see them as soon as she can but often there is a back-log of people waiting to see her. The school day begins at 8:20 and a late bell rings at 8:30. Once the school starts and everyone is in the building, Amy takes a walk-through of the building. This allows her to see if there are any questions and see if kids and teachers on task and in their room. Amy believes she works in a great school and as a result does not have any problems with people not being on-task.

After walking through the building, she then looks at the meetings on her schedule. Meetings typically range from those in the building with grade level teachers, individual teachers, aides, and those outside of school for district topics of special education, curriculum, and staff development. Amy shared that she does a good bit of staff development at her school and works with the teachers. Her district is

very poor, does not have a lot of money for staff development. They have written a couple of grants allowing outside instructors to come to the school, however, this is typically not possible. As a result, the majority of staff development training needs to come directly from Amy. Amy knows that it is not always the case that principals do staff development. However, as a principal, she believes that she needs to be a leader in many ways.

Other appointments include those for teacher observation. These are scheduled with the teacher because Amy wants them to be prepared for the observation and show her the best that they can do. If she does not see their best then she knows that she has a lot of work to do. If she goes into the classroom and sees their best then she knows that the potential is there and she can expect to see it all the time. However, Amy does not feel that she is in the position of principal to surprise teachers or find what is wrong. Rather she is in the position to see what is good and what she can do to make it better. Amy shared that this example of teacher observation illustrates her philosophy of education.

During the school day, Amy is pretty strapped taking care of or managing the school, putting out a fire, helping or supporting a parent, a kid, or a teacher with a problem. Amy feels that parents, kids, and teachers will work for her, if she works for them. Parents, kids, and teachers know that her door is always open and unless she is tied up with something, she will make herself available if they need to see her. She believes that supporting and being available is part of her job. Sometimes it requires paperwork to be put on the backburner during the school day.

Towards the end of the day, Amy likes to be visible to parents again as the kids leave. After school, around 2:45 p.m., Amy has a variety of meetings including child study meetings, special education meetings, staff meetings, or district meetings. Since the special education and kindergarten teachers do not have itinerant time built into their schedules, they often need to have child study or special education meetings after school. Her work day technically ends at 4 p.m. but unless she had a

doctors' appointment, she has never left at four p.m. Typically, she stays until 5 or 5:30 but sometimes will stay until 9 o'clock. The length of her school day is dependent on what needs to be done.

The two most important uses of Amy's time is training and loving. Training and loving is important because the number one reason that kids achieve is their teacher. Another impact on students' achievement is the level of education of their mother. Since the majority of the mothers in the school did not receive an education past high school, Amy feels that illustrates the importance of the teacher. It is also important to Amy that she help teachers to be the best that they can be. Due to the issue of time, she does not expect teachers to go and find the information that they need. As a result, when she sees an assessment or information about best techniques for teaching, she will pull the information together and work with teachers. Amy is proud of her efforts because of the great gains that have been made at her very poor school.

In regards to loving, she feels that it is important that the kids know that she cares about and is there for them. Her ability to show care for the students aids in the role of disciplinarian. Amy also wants her loving to permeate through the building with teachers. She instills in the staff the importance of nurturing and welcoming to students in the classroom. Amy does not feel that you can open the heart of a child to learn unless they know you are willing to give them love and nurturing. Since the majority of the students come from very low socioeconomical homes, Amy believes that they do not get a lot of love or nurturing at home. As a result, it is very important to Amy to love and nurture students.

Paperwork and griping by parents are less important uses of Amy's time. Amy feels that these are two kinds of paperwork. The first is useful paperwork that allows her to plan and implement the vital and necessary tasks of running the school. The second is the administrative paperwork for outside agencies, which she frustrates her. For example, she has to do paperwork for United Way but feels that it is a hassle of her time because she is not a collection agency. However, Amy knows that this paperwork

needs to be done for political survival to ensure that her school gets what it needs. While she might wonder if a parent griping is a waste of her time, she knows that it is needed. If parents know that you are on their side, they will feel that their kids are better off in school and will support the school. As a result, she does not know if anything that she does is a waste of her time.

Strategies that Amy uses to manage her time include awareness, prioritizing, planning ahead, arriving early, staying late, working through lunch, dealing with paperwork, and logging telephone calls. Amy shared that the best laid plans of a principal are rarely fulfilled. As a result, her awareness of building issues and what she might face during the day helps her prioritize when plans cannot be followed amidst many daily interruptions. Amy plans ahead by coming to school as early as 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, taking bites of lunch while working, and leaving late sometimes staying until 9 o'clock at night. She keeps a record of where, when, and at what time her meetings are. Amy has paperwork in priority stacks that she finds times to do before school, after school, and during uninterrupted moments. She logs received and returned telephone calls to ensure documentation and prevent things from coming back to haunt her.

For the most part, Amy feels that she is controlling her time usage because she has the autonomy to run her building. She feels that time usage pressures for principals come from internal pressures. However, that does not mean that there are not factors influencing what needs to be done. She is required to do certain things that sometimes come under the "guise" of the superintendent or the assistant superintendent. Amy wishes that the assistant superintendent, who is the leader of the 10 elementary principals in the district, would pull together the wealth of knowledge and strengths among principals. This would reduce jealousy among principals and would increase resources and information in the district. She gets frustrated that the leadership above her in the district is not leadership in which she believes. Her beliefs differ because she believes that you feed people honey rather than pouring vinegar

all over them. Amy does not think it is effective to try to order or control people by saying “you’d better do “x” or I will”

Instructional leadership for Amy involves being the leader of the building. The leader has the responsibility to know and understand the building, the people, and the delivery of the information and curriculum to the kids. As an instructional leader, she is responsible to know the curriculum, know the newest techniques for teaching, ensure teachers know curricular information, and share or provide curricular information with teachers.

Examples of her role as an instructional leader include a professional library, book studies with teachers, observations, and working with teachers. Amy has a professional library, which is open to teachers who are welcome to use the library at anytime. She values the library as a method to continually learn. When teachers go to Amy for information, she helps them pick out the best sources that they could use on their own time. Amy has done book studies with teachers but she has found that they require a huge amount of time. Book studies were hard for teachers to do because they have families. Teachers will come to Amy and ask for her help. They might share that they cannot get through to the kids and ask her to sit down with them to plan something. When Amy sees a teacher faltering, she will tell them to come to her office so they can work together to plan a lesson. She will then model the lesson for the teacher or find someone to model the lesson. Even if she is not helping to plan the lesson, Amy will also go into a teacher’s classroom and teach so that the teacher can observe her teaching and gain a concept of the technique.

While Amy is very comfortable with instructional leadership and the curriculum, she shared that she has colleagues who are “clueless” about curriculum and special education. She thinks this is wrong and such individuals should not be hired. However, in the political environment of schools, she knows

that the best people do not always get the job. Amy feels fortunate to have a fantastic curriculum director, who is there to support principals districtwide and help those without clue

Even as a teacher, Amy believed that schools need to be accountable for what is done in the classroom and as a principal believes very strongly in the importance of accountability. She feels strongly about learning better ways to teach kids by using good assessments to know that kids understood what was taught. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has allowed things to turn in the direction of accountability. She does not think that NCLB is a bad bill but thinks that there needs to be responsibility in looking at the “reality” of the bill. Amy does not think it is possible for everyone to be proficient or advanced by the year 2016 because there are not going to be only bright people in the world. Students in special education have individual education plans (IEPS) because they are delayed two or more years and cannot do what other kids do. She is frustrated by being told she needs to have scores in the top range when she does not have the kind of students capable of generating those scores. Amy feels that score generation and score weight are the factors that are hurting some schools. However, she does think that schools have to more accountable and people more responsible with children.

However, Amy does not believe that accountability mandates are encouraging her to take more of a role in instructional leadership because she has always felt very strongly about it. As principal, it is her job to lead teachers in the direction of accountability, understand what teachers are teaching, and how the curriculum needs to be taught. While she realizes that this belief is not the case with a lot of principals, she understands that instructional leadership has always been her niche. She believes that she knows the curriculum, knows how to teach it to teachers, and how to teach it to kids. Amy shared that her teachers view her as a “teacher of teachers.” As a result, she has gained respect for knowing these sorts of things. She does not think she knows everything and knows that there are teachers who can show her things. However, as the leader, she wants to show teachers, model for teachers, and have teachers

follow her lead. Amy wants teachers to read, learn, try, retry, and do what is best for kids so they achieve at their maximum potential.

Factors influencing instructional leadership perspective came from her experiences as a teacher, as a quasi-administrator, and as a parent. As a teacher, Amy always wanted to be the best that she could be. She believes that if students like the teacher then they will work for the teacher, if a teacher motivates the students then the students will want to learn. This encouraged her to look for the ways that she can motivate students to want to learn. As an avid reader, she ordered piles of books so she could learn about the best practices for the kids. As a teacher, she really went out of her way to learn and help kids. She saw lots of people who choose not to do that and did what was the easiest for them. However, Amy believes that job is to do what is best for the kids. Within her role of principal, she will go into classrooms and reinforce what teachers were doing correctly or show them what they were doing wrong. While she never had this experience as a teacher, she would have loved for someone to have come in and helped her. In the role of principal, Amy wants to help teachers. As a parent, Amy is also driven to be an instructional leader because she would want her children to have a teacher or principal like her; someone who is caring, driven, demanding, loving, and wants students to achieve to their potential.

The availability or absence of time has not had an impact on Amy's role as an instructional leader. Since instructional leadership is something that she values and feels is important, she finds the time to be an instructional leader. Often her finding time requires her to work very long hours and not have a life outside of school. Amy feels that this is possible because as a principal you are either going to be married to your job or married to your family. She admits that she is married to her job but shared that the marriage is possible because her kids are grown. Amy does not know how someone with young children would be able to do the job of principal because her family has always been very important to her. Since her family is grown, she has the time to dedicate to the job.

Time, is defined by Amy, as a gift that is given and used either wisely or unwisely. Using time wisely does not mean trudging away at the mill every waking hour. Individuals need to determine when they have had enough or when they need to forge ahead whether or not they want to. Amy feels that it is important to think about how time can be used wisely because once time is gone, an individual cannot get it back the next day. It is important that an individual has a little bit of time of time each day for themselves, whether exercising or with their family, in order to remain sane. In the role of the principalship, time for the individual does not happen.

Amy recommends that new principals learn from their mistakes, use good judgment, avoid a big ego, try not to be overly ambitious, be a team member, support teachers, be knowledgeable about special education and curriculum, and be aware of politics. When Amy was a new principal she would make her best attempt at what she was doing and knew that if she was not doing it correctly that someone would tell her. She believes this is possible because educators want to teach. As a new principal, she once did a report for Title I and then received a phone call letting her know that a specific section was not done correctly and needed to be redone. This taught Amy to use her good judgment in her work. Amy warns that new principals should not be overly ambitious or have too big of an ego when working with their staff. New principals need to remember that they are also a team member and not a dictator. This is important to remember because people will work for a team but they will not want to work for a dictator. As a team member, new principals should tell their staff that they want teachers to be successful and they are not looking to damage anyone's career. New principals should encourage their staff to keep learning so they can become the best teachers, allowing schools to have successful kids. Amy also encourages new principals to be aware of and knowledgeable about special education and the curriculum because they are both important components of the principalship. She also warns those new to the position to be aware of the politics and find sources of support.

Clem Rosser

Clem Rosser is a 57-year-old Caucasian male, who is married with three children ranging from 22 to 31 years of age. As an undergrad, Clem went to a university in Pennsylvania where he began majoring in chemistry. After the first semester, he switched into mathematics. After the third semester, he switched into math education, where he found his niche. For Clem, money was not a factor in the decision. He selected math education because he really enjoyed teaching at the time, felt he had a certain gift, and really liked children. Clem earned a Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics and received certification in secondary education and the teaching of mathematics. He taught middle school (sixth, seventh, and eighth grade) math in a public housing or project community in the north side of same city where he went to college. His first year's salary was \$7,600. He was born and raised in New York City and is comfortable in an urban environment. Although teaching in a project area was a challenge, he enjoyed the work and saw that he could help students in a classroom setting. After teaching for eight years, he realized that he would have a bigger impact on students in administration. Clem earned a Master's of Education in the Foundations of Education and received certification in Elementary Administration and a Letter of Eligibility for Superintendentcy. He worked as an assistant principal for three years before entering the role as principal.

Clem is in his 23rd year as principal at his current urban school. He is responsible for one elementary school. Seventy-eight percent of the students receive free and reduced lunch and 53% of the students are African American. Due to his length of service at the school and the low turn-over of teaching staff, except for retirement, he knows that he is in a rather unique situation. As a result, the staff knows him and he knows them very well. Another advantage is that his former students are now parents. While Clem has worked in five schools, he has spent his entire 35 years in education in the same school district.

A typical day for Clem begins around 6:15 in the morning. He enjoys listening to technology Pod Casts on the drive to work. Clem listens to music and Pod Casts on his iPod. Once at school, the first thing he does is check his Macintosh for software updates and iTunes for downloads and Pod Casts. He then looks at his daily e-mail on his Dell Computer and prepares his morning e-mail to send to his staff. Clem checks to see if items are still relevant, what needs to be added, and finds a quote of the day, which his staff likes to read. Around 7:30 a.m., he is in the hallway waiting for the students, who come in from the outside for breakfast. Breakfast is served to students at 7:35 a.m. He stays in the hallways until the bell rings at 8:10 a.m. and welcomes the kids into their classes. Once school starts, he works with students doing daily announcements on the PA system and adds his gems. After the announcements, he sits down to prioritize his day figuring out what he has to do or where he has to be. He hopes that he does not have meetings the whole day, which require him to be outside of the building. If he does not have meetings, Clem then walks the halls to make sure that classes are operating okay. When he wants a little downtime, he goes to the technology room because he loves to learn technology. Learning more and more from the technology specialist is a labor of love. The school does not often have discipline problems but when there are problems, he will go to the in-school suspension room, which is supervised by an aide, to see what students are there. Unless Clem has evening meetings, he will stay at the school until 5 or 5:30 p.m. at night.

He spends the majority of his time outside of his office and usually does not spend much time sitting in the office. The time that he does spend in his office is usually interrupted by some type of phone call or dilemma. Examples of "issues" on the day of the conversation that Clem did not have control over was a teacher, secretary, and technology systems specialist being out of school and Clem needing to find a sub for the teacher. While he has a lot of faith in his staff, a lot of his time is spent on instructional leadership. There are some meetings that he has to leave the building to attend. Clem has been receiving

more invitations to meetings because he has the fortune or misfortune to be president of the local Administration Association, a position that he has held since 1988. As a result, he depends upon his staff quite a bit. There is a lot of technology in the building. He loves technology as a tool and has kept busy learning more about technology. In the 2005-06 school year, Clem had an administrative practitioner who took over a lot of his responsibilities. However, due to financial reason, the school board eliminated the administrative practitioner position. As a result, Clem has had to absorb some of the responsibilities he had given the administrative practitioner.

Clem honestly does not think that he does the best job managing his time. Strategies that he uses to manage his time include not depending on his memory, making notes of everything, reminders from his secretaries, and artificially extending school time. He has learned not to depend on his memory any more, which is one of his best strategies. Clem also writes down or makes notes of everything. He has a weekly calendar so he knows exactly where he has to be when he is out of the building. His secretaries also offer him reminders of where he needs to go, what he has to do, and when fire drills are coming up. The secretaries know that he does not get upset about being reminded about things. Clem artificially extends his day by arriving early so he beats traffic, staying late, and coming to school on the weekend. It allows him to pace himself rather than trying to squeeze everything into a shorter day. The extended day/week provides Clem with time to think and enjoy. The worst is when he comes early and stays late yet is still under pressure. This is compounded by personal issues such as family. As a result, he is better some days than other days in the role of principal.

The most important use of Clem's time is being with children and observing and the least important use of his time are meetings. He thinks it is important to observe children, observe to make sure students are learning, and observe to make sure that their time is on task. The least important use of his time are meetings that could have been accomplished through e-mail or letters. The challenge with

meetings comes from never knowing that the meeting could have been handled in another way until he gets to the meeting and then it too late.

His view of time over the last several years has been affected by the accountability piece of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). NCLB has given them a concentrated requirement to work on the standards so when students take the PSSAs they do well and meet expectations. As a result, he now spends more time on instruction, observing teachers both informally and formally. He spends the majority of his time doing informal observations where he just goes in and sees how it is. Clem does more formal observations of the preservice teachers and student teachers. He feels like it is his responsibility to see their potential more than once before he writes a recommendation.

Accountability demands are using his time to look at data that is more accessible. He can go on the Web site for school district employees to see which teachers students did or did not achieve proficient on PSSA drills. The teachers also have access to that information and can look at individual student performance. However, for the most part, the homeroom teacher knows how each student is doing, who needs help, and who does not need help. For example, the teachers administer quarterly assessment, like the Tara Nova, and are not shocked by information on the computer since they entered the scores. He expects the teachers to work with those students during resource periods to help them achieve proficiency. Clem looks collectively at different teachers' results and how students are doing. He also looks at the growth trend. Ideally, he would like to see that there is some growth or demonstration of going in the right direction for quarterly assessments. Clem feels that it is hard to get a child, who is achieving below basic to basic proficiency. Rather he would prefer to rather see growth in moving from below basic to basic and approaching proficiency. He will also look at raw scores and not just how many students are proficient. Clem knows that his school is trying and is proud of his staff and kids for trying hard and making progress every year.

Clem's superiors and professional organizations affect his use of time. His superiors are the ones who call the meetings. Clem believes that they make a conscientious and sincere effort to have only meaningful meetings. However, Clem thinks that everything is relative in terms of importance. It is not always the agreement between what Clem thinks is important and what they think is important. Clem always refers or defers to whatever his superiors think. He volunteers his time as the president of his local administrators association. Clem goes to meetings to represent the administrators doing or accused of doing something inappropriate and also goes to evening meetings to learn exactly what is happening in the district. His family has been sacrificed more than anything due to his time commitments outside of the school day.

Parents in Clem's school do not abuse their time with him. He feels that there has to be time for parents and community. Depending on what he has to do, anything could look like "oh god, I have to meet with parents or I have to meet with the community." However, it is really relative to that snap shot of time. If for some reason, Clem has something due and a parent or community member needs to see him, it might appear that they are abusing his time but in reality they are not. The timing can sometimes be ill-timed or inconvenient. Clem feels that he is getting old, getting tired, and should not have to pull out his hair. At Clem's school he has some parents who give 100% support for the school and others who automatically blame the school if their child does not succeed. However, they have a track record of success with a diverse student population, which is 53% African American and 78% on free and reduced lunch, and can show parents that all children can learn. There is no safe haven from criticism at Clem's school from parents who get upset with Clem or his staff. There are periods of time when parents are upset if the school does not keep in communication with them. Clem takes responsibility as principal and reminds teachers to stay-in-touch with those parents and those at-risk children. However, the community is pleased with their results and looks at the school with pride.

Instructional leadership, for Clem, is the way the individual pulls together all of the stakeholders to get the most out of the children in terms achievement and the framework of the society that they are dealing with. Examples of his role as an instructional leader include his presence, going into the classroom, kids showing him their work, his looking at their work, observing student work in the hallways, and providing professional development for his staff. If the topic of the professional development is one that Clem is comfortable with, he will provide the staff development. If he is not knowledgeable about the professional development topic, he is an instructional leader in knowing the right resource individuals to speak with to get the teachers the professional development that they need. The highlight of his role as instructional leader is modeling how he uses the data as a tool for instruction. When he started in the position as principal 23 years ago, he told his teacher “all you have to do is work as hard as I do and you will be okay.” Clem has been in the position for 23 years and is still working hard so he wants to be a role model for them.

His role as an instructional leader has changed over the last several years due to the accountability factor. Before the accountability factor, the teaching was going on, he would observe, and congratulate them or say that they needed to do better next year. However, now there is a lot more pressure put on the principal and teachers. No one wants their school to be on improvement one or improvement two and concerned about being taken over. As a result of the accountability factor, it is important that he kick it up a notch as an instructional leader. He needs to know that he tried his best and can look himself in the mirror and say “I’m trying my best.”

Due to the accountability factor, Clem feels that everyone must “kick it up a notch.” In Pennsylvania, they use Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) to measure student process. If he sees how the third and fifth grade students are in one year, he knows that the fifth graders are going to sixth grade and he now has fourth graders going into fifth grade. As a result, he needs to make sure that

the fourth grade is prepared going to the next year. Clem is frustrated that they do not do a longitudinal study. Last year when his fifth graders made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), he can congratulate them but they are not in his school anymore because they are now in sixth grade. As a result, last years' fourth graders are taking last years' fifth grade assessment as continual proof of teaching. Clem tells his teachers that the PSSA is given by a fifth grade teacher but is not a fifth grade test, it is a kindergarten through fifth grade test. While fifth grade teachers have the end product, he cannot expect them to completely touch on everything if that teaching is not happening in kindergarten through fifth grade. Clem tells his staff that if they get back the results and they are good result, it is not just a celebration for the fifth grade teachers but the fourth grade teachers, third grade teachers, and kindergarten teachers can celebrate too. Without the previous grades teachers, the students would not be able to get as far as they did. The previous successful instruction also allowed the fifth grade teachers not to have to spend time outside of the fifth grade curriculum.

Celebrations on accountability accomplishments are not specific but, rather, done intrinsically by teachers. Clem shared that there is a lot of pressure. As a result of the pressure last year, the teachers worked harder and were worn out emotionally and physically. As principal, there is only so much that Clem could do to support them. However, when they got the results back and they made AYP, it was all worth it. Teachers knew that all of the hard work led to something positive. This year it follows suit that if they work as hard this year as last year that they will see the same good result. If they get the same results this year, it is a good thing.

Accountability mandates, with their external and internal forces, and central administration are affecting Clem's role as instructional leader. He thinks that the central administration in his district puts a lot of pressure on the school administrators. Sometimes they have a job to do and sometimes they are creating more work for administrators' than they realize. In his professional organizations, he also

represents the central administration. There are times when there is duplicity of work but the principals in the district are not shy so if something is repetitive they will bring it up.

The availability or absence of time has not had an impact on his role as an instructional leader because he just has to fit everything into the time that he has. Sometimes he gets lucky and there is a window of time to do what needs to be done. Other times, there are just so many factors hitting at the same time that he feels really hard pressed and can be affected emotionally. Clem thinks that his staff knows that there are more pressures on administrators than in prior years. They can tell from his reaction to them or if his is more testy than normal. His staff will figure out if something is wrong and for the most part they correct that something is wrong, something is due, or there is just not enough time in the day.

When Clem has competing factors or forces, he prioritizes by getting done whatever has to be done first. He will also come in on Saturday and/or Sunday to do work. This means that he is sacrificing family time but it is okay because his youngest is in college and not home and his wife works on Saturdays. Clem tells himself that instead of being home on Saturday watching TV, he uses his leisure time to catch-up on some of the work that he did not do Monday through Friday. He has built into the fact that the principalship is not a Monday through Friday job or an 8 a.m.–4 p.m. job. It is a six in the morning to however late at night job and also a weekend job. As principal, Clem feels that you have to convince your brain that you have more time even if that means stealing some quality down time. He is able to slow down and not let his blood pressure rise because he knows that he has a few weekend days when he can go into school and work at his leisure. Clem can come into school without having any teachers or children in the building and know that he is not leaving his wife at home. He can come in wearing his jogging pants and tennis shoes, listen to his iPod or iTunes music, drink water, and do work, catch-up, or clean-up. As a result, spreading things out and pacing it out helps Clem. He feels that this

comes from his work ethic and the way he was brought-up in making sure that things get done and get done correctly.

Time, for Clem, is something that individuals always wish they had more of. It is a factor that affects individuals' emotional and physical stability. There is never enough time unless an individual spreads it out. If Clem thought of time as a metaphor, he would see time as a watch or Energizer™ battery that keeps going and going because it is not something that you can touch. Clem does not feel that putting in extra time does not equate to being a good administrator but it is good to put in time to make oneself a good administrator. As a result, time is not necessarily the factor to being a good administrator rather that the administrator does whatever it takes.

Clem shared that the beginning years as an administrator are the toughest and offered advice for a new principal. His advice included setting aside time and finding a mentor(s) with a good reputation. Clem recommends setting aside time to learn routines, procedures, protocol because as much as he complains about not have enough time in the principalship, he still knows this information. While the job of administrator does not get easier, it is toughest in the beginning because the principal is not really sure if they are doing things right. If a new principal wants to save time and quicken their learning cycle, Clem recommends finding a mentor, mentors, or a colleague to act as an informal mentor. The mentor should be someone who has been in the system long enough, they respect, and who has a good reputation. Clem thinks that experienced principals should be happy to share ideas with younger principals because as they get older and prepare to retire, it is important to pass on the city school legacy. Experienced principals should want to be part of people taking the lead and help to prevent city schools from failing once experienced principals have left. As a new principal, Clem utilized and depended on several principals and never felt that he did not need someone to help him. Someone helped with scheduling, someone helped with budgeting, and someone helped to learn how to deal with difficult people. He

listened to any advice offered. Clem feels that new principals, who think they know it all, are going to have the hardest time. As a result, mentors can help new principals with all that needs to be learned because there are a lot of unique and dedicated principals.

Glenn Andrews

Glenn Andrews is a 54-year-old Caucasian male who is married, with two children, who are 19 and 23 years old. In high school, Glenn taught many kids to swim and then began coaching swimming at a local YMCA²⁴ and found that he was able to connect with kids and motivate them. From coaching and teaching kids to swim, it seemed natural for Glenn to get into elementary education in college. He received a Bachelor of Science in Education focusing on elementary education. For two years, he worked for an intermediate unit (IU) as a teacher of fourth through eighth gifted students traveling from school to school. Glenn then went to a local school district and worked as a fourth grade teacher and head swim coach for six years. During that time, he worked on his principal certification and received his Masters of Education in Educational Administration. Twenty-one years ago, Glenn got his first principal job and never worked as an assistant principal. Over the course of his career, he has worked in three school districts and eight schools.

Glenn has only worked in his current urban elementary school for the past semester. The school has a Title I schoolwide program and is considered to be low socioeconomic due to a 95% poverty demographic profile. The school has many single family parents, issues of child abuse, issues of neglect, and lack of parental support. He feels fortunate to have inherited a school with an excellent faculty, who are very compassionate and fill the needs of a high risk school. The faculty at his school was hand picked by the previous principal. Unless someone has a certain passion for what they are doing or the type of kid

²⁴ According to the YMCA Web site, <http://www.ymca.net>, YMCA stands for *Young Men's Christian Association* and is not only for "young Christian men" but, rather, the YMCA has the desire to bring people of all faiths, races, ages, abilities and incomes together. The YMCAs' financial assistance policies ensure that no one is turned away for reasons of inability to pay. The YMCA is considered the largest not-for-profit community service organization in America providing health and human service needs for men, women, and children.

at the school, they are not going to survive. Although the school has challenges with its demographic profile, they have done quite well achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the last few years. The teachers are making the difference with achievement and therefore are getting the type of scores to achieve AYP.

He explained how he spends a typical day. His day usually starts around 7:15 or 7:30, which gives him approximately a half hour to get caught up on the e-mail by going through his inbox. Technology can either be a blessing or a curse, which can be terribly time consuming because people are feeding him information and expect him to respond too. The teachers come in at 8:10. From 8:10 until 9 o'clock, time is reserved for child study meetings, IEP meetings, teacher committee meetings, and meetings with parents about disciplinary issues. Once the school day starts at 9 o'clock, Glenn tries to be as visible as he can be with his students. Every alternate day, they have short assemblies called "Partners Assemblies," where they meet separately with primary and intermediate kids to recognize them for good attendance and good work. Recently, they had parent recognition event. Glenn makes an appearance at the assembly to say a few words and then moves on. When he gets back to the office, there are usually phone calls, phone messages, or work e-mail waiting for him, which he tries to address. He then does what little paperwork is possible to accomplish during the day. As an elementary principal much of the instructional day is tied up with minute to minute problems that need to be handled immediately.

If Glenn has observations scheduled, he goes out to the classrooms. He does many more informal observations than formal observations so he is in and out of classes meeting with teacher to resolve problems. The e-mail and voice-mail system has made it easier to resolve problems because he can leave and receive voice-mail and e-mail messages. However, it takes time to respond to the messages about student issues, parent involvement committees, planning, and when approval is needed. Glenn wants everything to have his stamp of approval on it before it goes out to ensure that nothing is going to create

a problem. He knows that if he expects approval to be given, he has to take the time to follow through. Glenn knows that his teachers might be critical of his sending out e-mail. He sends out the e-mail because he has found that it is an easier way to facilitate getting information out.

At the end of the day, from 2:45 to 3:15, students are sent to him for principal awards and recognition for good things. He does this at the end of the day so he is not bombarded throughout the day. Glenn also makes announcements at the end of the day. He then deals with issues that popped up as the day went on. Things popping up can either be seen as a curse or beauty of the job of principal. As a result, as principal, Glenn cannot get a block of time, such as 45 minutes to an hour, to sit down, read, or process information. The teachers' day ends at 3:40. However, several teachers participate in an after-school tutoring program providing additional instruction to students. Normally, Glenn uses 4–5 o'clock as quiet time dealing with the piles of stuff around his office but can also meet with folks. In Glenn's job, if he does not do the work, nobody else does it. If he does not get to something one day, it will be there the next day. If he does not get to it the next day, no one is going to do it along the way. At some point of time, Glenn has to make time to do it and get it done. While contractually he is done at 4 o'clock, he structures his day to spend a little extra time from 4 to 5 o'clock.

Strategies that Glenn uses to manage his time include having two very good secretaries and delegating. It has taken Glenn a little while to get his secretaries used to his expectations but they have gotten to the point where things are running smoothly. The secretaries know what is expected of him so he can delegate and they get it done. He also delegates a lot tasks to his teachers to such as contacting parents. This allows him to spend his time on the high profile cases found in an urban school. Glenn learned to delegate early in his career and put things in the hands of people who will get the job done. He knows that if he delegates but the quality of the work does not meet his standards that there is no use

delegating. Glenn is really pleased that his current school has very professional people that he works with and can delegate tasks too.

He prioritizes what needs to get taken care of by first dealing with safety, which is a number one priority. Issues that demand his time immediately usually appear spontaneously and need to be resolved. Paperwork can wait, observations can wait, meetings with teachers can wait, but dealing with kid issues cannot wait. When dealing with disciplinary issues with young kids, it is important to provide them with either immediate positive or negative feedback to ensure that an impact is made.

Glenn shared the most important and least important uses of his time. The most important use of Glenn's time is dealing with the students and their needs. The students in his school know who the principal is, what he is like, what he is about, and what his expectations are. He makes sure that he has time to meet with his kids to let them know how he feels about things.

The least important use of Glenn's time is always the paperwork that he has to do. There is a tremendous amount of paperwork. Glenn does not think that anyone in the education profession is opposed to accountability but the documentation to support the accountability has become voluminous. His district has a new letter grade program allowing electronic generation of the report cards. The electronic grade program allows parents the option of check students' grades online. It takes time to go through the data and paperwork, which is why it is the least important use of his time.

Over the last several years his view of time has changed due to learning how to utilize his time wisely, personal obligations at home, his experience, and level of confidence. As a young administrator, he would arrive at school at six in the morning and could stay until six in the evening. The long hours were needed to plow through things because he was doing them all by himself and wanted to ensure that he was working at a certain level. What took him an hour to do 10 or 15 years ago, does not take him an hour to do anymore. Either he can do it better or he has someone to do it, which has caused the biggest

change in his perspective about time. Since he has an empty nest at home, there is no real rush for him to get home. Glenn works the extra hour from 4 to 5 o'clock so he can leave the office with it somewhat organized and he is ready for the next day.

His view of time has also been affected by accountability mandates, paperwork, and teacher problems. Accountability mandates have affected his view of time due to the documentation that needs to be done and the time that takes. Paperwork, such as school reports, teacher ratings, and teacher evaluations forms, is very time consuming. In his position prior to his current assignment, he had to deal with teacher problems, discipline, or dismissal, which tied up a considerable amount of time. Glenn is quite pleased that he has not had to deal with teacher discipline in his current position.

Glenn's superiors, school board, and district give him a lot of autonomy in his use of time. He feels pretty fortunate that they do not control his time and he is able to control his own time. He has certain things to get done and certain standards that need to be reached. Glenn is sure there would be a problem if he was not doing his job or teachers were perceived as not doing their job. He knows what is expected of him and that his superiors and school board have a job to do. Glenn does not see them as being a big problem. Of all of the bosses that Glenn has had, his superintendent is really not top heavy at all. If his superintendent is not getting people squawking to him about Glenn's school then the superintendent thinks that Glenn is doing a pretty good job and is not going to interfere. As a result, Glenn does not hear from his superintendent in that respect. He has had bosses that wanted to micro-manage him.

Situations with staff and students influence his time usage. The previous day, he received a phone call from his superintendent. There are 10 elementary schools in his district and the secretary at a sister school was going to be out for surgery for six weeks. The superintendent had a dollar saving strategy to use one of Andrews's secretaries, at the sister school for the six week. Glenn was not happy about the decision and met with his direct supervisor, the assistant superintendent. They worked out a

deal where the one secretary would spend one day at Glenn's school and the other four days at the other school. As principal, Glenn tries to cooperate, help out a colleague, and do what his boss tells him but was able to save his secretary one day at their school. This was important because the other secretary, who will remain full-time at Glenn's school, is retiring next year. The secretary, who will be lent to the other school, needs to be trained to move right into the retiring secretary's slot. As a result, the change took up some of Glenn's time. He had to spend 45 minutes meeting with both of the secretaries to explain the situation to them. Glenn now needs to put a plan in place about how to replace the work that the "lent" secretary did, which takes time.

The previous night, the school had a Letter Grade Parent Workshop. Letter Grade is a computer program, which allows parents to go online and pull down their kids' letter grades. The program also provides parents with a school calendar and school announcements. Prior to the workshop, Glenn and his secretaries put together a calendar for parents and a calendar for teachers prior to going live with the information. They have a computer projector and laptop, which they will use to display the 'Letter Grade' online program for the audience of parents. On the live parents' calendar, they saw IEP meetings and actual student names. Glenn thought to himself "oh my god, this isn't right" and killed it right away. Later he found out that they had done everything properly but there was a glitch in the program with broadcasting to parents, students, and teachers. All of the confidential and professional information that he had sent to his teachers had been broadcasted to the parents, which was a real liability.

Two recent student incidents include a student strangling another student and an incident with a bipolar student. He has a zero tolerance policy for any type of violence between students. For example, at the end of the school at 3 o'clock, one kindergartener attempted to choke another kindergartner. Glenn dealt with the situation immediately meeting with the kindergarten teacher, the emotional support special needs teacher, and the students' mother. He met with them to get the situation resolved so that

they know what to expect the following day. When the mother left the school, she took her six or seven kids home with her. Currently, Glenn is dealing with a second grade girl, who has just been diagnosed as bipolar. At any second, she can go off yelling and screaming for no apparent reason. As a result, Glenn spent time coordinating with agencies to develop a strategy to react immediately to the child's needs. He also needed to make time to meet with the behavioral specialist.

For Glenn, instructional leadership is working with his teachers to best meet the needs of the students through in-services, formal and informal observations. The business of education is driven by the Pennsylvania State Standards and ensuring that they meet AYP. Glenn is involved with districtwide and building level strategies to help teachers with differentiated instruction and a program called Foresight. Foresight allows the school to analyze the tests kids are being given. As instructional leader, Glenn needs to monitor what is going on in the classroom through informal and formal observations. He feels that teachers need to know that he is checking on those things. At one point and time in his career, being an instructional leader meant always being a tyrant checking up on staff. Since his staff are professionals, it is not his role to "check on someone" but, rather, he is supporting, facilitating, or working with them as a colleague to help solve problems and to best meet the needs of their kids. Glenn feels that a principal can create a tone or atmosphere of professionalism that carries over to instruction. However, instructional leadership really comes from the good teachers, who are the instructors. While some schools can meet their AYP in spite of the teachers, Glenn's school cannot. He feels that his teachers know that he is there but do not need him looking over their shoulder as an instructional leader.

Glenn does not think his role as an instructional leader has changed because of personality rather due to his situation. He thinks that an individual either has or does not have the personality for instructional leadership. As an instructional leader, if you give him a young teacher with enthusiasm and desire to be a good teacher, he will make them into a good teacher. However, if you give him a gifted

teacher who has issues or does not want to be at the school, no matter how talented they are, they are not going to be a good teacher. Since faculties are different, a change in a school situation can change one's role as instructional leader. A faculty with issues takes time away from a principal's ability to be an instructional leader. Glenn feels that in public education a lot of stuff can become contagious. If a principal has a couple of malcontents who think that the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment²⁵ (PSSA) tests are stupid, it can become an epidemic in the school. In his current school, the faculty embraces the PSSA tests becoming more of a partner with Glenn because they understand that PSSA tests are their responsibility. In his current position, Glenn does not have to be an instructional leader who mandates things to get done.

Parent groups do not affect his role as instructional leader at his current placement. His previous assignment was at a school with a much higher socioeconomic population so the parent group was much more demanding. Glenn would have Principal/Parent Advisory Meetings and there would be many questions. This was due to internet savvy parents having access to a tremendous amount of information about the 501 school districts in Pennsylvania. At his current school, parents know how to get to the "Megan's Law²⁶" Web site to check on whoever is living next-door to them but are not going to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Web site to check on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

²⁵ According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site, "the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards based criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards while also determining the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 is assessed in reading and math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 5, 8 and 11 is assessed in writing." Information from http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/site/default.asp

²⁶ A New Jersey law (often called Megan's Law) that requires convicted sex offenders to register with their local police. The law was enacted after seven year old Megan Kanka was brutally raped and murdered by a twice-convicted sex offender, who was living across the street from her in Hamilton Township, New Jersey.

Glenn thinks the type of parents at the school affects the type of instructional leader that the principal is. However, regardless of the type of parent, Glenn tries to deliver the same type of leadership in his schools because he has not been too influenced by parental pressure and has not had to worry about it.

The availability or absence of time has impacted his ability to be an instructional leader because in the principalship one never leaves the job at the end of the day having everything completed. If he had more time or fewer issues to deal with, he could probably tidy up some of those things at the end of the day. At the end of the school year, they get enough accomplished so that they succeed. However, Glenn does not think they will ever get to the point where they accomplish everything. He cannot go through items 1 to 19 on the list and finish the day and the next day work on a different 19-item list. This is not possible because a principal might be able to do items 1 through 8 on the list, leaving two more items to finish. The next day, a principal might think they are starting with one but they are not because they have two items from the previous day and something else pops up adding to the list. As a result, there is never a sense of finality or closure. Glenn might solve one problem and then something else pops up, which is part of the excitement of the job. He does not sit in the office watching the clock because time just flies by.

Time, is defined by Glenn, as being connected to productivity. There are some days where Glenn works very, very hard but does not get much done. There are other days where Glenn accomplishes an awful lot but does not feel that he worked all that hard. A lot of his work requires "manipulation" of parents, kids, or teachers. If he can get things to flow smoothly then he feels that he has had a productive day. He no longer looks at time as getting 10 observations done in a month or 10 letters of reprimand sent out. Rather he looks at the overall picture, reflecting on the tone of his school today, during the first marking period, or during the second marking period.

Glenn feels that time is an issue with which all professions struggle. Time in education is a little bit different because productivity cannot be compared to time. A good friend of Glenn's is a veterinarian,

who does surgery Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings. The veterinarian knows that his time is controlled by having seven surgeries to do in the morning and then has so many appointments after that and that is his day. As a result, his day is very concrete and very sequential. While problems might come up during his work, he can pretty much stick to the schedule. For Glenn, sometimes things can take an awful lot of time but are not necessarily productive. However, productivity for Glenn is the overall tone of his building and the overall accomplishments of the school.

Glenn offered advice for a new principal. He thinks that a lot of young principals, who have just gone through the certification, come into this business with a lot of ideas and a lot of energy to implement these ideas. However, once they get into the position, they find that they are not trained to deal with the spontaneity of what may enter the door. University academics deal with the theory and perfect model; however that is not the reality of the practitioner. The conflict for the young practitioner is the desire to do the things they learned but they become frustrated by the time restraints with which they have to deal with. For example, if a child comes to the principals' office and says that he was beaten by his step-father the night before, the principal better do something. They need to get agencies involved, the nurse involved, and comfort the child. This reality has nothing to do with a theory or strategy on multiple intelligences. Glenn thinks that it is vital for a principal to prioritize about what is important to them. Principals need to realize that they have control over some things and sometimes you do not have control. Whether the central office is run by micro-managers or those who are heavy from above plays a big part of a principals' control. A new principal should meet the needs of kids, parents, faculty, and boss. Since Glenn has been in the profession a long time, his meeting the needs of his boss is not important to Glenn or his boss. However, it is very important to a superintendent to know what a new principal is doing. As a result, it is important for a principal to have peoples' respect.

Hazel Cavalerie

Hazel Cavalerie is a 62-year-old, single Caucasian female who does not have any children. Hazel went to a liberal arts college and took a little bit of each subject because she did not know what she was going to do. She received a Bachelor of Science focusing on social studies, social sciences, history, political science, and economics and a minor in philosophy. When she got out of college, all a woman could become was a nurse, head secretary, or teacher. At that point in time teaching was the only job she could get. While she had not majored in teaching, she could become a teacher if she took approximately 12 credits in teaching. Hazel took a teaching job for one year to save money to go live in Israel for a bit. She taught for 30 years before entering administration. Hazel is certified as a K-6 Elementary Principal and has a Master of Science in Educational Leadership. Over her 37 years in education, she has worked in five schools in two school districts.

Her district gave an oral test to find potential principal candidates. She was selected to participate in the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program. The program was run by a veteran principal, who was “half-blind,” but provided very interesting training. After the training, she was hired as a principal and having never worked as an assistant principal.

Hazel has been a principal in her current position for seven years and was in another principal position for six months. As principal, Hazel enjoys the job, being at school, and doing everything but realizes that the job is not for everyone. For Hazel, the principalship is a job requiring a higher level functioning, like the profession of law. Like a lawyer, who works a 14-hour day, as a principal in a city school she has an undefined work day. Her contract says that she can be asked to do things or go somewhere from seven in the morning until 10:30 at night.

She is the principal of one “pretty big” building with between 7:13 to 7:30 children and a faculty of 40. While everyday is different in the principalship, a typical day for Hazel involves arriving at school

between 6:30 and 7 o'clock in the morning. She goes to her e-mail first because that is how all of the communications in the district are done. As a result, her e-mail is watched all day and at night. Between seven and eight in the morning, she sees who is absent and does all of her e-mail. Hazel is out in the school yard at 8 o'clock because students are admitted at 8:15 in the morning. She spends a lot of time walking around the building. Hazel wears a pedometer, because she is on a diet and needs to exercise, and knows that she walks 8,000 to 10,000 steps a day. In the morning, she may decide to do observations or walks-through of the building. Her district allows principals to take laptop computers into classrooms to do observations. This makes the observation process a lot faster because she can write the observation while observing. Hazel appreciates this option because previously the district did not allow electronic devices to be used for observations. At lunch time, she goes through all four of the student lunches. Throughout the day, Hazel deals with parents, has meetings, and conferences making for a very busy day. Teachers also might call and she needs to run there or students get into fights that she needs to respond to. On Thursdays, the nurse is not at the school so Hazel is the nurse and does her nursing duties. At the end of the day, she monitors student dismissal. After school, children, who received a score less than 26% on the Pennsylvania System of State Assessments (PSSA), participate in extended day 'Power Hour Time' to receive extra tutoring. After that 'Communities and Schools' offer extended day homework help and other activities until 5:30. As a result, Hazel is at school for almost 12 hours at day. She thinks it is funny that as a teacher, she used to think that she worked hard because she arrived at 8:30 in the morning and left at three in the afternoon.

Hazel finds it very hard to manage her time but works around what is demanded of her. As principal, it is hard to plan ahead because people come in unexpectedly. Sometimes before she comes to school, Hazel maps out in my mind what she is going to do but things always change because the demands of the parents, children, and district personnel are very impromptu. No one makes an

appointment, they just show up. When they show up, they expect Hazel to stop what she is doing and talk to them. Hazel makes sure that she talks to every parent who wants to speak to her either on the phone, returning a phone call or sitting down with them. This is important because things can get blown out of proportion or parents get very angry if no one talks to them. Hazel understands this because she gets angry if no one talks to her when she goes somewhere. As a result, this takes a large portion of her time. During meetings, Hazel takes notes and writes notes of what needs to be done. Hazel tries to constantly stay on top of things by walking around to fit in observations. From September to January, she has to do two observations of every uncertified teacher and one observation of every certified teacher. In January, a new round of observations of begins. While she does not do well with date books, she uses a large desk calendar plotter so she can mark things down and not forget about appointments. Hazel manages her time and does not become overwhelmed by having wireless internet and checking e-mail at home from her laptop while laying in a chair at night or on the weekend.

For Hazel, everything seems important so she was unable to find something that was most or least important. As Hazel goes around the building, everything is important: the lunchroom, the lunch lines, observations, and the curriculum that is needed to pass the PSSAs. As a result, everything is relative and the importance of these factors combine together to have a good building.

Hazel's view of time has changed over the last several years when she moved from teacher to principal. As a teacher, she thought that she worked very hard and did her job. Hazel does not think that people fully understand or realize what happens in a principals unbelievable day. For example, a retired teacher came back to the school to substitute as a counselor. The counselors' office was in the office. The retired teacher shared that she never realized what went on in an office all day. During the day, people come into the office off the street with all of these problems. As a result, it makes for a very interesting,

entertaining, and non-boring day, which keeps her moving. When principal candidates come to her school to shadow for the day, they are usually worn out by 12:30 and say “I have to go now.”

She does not think anyone is controlling or influencing her time because she is in control. While she is not a control person, she needs to know what is going on in the whole place. Everyone reports to Hazel and cannot do anything without her saying that it is okay because she is responsible for the whole building.

About 10 years ago, as a teacher Hazel was trained as a Teaching Learning Network Person. Her urban district took selected teachers and gave them tests, they selected a hundred of the teachers to go and be coaches in different schools. Hazel was selected and became a high school math coach. Since she was an elementary teacher, she had not previously been in the high school but knew math, as demonstrated on the tests. Hazel would go in and help teachers in trouble advising them on how to enhance their math lessons. She constantly read literature on math and learned more about it.

Her role as a ‘Teaching Learning Network Person’ helped to define her role as instructional leader. She coaches teachers who need help. However, she is careful because being a coach and being a principal are two different things. If she tries to coach someone in classroom management, they may think that she is taking over their room. As a result, she found the PFT, Public Health and Welfare, which had a course in classroom management. She had her weaker teachers take the course and covered their classes. She also ordered 5–10 copies of Preventing and Solving Classroom Discipline²⁷, which she

²⁷ Educator's Guide to Preventing and Solving Discipline Problems was written by Mark Boynton and Christine Boynton and was published in November, 2005 by the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development. “This book considers how teachers can prevent and deal with discipline issues, focusing on children who occasionally break the rules. They describe the important elements of discipline; buildingwide strategies and philosophies; and relationship, monitoring, parameter, and consequence strategies. The last section emphasizes techniques for problem students, such as bullies,

originally received from Educational Leadership²⁸, and gave it to her weaker teachers to read because it is a “very good book.” Educational Leadership sends her five or six “little books” a year and magazines, which allows her to do a lot of reading. Hazel will also go into the classroom, watch lesson and make suggestions. She will also give little math tricks from when she had a math lab and was in the high schools. Her role as a “math person” helped her to look at instructional leadership in this manner.

Hazel does not believe that her role as an instructional leader has changed over the last several years. She thinks that it is the same because she more of an instructional than organizational person. However, Hazel feels that a lot of teachers are not trained in teaching and learning. Due to the PSSA, she researches and searches out methods to get everything done. During her research and reading, she found PSSA software, which allows her to help enhance instruction. Children get on the computer and answer questions, which look like questions on the PSSA test, and are given a score. Teachers find out where the students are having trouble and go over those pieces with them. Hazel believes that this is more interesting for students than practicing it in a book.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has affected her role as an instructional leader because schools are judged by the tests. When she arrived at the school, the tests were high in a certain area but not in other areas so she made everyone aware of that. Hazel has become very involved in looking at testing. She also has started concentrating on attendance of children because if attendance is very high, scores will go up. Hazel also makes sure that everyone is teaching what they should be teaching and doing the best for the

²⁸ *Educational Leadership*, is a “journal for educators, by educators” and is the “flagship publication” of the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development. According to their Web site, Educational Leadership “is acknowledged throughout the world as an authoritative source of information about teaching and learning, new ideas and practices relevant to practicing educators, and the latest trends and issues affecting prekindergarten through higher education.” (Web site: <http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.a4dbd0f2c4f9b94cdeb3ffdb62108a0c/>)

children. She feels that some teachers do not put out their full effort and she makes teachers put out their full effort. In education, Hazel feels that there are very low expectations of certain people and feels that the more you expect, the more you get. She thinks that she might be viewed as annoying, by her teachers, about ensuring that they are putting out the maximum effort. For example, if she observes a lesson and a teacher is only asking the basic questions and thus is not giving the best to the children Hazel will remind them what a professional lesson looks like. She also does what she is asked or told to do and tries to do what she is supposed to do.

The availability or absence of time has not impacted her role as an instructional leader because she is at school all day and night. The absence of time is not a factor because she is there all the time. Hazel feels that other principals might not have time to be instructional leaders and get into classrooms because there is so much paperwork. Other principals need to balance demands on their time. Somehow she is able to get her paperwork done and never had any complaints about anything that she needs to hand in. She finishes all of her paperwork at school and does not carry a work home. While other principals do not finish the paperwork, she hands in everything on-time and makes sure that nothing is late. Hazel sees a lot of people make excuses but does not think they were trained to be instructional leaders and do not know what to do. As a result, these principal say "I can't get out of my office" or "I can't go do this because I don't have time" so they busy themselves doing lots of nice, neat paperwork. Hazel has a good staff that helps her with certain paperwork. For example, she has to keep giant Title I binders, which contains the information that is frequently requested. She feels that she is focused, maybe even obsessed, about instruction. If she sees an instructional need in a classroom, she will ask the reading or math coach to help the teacher. For example, one teacher was not doing guided reading correctly, since Hazel does not consider herself as a "big reading person," she will ask questions and then send someone

in when something does not look right. She knows that a lot of principals are affected by the availability or absence of time because they are just “fancy clerks.”

Time, for Hazel, is an obsession. She is always obsessed with getting places on time and uses it as a gauge. When Hazel leaves her house at 6 o'clock in the morning, she has a timer in her car and looks at the clock at a certain point to see if she got there on-time. Hazel is always the first person at every meeting. If her superintendent says something must be in before 12 o'clock, she will get it in at 10 or 11 o'clock. Like her superintendent, who she gets along with time-wise, she finds it “contemptuous” if someone is late. As a result, Hazel feels that you always have to be on-time.

Hazel's advice for new principals is not to get overwhelmed when they see all the tasks that are required. New principals need to realize that the principalship is a very time-consuming job and people stay at school very late. Hazel is at school for almost 12 hours a day. When she first started in the principalship, she received several booklets detailing her responsibilities. She would get a little overwhelmed and if she left it or forgot about it, the next booklet of information would seem to be twice as large. As a result, she found that if she took notes immediately at meetings, listing every specific task she had to do immediately; then the following week that she was much better off. Since principals are given all of this work to do, which is due at a certain time, they need a good calendar. She shared the advice she offered to a principal, who was in trouble, to always check his e-mail including at night when he is home. The problem that some principals have is that they do not check their e-mail. Hazel knows a principal that has 530 unopened e-mails because she/he only opens up certain informational clues. Principals need to find a way to keep up with their work. She does not carry work home because she gets it done at school. Hazel believes that if you keep up with your work and do everything then you do not let anything go. Hazel recommends every principal getting Educational Leadership, from the Association

for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD), because it provides the latest practices in education. It is important that principals keep up with the latest practices and follow those trends.

Hazel believes that the personality of a principal determines how they handle the job. If a principal cannot keep up with the work and cannot organize their thoughts, make decisions, or have a focus then they will struggle. She feels that principals need to have a passion for the job otherwise they are not going to make it. Some people become principals because they hate the classroom as a teacher and want to get out. However, as a principal, they are an instructional leader and need to love the classroom and teaching. For principals, who are married or have children, it is important to have good help or an understanding person at home. She shared how a female principal was accused by her husband of having an affair. He made this accusation because she did not get home until 8 or 9 o'clock at night and was never home. Principals, who are married or have children, need to have blocks of time for family so their family does not think they are never home. As a result, she thinks that time management is needed.

Peter Mundy

Peter is a Caucasian male who is married with a daughter in her mid-20s. His father was a teacher and school principal. As a result, ever since he could remember he has been associated with schools largely through his father's career in education. He remembers his dad taking him to school-sponsored events as early as preschool. Peter's life and career was significantly influenced by his father. He received his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and taught for three years. Peter then received his Masters of Science in Counselor Education and worked as a counselor for 12 years. He also has his Doctorate of Education in Educational Administration and has been a principal for 20 years. His teaching, counseling, and administrative experience has all been in the same district where he has worked in three schools for 35 years.

He is an evaluating professor for a master's program in an out-of-state University. The University offers several different master's degrees online. The online course work utilizes presenting professors who present the content through a video strand. The students work, papers, and exams are sent to Peter via the computer for evaluation. He does all of the evaluating and grading of student's work. Over the years, he has also worked as an adjunct professor/instructor at various colleges in the area where he lives. These courses are largely teaching psychology or administrative related courses.

Peter has been the principal of his current urban elementary and middle school for the past 10 years but has been a principal for 20 years. The school serves grades kindergarten to eighth grade and has approximately 1,100 students in it. Sixty-six percent of the students are low income and 45 percent are minority. He has worked in the same school district for 35 years or his entire career in education. Peter feels that the position of principal is more than a job, it becomes a lifestyle. It is not the type of job where one can work five days a week from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Peter feels that principals have to be committed to what they are doing. The commitment involves an investment in time and energy. As a result, Peter feels

you need to be physically fit and in good physical condition to keep up with the pace. While Peter is not at school every weekend, there are occasions when he needs to come to school on a Saturday morning. He understands that is just the way it is and does not even think about it because there is work or reports that have to be done.

Peter does not feel he has time parameters and does not think of coming in or leaving at a certain time each and every day. Peter tries to arrive at school at approximately 7 a.m. The middle school students arrive around 7:50 a.m. and the elementary school students arrive around 8:50 a.m. The middle school students are dismissed at 2:45 p.m. and the elementary students are dismissed at 3:20 p.m. Peter stays at school as long as it takes to do whatever he has to do whether that means leaving at 4, 4:30, or 5 p.m.. Often times, he comes back to school in the evening after eating a quick dinner. If there is a school sponsored, he is back in the evening. These events include athletic events, a club activity, a parent meeting, school board meeting, a department meeting, or a curriculum meeting. Peter returning to school in the evening is not unusual and something that he does not even think about doing. Peter never uses reasoning such as "tomorrow is another day" or "it's already 5 o'clock" as rationale to abandon a task that he has started. He strongly believes that if there is a job to be completed, he needs to get the job done.

How does Peter manage his time within his job as principal? He tries to keep a schedule of upcoming events/activities for the week. Peter has a little computerized printout of where he needs to be each and every day. He tries to schedule or map out his time one week in advance so by Thursday afternoon he pretty much knows what his planned schedule for the following week looks like. However, there are always exceptions or eventualities when he walks in the morning and something is occurring that he did not plan for or budget his time for. Peter feels that the unexpected is a big part of the job and just needs to be dealt with. He feels that whatever time or energy is necessary to deal with those

situations needs to be invested and then he goes from there. As a result of the unexpected, Peter does not feel he can stick to a set time schedule.

The most important use of Peter's time is the time invested in human dynamics or human interactions. This includes the time spent with the students, the parents, and the teachers. For Peter, human interactions are a priority. He does not feel that he can compromise that time or those interactions because there is paperwork to be done or there is a report that has to be submitted. If he walks into the office and there a parent, teacher, or student standing at that door that did not schedule a conference, his first priority is to stop what he is doing so he can sit and talk to that person. The paperwork or deskwork can be done on a Saturday morning or in the evening. However, the investment of time and interactions with human capital is paramount so he spends the time to speak to the students, teachers and parents. As a result, Peter shared that during the course of a normal day one will not find him sitting at his desk very often. Rather than being at his desk, he is in the classrooms, in the lunchrooms, or in the hallways. This is important for Peter because he wants to have the "visibility factor." The "visibility factor" allows a person to feel that he is approachable and they can stop to ask him a question or engage him in a conversation. For Peter, it is important to invest and manage time for those kinds of human interactions.

From a time perspective, the least important is the paperwork. Peter shared that the paperwork always gets done in the evening, on the weekend, or at home but it is down at the bottom of the priority list. Paperwork is least important for Peter because he does not want to be the type of person that sits behind a desk and cannot see someone because he has paperwork to do.

Peter does not think that his view of time has changed over the last several years. He comes largely from a counseling background emphasizing human contacts, interactions, and dynamics. Peter feels that the human side of any type of administrative of work, whether it is in education, business, or industry, is important. He feels and has always felt that you need to know how to deal with the human

dynamics any situation. As a result, he does not think his view of time has changed or the last several years.

Accountability mandates like No Child Left Behind (NCLB) have also not affected his use of time. His counseling background taught him to value accountability measures, evaluations, and assessments. His time management has not been altered because of accountability mandates because he has always been interested in utilizing test data. Data driven decisions allows him to know the curriculum/instruction by looking at the data, trends, assessments and test scores. As a result, accountability mandates have not affected how he manages his time.

His superintendent, school board, and district are also not affecting how he uses his time because he has been doing the job of principal for a long time. His superintendent spent far less time in the role of principal. The school directors come and go every four years. Due to his superintendents' limited experience as a principal and the turn-over of school directors, they do not affect how he spends his time. From a professional standpoint, Peter feels that he controls his time usage. From a personal standpoint, his wife might control some of his time.

Peter feels that you need to spend a lot of time with parent groups because parent involvement and support is critical. This involves a pretty good investment of time for Peter because he wants to establish and maintain a communication link and working relationship with parents. He wants to share with parents what a place like his school has to offer. Time commitments include (1) executive board meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA); (2) community groups wanting him to come speak about their PSSA scores or about No Child Left Behind; (3) school-level parent group meetings; (4) district parent advisory council meetings; and (5) special interest (i.e., gifted or handicapped) parent group meetings. There are various special interest groups within the general parent group, each with their own agenda. As a result, Peter knows his meeting schedule: meet with the PTA group one night, meet with the

parent advisory council the next night, and meet with the special interest group on the third night. While there is a lot of time spent with parents, Peter feels this time is critical.

His time is also spent with other community, social service, business, and industry groups including the Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, and Partners in Education. Business and industry partnerships have also allowed Peter's school to provide perfect attendance incentives to the kids in the school. These incentives include a \$10 gift certificate to the local mall or a gift certificate to McDonald's. Peter shared that these incentives do not fall in the school's lap but come from time invested and relationships established with business and community groups to make special programs available for the students. Peter feels that it is important to forge relationships with those folks because it allows partnerships to form.

Three blocks from Peter's school is an international leader in the development of plastics. The company is known worldwide and is in the Fortune 500. Their products include the little plastic trays are used in a grocery store ready-made food section or cellophane wrap. Peter has developed a partnership where the schools academically talented middle school science students are sent to the company to work with their chemists. Their chemists also come to the school and teach science class lessons to the kids. Peter feels that it is a great opportunity for his kids' curriculum to be enriched. Without the connections to community, business, and industry groups relationships like those with the plastics company would never had happened and Peter feels that they are important to establish.

Peter defines instructional leadership as having a life-long learner mind-set with the desire to stay current and ability to have a creditable pedagogical knowledge base about the field. Staying on-top of what is happening in the field, with regard to curriculum and instruction, can occur through graduate level coursework or seminar attendance. Having the pedagogical knowledge base allows an instructional leader to speak credibly on happening and what should happen. This knowledge base also includes the

ability to demonstrate or teach a little minilesson in a classroom once in a while or take a small group of kids aside to work with them. The ability to work with students allows the instructional leader to be a facilitator, motivator, and rejuvenator. In turn, this promotes the status quo not always being accepted and new approaches being implemented. As an instructional leader, Peter feels sometimes you need to be an exterminator. This means being able to see what is out there right now that may not be working. It also means having the courage to say we are not going to do this any more and then rethink, regroup, and redesign what is being done.

He does not feel that his definition of instructional leadership has changed over the last several years because it is how he has always felt. However, Peter feels that the definition of administrators in general has probably changed because of high stakes testing of PSSA derived from No Child Left Behind (NCLB). As a result of accountability mandates, administrators are in a position now where they really need to understand and make data driven decisions, have a knowledge base, and the credibility to change some things what and how things are being taught. This is particularly important in schools that are not performing. However, it is hard for principals to change the curriculum because the local board approves and controls what is being taught. What instructional leaders do control is what instructional methodologies and strategies are being used. As a result, the definition of instructional leadership has changed by administration in general because accountability mandates not longer allow people to go with the status quo.

Peter feels that high stakes testing and issues of accountability have forced administrators to really redefine their role as instructional leader. Prior to accountability mandates, a lot of this stuff was handed down from the central office. Each principal was the caretaker to make sure that stuff from the central office was taken care of. However, accountability mandates hold each school individual accountable. Principals need to have the courage and the leadership ability follow the curriculum but

make different decisions about methodology and delivery strategies based on their individual school.

These different decisions need to be based on the school population, school demographics, and how kids are performing on the high stakes tests. Principals need to be instructional leaders in changing some things up and make different decisions in order to meet the accountability mandates.

School community factors or influences have not affected Peter's role as an instructional leader. If there is a job, like instructional leadership, to be done, he can recognize what has to be done and do it. He knows his job as principal and what has to be done as an instructional leader better than anyone in the community or school district. People in the central office are not in the school every day so they are not going to be able to influence or change Peter's thinking. Peter knows that if he is not performing or making the wrong decision that he needs to be held accountable by the central office and could be out the door. However, it has not happened and he does not expect it to happen because he is on-top of things.

Peter does not think his availability or absence of time has had an impact on his role as an instructional leader. However, from an instructional standpoint, Peter thinks that it is important that instructional time for students is not compromised. For example, Peter tries not to get involved in things that may steal instructional time from students. In regards to high stakes testing, Peter has a little saying "it is no child left without a behind." He feels that students' asses are being tested off beginning in third grade and all of the testing takes time from instruction. The tests then have to be scored, diagnoses made, a prescription plan written, and a tutorial assigned. All of these tasks to satisfy benchmarks take teacher time from instruction. Peter is concerned that valuable instructional time is being lost for factors that really are not germane to having each child really realize his or her potential. He feels that individuals working in education need to be careful that they are not narrowing the curriculum so it focuses solely on the assessments. Peter is concerned that opportunities that teachers once had to go off in different directions to enrich the curriculum are no longer possible because they have to stay focused on

Pennsylvania academic standards and anchors. From a time perspective, Peter is really bothered by the curriculum being narrowed as a result of the focus on the test.

How does Peter define time? Peter defines time as being prompt, fulfilling the requirement or commitment, and not shaving off time. He tells his staff not to be a time bandit and be prompt with all time commitments. For example, if there is a conference or meeting scheduled from 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. then they need to be there at 8 a.m. and stay until 8:30 a.m. He does not want them shaving off time or walking out of a half-hour or 45-minute meeting or conference because they have something else to do. If they have some sort of supervision duty of some sort, he wants them to be there promptly, fulfill the time requirement or commitment, and not to shave time of the commitment.

He thinks principals cannot have the time mind-set they are just in the job for “x” number of hours, then out the door, and will be back at it again tomorrow. Peter thinks that they need to see the principalship as a lifestyle and not just a job because it does become their life. However, for an individuals’ own physical, mental, and emotional well-being, he believes that they need to have a life other than just being a principal. He loves to ski, play golf, mountain bike, and even participated in the Broad Street Run (ten mile race) in Philadelphia. While he definitely has a life outside of the school, he feels that principals cannot have the mind-set that they are here at 8 a.m. and out by 4 p.m. Peter thinks principals’ needs to schedule their time within and outside of the 8 a.m.–4 p.m. timeframe which allows them to be on top-of-things. Within the scheduled time frame, they need expect the unexpected to occur. By being on top of things and having the unexpected occur, they are able to have the scheduling leeway to change things and deal with the unexpected.

For new principals or someone interested in being a principal, Peter thinks the best thing for them would be a mentor. A mentor could let a new principal shadow them for a half hour or an hour a day. Peter thinks the every day shadowing would allow them to see exactly how to deal with the

unexpected, navigate throughout the day, learn what to do in the morning, or what stuff goes on at night. Peter thinks this is important because his district recently has had new principals who have only lasted a year or two and bailed out because they just could not deal with the time and management issues. His district does not subscribe to hiring someone who first served as assistant principal before moving into the principalship. Rather they take people right from the classroom and move them into a principalship. Peter feels that the district lost the new principals because they were not properly mentored, did not really understand what they were getting into and did not have people they could go to for help. As a result, these new principals returned to the classroom.

A recent example of the bailing was a special education supervisor, who lasted less than a year, and recently decided to return to the classroom. While this woman was very confident, she made this decision because she never realized how much time was involved in the position. The woman has a son at home who wonders where mom is because she works late and is never at home. The time that she used to have in the summer was no longer there because she now works through the summer. The woman felt that she could not deal with, manage, or live with all the time requirements. Peter feels that mentorship, especially in large school districts, by experienced people who have survived the job expectations can help new principals to not bail.

Taylor Sykes

Taylor Sykes is a 53-year-old Caucasian male who is married, with three children who are 18, 24, and 27 years old. In junior high and high school, he wondered what he should do after high school. He had some really great teachers in who gave him guidance and direction about what to do with the rest of my life. They suggested his going into education after high school because there were not a lot of men in education, particularly elementary education. In college, he majored in elementary education and earned a Masters of Education in Speech Pathology and Audiology. After student teaching got into the teaching profession right out of college and worked as a teacher for 11 years. He worked as a vice principal for five years and has been a principal for 16 years. Taylor has worked in the same urban district for his entire 32 years career in education. He has been in his current position of elementary principal for the past eight years and his school has 340 students. He works in an urban school district in a schoolwide title-one and reading first school.

The school has a leadership team consisting on Taylor (the principal), K-3 and 4-5 reading coaches, and three instructional leader teachers (ILT) for K-2 (primary grades), 3-5 (intermediate grades), and special education (due to number of classes housed in building). The ILTs, a master teacher, assist their colleagues with demonstration, model lessons, support to materials, support to professional development, and are the immediate resource to grade level teachers. Any haves, needs, wants, desires teachers have are take it to the ILT. The ILT then becomes their advocate at the leadership table in sharing what their group is asking for. The leader offers solutions or strategies for helping the teacher gain what they are looking for while fully recognizing that there will be impact on the budget, facility, or program. The leadership team allows them to work together hand and hand making decisions. The leadership team is funded by district stipends afforded to the instructional teacher leaders (ITL) and reading coaches. The

stipend is above and beyond the base teaching salary. However, the members of the leadership team do not fulfill the role for the money, which is not a tremendous amount. They fulfill the role because they have a commitment to the profession, for themselves as professional, and to make education work for kids. The leadership team is framed so that practitioners support the principal. The leadership team also acts as a catalyst to make sure that schools are performing and doing what is necessary to ensure that children are learning.

The district relies on the leadership team to address many concerns and reach the needs of kids. Taylor feels that he is blessed to have a strong leadership team that works well together. He does not think he could manage the role of principal without their support because there are too many important things to be done. In Taylor's district, the collective bargaining agreement has facilitated an organizational structure in the district allowing the leadership team to be the mechanism driving what needs to be done. The other members of the leadership team are the immediate eyes and ears in the school. As practitioners, they are living the same problems as the teachers so they can easily identify problems or when solutions are not working as the team hoped. As a result, the leadership team can brainstorm other strategies or interventions to do things more efficiently or with fewer complications. The district relies heavily on the leadership team to make sure that they are in compliance and are doing things in the best way possible.

Taylor feels that it is important to extend leadership opportunities to teachers outside of the leadership team. These leadership opportunities include having a key person responsible to run point on specific projects related to the curriculum or assessing to understand. School leaders also share it with the rest of the staff any changes or modifications to the curriculum or assessments that will be introduced in the future.. He thinks that an extension of leadership is giving folks the opportunity to have a say and

know that what they say is going to be heard. Taylor thinks that it is important to utilize every opportunity to implement things in a way that is positive for children.

He shared that every school has a leadership other than just a single leader called a principal but they may not call it a leadership team. The principal has counselors, social workers, master teachers, and department chairs who they comfy in to make sure what needs to be done is being done. There is no school works independent with a single person giving out all of the directives. They all have a style and form of leadership.

Within the role of principal, he uses his time to fulfill responsibilities of plant/facilities manager, educational leader, and budget manager in a large urban district. As plant/facility manager, Taylor needs to make sure that he always has sufficient space for the different individuals coming in and out of the building. These individuals include occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, counselors, social workers, and family therapists. It is a critical component that he successfully coordinates time and space for these individuals to work with the children and families. As the educational leader in the building, there is the expectation that he goes into classrooms, does observations, and confers with teachers. This includes discussions with teachers about best practices, pacing of instruction, and lesson design. It also includes providing tools that teachers need to be effective with kids. The district expects and requires all administrators to make visiting classrooms part of their daily routine and observe teachers. Principals need to do informal observations and at least six formal observations per month with staff. After the formal observation, the principal discusses the teaching episode with the teaching focusing on what worked well and what needs to be done differently to improve upon student learning and student achievement.

As the budget manager, Taylor needs to be aware of student number because the budget is based on student numbers. If the actual number of students is lower than the projected number of students then

there needs to be a reconciliation of budget funds. Taylor then needs to give the district back the per student tuition for every student that did not come to the school to relieve the schools that did evidently get the kids. He is always dealing with budgetary concerns because he works in a district using site-based school budgeting and operates the instructional budget for his school. He needs to make sure there is sufficient money for Taylor's, materials, supplies, and salaries based on number of employees. Taylor and his leadership team place emphasis and pride on keeping a very low 1-16 teacher-student ratio in the primary grades to encourage interactions and involvement. His role as budget manager will be changed dramatically next year due to reorganization to address budget deficits faced by the district and allow the district to work within a specific budget in a given school year. The reorganization involves closing approximately 20 schools, which will require schools to be consolidated, demographics restructured, and class size to increase to 25-28 children per teacher in a classroom. The increase in the student ratio will make the district figures more in line with figures across the commonwealth and nation. These changes are necessary and viewed as a positive and proactive strategy to deal with the districts budgetary circumstances and still meet the needs of the kids in a matter that is comforting as possible to the parent, neighborhood, and community.

The most important use of Taylor's time is acting as a liaison between the school and the community and the least important use of Taylor's time is issues dealing with the physical plant. The liaison role involves making sure families recognize and understand the good work being done at the school and the challenges presented to children so they can be successful learners. The conduit between home and school is important because issues that occur in the home that impact the school performance and things that happen in the school impact home life. The principals office that manages through the complexity of school life to make sure that it is working and supporting the needs of the students education and family life. Taylor feels that physical plant issues are out of his domain and thus a least

important use of his time. For example, if his school needs a new roof, he calls the maintenance department and tells them that they need a new roof. While he hopes that it is take care of, the timeline for completion is out of his control. He hopes that the roof gets taken care because the school needs a working roof in order to function and serve the children. However, in the role of physical plant leader it is necessary that he knows what is going on in the building but also knows that he can rely on other folks to take care of its competition. Capital improvements such as a roof repair, fire renovation, school refurbishing would be handled by the central office budget rather than the site-based budget.

Strategies that Taylor uses to manage his time include an effective office staff, fluid schedule, developing routines, meeting important timelines, and expecting the unexpected. Taylor has a very effective office staff that works hand-in-hand setting forth a daily or weekly planner and that they try to adhere too. They keep is schedule working in fluid so that when meetings are set, there are rare occasions where they need to be canceled or rearranged. Taylor has developed routines for regular or standing events. Standings events in Taylor's school include different monthly Monday meetings and weekly meetings with the staff. At the same time on the first Monday of every month, there is an instructional cabinet meeting. On the second Monday is a Parent School Community Council, the third Monday is discipline committee, and the fourth Monday is building committee. Every Tuesday is a professional development day for the staff at the end of the day. These types of scheduled events help to structure the day and time because they are givens. If a principal wants things to happen, they have to stay true to the givens and follow through with them when they occur. It is also important to evaluate and inspect events to make sure that the desire events are happening in the way that they were planned to work. Things happen more consistently and efficiently when a principal are able to follow through with the routines, stay true to the flow pattern. These routines and efficiency help him to meet important timelines. Taylor

also manages his time to be ready for things that cannot be accounted for or might interfere with best laid plans during the course of a day or week resulting in time changes in the planner or to the schedule.

There is a lot of pooling on Taylor's time, which requires him to prioritize what is necessary to be done that day. He needs to be flexible enough to reprioritize and meet those time demands. Sometimes he has to reprioritize and identify this was important today or yesterday but it is not as important today. This reprioritization allows items to either go down a few notches or get elevated a few notches based on where the influence is coming from. An example of reprioritization would be in a situation with a disgruntled parent who calls the central office and the information shared gets to the superintendent office. The superintendents' office makes an inquiry, wanting a response now, and not wanting to wait while the principal does a scheduled classroom observation or whatever else is on their schedule. The need for the immediate response is due to their need to be prepared to give a response should the situation escalate to something that ultimately gets out to the media and negatively impact the prospective of the district. As a result, in the role of the principal just like any job, things come up, they need to be prioritized, and dealt with as necessary.

Parents also play a role in Taylor's time usage through issues, emergencies, and leadership situations. Sometimes he will have an irate parent, who just appears at the office, and needs their issue addressed right then and there. Depending on what else is going on, he either can or cannot see them immediately but reality is that he will always see them. He just might have to say "I am not able to meet with you right now but I will give you this time soon as I possibly can." Taylor will also have parents who call or come in with an issue or concern. Recently, he had a family call and share that they had lose an infant child. The family also has three other school-aged children, who are out for the funeral but will need counseling services, bereavement services, and other outside support agencies when they return to school. There is also a Parent, School, and Community Council, which is the governance board for the

school. The leadership team is responsible to report to council and share the direction that the school is moving towards. The council provides support and governance to implement what is important to the district, school, and children in order to move the agenda forward.

Student teachers, who work at Taylor's school, influence his time. He has to work with the colleges and universities to coordinate their supervisors coming in. Taylor also needs to be able to meet with and observe those young folks to give them some feedback. Feedback helps student teachers grow in a manner that Taylor wants because he might be hiring them in a year or two.

Taylor's time is controlled by himself, the unexpected, and the central office. He would like that he controls his own time but that does not always happen with 340 bodies walking the school, each of whom have their own issues. For example, when kids engage in an inappropriate behavior such as fighting, Taylor cannot ignore it rather he has to deal with it in its immediacy to ensure safety and well-fair of children are always protected. The central office also controls his time. Sometimes they call an emergency principals meeting which requires him to drop what he is doing and attend that meeting. The central office also has scheduled meetings two, three, four times a month. These meetings are important because they bring principals together to share facts about the roll out of information to ensure that it is consistent and effective across all schools.

His view of time has changed with age and can be expressed in the words once told to him. "When you get older and go through the industry called education, every year goes faster and faster." While it is several months into the school year, Taylor feels like school started yesterday. The time management of his day, week, and the time management by his staff is all affected by different demands. These demands include delivering instruction, accessing it, preparing kids to ready in time for the state assessments, and ensure the appropriate material is covered in that period of time. As principal, Taylor needs to be flexible enough to meet teachers in relation to specific needs and then find someone to give us

workshop in-service on the needs. As a result, it becomes a priority to work with the he has time to supports teachers doing the jobs expected of them.

Time in schools spent assessing rather than instructing has been caused by the accountability mandates. Schools are now taking bench marking more frequently to prevent big gaps in the learning curve. While there are more assessments being done has negatively impacted the amount of instruction. Taylor feels that it can be positive when schools are able to pin down explicitly what a particular students needs are and where they are failing. The information can then be used to provide the student with direct instruction. If the student learning is not as great when the final analysis is done then the school has given the child sufficient supports to be a successful learner.

Instructional leadership is defined by Taylor as being the principals' knowledge of acceptable student performance. This knowledge is driven by state and standardized assessments. Schools want children to know and be able to do so through the standards and curriculum. In Taylor's school the leadership team is integral part of the instructional leadership. The leadership team consists of both instructional lead teachers and reading coaches providing multiple people the option of reaching out to teachers. As supervisory staff, they provide other support they can be content specialist and do demonstration model lessons. As principal, Taylor makes sure his staff is being exposed too best or state-of-the-art-practices that are proven through scientifically-based research which allows them to implement instructional delivery at its finest point. It is also Taylor's role to stay on top of, know, and assess what his staff needs then be able to pull the resources together so that the teachers are given the kinds of supports and professional development that will allow them to do their jobs.

His view of instructional leadership has changed dramatically due to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the need to verify an individual student level. For example, if a child started at point "a" and is now performing at point "b," has there been growth between point "a" and "b." The growth is based

on how much attainable learning has occurred and being able to document that growth qualitatively, quantitatively, through data analysis. Growth is also based on ensuring that the expected standards are being delivered and the benchmarks that are being designed to be achieved are being achieved. As principal, his role in instructional leadership has changed dramatically because accountability mandates are growing in a realistic and formidable way. These new commitments had added more to the plates of many in education and not much has been taken away. However, Taylor feels that a good time manager and a good instructional leader are able to identify what can be taken away and cause a challenge to the learning process. However, he worries if something does not get taken away then at some point, the plate is going to break. Taylor believes that teachers become more respectful to a new initiative being brought forward when something is taken out of the mix. It is important to realize that if things keep being added and something does not get taken away then the plate is going to break at some point of time. It is unrealistic to believe that 10 times more can be done in the same amount of time. While schools always try to improve their efficiencies, Taylor feels it is important to remember that there are still little bodies in front of them that need time and attention. Some of the paperwork issues, recording issues, and data entry issues can be better served in another way and another capacity.

Taylor considers himself and other principals to be middle managers moving the districts agenda. Principals take the initiative to ensure teachers are addressing individual student learning needs by analyzing data related to instruction. They verify that teachers are moving children forward and sustaining them on pathways that are appropriate to the child's performance level and are using data to base their instructional decisions. Taylor feels that the role of the principal has evolved tremendously because of the evolution of technology. As a result of technology, schools have more data available than they had in the past and are able to use the data for a day-to-day or month-to-month as prescription for individualization of instruction.

He feels that technology is helping with these issues. For example, a teacher can plug in the data from their individual teacher stations. Once entered, the central office has an obligation and responsibility to collate all of the information and share the analysis with teachers. Teachers then use the analysis to be aware of the numbers of kids who are proficient, basic, and below basic. This information helps the teachers with developing flexible grouping strategies and determining if liked ability kids is grouped. However, if the central office has not done a good job with the analysis then teachers end up wasting their time and reanalyzing the data. As a result, Taylor feels that the technology is as much of a hydrous as it is a help. While teachers are getting used to the technology, it has been very overwhelming. He needs to give teachers time to navigate through the technology, which becomes a major help to them. It is beneficial to not ask teachers to do something that a computer program could do for them. It is also helpful to assist teachers to produce the kinds of reports that will allow them to be more effective delivering the instruction expected by the principal. Technology is a help to Taylor if the information is given to him expeditiously. He can use the information to follow through with grouping kids appropriately and correctly so the instruction given is specially designed for what their needs are.

Examples of Taylor's use of time as an instructional leader include informal and formal visitations and meetings with the leadership team. Informal observations involve making sure to visit and walk around all of the classrooms giving five to seven minutes of informal time to each classroom touching base with kids and looking at their work. Formal observations are always built into his schedule to allow give the teacher a more considerable amount of time to watch a lesson unfold and make sure all of the critical components are being addressed and delivered. The first part of the morning, he has an opportunity to meet with the leadership team to identify whether there is a concern that is arising or something that can be addressed in a different fashion. At least one member of the leadership team (principal, K-3 and 4-5 reading coach, and instructional teacher leader) make a point to be available and

go to the common planning meetings of the grade level teams. This allows them to work with the teachers, address their issues or concerns, make sure that they are doing what needs to be done, and review student and progress monitoring. It also allows the leadership team to touch base with teachers and cut cross grade level grouping, cross class grouping, and flexible grouping within the class to meet the needs of the kids. As well as ensuring that the grouping is done in an accurate and correct matter and are working together as a team to effectively manage their time.

The impact Taylor's availability or absence of time has had on his role as an instructional leader is different than most principals because of other hats that he wears. He is heavily involved in the state associations and the national associations for the principals groups. Consequently he has commitments that take him out of the building and into Harrisburg one or two days a month. These days are when he might not be available are in addition to the periods of time when he is out of the building for a principals meeting or other district meetings. When he is out of the building, he knows the building will be able to move forward because there is a standing leadership commitment. If there is an issue, there is a designated teacher-in-charge who is an instructional teacher leader (ITL) and on the leadership team. If they are not in the building, it would fall to the next ITL. As a result, when he is not in the building, there is still sound leadership. There is a chain of command that everyone in the building knows, understands, and is comfortable with whether or not Taylor is in the building. As a result the program moves on, the curriculum moves on, and the instructional pacing moves on. Taylor feels that if the building falls apart because the principal is not in the building then there is not a very strong organizational delivery in the first place. A building has to be able to sustain itself and continue the good work whether the principal is physically there or not. Taylor feels that most buildings operate with shared leadership because people need supports and structures that they understand. A teacher needs to understand what needs to be done or who to go to if a situation arises and the principal is not in the building.

Time, defined by Taylor, is the component that an individual hopes to have control over. An individual tries to control time the best they can with the full understanding that issues will arise causing reprioritize of time usage to occur. Some of the issues are beyond the individuals control but everything still needs to be fit in. A lot of the work is done after the school day, in the evenings, or on the weekends. The definition also applies to classroom teachers and support staff in the building. Education requires a tremendous amount of work done outside of the hours of the 8 a.m.–2:30 or 8 a.m.–3 p.m. school day and they have weekends off. Educators are spending the time because that is what professionals, like doctors and lawyers, do. Educators do not make a big deal about the time requirements because they recognize that a certain amount of it comes with the territory. As a result, they need to ban together, work-together, and use their time effectively when they are together. When other things are done outside of the school day, it has meaning because they gained all of the information needed when they met collectively together.

When sharing advice for new principals facing time challenges and finding time to be an instructional leader, Taylor shared specific mentoring offered in his urban school district. When new administrators enter the district, they are given a mentor to assist them and offer a release to go to when help or advice is needed. The district also has a two-year aspiring principals program allowing individuals to experience and learn the role as well as learning from veteran mentors. The program allows aspiring principal to have experiences and exposures as a foundation before ever being called up or thrust into the role of principal or an assistant principal. As a result, Taylor's district has a very organized, structured, replenishing of forces, and preparing folks to become principals. His district also hires from outside the district. When a new or veteran administrator comes to the district, they are also offered a mentor from the local administrative group to help learn practices and policies in the district as well as having someone to discuss concerns with and seek advice from. Taylor's district also recognizes

that not everyone is as well-versed in items such as scheduling or budgeting and provides principals with opportunities for networking to work together to define best practices and strategies around their individual identified area of need. If a new principals' district does not offer mentoring, they can always call the administrators association to find someone to offer help or advice on a specific topic.

Summary of Findings Regarding Urban Principals

Urban principals' responses were varied and diverse. However, upon analysis, common themes can be found in their responses. The following sections look at urban principals' responses to questions about time and instructional leadership.

Most Important Use of Time

The most important use of time fell into four categories for urban principals, time related to teachers, students, parents, and other. Four principals (Amy, Glenn, Peter, and Clem) all discussed students as being the most important use of the time. Amy discussed it being important to love kids and show them she cares by being nurturing, welcoming, and a disciplinarian. Glenn shared dealing with students and their needs, Peter talked about human dynamics/interactions with students, and Peter stressed human dynamics/interactions with students. Three principals (Amy, Clem, and Peter) brought up teachers as being the most important users of their time. Clem felt that it was important to observe teachers to make sure students are learning and their time is on task. Amy mentioned training teachers while Peter looked at his human dynamics/interactions with teachers. Peter was the only principal to mention parents as being the most important use of his time continuing his "human dynamics/interactions" theme. As principal, he feels it is important that he is a liaison between school and community to make sure parents understand good work being done at the school and the challenges presented to children so they can be successful learners. Embedded within human dynamics/interactions, Peter feels that the "visibility" and "approachability" factors are important so people feel comfortable to stop to ask him a question or engage in a conversation. Hazel believes that everything is important and relative to having a good building.

Least Important Use of Time

Principals brought up paperwork, meetings, and the physical plant as being the least important use of their time. Three principals (Amy, Glenn, and Peter) verbalized paperwork as being the least important. Paperwork for outside agencies, such as United Way, is least important for Amy because she is not a collection agency but knows that paperwork is necessary for political survival. Since Peter does not want to be the kind of principal sitting behind a desk, paperwork and documentation is at the bottom of his priority list getting done in the evening, on the weekend, or at home. Glenn finds paperwork, documentation, and data analysis needed to support accountability as voluminous and is least important for him. Only one principal addressed meetings (Clem) and physical plant (Taylor) as being the least important. Clem attends a lot of meetings as president of his local administrative association and finds meetings that could have been accomplished through e-mail or letters as least important. However, he still attends this meeting because he does not know until he arrives at the meeting if they could have been accomplished via and e-mail. While Taylor needs to know what is going on in the building, however, issues dealing with the physical plant (i.e., capital improvements) are less important because they are out of his domain with other people responsible for competition.

Change in Time Perspective Over Last Several Years

Principals had different perspectives on whether or not their view of time changed over the last several years. Glenn, Hazel, Taylor, and Clem shared factors that had led to a change in perspective and Peter explained why his view of time had not changed. Factors affecting Glenn's change in perspective about time included personal obligations at home, experiences as a principal, level of confidence within role, and reduction of teacher problems. Hazel and Taylor also shared how experience and change in situation affected their view of time. Hazel's view of time changed when she moved from the position of teacher to position of principal. Taylor's view of time has changed with age because every year seems to

go faster and faster. Three principals, Glenn, Taylor, and Clem, all shared that accountability mandates had affected their use of time. As a result of accountability mandates, Glenn spends more time documenting, Taylor spends more time assessing rather than instructing, and Clem now spends more time observing teachers both formally and informally. He also spends time looking at student data. Glenn's counseling background has always encouraged him to emphasize human contacts, interactions, and dynamics so he does not believe that his view of time has changed. His counseling background also taught to value accountability measures, evaluations, and assessments emphasized by accountability mandates like No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Time Controls or Influences

Five of the principals (Amy, Glenn, Hazel, Peter, and Clem) felt that they controlled their own time. Hazel shared that no one controlled or influenced her time because she is in control. Three principals (Amy, Glenn, and Peter) believe they have the autonomy to run their buildings. Glenn expressed his good fortune in the autonomy and lack of control over time by his superiors, school board, and district. Due to his superintendents' limited experience as a principal and the turn-over of school directors, they do not affect how Peter spends his time. The school board also does not affect his time usage because he has been doing the job of principal for a long time. Three principals (Amy, Taylor, and Clem) believe time is influenced by the central office or superiors. Amy is required to do certain things under the guise of superintendent or assistant superintendent. Taylor's central office calls emergency or preplanned meetings. Like Taylor, Clem's superiors call meetings, which influence his time usage. Glenn and Taylor both shared unexpected situations influencing their time usage. For Glenn it is situations with staff and students and for Taylor it is unexpected issues or emergencies with students or parents. While Clem also has the situations with parents but not feel that they abuse his time. Amy and Peter explained the source of time pressures. Amy believes that time pressures for principals come from internal

pressures. From a professional standpoint, Peter feels that he controls his own time but from a personal standpoint, he feels that his wife might control some of his time.

Definition of Instructional Leadership

The urban principals definitions of instructional leadership fell into four categories of serving the best interests of the learner and learning, professional development, and instructional decision-making: Only one principal, Amy, defined instructional leadership based on the best interest of the learner. As an instructional leader, she feels she needs to know and understand the building, people, and delivery of information. Additionally, Amy feels the instructional leader needs to know the curriculum, know the newest techniques for teaching, ensure that teachers know curricular information that they need to deliver, and shares or provides curricular information with teachers. Two principals, Glenn and Clem, defined instructional leadership based on the best interest of instructional decision-making. As an instructional leader, Glenn helps teachers with different strategies for differentiated instruction using a program called Foresight. The program allows teachers to analyze the tests that kids are being given. Like Glenn, Hazel found Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) software where students answer questions on the computer, which allows teachers to enhance instruction based on where students are having trouble. Clem acts as an instructional leader by modeling how to use data as a tool for instruction. Three principals (Glenn, Taylor, and Hazel) defined instructional leadership based on serving the best interest of learning. As an instructional leader, Glenn wants to make sure that teachers are meeting the needs of students as required by the Pennsylvania State Standards, in order to ensure that they meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). State and standardized assessments have driven Taylor's desire to know what is considered acceptable student performance on the curriculum and standards. Hazel believes that instructional leaders need to pull together the stakeholders in order to get the most out of children in terms of achievement.

Six principals (Amy, Glenn, Hazel, Peter, Taylor, and Clem) defined instructional leadership based on the best interests of professional development. As an instructional leader, Glenn provides teachers with in-service opportunities and coaches teachers through formal and informal observations. In his current position as principal, he is able to support, facilitate, and work as a colleague with teachers to help solve problems or best-meet the needs of kids. Like Glenn, Taylor does informal and formal visitations of teachers to ensure that critical components are being addressed and delivered. Taylor also meets with the leadership team to identify concerns that needs to be addressed. Peter believes that as an instructional leader he needs to have a life-long learner mind-set and the desire to stay current. He serves the best interest of his own professional development through graduate level coursework and seminar attendance. Peter believes that his having a pedagogical knowledge base allows him to speak credibly on what is happening, what should be happening, and work with students to be a facilitator, motivator, and rejuvenator. He also believes that an instructional leader needs to be an exterminator realizing when something is not working and having the courage to rethink, regroup, or redesign what is being done. Like Peter, Hazel provides herself with professional development reading books and magazines from Educational Leadership. Taylor believes as instructional leader, he needs to stay on top of, know, and assess his staffs needs so he can pull together resources, supports, and professional development that they allow them to do their job. These resources, supports, and professional development are important because he wants to make sure his staff is exposed to best or state-of-the-art-practices that are proven through scientifically based research which allow them to implement instructional delivery to its finest point. Clem provides his teachers with professional development and knows the right resource people to speak with to help teachers get professional development. As an instructional leader, Amy provides professional development for her teachers through access to a professional library, book studies with teachers, observations, working with teachers when they need help, and modeling lessons or finding

someone to model lessons for teachers. Like Amy, Hazel also provides professional development for her teachers through coaching teachers who need help, finding a classroom management course for weak teachers, buying copies of a book to share with teachers, and making suggestions on lessons she has watched.

Instructional Leadership Changing or Not Changing Over Last Several Years

Over the last several years, four principals role as an instructional leader has not changed and two principals' roles as an instructional leader have changed. Taylor and Clem's roles as an instructional leader have changed over the last several years due to accountability mandates. Taylor's role has changed dramatically because of accountability mandates are growing in a realistic and formidable way. Clem feels that accountability mandates are putting more pressure on principals causing them to kick it up a notch as an instructional leader. Amy, Glenn, Hazel, and Peter roles as instructional leader have not changed over the last several years. Amy always felt strongly about instructional leadership. It is her job to lead teachers in direction of accountability, understand what teachers are teaching, and how the curriculum needs to be taught. Like Taylor and Clem, she is aware of accountability but unlike Taylor and Clem, she feels that accountability is important. While Peter does not think his role as an instructional leader has changed, he thinks that administrators in general roles have changed because accountability mandates no longer allow people to go with the status quo. Glenn does not think his role as an instructional leader has changed because one either has or does not have the personality for instructional leadership. He feels that a change in situation or building can change a principal's role as an instructional leader. Like Glenn, Hazel thinks that she has more of an instructional than organizational personality and searches out methods to get everything done.

Factors Affecting Role as an Instructional Leader

Accountability mandates, parents, and experience affected urban principals' role as an instructional leader. Four principals role as an instructional leader has been affected by accountability mandates. Since schools are judged by tests, Hazel has concentrated on children's attendance because if attendance is high, scores will go up. As a result of accountability, Clem feels that there is a lot of pressure on administrators and everyone has had to kick it up a notch. Like Hazel and Clem, Peter feels that high stakes tests have forced administrators to redefine their role as an instructional leader. Since the tests hold individual school accountable, Peter feels that administrators need to have the courage to follow the curriculum but make decisions based on the school population, demographics, and how kids are performing on the high stakes tests. Taylor feels that principals need to analyze data related to instruction to move children forward based on their performance level. This analysis is possible because schools have more data available then they had in the past. Two principals' have been affected by forces other than accountability mandates. Glenn feels that the type of parents at a school affects the type of instructional leader that a principal is. As a parent, Amy wants to be the type of teacher and principal that she would want her own children to have. As a result, she is an avid reader to help kids and goes into classrooms to reinforce teachers.

Availability or Absence of Time Impacting Role as an Instructional Leader

The availability or absence of time has impacted two principals and not impacted four principals role as an instructional leader. Glenn and Taylor believe that the availability or absence of time has impacted their role as an instructional leader. Glenn does not feel that in the principalship one ever leaves at the end of the day having everything completed or accomplished. Taylor's absence of time is from an outside factor of being heavily involved in the state and national principals' association. Amy, Hazel,

Peter, and Clem do not believe that the availability or absence of time has impacted their role as an instructional leader.

Both Amy and Hazel have not been impacted by the absence of time because they work very long hours and are focused on instruction. Clem feels that he has to fit everything in the time that he has. He artificially extends the work day and week to get everything done. Unlike the other principals, Peter talked about the availability or absence of instructional time for students. As a result, he tries not to get involved in things that may steal instructional time from students and makes sure that the curriculum is not narrowed to focus solely on assessments.

Time Defined by Principals

When defining time, two principals used a metaphor, three principals used a personal synonym, and one principal defined time based on his expectations of staff. Amy and Clem both used a metaphor to define time. For Amy, time is a gift given to be used wisely or unwisely, which cannot be gotten back. For Clem, time is an Energizer™ battery that keeps going because time is not something that you can ever touch. Glenn, Hazel, and Taylor used personal synonyms of productivity, obsession, and control to define time. Glenn defines time as the productivity needed for the day to run smoothly. Hazel sees time as an obsession; she likes to get places on time or things done on time. For Taylor, time is the component that an individual hopes to control while understanding that reprioritization is needed when issues are out of one's control. Peter defined time based on three staff expectations of being prompt, fulfilling the requirement or commitment, and not shaving off time.

Principals continued their time definitions by putting it into the context of the principalship. Amy feels that principals need to determine when they have had enough and when they need to forge ahead. They also need to carve out personal time for family or exercising to remain sane. Like Amy, Peter expressed the importance for principals to have a life outside of the job but also need to see the

principalship as a lifestyle. Like Amy, Clem talked about their not being enough time. Clem believes that time is something that individuals always wish they had more of but there is never enough time unless an individual spreads it out. Glenn thinks that time is an issue that all professionals struggle with but unlike other professionals educators cannot compare time to productivity. As a principal Hazel finds it contemptuous when people are late because you people should always be on-time.

Advice for New Principals

Urban principals' advice for new principals was varied and diverse. Hazel shared that new principals need to have a passion for the principalship and realize that it is a time-consuming job. Clem encouraged new principals to set aside time to learn routines, procedures, and protocol. Amy discussed using good judgment, learning from mistakes, and being aware of politics. She also recommended being knowledgeable about the curriculum and special education. Glenn discussed prioritizing what is important, learning to deal with spontaneity of job, and realizing that you have control over some things but not others.

Hazel encouraged new principals not to get overwhelmed. If married or have children, Hazel recommends getting good help at home or having an understanding person at home. Hazel also mentioned taking notes immediately during or after meetings, always checking e-mail, and find a way to keep up with stuff. She highly recommended getting a subscription to Educational Leadership from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Both Amy and Glenn talked about the needs of teachers. Glenn encouraged new principals to meet the needs of kids, parents, faculty, and their boss. When working with teachers, Amy emphasized being a team member, not being a dictator, and offering support. She expressed the importance of telling teachers that you want them to be successful and are not looking to damage anyone's career. When

working with staff, Amy discussed not having a big ego or being overly-ambitious. Her words were echoed by Clem, who encouraged new principals not to be a know it all.

Amy, Peter, Taylor, and Clem discussed finding sources of support or a mentor. Clem talked about important characteristics for the mentor including having a good reputation, respected by new principal, and in the system for a long time. Taylor suggested finding a mentor through the district or call the administrators association to find someone to help. He also encouraged new principals to find opportunities to network with other principals.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Prior to answering the six research questions that structure the study, this chapter provides an overview of the participants interviewed for the study by discussing their similarities and differences. The chapter then answers each of the six research questions.

The first research question investigated the ways Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time. Time in the principalship is spent in meetings, in discussions with teachers, in considerations of students with special needs, in observations, in arrivals and dismissals, in making announcements, in studying budgets, in discipline issues, on environment checks, in classroom visits, in paperwork, on parent organizations, in examining assessment results, in handling unexpected situations, and on e-mail. Principals' view of time has changed based on experience as a principal, change in position, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, and not having enough time. Time was defined by principals by using metaphors, by conveying clock-time and body-time perspectives, and in geometric terms.

The second research question looked at strategies principals employed to manage their time, and the third research question looked at what principals considered the most important and least important uses of their time. Principals managed their time by means of using a calendar of scheduled events, prioritization, or their secretary; they put in extra hours; they used technology, lists, notes, and color coding; and they managed paperwork, delegated responsibilities, and read literature. The most important use of time involved people, curriculum and instruction, and having a presence in the school. The least important use of principals' time involved parents, paperwork, meetings, and e-mail.

The fourth research question looked at how principals define instructional leadership and how the context of accountability changed the definition. Principals defined instructional leadership based on

the learner, learning, and professional development. Accountability has impacted principals' definition and use of instructional leadership based on curricular and assessment decisions, concerns, students, and teachers.

The fifth and sixth research questions looked at the extent to which and in what ways principals perceived the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practice as an instructional leader and the contextual forces and influences facilitating or hindering their use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement. Half of the principals were impacted by the absence of time, but the other half of the principal's role as an instructional leader was not impacted by the availability or absence of time. Forces hindering time usage included meetings and people. However, principals who were not impacted by the availability or absence of time felt they controlled their own time and that instructional leadership was important. When discussing time for curriculum, principals mentioned being knowledgeable about the reading, writing, and mathematics curriculum and having information, being aware of concerns, supporting teaching, and making decisions. When discussing time specific to student achievement, principals discussed PSSA results, improvement of student outcomes on PSSA, and pressures, tensions, and stress.

The Participants: An Overview

Twenty-two Pennsylvania elementary principals were interviewed for this study. Eight of the principals work in rural districts, seven are in suburban districts, and seven are in urban districts. The principals' personal backgrounds have a lot of similarities. All of the principals are Caucasian but were not selected based on their ethnicity or gender. Seven of the principals are male and 15 are female. Female principals were more willing to agree to an interview than male principals were.

Their ages range from 39 to 62 years old. One principal is under 40, 5 are in their 40s, 12 are in their 50s, and 2 are in their 60s. Two principals did not list their age but appear to be 40–60 years of age.

The mean age of the principals is 52.5 years. Three of the principals are single, 17 are married, 1 is divorced, and 1 did not list marital status. Five principals have one child, eight principals have two children, five principals have three children, two principals have four children, and two principals do not have children. The children range in age from 2 to 39 years old. The mean number of children is two and the mean age of the children is 21.

Four principals have an associate degree in arts, behavioral sciences, elementary/social work, and language arts. All of the principals have bachelor's and master's degrees. Seven of the principals have a bachelor of arts in the areas of early childhood education, English literature, history, mathematics, and music education, and two have degrees in psychology. Thirteen of the principals have a bachelor of science in the areas of mathematics, psychology/biology, social studies, and elementary and kindergarten education. Two have degrees in education, and six have degrees in elementary education. One principal had a bachelor of science but did not list what it was in. One principal did not list a specific bachelor's degree but had an undergraduate degree in special education. One principal did not list a bachelor's degree, but it is assumed he had one because he listed a master's degree.

Each of three of the principals have two master's degrees. Nine principals have a master of education degree in education, elementary education, educational leadership, foundations of education, reading and language arts, special education, and speech pathology, and two have degrees in educational administration. Three principals had master of arts degrees in American studies, exceptional students education, and school administration. Eleven principals had master of science degrees in counselor education and elementary education, and two had degrees in educational leadership, two had degrees in special education, two had degrees in school administration, and three had degrees in education. One principal did not indicate a master of arts, science, or education but had two master's: one in counseling and the other in administration.

Ten of the 22 principals interviewed for this study have or are pursuing doctorates. Two principals are doctoral candidates in educational leadership, one is a doctoral student²⁹ in educational leadership, one is a doctoral candidate in educational administration, one is a doctoral candidate in elementary education administration, and one indicated being a doctoral candidate but did not indicate the program. Two principals have earned a doctor of education (D.Ed.) degree—one in curriculum and instruction and the other in educational administration. Two principals have earned a doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree: one in community systems planning and development and the other in administrative and policy studies.

Table 11: Rural, Suburban, and Urban Principals' Total Number of Years in Education

Kathy	Suburban	14
Donna	Rural	18
Sophia	Suburban	18
Geri	Suburban	20
Alex	Rural	21
Andy	Rural	21
Allison	Suburban	24
Karen	Rural	24
Donna	Rural	25
Peggy	Suburban	25
Amy	Urban	26
Linda	Rural	28
Glenn	Urban	29
Louis	Rural	31
Melissa	Urban	31
Stacy	Suburban	31
Taylor	Urban	32
Christopher	Rural	34
Clem	Urban	34
Danielle	Suburban	35
Peter	Urban	35
Hazel	Urban	37

²⁹ A doctoral candidate is farther along in a doctoral program than a doctoral student is. While it varies from program to program, a doctoral candidate has typically successfully completed core academic courses as a doctoral student and is ready to take comprehensive exams or has successfully completed comprehensive exams.

The professional experiences of the principals differed. Their total number of years working in education ranges from 14 to 37 years, with a mean of 27 years. Table 11 illustrates the individual principals' varying number of years of experience in education. Seventeen of the principals have worked only in education, and five have also worked in careers outside education. They have worked in a range of one to five school districts. Six principals have worked in one district, six principals have worked in two districts, four principals have worked in three school districts, and one principal has worked in five school districts. One principal indicated that she worked in multiple districts due to the nature of her job.

Table 12: Number of Schools That Rural, Suburban, and Urban Principals Worked In

Multiple	1 school	2 schools	3 schools	4 schools	5 schools	6 schools	7 schools	8 schools	9 schools	10 schools	11 schools	12 schools	13 schools	14 schools	15 schools	16 schools	17 schools
1	1	1	5	1	5	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Table 12 indicates the number of schools principals worked in. Experience as a teacher ranges from 0 to 30 years. Table 13 illustrates the individual principals' experience as a teacher, with the average experience being 13 years. Experience as an assistant principal or vice principal ranges from no experience to eight years. Twelve principals have no experience, one principal has a half year of experience, one principal has one year of experience, one principal has two years of experience, three principals have three years of experience, one principal has four years of experience, two principals have five years' experience, and one principal has eight years' experience as a vice principal or assistant principal.

Table 13: Rural, Suburban, and Urban Principals' Number of Years as Teacher

·	Andy	Rural
·	Linda	Rural
3	Peter	Urban
5	Sophia	Suburban
7	Geri	Suburban
8	Glenn	Urban
8	Clem	Urban
9	Kathy	Suburban
9	Donna	Rural
11	Taylor	Urban
12	Stacy	Suburban
13	Amy	Urban
13	Karen	Rural
14	Alex	Rural
14	Allison	Suburban
14	Melissa	Urban
16	Louis	Rural
17	Christopher	Rural
24	Elizabeth	Rural
25	Peggy	Suburban
28	Danielle	Suburban
30	Hazel	Urban

Table 14: Rural, Suburban, and Urban Principals' Experience as Assistant Principal or Vice Principal

·	Amy	Urban
·	Danielle	Suburban
·	Donna	Rural
·	Elizabeth	Rural
·	Geri	Suburban
·	Glenn	Urban
·	Hazel	Urban
·	Linda	Rural
·	Louis	Rural
·	Peter	Urban
·	Sophia	Suburban
·	Stacy	Suburban
·	Allison	Suburban
½	Christopher	Rural
1	Melissa	Urban
3	Alex	Rural
3	Karen	Rural
3	Clem	Urban
4	Andy	Rural
5	Kathy	Suburban
5	Taylor	Urban
8	Peggy	Suburban

Table 14 illustrates the individual principals' experience as an assistant principal or vice principal. Total experience as a principal ranges from 3 months to 23 years. The average of the principals' total experience in the principalship is 11 years. The average of principals' experience in their current principalship is eight years. Seventeen of the principals are responsible for one school, four principals are responsible for two schools, and one principal is responsible for four schools.

A summary of the information in this section is listed in tables 15–19. Table 15 provides background information, and tables 16–19 describe education, certification, and personal information.

Table 15: Rural, Urban, Suburban Principals' Professional Background

		# of years in position of principal	# of years in current position of principal	# of schools you are currently responsible for	# of years in position of vice or assistant principal	# of years as teach er	Total # of years worked in education	Total # of schools worked in	Total # of districts works in	Ever worked in another career. If yes, career?
Rural District	Andy	12	12	1	4	0	21	2	1	No
	Linda	6	6	1	0	0	28	Multiple due to nature of job		School psychologist & early intervention coordinator
	Louis	15	15	4	0	16	31	3	2	No
	Karen	9	3	2	3	13	24	5	4	Department Store Buyer
	Elizabeth	¼	¼	2	0	24	24 ½	5	4	No
	Christopher	17	17	1	1	17	34	6	2	In college & Vietnam
	Donna	9	9	1	0	9	18	1	1	No
Suburban District	Alex	4	4	1	3	14	21	8	4	No
	Allison	10 ½	4	1	½	13 ½	24	9	3	No
	Danielle	7	3	2	0	28	35	3	2	No
	Geri	11	11	1	0	7	20	3	3	No
	Kathy	¼	¼	1	5	9	14	4	2	Preschool administrator
	Peggy	7	7	2	8	24 ½	24 ½	8	4	Computer Keyboarding
	Sophia	13	8	1	0	5	18	5	3	No
	Stacy	19	19	1	0	12	31	3	2	No
Urban District	Amy	2	3	1	0	13	26	6	5	No
	Hazel	7 ½	7	1	0	30	37	5	2	No
	Melissa	13	13	1	2	14	31	9	1	No
	Peter	20	10	1	0	3	35	3	1	No
	Glenn	21	½	1	0	8	29	8	3	No
		Clem	23	23	1	3	8	5	5	1
	Taylor	16	8	1	5	11	32	17	1	No

Table 16: Rural Principals' Education, Certification, and Personal Information

		Associate Degree	Bachelor of	Master of	Doctorate	Certification	Ethnicity	Gender	Age	Marital status	Age of children
Rural Districts	Andy		Arts in Mathematics	Science in Education Cert. in School Psych. & Counseling	Doctoral Candidate in Educational Leadership	Math School Psych K-12 Guidance Elem. & Secondary Principal Letter of Eligibility	Caucasian	Male	44	Married	12,15
	Linda		Arts in psychology	Science in Education	D.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction	School psychologist Elem. & Secondary Principal	Caucasian	Female	54	Married	19 & 22
	Louis	Elementary / Social Work	Science in Elementary Education	Science in School Administration		Elementary Education Administration (K-12)	Caucasian	Male	54	Married	21, 24, 27
	Karen	Behavioral Sciences	Arts in Psychology	Science in Education		Instructional II in Secondary Social Studies Educational Specialist in Secondary Counseling Elementary Administration Secondary Administration All certifications are permanent	Caucasian	Female	59	Not listed	32, 34
	Elizabeth		Arts in History	Arts in American Studies and Science in Education		Social studies teacher K-12 Principal (Element.& Second.)	Caucasian	Female	48	Married	21, 15, 7
	Christopher		Arts in English Literature	Arts in School Administration		Elementary Education School Administration	Caucasian	Male	59	Divorced	21, 19
	Donna		Special education	Education in educational leadership	Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership	Instructional II Supervisory II	Caucasian	Female	39	Married	13, 10
	Alex		Arts in Music Education	Education in Educational Administration		Latin Choral & vocal music Elementary principal	Caucasian	Female	42	Married	17, 11, 7, 3

Table 17: Suburban Principals' Education, Certification, and Personal Information

		Associate degree	Bachelor of	Master of	Doctorate	Certification	Ethnicity	Gender	Age	Marital status	Age of children
Suburban Districts	Allison		Arts in Early Childhood Education	Education in Elementary Education		Principal Certification II	Caucasian	Female	46	Single	14
	Danielle		Science in Elementary Education	Science in Elementary Education Science in Educational Leadership	ABD Administration - Elem. Ed.	Admin I & II	Caucasian	Female	55	Married	12, 19
	Geri		Science in Elementary and Kindergarten Education	Arts in Exceptional Students Education	Ph.D. in Community Systems Planning and Development	EK.ED. Instructional II Administrative Certification K-6	Caucasian	Female	61	Married	31, 31, 35
	Kathy	Arts	Science in Education	Education in Special Education	D.Ed. candidate	K-12 Principal Letter of Eligibility	Caucasian	Female	Not listed	Married	26
	Peggy	Language Arts	Science in Elementary Education	Science in Communication Disorders (Special Education)	D.Ed. (ABD) in Ed. Admin.	Elementary Education (K-6) Special Education (K-12) Special Education Supervisor (K-2) Administrative (K-12) Letter of Eligibility	Caucasian	Female	58	Married	37
	Sophia		Science in Psychology/Biology	Science in Special Education	D.Ed candidate in Ed. Leadership	Special education Elementary principal Special education supervisor Letter of Eligibility	Caucasian	Female	41	Married	2

Table 18: Urban Principals' Education, Certification, and Personal Information

		Associate Degree	Bachelor of	Master of	Doctorate	Certification	Ethnicity	Gender	Age	Marital status	Age of children
Urban Districts	Amy		Science in Elementary Education	Masters of Education in Education		Administrative Certification	Caucasian	Female	58	Married	31, 32, 33, 36
	Hazel		Science in Social Studies	Science in Educational Leadership		K-6 Elementary Principal	Caucasian	Female	62	Single	No children
	Melissa		Science in (not listed)	Education in Reading and Language Arts	Ph.D. in Administrative and Policy Studies	Elementary education, Reading specialist, Supervisor, Admin. K-8, Letter of Eligibility	Caucasian	Female	53	Single	No children
	Peter		Science in Elementary Education	Science in Counselor Education	D.Ed. in Educational Administration	Administrative, Supervisory Counseling	Caucasian	Male	Not listed	Married	25
	Glenn		Science in Education	Education in Educational Administration		Educational Administration	Caucasian	Male	54	Married	19, 23
	Clem		Science in Math	Education in Foundations of Education		Secondary Education, Math teaching, Elementary administration, Letter of Eligibility	Caucasian	Male	57	Married	22, 29, 31
	Taylor			Education in Speech Pathology		Education of the Multiply Physically Handicapped, Elementary Administration, Secondary Administration	Caucasian	Male	53	Married	18, 24, 27

Question # 1:**In what ways do Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time?**

In order to understand the ways Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time, principals were asked two broad questions: First, how do you spend your time in the principalship? Second, what factors have affected your view of time?

Time Usage in the Principalship

In order to understand how Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think and speak about time, one must understand how time is spent in the position. In order from most mentioned to least mentioned, 14 themes emerged, including meetings, observations, student arrival and dismissal, budgeting, discipline, environment checks, paperwork, PTO³⁰/PTA³¹, special education, teachers, announcements, assessment analysis, handling the unexpected, and e-mails.

Meetings

Time spent in meetings is not a topic new to the principalship. Harchar and Hyle's (1996) study interviewed principals. One principal in the study said that "the pressures of paperwork, discipline problems, and administrative meetings were taking up most of her time" (Harchar & Hyle, 1996, p. 24). These principals' comments differ from those of the principals interviewed for this study in that no principal felt that meetings took up most of the time; rather, they spoke of the time they spent in meetings. Martin and Willower's (1981) study looking at the managerial behavior of high school principals found that principals participated in three types of meetings: scheduled meetings, unscheduled meetings, and exchanges. While the principals interviewed in their study worked at the high school level

³⁰ PTO stands for *Parent-Teacher Organization*.

³¹ PTA stands for *Parent-Teacher Association*.

and the principals interviewed in this study work at the elementary level, both participate in identical meeting types.

Time spent in meetings was mentioned by 13 principals (Alex, Allison, Amy, Christopher, Clem, Donna, Elizabeth, Geri, Karen, Kathy, Peggy, Sophia, and Stacy). These meetings were administrative, with teachers or other staff, and about special needs populations, with parents; provided professional development; and assisted professional organizations. Stacy divided her responsibilities into percentage of time during a nine-hour workday. She found that she spent 11% of her time in meetings located in the school and outside the school. Seven of the 13 principals (Allison, Amy, Elizabeth, Geri, Karen, Peggy, and Sophia) mentioned participating in administrative or district meetings. Geri said the typical afternoon principal meeting lasted four and a half hours; Elizabeth's lasted an hour to an hour and a half. Sophia was the only principal to mention participating in curriculum meetings. Amy and Sophia discussed meetings with parents or parents and teachers to problem solve. Both Peggy and Elizabeth discussed professional development (PD) meetings, but each had very different intents. Peggy's PD meetings are with faculty members of a local university regarding PD for teachers and student teachers in the district. Elizabeth, an individual new to principalship, meets with her mentor, who is an intermediate principal, for her own professional development. Clem sometimes has to spend an entire day out of school to attend meetings for a professional organization. Two other principals had very different perspectives on meetings. One principal said that he set aside meetings due to the day-to-day reality of what is happening in the school. Unlike this principal, Kathy is able to clear her schedule to attend meetings when they pop up. While time spent in meetings was mentioned by 13 principals, they were also able to identify specific purposes for the meetings. Principals did not mind meetings which solved problems or those requiring their time and attention but were frustrated by meetings that could have been handled via a memo or e-mail (Brock, 2002; Shellard, 2003). District administrators or the principals

themselves need to determine whether a meeting is needed or whether an e-mail or memo could take the place of the meeting before scheduling the meeting.

Discussions with Teachers

Time spent in meetings and discussions with teachers was mentioned by eight principals (Alex, Amy, Christopher, Geri, Kathy, Linda, Peggy, and Sophia). Teacher meetings were for the purposes of scheduling, touching base, and gathering of the whole staff, teacher evaluation, and technology. Discussions allowed principals to touch base with teachers. Linda touches base to see how things are going and to determine if there is anything teachers' need to talk about. Kathy feels that touching base is important because she is new to the position. Touching base allows Peggy to develop relationships with teachers. For Alex, discussions with teachers usually begin with their asking, "Got a minute?" Time spent talking to teachers is very important. In high-success schools "teachers [are] engaged in frequent and continuous talk about teaching practice" (Reitzug, 1997, p. 338). Some principals are "unskilled in working with teachers as colleagues" (Williams, 1980, p. 180). However, eight of the principals interviewed in this study spend time having such conversations. These discussions with teachers are important because they allow teachers and principals to work collaboratively together to solve different problems.

Students with Special Needs

Time spent attending meetings for or about students with special needs—including child study, special education, individual education program (IEP), evaluation report (ER), and instructional support (IST) meetings was mentioned by seven principals (Allison, Amy, Donna, Elizabeth, Geri, Kathy, and Sophia). Several of the principals mentioned scheduling these meetings on set days two or three times during the month. Unlike the other principals, Donna is the special education supervisor in the district and as a result spends extensive time on related services for special education. Since special education is

near and dear to Kathy's heart, she has spent time designing differentiated instruction and has started an inclusion program in the school. Principals in this study spoke about different aspects of their involvement in special education. One recent study found that principal "leadership practices need to be reexamined in terms of how they conceptualize disability, special education, inclusion, and parent involvement" (Zaretsky, 2004, p. 281). However, principals in this study were very accepting of students with special needs and the time required to meet their needs. The time challenge of meeting the needs of special education students has become more difficult in the context of high-stakes accountability driven by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Principals must consider "two competing values: that of the individual child and that of the school at large" (Faircloth, 2004, p. 33). The principals interviewed for this study mentioned only the special education "principal child" rather than the "school at large".

Observations

Observations were mentioned by eight principals (Allison, Amy, Elizabeth, Karen, Kathy Linda, Peggy, and Stacy). Observations can be sorted into the categories of students, teachers, and courses. All eight principals discussed teacher observations. Principals discussed doing both formal and informal observations. Amy said she always schedules formal observations with teachers because she wants them to be prepared for the observations. Only one principal, Karen, discussed student observations. Peggy was the only principal to mention course observations and did not mention the type of course she was observing. Principals spending time doing observations is very important and is supported by the literature. A 1995 education research study stated that "formal classroom observation is a valuable tool used by principals to measure teaching effectiveness" (Gordon, Meadows, & Dyal, 1995, p.). In addition to formal observation, informal observations can also support teacher effectiveness. Another study recommended that after an informal observation, a principal needs to "take time to write the teacher a

note ... contain[ing] words of encouragement and praise about specific teaching strategies or management” (Whitaker, 1997, p. 155).

Arrival, Dismissal, and Announcements

Visibility during arrival, during dismissal, and during both arrival and dismissal was discussed by six principals (Amy, Allison, Christopher, Geri, Kathy, and Linda). Linda and Geri assist with morning student activities. Geri plays a key role in getting students from the bus and into the building. Linda likes to be with kids in the morning to see what is going on, who is eating breakfast, and who is having problems on the playground. Allison likes to greet student in the bus line at the end of day so they know that she is still in the building. Amy, Christopher, and Kathy like to be visible during student arrival and dismissal. Amy thinks it is important that both parents and students communicating with kids. Like Amy, Kathy thinks student contact is important. Rather than greeting see principals students as they exit the bus in the morning, Kathy circulates through the cafeteria, which holds students after they exit the bus. Embedded within arrival and dismissal procedures were announcements—mentioned by three additional principals (Allison, Kathy, and Clem). Allison uses prescribed announcements but also likes to use the time to correct misbehavior. While student do the daily announcements, Clem likes to add his own “gems.” In a 1999 dissertation, Douglas Fiore found that principals with positive school cultures were more “visible during student arrival time, lunch time, dismissal time, and at various other times throughout the day” (Fiore, 2000, p. 12). As a result, the literature supports principals’ time being spent at arrival, at dismissal, and making announcements.

Budget

Five principals (Alex, Andy, Linda, Peggy, and Taylor) mentioned spending time on the budget. Taylor said that as budget manager, he needs to be aware of students’ numbers because it determines the budget. Linda said that the instructional budget takes her two weeks to design and can be very stressful.

Like Linda, Andy orders all instructional supplies. In order to write requisitions for teacher supplies, Alex has to check the budget categories to determine the funds remaining. Peggy not only works on her individual school budget but also assists with the district budget to determine her piece of the pie. The principals' time spent on the budget is important because it determines what resources teachers and students have available.

Discipline Issues

Time spent on discipline issues was mentioned by five principals (Alex, Clem, Donna, Elizabeth, and Linda). Both Alex and Elizabeth have to address bus discipline. In addition, Alex addresses classroom, lunch, and recess discipline problems. Linda is able to spend least time on discipline issues because her school has schoolwide rules and consequences allowing her to see only the hard-core cases. Like Linda's school, Clem's school does not have many discipline problems, but it has an in-school suspension room. It is important that principals spend time attending to discipline issues that can disrupt the learning environment for students. Principals who spend extensive time on discipline issues should look into schoolwide rules and consequences, which Linda uses at her school. A schoolwide discipline system allows all students and teachers to be on the same page for what is expected. Additionally, teachers can be the first line of discipline so it starts and stops in the classroom, and the principal can get involved when situations repeat or become more severe in nature (Kergaard, 1991).

The five principals, who talked about discipline issues being an important use of their time, worked in rural, suburban, and urban districts. Three principals (Donna, Elizabeth, and Linda) work in rural districts, one principal (Alex) is in a suburban district, and one principal (Clem) is in an urban district. Morris (2005) conducted research on race, class, gender, and discipline in an urban school. Morris found that "schools attempt to mold students, especially those perceived as lacking or resistant in some way, into embodying what school officials consider proper comportment ... through persistent bodily

discipline, or regulation of bodily movements and displays.” While Morris’s research was on urban schools, it is believed that schools need to regulate discipline in order to ensure a safe and productive learning environment.

Environment Checks

Environment checks were discussed by five principals (Allison, Amy, Christopher, Clem, and Peggy). These environment checks took two forms: building safety checks before the school day began and building walk-throughs once the school day began. Christopher makes sure the school grounds are safe and look okay before the day begins. Allison, Amy, Clem, and Peggy stressed having a presence in the building. They walk the halls and stop in classrooms to facilitate this role. Environment checks are important because they foster school safety and allow the principal to be visible, which promotes a positive school culture.

Classroom Visits

Time spent on classroom visits was mentioned by five principals (Christopher, Donna, Kathy, Linda, and Peggy). Linda tries to spend as much time as possible in and around classrooms. Sometimes she sits in on part or all of a lesson. Like Linda, Kathy thoroughly enjoys getting into classrooms. Christopher tries to visit each classroom twice a week. Peggy feels that stopping in classrooms ensures that she has a presence with children. Unlike these principals, Donna is disappointed that she has difficulty getting into classrooms and spending more time with teachers and children. Classroom visits allow principals to interact and observe students and teachers.

Paperwork

Four principals discussed time spent on paperwork and with parent organizations. Alex, Geri, Linda, and Stacy spend time on paperwork. Linda takes care of paperwork after everyone has gone home. Stacy spends 11% of her time preparing, planning, and handling paperwork. Alex shared specific

paperwork which requires her attention including reports for the school board, quarterly reports on student progress, academic interventions for struggling students, and teacher requests for conference attendance, absence, and personal days. The literature states that principals, who get control of paperwork, are more effective (Parsons, 2001). The use of computers or secretaries can help principals control paperwork.

Parent Organizations

Time spent attending Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and events were mentioned by four principals (Karen, Linda, Louis, and Peggy). Karen is responsible for two schools and tries to attend PTA functions at each school. Louis is responsible for four schools and works with three parent associations. He tries to attend all of their meetings. Like Louis, Linda is active with the PTO and goes to their meetings. She tries to come to fairs and activity nights hosted by the PTO so she can be with the kids. Peggy did not mention attending meetings or events but shared that she tries to work with the PTO. The literature talks about the important of making the choice to invest time and energy to “engage in bridging activities with parents and communities ... [which include] attend[ing] PTA meetings, schedule[ing] parent-teacher conferences and back-to-school nights, and sponsor[ing] public student performances” (DiPaola, 2005, p. 69). As a result, principals’ time spent attending PTO and PTA meetings are important because it helps to build relationships with parents and the community.

Assessment Results

Three principals (Andy, Geri, and Linda) discussed spending time looking at assessment or Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) results. Andy needs to spend time ensuring that students have met end-of-year-progress. Geri’s school faces challenges with the PSSA assessments because of the number of youngsters with learning difficulties and non-English speakers needing

accommodations. Linda thinks it is important to spend time looking at PSSA results so she can present the information to teachers so they can understand the information and think it through. In the context of accountability, PSSA assessment results make a difference for schools.

In Pennsylvania, under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) the PSSA tests is the assessment method by which schools are judged. The PSSA tests rate students based on being advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic and determine whether schools make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The public has access to the PSSA results through newspapers and online Web sites. In addition to public knowledge of results, schools face corrective actions for not making AYP. As a result, it is important that principals spend time looking at PSSA results and work to improve them.

Unexpected Situations

Time spent responding to unexpected situations was mentioned by three principals (Christopher, Karen, and Kathy). Kathy makes sure she immediately attends to “brush fire” situations. Christopher sticks to his schedules as much as he can but knows that things will come up with a student or parents that change his whole schedule. Like Christopher, Karen’s calendar goes out the window when a crisis arises and needs to be dealt with. After she handles the crisis, she figures out what she needs to do, transfer, or rearrange. In order to keep the school safe, running smoothly, and students learning, principals must respond to unexpected or crisis situations and emergencies. If these situations are taking too much of the principals time, they can, “actively look at the cause of the situations to see if steps can be taken to prevent the situations. Systems of support can also be set-up to help the principal respond to different situations. For example, some principals were supported by the guidance counselor, head or lead teacher, and special education teachers. These individuals stepped up to the plate to assist with different situations when the principal needed help or could not be at two places at the same time.

E-Mail

Time sending or responding to e-mail was discussed by three principals (Allison, Peggy, and Clem). Peggy spends the bulk of her day responding to parent and teacher concerns communicated through e-mail, telephone, or drop-by-visits. Clem also responds to e-mail but sends a morning e-mail message to his staff. E-mail allows principals to communicate with teachers and parents and always them to communicate with the principal. Brock & Grady (2002) suggest that managing e-mail can consume considerable amounts of time so principals should establish a time to respond to messages, not several times a day and not from home e-mail. Principals should avoid and reduce problematic and time-consuming situations occurring from e-mails by remembering "that whatever you say in an e-mail can be forwarded to hundreds of people with a single command" (Brock, 2002, p. 78). Within the past 10 years, principals' time on e-mail has increased as more and more people rely on e-mail as a means of communication. Some principals view the technology as a "god sent" but other principals viewed it as another way for people to get in touch with them. Whether e-mail is viewed as a help or hindrance, it is a reality of the time.

Other Activities and Uses of Time

Other activities and uses of time reported by the participants in this study included, by two principals, included drop by visits, dealing with parents, public relations, new staff determination, acting as a receptionist, and students. Responsibilities shared by one principal included behavior management, building checking on absenteeism, communication checks, curriculum, evaluations, facility management, lunchtime, acting as nurse, professional development, staff development, and student support. These responsibilities allow principals to manage the school but did not appear to be significant.

Changes in View of Time

After identifying how time is spent by Pennsylvania elementary public school principals, it is important to establish how their view of time has changed over the last several years. Four themes or categories of influence emerged in principals changes in view of time over the last several years. These themes included experience as a principal, change in position, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, and not having enough time. This information will give additional insight into how principals think and speak about time.

Experience as a Principal

Five principals (Alex, Glenn, Louis, Sophia, and Stacy) shared that experience in the position had caused a change in view of time over the past several years. From experience, Alex has learned how unpredictable the job of principal is. Similarly, Stacy has learned that in the principalship not everything can go according to plan. As a result, she accepts that there is never going to be enough time to get caught up on everything. Sophia believes that as individuals get older, they value every minute that they have. These lessons of the unpredictable nature of the principalship allow principals to be flexible and deal with things as they happen. Principal's responses clearly indicated an emphasis on needs of the person or situation over the managerial responsibilities of the position.

The principals shared specific lessons that experience has taught them about time usage. Alex has also learned the importance of scheduling family time, asking to attend her children's activity rather than a school board meeting, and learning to say no. Unlike Alex, Glenn has an empty nest at home so he does not rush to get home and is able to put in a little extra time to get organized or ready for the next day. Glenn has gained confidence with his experience in the position and is either able to do things himself or delegate them to others. When Sophia began the principalship, she felt obligated to do everything that was asked of her. Experience has taught Sophia to not sweat the small stuff or worrying about things that

she cannot control and letting go so she can focus on what is important. Stacy has learned to be more efficient with the time that she has and always gives priority to the most important goals. Like Stacy, experience has helped Louis become more efficient with his available time. Since he has experience, scheduling, making most out of available time, identifying problems and the best solutions, he is able to be efficient with his time. Experience has taught each of these principals' lessons of what is personally important to them and how to prioritize their time to make everything work.

Change in Position

Four principals (Donna, Hazel, Kathy, and Peggy) discussed that a change in position affected their view of time. Donna's change in position from teacher to principal affected her view of time. She thinks that the differences in time from teaching to the principalship are a trade off of responsibilities. As a principal, she needs to make the time differences work effectively for her. Like Donna, Hazel's view of time changed when she moved from the position of teacher to position of principal. When she was a teacher, she thought that she worked very hard however as a principal, she has "unbelievable," "interesting," "entertaining," and "non-boring" days that keep her moving. Kathy's view of time changed when she moved from the position of assistant principal to the position of principal. Since she is new in the position of principal, she dedicates her time gradually and is very time conscious. Peggy's view of time changed when she was assigned a second school in her position as principal. Since she did not know that she was going to have a second school, she signed up for an intensive doctoral program. The additional responsibilities changed her view of time. These principals' shared how moving from teacher to principal, moving from assistant principal to principal, and being given the added responsibility of a second school changed their view of time. Time and responsibilities in teaching and the role of assistant principal are very different than those in the principalship. Additionally, running one school is very different from running two schools. For some, two schools is double the "challenges" and for others it is

scheduling or navigating through different cultures. Whatever the change in position, it takes time and experience for principals to navigate through these new expectations.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Legislation

Three principals (Christopher, Clem, and Allison) discussed how No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has affected their use of time. Christopher feels that NCLB requires principals to spend more time looking at test results because schools that do not score well face difficulty. He feels that NCLB is more serious than past testing efforts, requiring everyone to think more and be more accountable for what is being or not being done. NCLB has caused Clem to spend more time on instruction observing teachers both informally and formally. He needs to make sure that teachers are doing concentrated work on the standards so when students take the PSSA tests, they do well enough and meet the expectations. Accountability demands have also required him to spend more time looking at data, collective student progress, growth trends, and student proficiency. As a result of PSSA standardized testing mandated by NCLB, Allison has become very conscience of proper use of instructional time. She looked at Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) events that were taking away from instructional time and moved the events from the instructional school day to the weekend. As these principals shared, accountability mandates necessitate principals looking a test results, observing more frequently, and making decisions about instructional time.

Not Enough Time

Three principals (Donna, Linda, and Stacy) talked about realizing that there is never enough time in the principalship and how this has affected their view of time. Embedded within this theme is the stress and pressure that principals feel. Linda thinks that she needs more hours in the day because time is running out. Donna feels that in the principalship, one can never get ahead because there is never enough time to get caught up. Like Donna, Stacy has learned that there is never going to be enough time in

principals to get caught up on everything. Linda admitted that running out of time is due to her taking on more responsibilities. The cause of the “not enough time” perspective is not known. Hypothesis for the cause include (1) No Child Left Behind adding more to principals’ plates, (2) the nature of the principalship, or (3) the personality of individuals who enter education to take on more responsibilities or do more.

Significance

Experience as a principal, change in position, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, and not having enough time are the four themes that emerged when principals talked about how their view of time has changed. The themes of experience as a principal and change in position demonstrate the importance of sources of support and mentoring for new principals as well as principals working in a new school or new environment. The theme of not having enough time illustrates how more and more is being added to principals’ plates but little or nothing is taken away from their responsibilities. An example of more being added to principals’ plate is supporting NCLB, which was the fourth factor that has changed their view of time over the last several years. This information provides additional insight into how Pennsylvania elementary principals think and speak about time.

Time Defined by Principals

After examining how principals think and speak about time from a practitioner perspective, it is important to examine how they define time. Elementary principals interviewed for this study defined time based on metaphors, clock time, geometric terms, and body time. These themes are consistent with those taken directly from the literature (Adam, 2004; Birth, 2004; Filipcova & Filipec, 1986; Newman & Smith, 1999; Pronovost, 1986; Rezsóhazy, 1986).

Metaphors

Eight of the 22 principals interviewed used metaphors to define time. Metaphors included time as: energy, full drawer, gift, productivity, snowball, and friend or enemy. These metaphors are different than the time metaphors or expressions mentioned in the literature. Metaphors in the literature include: "bedtime," "budget time," "family time," "free time," "overtime," "own time," "party time," "quitting time," "religious time," "school time," and "work time." Metaphors in the literature illustrated segments of time during the day but the metaphors used by the principals interviewed in this study illustrate greater depth and reflection.

Donna, Geri, Glenn, Hazel, and Linda used metaphors based on the size of what needs to be done. Donna sees time as an energetic and powerful snowball that goes faster and gets bigger. Similar to Donna, Geri views time as the amount of energy available to do the job. Due to all that needs to be done, Glenn sees time as the productivity needed for the day to run smoothly. Hazel views time as an obsession to get places on time and get things done on time. Linda sees time as a drawer that is full because time is spent out in the school rather than in the office. Describing time based on "time demands or deadlines" was discussed by Newman and Smith (1999) as well as the principals in this study. These time metaphors are nicely aligned with metaphors used to define the principals; principals who "wear many hats," "need to keep many balls in the air," "expect the unexpected." The metaphors used to define principals, used in the literature, and used by principals all illustrate the size of what needs to be accomplished within a give period of time.

Two principals used the metaphor of a gift to define time. Kathy sees time as a gift in how it is used and enjoyed because it disappears. She also sees time as a gift because it is fluid and something that one cannot put their hands on. Similarly, Amy sees time as a gift that can be used wisely or unwisely but once gone cannot be gotten back. Kathy and Amy both shared how the gift of time needs to be used. Kathy

feels that every minute of the day needs to be respected and used in the best constructive way. Amy feels that principals need to find a little bit of time each day for themselves. These metaphors defining time illustrated the abstract and theoretical conceptions of time from a practitioner's perspective.

The analogy of time as a gift truly hit home with the researcher of this study. As a first year teacher, the researcher's principal gave the staff "a gift of time" in December. Teachers were invited to use the gift to do whatever they needed to in or outside of school rather than attending professional development. The teachers may not have grown instructionally from the experience but were able to take care of whatever was on their to-do list thus removing stress and refreshing their instructional perspective. Principals in this study saw time as a gift that they needed to appreciate and treasure. Principals should reflect on how they can give their staffs the "gift of time" thus illustrating how they appreciate teachers time.

Elizabeth defined time as a friend or enemy in a love or hate relationship depending on how it is used. Time is your friend if an individual realizes that they have a certain amount of time and know how much they have to get accomplished. If an individual has too much time, they tend to waste their time and thus time is their enemy. This time metaphor illustrates the positive, friend/love, and negative, enemy/hate, relationships in how it is used. This conception of time illustrates the importance of using time in a positive manner so it is not wasted.

Clock Time

Two principals (Alex and Louis) defined time based on clock time. "Clock time" comes from the literature and was described by both Adam and Birth in 2004. Adam (2004) describes that clock time is linear and represented by a specific repetition of the "same irrespective when and where" (p. 101). Birth (2004) felt that clock time "express the passage of time by displaying the relative position of two hands in a defined space, and digital displays show the passage of time as an accumulating quantity" (p. 71). Alex

sees time as a measure of events of what is being done from sunup to sundown, which can be divided into chunks of time. As Birth described, Alex sees time as the space of time from sunup to sundown and the “accumulating quantity” is the measure of events done. Similarly, Louis defines time as a continuum where a person has to fit things within a reasonable spacing. Within this continuum, he has to fit in kids during the school day and parents during the weekend, after school, or when pressing issues occur. These linear “clock time” definitions of time illustrate that principals have “x” number of things to do in a certain window.

Geometric Terms

Only one principal, Stacy, defined time backed on geometric terms. Time can be discussed in geometric terms such as a cycle, spiral, circle, point, and line (Adam, 2004; Birth, 2004). Stacy defined time as intersecting circles. She was the only principal interviewed to define time not only in words but also in picture. The literature views time represented by a circle as the repetition of the same or the past and future in the present. However, Stacy used circles in a different context. She believes that nothing is independent or separate from each other in time and the circles of time are interconnected because there is a commonality between everything that happens. This geometric definition of time took a theoretical concept and put it into a context of the reality of the principals’ experience.

Body Time

Only one principal, Danielle, defined time based on body time. Body times looks at birth, regeneration, and death. Danielle sees time as a resource to be valued more than anything because an individual does not get a second chance for anything. Her definition of time was affected by the loss of a child which caused her to not want to be wasteful or negative with available time. As a result of this tragic life event, Danielle wants to be caring, considerate, kind, loving, positive, and considerate to the lives of individuals. The loss of her child caused a regeneration of appreciation for life and being positive

with all aspects of her life. Prior experience facilitated Danielle's use of "body time" to define time.

Principals interviewed for this study, emphasized prior experience and training influencing their priorities. As a result, it is surprising that prior experiences did not affect other principals' definitions of time.

Question # 2:
What strategies do these principals employ to manage their time?

Looking across the full sample of 22 principals interviewed for this study, 10 time management strategies were mentioned by more than one principal. In order from most mentioned to least mentioned these include: calendar/scheduling, prioritization, secretary, arriving early/staying late/coming in on weekends, lists and notes, technology, color coding, paperwork, delegation, and literature. Other strategies only mentioned by one principal include watching the clock, schoolwide discipline, documentation, experience as a principal, being flexible, using humor, having a manual with important documents, not reinventing the wheel, planning ahead, having a portable office, set routines, and time saving strategies on the phone.

Calendar/Scheduling of Events

Six principals talked about general schedules or calendars used to manage their time. Alex has a tickler file of what she needs to do every month. She schedules things that she is obligated to attend and things that she wants to do. Sophia tries not to overschedule herself. Amy keeps a record of where, when, and what time her meetings are. Geri likes to keep a plain, hardback book of her schedule. The back of the book contains a big clip and she clips stuff to there so she never lose them. She prefers not to do the schedule online. Unlike Geri, Linda has a Palm Pilot. However, she cannot find it because it is lost in her briefcase. Like Geri, Karen keeps a day planner of everything she needs to do. She also writes notes of school meetings and events in the planner, which allows her to go back and track events that happened during the school year. Karen feels that if she lost her planner, she should not be expected to remember what needs to happen. Unlike Geri and Karen, Hazel does not do well with date books. She uses a large desk calendar plotter, which allows her to mark things down and not forget about appointments. The use of a calendar and scheduling of events allows principals to be proactive in planning different meetings,

programs, or events. It allows them to know where they need to be and what they need to do. For Karen, the planner is a source of written documentation of when happenings and actions occurred. While the calendar and scheduling of events is a commonly used time management strategy, it is one that is practical, works, and serves a purpose.

Three principals (Peter, Taylor, and Clem) use weekly calendars. Peter tries to schedule or map out his time one week in advance so by Thursday afternoon he pretty much knows what his planned schedule for the following week looks like. He tries to keep a schedule of upcoming events/activities for the week and has a little computerized printout of where he needs to be each and every day during the week. Taylor's effective office staff helps to set forth a daily or weekly schedule that they try to follow. The schedule is kept working in a fluid manner so there are rare occasions when set meetings have to be canceled or rearranged. Clem has a weekly calendar so he knows exactly where he has to be when he is out of the building. Principals' use of the weekly calendar is slightly different than the calendar of personal or school events in that it is often found on a single sheet of paper and can be carried in a pocket. This allows principals to quickly determine at a glance where they need to be next. However, it is easier to lose a piece of paper than a planner or other type of calendar.

Three principals (Danielle, Elizabeth, and Karen) create calendars for their teachers and/or the school community. Danielle creates calendars for events at each school. She does an overall annual calendar with both of her Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) so they get equal time, equal respect, and Danielle's undivided attention. Danielle also does a monthly calendar for teachers sharing the meetings that are occurring and the where they will be located. She will send an update/revision of the calendar to the staff in the building every week. Elizabeth comes from the high school environment where they deal with calendars for sports and assemblies. As a result, she is very organized with calendars, which allows teachers to know what is going on and happening. The calendar helps teachers with planning for

instruction. Karen tries to plan out the schedule for the semester, month, biweekly, and daily. Due to conflicts arising, part of the schedule is planned semester by semester. One month prior, she will look at the calendar and determine what is happening or going on the next month. Karen then has to plan every other week for the student support/assist process, the old instructional support team (IST) process, because the school psychologist is only available every other week. Everything that gets put onto the calendar has to get done. School community and teacher calendars are an excellent way to keep everyone informed of happenings. It allows key stakeholders to be on the same page and plan accordingly. When using community or teacher calendars, it is important that a common understanding of nothing being “written in stone” is established. This will prevent complaints if it is not possible to follow the calendar to a tee.

Alex schedules or blocks off “pockets of time” to get all kinds of tasks done. These tasks include time to return phone calls, return e-mails, format e-mails, and read. Alex will batch these tasks together and do them at once because it is easy for phone calls and e-mail to tie up more time than it should. She will also use the pockets of time, time when meeting attendees are late, and minutes between meetings to follow-up on things or get something done quickly. Grouping items is similar to the assembly line philosophy where a worker focuses on one specific task which increases production of whatever is being made. This philosophy applied to a principals’ use of time illustrates that doing tasks of a similar nature at the same time decreases the total time required to do those tasks because transition time is reduced or eliminated.

Ruth Ress’ (1986) article SOS: A Time Management Framework – Suggestions on how to plan tasks and use time effectively in Education Canada discussed the three-tiered SOS time management framework. SOS stood for Self, Organization, and Scheduling. “Scheduling, refers, to the necessity for the individual to begin to plan and schedule the larger, more difficult, or more complicated tasks that require

some reflection” (Rees, 1986, p. 10). She also suggested five practices that should become habitual for a good time manager including having one master calendar. Without likely knowing Rees’s research, these 10 elementary principals followed her time management recommendations.

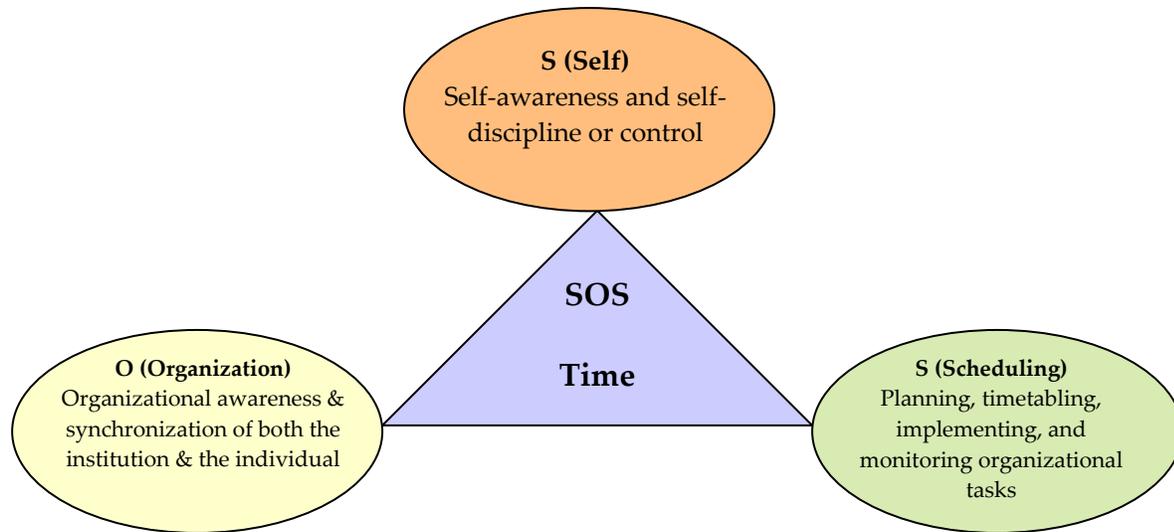


Figure 19: Ruth Rees’s SOS Time Management Framework

Prioritization

Principals’ spoke about their use of prioritization to manage their time. Linda’s priorities are the kids, staff, and families and that is where she wants to spend her time. Glenn’s number one priority is safety. He prioritizes what needs to get taken care of by first dealing with safety. Paperwork can wait, observations can wait, meetings with teachers can wait, but dealing with kid issues or safety cannot wait. Alex uses deadlines to prioritize what needs to done. Prioritization is also aided by meeting her various teams to determine what is coming down the pike, what has come unraveled, and what needs to be tightened back up. Like Alex, Allison also tries to prioritize her day based on what needs to get done and what is occurring. The literature discusses how priorities are assigned. Rezsahazy (1986) found that “people assign an order of priority to their preferred activities among the possibilities available to

occupy” (p. 38). One could assume that Linda and Glenn prefer activities that deal with people over other tasks such as paperwork. Since the unexpected can occur within the principalship, prioritization and reprioritization allow principals the flexibility to meet the needs of the day.

Glenn feels that issues that demand his time immediately usually appear spontaneously and need to be resolved. Like Glenn, Danielle plans the best she can but knows there are situations that she cannot plan for and she is lucky that the schools are only a few miles apart. She has been told that she had a tolerance for ambiguity. Danielle has learned that as principal, you need to prioritize items initially but then reprioritize even the best laid plans on a beautiful calendar. Like Danielle, Amy prioritizes when plans cannot be followed amidst many daily interruptions. Taylor feels that he needs to be flexible enough to reprioritize and meet those time demands. Sometimes he has to reprioritize and identify this was important today or yesterday but it is not as important today. This reprioritization allows items to either go down a few notches or get elevated a few notches based on where the influence is coming from. Like Taylor, Karen also has to be flexible with her calendar or schedule when a crisis arises and needs to be dealt with. After dealing with the crisis, she figures out where she left off, what she needs to do to pick-up where she left off and what she needs to be transferred or rearranged. The ability to regroup and plan so that there are not conflicts allows her to maintain her sanity, not have a nervous breakdown, and manage everything. Principals’ ability to prioritize based on the needs of the day allows them to remain flexible and then reprioritize what needs to be done.

The literature talked about principals’ preference for “live action” situations or those that appear spontaneously. Martin and Willower (1981) found that principals in their study had the “tendency to engage themselves in the most current and pressing situations” (p. 80). Their “priority went to tasks that required immediate action” (Martin & Willower, 1981, p. 80). This tendency was also illustrated by the principals in this study discussing their prioritization.

Geri shared a specific strategy for reprioritization of paperwork. She has three baskets that she had labeled for a time but no longer needs the labels. The three baskets include “nice to know – look at in the future,” “time dated must do,” “needs to be done sometime.” Geri got the idea of prioritizing from a book on the Covey System. From time to time, Geri will shuffle through the baskets to reprioritize and clean out or throw out items in the baskets. This is important because while there are things that she would like to read, things can pile up. Occasionally, she will pull out an item from the basket and read it before working on something else. This strategy for prioritizing paperwork is very practical and manageable. If principal prefer to put paperwork into folders rather than baskets, folder can be marked “urgent,” “to do,” “review,” “file,” “faculty bulletin,” “discard.” These strategies for prioritizing paperwork will allow the principal to quickly locate the information and address the immediate needs.

Secretary

The literature talks about how a secretary can aid a principal’s use of time. Brock and Grady (2002) discussed that “a well-trained school secretary can deflect nuisance calls and interruptions, subdue minor crises and distraught parents, and handle filing and correspondence, all the while providing comfort to sick students, upset parents, and disgruntled staff” (p. 77). In this study, principals talked about how their secretaries helped with phone calls, scheduling, mail, discipline, and offered reminders.

While Linda did not share specific tasks that her secretary assists with, her time is helped and managed by her really competent secretary. Allison’s secretary helps with phone calls. She has trained her two secretaries so she does not want to take every single call that comes in during the day. The secretaries are encouraged to try to answer parents questions the best they can. The secretaries fielding calls allows Allison to not pick-up the phone and answer every single call. This is a time management strategy because she is able to have quiet, think time to complete the task rather than being interrupted for phone calls. During this time, her office door will be open but her secretaries are fielding a lot of stuff

that she does not have to be bothered with. Sophia, Taylor, and Donna's secretaries are wonderful schedulers. Sophia's secretary saves time by having people go through her secretary to schedule appointments rather than going back and forth on e-mail to get something scheduled. Like Sophia, Taylor has very effective office staff, which helps to create a fluid daily or weekly schedule. To help her secretaries with scheduling, Donna meets with her secretaries to block out what is ahead in the next month. Alex's secretary sorts mail and assists with paperwork for discipline. Her secretary look through her mail and sorts through items that are junk, the school has no interest in, or school already does. Alex fills out short discipline forms and her secretary records them in an electronic system called Win School. The concise form works well because it is a short paragraph about the situation, which does not require the secretary to decipher Alex's notes about who did what to whom. Her secretary recording the information allows for one least electronic recording that Alex has to do. Clem's secretaries offer him reminders of where he needs to go, what he has to do, and when fire drills are coming up. The secretaries know that he does not get upset about being reminded about things. Principals' time is managed by a competent secretary fielding phone calls, assisting with scheduling, sorting mail, assisting with paperwork, and providing reminders of what needs to be done.

Principals also delegated tasks to secretaries and utilized their individual strengths. It took a little while for his secretaries to learn his expectations but Glenn can now delegate tasks to them, which helps him manage his time. Kathy manages her time by utilizing individual strengths of her secretaries. She will share what she needs to do and will ask if they can help her. Sometimes they will say that they can line something up or call someone. If she is writing a letter, she will ask one of the secretaries to "flesh it out." Kathy can also ask one of the secretaries to draft and send out letters on different topics. While one secretary can accomplish this task, the other secretary, while extremely capable, is not comfortable drafting letters. The delegation of tasks will benefit the principal because he/she will only have to oversee

task completion rather than actually completing the task. The delegation of tasks can show the staff that their principal trusts, respect their skills and abilities to complete the task. However, if the staff is not properly trained to do the task or if they do not understand the task, the task may be done incorrectly or inaccurately and need to be redone. As a result, it is important the principal determines whether it is appropriate for someone else to do the task or consider “who will benefit from what I decide? Who will be hurt by my actions? What are the long-term effects of a decision I make today?” (Shapiro, 2001, p. 17).

Extra Hours

Six of the eight principals (Alex, Amy, Donna, Louis, Stacy, and Clem) shared that they arrive early and stay late. Alex does this to ensure that what has to be done gets done. Stacy likes to arrive early so that she can start the day out by taking care of things that can be handled before the majority of people arrive. She also stays late to take care of the things that did not get handled. Arriving early and staying late allows Stacy to have flexible days that can be adjusted depending on the needs of the day. The extended day/week provides Clem with time to think, enjoy and pace himself rather than trying to squeeze everything into a shorter day. Donna is able to come to school early before the staff arrives because her children are older and more self-sufficient in the morning as they get ready for school. She enjoys this very quiet time and is able to get a lot accomplished with her secretary. Donna also stays in the evening from the end of the school day at 3:30 p.m. until 4:30 or 5 p.m. finishing things up. She will use the time to address e-mails, return phone messages, address mail in the mailbox, type reports, or prepare materials for upcoming meetings. Amy plans ahead by coming to school as early as 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning and leaving late sometimes until 9 o'clock at night. She also puts in extra hours by working through lunch. While principals often have to put in long hours to accomplish the job responsibilities, they need to make sure to find time for hobbies or family in the evenings or on the

weekend. They need to consider “how can I work smarter rather than harder.” These strategies will hopefully help hard-working principals from facing burn-out.

Two principals, Linda and Elizabeth, do not arrive early but do stay late and three principals discussed coming to early and leaving at the end of the day. Since Linda’s kids are grown-up and in college, she often stays late to get work done. Elizabeth shared that she is not a morning person. She is able to stay in the afternoon because her daughter attends an after school care program. Elizabeth uses the hour and half from the time the last bus leaves until 5 o’clock to e-mail teachers and do her paperwork. Linda and Elizabeth illustrate how personal responsibilities and personal habits can be honored while still completing the tasks that need to be accomplished.

Three principals discussed coming to school on the weekend and/or taking work home. Clem artificially extends his week by coming to school on the weekend. Louis usually comes to school on Sunday afternoons or evenings to get geared up for the upcoming week. During his Sunday time, he tries to prioritize what he needs to do for the week. Louis also takes home items to look or read over, when he does not have something occurring at home and time allows. While Linda did not mention coming to school on the weekend, she does take a lot of work home. Whether principals decide to take work home or come to school on the weekend, they are accomplishing responsibilities yet doing so in an environment that they are comfortable with. Principals are accomplishing said responsibilities with the framework of other weekend responsibilities.

Technology

Principals shared how they use technology to help manage their time. Louis revises existing files on his computer to save time. Alex has a lot of premade templates for form letters and recommendation letters, which allow her to cut, paste, add, and delete. Danielle uses the technology of e-mail, Palm Pilot, cell phones, and online minimeetings to communicate with people. She uses her Palm Pilot to do teacher

observations. For each standard that teachers must assume as part of their responsibilities, she has generated a generic paragraph for outstanding, good, average, and in need of help. Danielle selects the description that fits for the standard and then goes back and enters specific information from the class that she observes and makes a statement relative to the individual. Her use of technology has allowed observations to no longer just be completing the DEBE 333³² forms but, rather, allows teachers to take ownership of the observation. From using technology of existing templates and evaluations done on Palm Pilot was not possible 10 or 15 years ago but now helps principals to manage their time. Present day principals have access to tools or technology such as word processors templates and Palm Pilots. These tools and devices have been beneficial to many of the principals in the study.

Four principals talked about using the technology of e-mail to work from home and communicate with teachers. Sophia thinks the whole definition of work is really changing because technology is allowing things to become more streamlined. As a result, Sophia does not think that she could do the job of principal could be done without e-mail. While e-mail is a curse causing her to receive bursts of 20 e-mails, she would rather have lots of e-mails because parents now rarely call her. Sophia does feel that you need to balance technology because relationships and connecting with people is really important and not everything should be done through e-mail. Despite cursing at e-mail, Sophia thinks it. E-mail is a great help because she can access and respond to messages from the confines of her home. This allows her to send or receive e-mail even when she is not at work. Similar to Sophia, Hazel manages her time and does not become overwhelmed by having wireless internet and checks e-mail at home from her laptop while lounging in a chair at night or on the weekend. The use and accessibility of e-mail has

³² DEBE 333 forms were from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and were required to be used by principals across the state for teacher evaluation

rapidly expanded. While it was not common practice 10 or 15 years ago, it is a reality of most professions in today's professional environment.

Both Elizabeth and Danielle use e-mail to communicate with teachers. Once a week, usually on Fridays or Mondays, Elizabeth sends out e-mail sharing reminders of what is happening. Her teachers make fun the amount of e-mail she sends, however, it is the only way she can effectively get the same information to everyone at the same time. Like Elizabeth, Danielle provides teachers with e-mail miniupdates or announcements for the week. She uses e-mail return receipt to ensure that they received the information. Teachers are asked to respond if they have any questions. Using a memo or e-mail to communicate updates and announcements rather than having a staff meeting is recommended by the literature (Brody & Grady, 2002; Shellard, 2003). Prior to the use of e-mail, principals used memos to communicate information to teachers. These memos might have been typed on a computer or typewriter, hand written and Xeroxed, or done with carbon paper. As a result, these memos cost the school district money for the supplies. With the technology of e-mail, principals are still able to communicate with staff but are able to do so more quickly and at least of an expense. Principals using e-mail "return receipt" to provide documentation that each staff member received the information.

Lists and Notes

Stacy, Donna, Clem, Linda, and Geri use lists or write notes to manage their time. Stacy writes to-do lists prior to the start of the day in order to look at and write out the big goals for the day. Like Stacy, Donna writes "priority lists" in the afternoon to determine what needs to be accomplished the following day. Both Stacy and Donna talked about items not getting attended too because of the flow of the day. Stacy's goal is to be willing and able to go with the needs of the students, parents, teachers, and whoever else is in the building. As a result, Donna explained that there is a continual reshuffling and juggling of her priorities. Clem, Linda, and Geri write things down and keeps notes on the topic. Linda thinks that it

is funny that she is reduced to “little pieces of paper” because it is nice to cross off things. Geri self-described herself as “living in a world of stickies.” She shuffles the stickies in order to reprioritize tasks and uses them to mark tentative plans in her planner. Like Linda’s enjoyment of crossing things off, Geri gets a “thrill” out of crumpling stickies and throwing them out. While writing lists and notes is a commonly used “to do” or “must do” strategy, it is not appropriate for all learning or working styles. Individuals who are successful with lists or notes should consider using the strategy. However, if this strategy does not work for the individual, they should consider publicly announcing what they want to accomplish and publicly share a completion date. This verbal strategy can be help for individuals who do not benefit from writing lists or notes.

Color Coding

Geri, Linda, and Karen mentioned color coding to manage their time. Geri color codes both stickies and e-mails. Following the Covey System, Geri uses different color stickies – green stickies are “nice to-dos” and pink stickies are “things that she really has to do.” Geri also color codes e-mails based on the ones she wants to return to. She will return to the e-mails at home or on the weekend when she has more time. Linda color codes events (such as in-service days, important meetings, vacation days, and recycling week) in her calendar to help with the working of the building. Karen has also tried to color code her school calendar because she is a teacher of learning styles and differentiated instructional techniques. However, she found that it was not possible to carry different colored pens with her. Color-coding helps individuals organize, categorize, and draw attention to different information (Moore, 1997). As a result, color-coding is another strategy to help manage time and prioritize tasks that need to be accomplished.

Paperwork

Linda, Amy, and Danielle use paperwork strategies. Both Linda and Amy use piles or priority stacks to deal with paperwork. Danielle has created walk-through forms that are very specific to the content that she is trying to encourage. She had done walk through forms for math, reading, and room set-up. At the beginning of the year, she will do a walk through to make sure certain things that help a good classroom be effective are in place from day one. Examples include: a small group activity area, a large group activity area, and schedules on the wall. Danielle will check off anything that is positive and leave anything that is not positive blank. She wants the teachers to ask about why it is blank and does not want to write anything negative on the walk through form. She also does not ever say anything negative to her teachers about the walk through form. Her teachers will come to her to seek information and say “you did not say anything about this or this.” Danielle will ask them where it was in their lesson. She believes this is a way of modeling reflectivity. Danielle will give teachers 30 days to make changes and then check in. She might say, “I came back to look at x, y, or z again” or she might give them a head up that she will be stopping up. She believes that if she keeps stopping by, the desired outcome will eventually occur. Paperwork prioritization piles and walk-through forms are two strategies that principals use to manage their time.

The principalship is often described as being limited to “handling the paperwork” and keeping things running smoothly in the building (Denham, 1980, p. 173). The principals in this study talked about a variety of other job responsibilities outside of paperwork. However, paperwork is a reality and responsibility of the position. Harchar and Hyle (1996) study interviewed elementary principals and their teachers to develop a theory of instructional leadership. One principal interviewed in the study talked about “pressures of paperwork, discipline problems, and administrative meetings ... taking up most of

her time” (Harchar & Hyle, 1996, p. 24). This principal likely did not use Linda or Amy’s priority stacks for paperwork or Danielle’s strategy of walk-through forms.

Delegation

Both Danielle and Glenn delegate tasks to get the job done. When delegating, Danielle makes sure that her staff can see a beginning, middle, and end of the task. Glenn believes that it is important for delegated tasks to meet his personal standards or there is no use delegating the task. He learned to delegate early in his career and is pleased by the professional staff at his current school, to whom he can delegate tasks. Weldy (1974) discussed that principals tend to either under-delegate or over-delegate. He suggested four specific delegation strategies:

1. When time is limited, a principal should do what must be done and delegate other tasks.
2. Principals should delegate those tasks that require skills he/she has already mastered to ensure that he/she is working at the “growing edge” of his/her job.
3. Principals should do tasks in strength areas and delegate what another can do better.
4. Delegate what he/she does not like or is not interested in even at the risk of being accused of handing out all the “dirty work”

While these strategies were not mentioned by Danielle or Glenn, they offer insight on how delegation can be done effectively.

Literature

Allison and Geri have used literature to help manage their time. Allison read the book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, and Geri read a book on the Covey System. When Allison was taking classes towards her principalship, she read the book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* in one of her first classes. The book helped her to put things into perspective about what is important and prevent herself from consistently getting into situations where she is just spinning her wheels. She has learned to

keep those things in mind and prioritize as she goes. Geri read a book on the Covey System. In this system, boxes are placed indicating immediate or important but not low-priority tasks. She makes a concerted effort to go to the important box even when it is not immediate. Geri does this because she is aware of the need to do that. Allison and Geri's reading of two books on prioritization illustrates how principals seek out resources for their own professional growth and practical strategies to improve.

Strategies Mentioned by Individual Principals

Strategies only mentioned by one principal include watching the clock, schoolwide discipline, documentation, experience as a principal, being flexible, using humor, having a manual with important documents, not reinventing the wheel, planning ahead, having a portable office, set routines, and time saving strategies on the phone. These strategies are very practical and offer additional insight to practices used by principals.

During meetings, Sophia is a clock watcher and likes to help people cut to the chase and focus on the agenda of the meeting. She does not hesitate to nicely focus or bring people back to agenda of the particular meeting. Sophia does not think it is appropriate to keep the talking going and kill the topic so she will let them know that they need to wrap it up. Since people know that about her, they do not drone on and on. Sophia's strategy helps to keep people on task and not waste anyone's valuable time.

Allison's time is helped by having really good procedures and a system in place for schoolwide discipline. This is important because if the children know what is expected of them and the teachers know how to handle situations then Allison does not have to spend her day running from classroom to classroom for trivial things. The procedures and system for schoolwide discipline helps her to be available to teachers and available when other things come up throughout the day. Amy logs received and returned telephone calls to ensure documentation and prevent things from coming back and to haunt her. Louis is flexible about things that pop up. Danielle finds that a sense of humor helps to manage all of

the time commitments. She laughs that she has a big black book determines the direction of life's path. Louis saves time by not reinventing the wheel or starting anything from scratch. Many of the principals have taken good working procedures and fine tuned them for their own situation rather than starting from scratch.

Karen has created a "school manual" and "portable office" for the two buildings that she is responsible for. The manual allows her to have information at her finger tips. Schedules in the manual include those for each school, individual teachers, the cafeteria, busing, title one, learning support, and special activities. She has a list of different codes and passwords needed for both buildings for computer entry or scanning including teacher observation and district math/science programs. Included in the manual is a list of the staff for the district and her buildings as well as teacher and substitute contact information. Karen has a list of all service agreements, a custodial list, log-ins for teacher's teams, log sheets for reporting incidents, emergency contacts, and a call off list for a school bus breakdown or a closing. Also included are building plans, copies of report cards, academic standards, student postures, and PSSA achievement scores for both building. Karen also has a notebook for administrative team meetings, which gets cleaned and updated. As a result, if a question comes up, everything is in her manual because she never knows when different information will be needed. Manuals or binders of important information enable principals to have answers readily available on a moment's notice.

Donna plans ahead and has end of the month meetings with her secretaries, co-principal, IST coordinator, assistant superintendent and superintendent to plan upcoming events. She meets with her co-principal to determine if there are meetings or in-service training that need to be scheduled or mapped out. She will meet with the IST coordinator in person and via e-mail correspondence with her special education staff to determine what IST and IEP meetings are coming up in the following month so they can be plugged into the schedule and calendar. After these meetings are scheduled, Donna can plug in

what she needs to do for the month. All of this indicates the need for preplanning and organization in order to ensure a more smoothly operated school.

Elizabeth has an open door policy yet closes her door when work needs to get done. Typically during the school day, her office door is wide open. Her office can be seen as soon as one enters the office. Teachers are encouraged to stop in her office and do all the time. Once during the six day school cycle, Elizabeth will tell the women in the office that she has work to do. She will shut her office door so she is not distracted, sit and plug away at priority work, and finish the rest after school. The office staff knows that their interrupting her, if someone needs her, is not an issue but shutting the door allows her to focus on the completion of the tasks. Elizabeth's strategy is encouraged by Kergaard (1991), who suggests that principals designate a time each day to close the door and asking to only be disturbed if there is an absolute emergency. Kergaard (1991) shared that this "closed door time" can be used to return phone calls, e-mails, complete paperwork, and make plans for the future. This planning technique helps to insure that essential work is completed in a timely fashion.

Taylor and Danielle have developed routines for standing events. Taylor has developed routines for regular or standing events. Standing events in Taylor's school include different monthly Monday meetings and weekly meetings with the staff. He feels that things happen more consistently and efficiently when a principal is able to follow through with the routines and stay true to the flow pattern. Similarly Danielle has developed a routine for staff meetings. Staff meetings start with "thank yous," congratulations, and accolades. She then follows the agenda of items to be updated or discussed to allow input to be given. Sometimes she follows-up about problems that have occurred. The meeting agenda strategy is also suggested by Weldy (1974) as a way of allowing participants to know the "work to be accomplished" and work "towards the same objective" (p. 35). Routines and meeting standard operating procedures help to keep things moving and ensure things are done or completed.

Alex uses tactful time saving strategies when speaking with people on the phone. For example, when speaking with parents on the telephone, she will say “I just wanted to call you before I leave for the day” or “I have about 10 minutes.” If the conversation takes more than 10 minutes, Alex will say “I see how important this is to you and I want to give you the proper amount of time to talk, how about if we continue this conversation on _____” and gives a time. These strategies let people know that she values their time and needs but is not taking away from what she needs to do at the moment. These tactful telephone tactful strategies validates the other person’s concerns but also allows the principal to attend to other pressing issues.

Discussion

While limited commonality between the principals are illustrated in their time management strategies, these strategies are supported by the literature and offer diverse strategies to manage time. These beneficial strategies include calendar/scheduling, prioritization, secretary, arriving early/staying late/coming in on weekends, lists and notes, technology, color coding, paperwork, delegation, literature, schoolwide discipline model, using humor, manual of important documents, set routines, and time saving strategies on the phone.

Question # 3:

What do these principals consider the most important uses of their time? Conversely, what do these principals consider the least important uses of their time?

Twenty-two Pennsylvania elementary principals were interviewed in this study and asked what they considered to be the most important and least important uses of their time. Principals shared three most important uses of their time including people (children, teachers, and parents), curriculum and instruction, and a presence in the building. The least important uses of time included parents, paperwork, meetings, and e-mail.

Most Important Use of Time

Understanding what principals perceive as the most important use of their time illustrates where they put their focus during the school day or week. Principals perceptions of the most important use of their time comes across loud and clear in the way they prioritize everyday items and long term plans.

People

Seventeen principals view time with people as the most important use of their time. People time included interactions with children (mentioned by eight principals), teachers (mentioned by eight principals), and parents (mentioned by four principals). One principal, Donna, did not specify the “who” in her interactions with people but she thought it was important to get out into the school.

Children

When discussing time spent with children, principals talked about their learning, safety, making school a positive experience, and having the opportunity to connect or interact. Linda and Peggy both shared the importance of spending time with children to make sure they are learning and safe. Danielle and Elizabeth want to spend time with children to ensure that their lives are positively affected and have the option to be successful. Elizabeth feels this is important because if kids do not start out believing that school is a good experience then they are being set-up for failure. Since Sophia rarely needs to meet with

children about discipline issues, she thinks it is important that she structures other time to be with, see, and connect with kids. Both Alex and Stacy feel that it is important to find time to interact with students. Stacy feels this interactions set the climate for her school. Both Elizabeth and Peggy shared that they value time with children comes from their background as a teacher. Principals positively connecting with students helps to ensure that students see school in a positive light. If principals only see students when there is a problem, students get the wrong message about school. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) wrote that school principals have the “moral imperative ... to serve the “best interests of the student” ... [therefore] this ideal must lie at the heart of any professional paradigm for educational leaders” (p. 23).

Four principals discussed different situations with students requiring their time usage. These situations included students with food allergies, needing outside support, and two students with behavioral concerns. This year Peggy has six children in the same grade level with severe peanut allergies. Their allergies are so severe that teachers and students have had to learn new information, habits, and routines. Louis had several students, who he needed to work with Children and Youth, in order to help. Since the case worker from Children and Youth did not have a relationship with the student, Louis wanted to make sure he was available to provide additional support if the case worker was not able to learn valuable information. Andy and Allison both have students with special needs that are capable of flipping out without warning and need one-on-one time. Student issues examined and solved are at the heart of a successful school.

Principals shared activities that they did during the school day in order to interact with students. Geri and Sophia touch base with kids during lunch. Once a week, Sophia meets with “Student of the Week” who is selected by each classroom. By the end of the year, the goal is that every student has gotten to be student of the week. This time helps her to build connections with students and learn their names. Sophia also meets with students during Monday morning announcements and on their birthday when

they receive birthday buttons. She also keeps track of her classroom visits to ensure that she is making connections with students and teachers. In order to ensure that she is visible to students during the school day, Geri will answer e-mail on her wireless notebook in the hallway rather than sitting in her office. Elizabeth is proud that students will come up to her in the hallway and give her a hug or talk to her. Peggy always makes sure to remind frustrated teachers that the whole reason they work in schools is for the children. A principal being out in the school population with students and teachers enables the principal's presence to be known. It is often very reassuring for students and teachers to make a visual connection with the principal.

Teachers

Nine principals (Alex, Allison, Christopher, Danielle, Geri, Kathy, Linda, Sophia, and Stacy) discussed time with teachers as being the most important. Activities with teachers included providing support, observations/conferences/meetings, interactions, and being available. Danielle, Geri, Kathy, and Linda all shared supporting teachers as being important. Danielle supports what teachers need by funneling information to them about what they need to be successful. Kathy supports teachers by making verbal contacts with them and getting them what they need. Geri supports teachers by positively reinforcing all that they do and meeting with them when they need counseling or help. Linda supports teachers with staff development and new curriculum. She also supports teachers by brainstorming solutions to teaching challenges. Alex, Christopher, and Sophia discussed observations, conferences, and meetings with teachers. Alex feels that it is important to observe teachers. Christopher took her idea one step further and shared how spending time with teacher observations and post-conferences with teachers helps them to discover how to improve instruction. In addition to evaluation meetings, Sophia feels that individual education plan (IEP) meetings are important. She believes that time for IEP meetings helps to solve problems or celebrate success. Allison talked about being available to teachers and Stacy talked

about interactions with teachers. Allison believes this helps with the functioning of the school day and Stacy believes that it helps to set a climate for the school. A focus on teachers and teaching has always been a core characteristic of instructional leadership dating back to the 1980's. The emphases and processes have changed, but it remains the essence of instructional leadership. Principals in this study generally viewed that utilizing instructional leadership strategies enabled them to be successful as principals, their schools to be successful, and most importantly for their students to be successful.

Parents

Five principals (Geri, Kathy, Linda, Sophia, and Stacy) talked about time with parents as being the most important. This time included communication, interactions, and preventative meetings. Communication with parents might include drop-by visits, phone calls, or e-mails and was mentioned by both Geri and Kathy. Geri always drops everything to spend time with a parent who comes to the school unexpectedly and appears to be distraught. Whether a parent calls or comes in, Kathy always makes sure she returns their call or talks to them one-one-one. She always establishes at the start of the conversation how much time she has available to talk. Both Stacy and Sophia value interactions with parents. For Sophia, it allows connections and relationships to be built and for Stacy, it sets the climate for the school. Preventative meetings with parents about students having academic or behavioral problems are important to Linda. These meetings help students' situation at both home and school. The involvement of the principal helps to support both the student and parent(s) during difficult times. There has much research (Robinson & Fine, 1994; Vincent & Tomlinson, 1997; Williamson & Johnston, 1999) on the importance of home/school collaboration. As a result of NCLB, parents have more power and can act as consumers in their child's education thus requiring schools to develop a professional and collaborative relationship with the client.

Curriculum/Instruction

Four principals (Donna, Geri, Louis, and Stacy) discussed time spent on curriculum and instruction as being the most important. Stacy believes that time spent having conversations about instruction and improving instruction is very important. Donna also spends time having conversations with teachers and shared the conversations include revising, reviewing, and implementing new curriculum. Donna and Louis spend their time on curriculum and instruction by being in classrooms making sure that programs are properly implemented. Unlike the other three principals, Geri feels fortunate that she does not have to spend a lot of time on curriculum because her district has a very strong curriculum department. However, she tries to stay knowledgeable about what is coming down the pike and enters the scene more when teachers are asked to do something new or different. She will put a little more pressure on teachers to follow the new curriculum but will also praise them for trying when they feel inadequate. Curriculum leadership is another core component of instructional leadership from the start back in the 1980's. In the early days it manifested as "program management." The focus and processes have changed, but it is still a priority. In this study, the principals' support helped to encourage teachers not to fear the new curriculum ideas.

Presence

Three principals (Alex, Karen, and Linda) shared that having a presence in the building is the most important use of their time. Alex has a presence in the building by being visible. Linda uses building-walk throughs to have a presence and ensure student are learning and everyone in safe. Karen went into the most detail about how she shows a presence in the building including being in the classroom, seeing the kids, watching the teachers, making sure everything is running the way it is supposed to be running, answering the questions if they have any, and making sure she gets out into the building every single day. It is very important for a principal to establish a visible daily presence in the

school. When a school community sees the principal being actively involved in the day to day running of the school, they often feel supported and validated. Robert Starratt (2005), a professor at Boston College, has written about “presence” being a desirable characteristic for school principals.

Least Important Use of Time

Principals use of time can be divided into many effective and equally as many ineffective areas. Principals must quickly learn what does or does not work for them. Five themes emerged from the study on least important uses of principals’ time including parents, paperwork, meetings, and e-mail

Parents

Six principals (Allison, Danielle, Donna, Elizabeth, Louis, and Peggy) shared that parents are the least important use of their time. Allison gets very frustrated by rude or disrespectful parents. Often after dealing with these types of parents, Allison needs to document the incident which takes extensive amounts of time. Both Elizabeth and Louis get frustrated by parents not following the protocol of going to the teacher before going to her. Louis also get frustrated when parents from the Parents Association do not make the proper arrangements for events and he has to tie up loose ends. Since Allison, Elizabeth, and Louis are professionals, they handle these situations with parents and then realize how frustrating or time-consuming they can be.

Danielle, Donna, and Peggy talked about complaints or concerns by parents. This frustration is explained by the old adage “10% takes 90% of your time.” Donna discussed that when complaints occur it is very time consuming to gather information, conduct investigations, and prepare rationales. Danielle shared three parents’ complaints, which all occurred on the bus. The first complaint was about a particular bus not getting to a bus stop on time. The second complaint was about a parent’s complain about abuse to their child by a bus driver. The final situation involved a situation between two students. The second and third situations were resolved by video documentation from a bus camera. Donna shared

a recent situation where a holiday concert had to be canceled due to inclement weather and the parent complaints that canceling the concert brought. The time consuming complaints had to be addressed but took time away from the “bigger picture” of educating students. Peggy gets frustrated by the petty concerns that parents come to her about. She sometimes wonders what they would do if a crisis occurred. Peggy always listens to parents concerns but unless parents have a legitimate concern gets it done her way. A paradox of parents being least important (in this section) and most important (in previous section) emerged. A category of activity has both qualities – constructive to some purposes and intents, and detrimental to others. If the activity relates to a core dimension of instructional leadership, that perhaps is sufficient warrant for allocating time to the category of activity even though it is detrimental in other ways. A small number of parents can take an inordinate amount of a principal’s time to solve minor problems.

Situations with parents are the only aspect of the principalship that was shared as both the most important and the least important use of time. Parents appear to be on the most important use of time when solving problems or helping children. However, parents appear on the least important use of time when they are annoyed or frustrated about different situations.

Paperwork

Five principals (Christopher, Geri, Linda, Peggy, and Stacy) talked about paperwork being the least important use of their time. They talked about why it was the least important, types of paperwork, and sources of support with paperwork. According to Peggy and Stacy, paperwork needs to be done because it makes everything work and function. Christopher shared that paperwork helps to get grant or state money and helps with teacher evaluation. Different types of paperwork included reports for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, reports on violence in schools, reports to help teachers receive level-two certification, observations forms for nontenured teachers, parent letters or e-mails, PTO

approval forms, and teacher request forms. Help with paperwork came from the secretary, nurse, administrative assistant, superintendent, district personnel, and extra time at school. Linda's secretary helps to generate data from the student database and other paperwork. Christopher has numerous sources of support. His nurse and administrative assistant help, the superintendent does not overload him with paperwork junk, and someone in the district does paperwork for the federal government. Stacy takes care of paperwork after school or on the weekend. Some paperwork is necessary evils for principals and delegation can help with some of the paperwork.

Two principals, one with experience and one without experience, illustrated very different paperwork challenges. Elizabeth is in her first three months of being a principal. Paperwork drives her nuts because she is accountable for paperwork that was done before she arrived in the position. She is frustrated that information for the paperwork was not left for her nor is it easy to find. Elizabeth wishes that she had done the paperwork in the past and had an example to pull out and look at. Geri, who has experience in the position of principal, remembers when principals were primarily managers but now have other responsibilities. When she was younger, she would put in extra hours in the evening and on weekends but she cannot do that any more because she is too tired. These principals view paperwork as a different challenge based on their experience. Elizabeth is frustrated by paperwork because she cannot find the information and Geri is frustrated because she is too tired to put in the extra hours to get the paperwork done. Principals run the risk of drowning in paperwork because it can be a time consuming entity. As always, leaders and managers run the risk of allowing paperwork and "administrivia" to take over their time. It can also be a cop-out or excuse for not doing more critical things like dealing with teachers and instruction.

Meetings

Three principals (Christopher, Peggy, and Sophia) talked about meetings being the least important use of their time. Both Christopher and Sophia, as elementary principals, are frustrated with the amount of time spent on secondary issues at administrative meetings. Sophia gets frustrated because she does not see the direct relevance to the elementary level. Both Christopher and Sophia offered ideas to improve this time challenge. Christopher thinks that there should be separate meetings for elementary and secondary principals. Sophia thinks that e-mails could be sent asking for basic opinions rather than spending extensive time discussing topics. Peggy wishes that rather than attending meetings, she could just stay at school. The pace of work, technological advances, and increased complexity of the role begs question of whether meetings are the best use of time. However, meetings bring other peripheral professional benefits such as interaction with peers and less formal exchanges of information.

E-Mail

Two principals (Karen and Kathy) talked about e-mail being the least important use of their time. E-mail messages can be numerous in number, responses are time consuming, and can address sensitive issues or concerns. As a result, Kathy tries not to dwell on e-mail. She always tries to respond to e-mail quickly and will print out directives for later consideration. Similar to Kathy, Karen responds to e-mail quickly, however, she will scan through e-mails to determine which require an immediate response. If e-mails are not important, she will let it sit until she can get to it. The benefit of e-mail is that it can be prioritized more quickly than telephone calls because more information is readily available.

Jones (2006) offered advice on e-mail etiquette. While e-mail is a speedy means of communication, it is not a secure means of communication and it should not be treated casually. E-mails should be kept concise and to the point, layout of e-mail should be considered when replying, and replying should be done quickly (Jones, 2006). For additional information on e-mail management and

effectiveness, read C. Cavanagh (2003) *Managing Your E-Mail: Thinking Outside the Inbox* and N. Flynn & T. Flynn (2000) *Writing Effective E-Mail*.

Discussion

The paradoxes of activities present both good and bad uses of time. The solution is to give priority to those activities which are central to instructional leadership. These principals define the core dimensions of instructional leadership as the best interests of the learner, learning, professional development, and curriculum and assessment decisions.

Question # 4:

How do these principals define instructional leadership? How, in their perception, has the context of accountability changed that definition?

The discussion of findings for this research question begins with a restatement of the definition of instructional leadership used for the purposes of this study. The principals interviewed for the study defined the core dimensions of instructional leadership as the best interests of the learner, learning, professional development, and curriculum and assessment decisions. The best interests of learning included discussions about learning as a central role of school, knowledge about curriculum, instruction following academic standards, promoting technology, teaching skills, and inclusion, scheduling to maximize time for learning, finding resources to support learning, and observing teachers. Principals talked extensively about the instructional leaders' involvement in professional development for themselves and teachers.

Rather than sharing how their definition of instructional leadership has changed as a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), principals shared how their role as an instructional leader has changed. As a result of NCLB, principals need to spend time looking at data and making curricular and assessment decisions. NCLB requires that schools make adequate yearly progress (AYP) by raising the achievement levels of students. Principals talked about how the context of accountability is influencing role as an instructional leader when working with teachers.

Definition

Based on the literature, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals, a definition of instructional leadership was developed. This was important because the literature offers a variety of definitions on what instructional leadership involves.

An instructional leader serves the best interests of the learner and learning, professional development, and instructional decision-making.

- Serving the best interest of the learner, an instructional leader focuses on “teaching and learning, involved in curriculum development”³³ promoting an instructional program conducive to the successful learning of all students³⁴.
- Serving the best interest of learning, an instructional leader considers learning a central role of schooling³⁵; encourages instruction to follow academic standards³⁵; promotes instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction and inclusionary practices³⁶; and does scheduling to provide maximum time for learning³⁶.
- Serving the best interest of professional development, an instructional leader creates a school culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals³⁵. This adult learning culture emphasizes the study of teaching and learning, collaboration and coaching relationships, program redesign, and action research³⁷.
- Serving the best interest of instructional decision-making, uses multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools^{35, 36} to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement^{35, 36}.

³³ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

³⁴ Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996

³⁵ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

³⁶ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

³⁷ Blase & Blase, 2000

This definition was used as the basis of analyzing instructional leadership definitions shared by 22 elementary principals interviewed for this study. The principals' definitions emphasized instructional leadership from the practitioner perspective. It illustrated areas that needed to be added to the definition and an area that principals may be doing but do not consider as instructional leadership.

Learner

Serving the best interest of the learner, an instructional leader focuses on teaching and learning, involved in curriculum development promoting an instructional program conducive to the successful learning of all students.

When looking at the learner, the five principals' talked about the learner or student, student achievement, and helping the teacher help the student. Andy shared that the instructional leader needs to be knowledgeable about students' family, background, and instructional, personal, or social needs. Stacy and Karen shared that the instructional leader needs to determine the success of students and have discussions about student achievement. Clem took this idea one step further believing that the instructional leader needs to pull all of the stakeholders together to get the most out of children in terms of achievement. In order to help student achieve, instructional leaders need to ensure and encourage teachers to meet the needs of all children (Peggy) and help teachers learn strategies to help students be successful. The principals' responses differed from the definition in the aspect of student achievement. This addition makes sense since the principals' work in the high stakes context of accountability.

Learning

Serving the best interest of learning, an instructional leader considers learning a central role of schooling; encourages instruction to follow academic standards; promotes instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction and inclusionary practices; and does scheduling to provide maximum time for learning.

When looking at learning, principals' responses can be grouped into the existing categories defining the instructional leader serving the best interest of learning but three more categories need to be

added. First, the instructional leader needs to be knowledgeable about the curriculum. Second, the instructional leader needs to find and provide resources to support instruction. Finally, the instructional leader needs to observe teaching to ensure that students are learning.

Learning as a Central Role of School

Principals did not talk about “learning being a central role of school”; however they talked about the other characteristics of leadership which facilitate learning. Sophia believes that the instructional leader needs to know the culture of the school and/or district in order to know the learning needs and challenges. Following this line of thinking, Geri shared that the instructional leader needs to ensure that teachers are not overburdened with physical constraints which might get in the way of teaching or learning. Alex and Karen feel that instructional leaders need to set the tone for the building acting as a cheerleader who provides teachers with support, encouragement, and follows-up. Like Karen, Peter spoke in-depth about what the instructional leader needs to do in order to support learning. He believes that the instructional leader needs to be a facilitator, motivator, rejuvenator, and exterminator. These characteristics facilitate the status quo not being accepted and time provided to rethink or regroup or redesign practices so new approaches can be implemented.

Knowledgeable about Curriculum

The instructional leader needs to be knowledgeable about the curriculum this means having the knowledge and being able to work and communicate with teachers and parents. Knowledge of the curriculum is a constant, ongoing, and evolving process. The instructional leader is responsible to have a very clear and good grasp of the curriculum that the school district has adopted and is being delivered to students (Andy and Amy). Additionally, they need to have an understanding of curricular programs that are occurring at each grade level (Louis), what is going on in the classroom (Sophia), and the direction that the curriculum is going in (Andy). Curricular knowledge allows instructional leader have

credibility when speaking about curriculum and instruction (Peter). As a result, it is important that the instructional leader stays current and on-top of what is happening in education with curriculum and instruction (Peter).

The instructional leader then needs to use this knowledge to work and communicate with teachers and parents. Working and communicating with teachers entails monitoring, empowering, demonstrating, understanding, sharing information, and involving teachers in curricular decisions. Instructional leaders need to monitor teachers to ensure that they are implementing the curriculum and standards as intended or designed and are staying on track with the intended timeline or goals (Geri and Peggy). They need to empower teachers to use curriculum and help to improve instruction (Donna) by demonstrating or teaching minilessons (Peter). The instructional leader needs to understand teacher needs based on the curriculum (Louis) and the constraints that they face in its delivery (Donna). They also need to credibly share curricular information (Peter) with teachers to keep them abreast of what is going on (Amy and Karen) and ensure that teachers know the curricular information (Amy). Instructional leaders need to work with teachers to select curriculum replacements for older curriculum or curriculum that will better meet the standards (Christopher). They also need to talk to parents about the curriculum (Alex) and have a knowledge base that allows them to speak credibly (Peter).

Instruction Follows Academic Standards

Only one principal talked about academic standards when defining instructional leadership. Taylor shared that an instructional leader needs to be knowledgeable about acceptable student performance driven by state and standardized assessments. He believes that this is important because schools want children to know the curriculum and be able to do the assessments based on the standards. It is possible that principals view the curriculum as covering the academic standards. For example,

numerous principals talked about using the Everyday Math³⁸ curriculum being used in their school and how their mathematics scores on the Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA) have improved.

Promotes Technology, Teaching Skills, and Inclusionary Practices

The principals focused on teaching skills. The instructional leader needs to know the newest techniques for teaching (Amy). They also need to lead instruction and make sure that teachers are teaching what they are supposed to (Peggy). To support teachers in this effort, the instructional leader needs to meet one-on-one with teachers to address different needs and help improve their instructional process (Karen). Although technology, differentiated instruction, and inclusionary practices were not brought up when they defined instructional leadership but were discussed by the principals. As a result, it is important for the promotion of technology, differentiated instruction, and inclusionary practices to remain in the definition.

Scheduling to Maximize Time for Learning

Principals did not define instructional leadership based on scheduling to maximize time for learning. Karen spoke about scheduling common planning time for teachers to meet in grade level meetings. These meetings allow the principal, as instructional leader, and the teachers to talk about different curricular topics. While she did not talk about in her definition of instructional leadership, one principal shared that she moved PTA events from occurring during the school day to the weekend in order to maximize time for learning. Additions to the curriculum have taken away precious learning time

³⁸ *Everyday Mathematics* is mathematics curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and published by Wright Group/McGraw-Hill. The curriculum prides itself on real-life problem solving, balanced instruction, multiple methods for basic practice skills, emphasis on communication, home and school partnerships, and the use of technology. For additional information on *Everyday Mathematics*, visit <http://www.wrightgroup.com/index.php/programlanding?isbn=L000000004>.

for essential subjects. As a result, in order to give more time back to learning some principals used creative strategies such as making PTA events into after school events.

Resources to Support Learning

Finding resources to support learning is an area of instructional leadership that has been added based on information shared by the 22 principals interviewed for the study. Louis believes that the instructional leader needs to know whether particular needs or supply requests from teachers are worthwhile for the academic program. Knowledge about the academic program helps the instructional leader to make financial decisions. Geri shared that the instructional leader needs to provide resources which support best practices and are needed for instructional delivery. Taylor feels that the instructional leader need to access what their staff needs and then pull the resources together so teachers have supports needed to do their job. Financial decisions must be made in order to keep needs and wants of the district in line with sound financial planning to ensure and support learning.

Observations

Seven principals discussed teacher observations as part of instructional leadership. Christopher and Sophia believe that the instructional leader needs to know how to do both informal and formal teacher observations. Karen encourages instructional leaders to have teachers provide preobservation plans or materials to ensure that lesson goals are established. The instructional leader needs to use observations to monitor if teachers are properly implementing the curriculum (Christopher, Glenn, and Louis). Thus observations allow teachers to know that the instructional leader is checking on instruction (Glenn). After the observations, the instructional leader needs to make recommendations or offer suggestions for improvement (Christopher and Hazel). When offering feedback, the instructional leader needs to know the curriculum to ensure that the observation is having an impact and the instructional leader does not lose credibility (Donna). Karen believes that the post-observation conference needs to be a

collaborative discussion with teachers to help identify good qualities, what could be strengthened, and how the restructuring could occur. The overall message from the principals' was that they used teacher observations to ensure that curriculum is being implemented and to provide feedback for improving instruction.

Professional Development

Serving the best interest of professional development, an instructional leader creates a school culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals. This adult learning culture emphasizes study of teaching and learning, collaboration and coaching relationships, program redesign, and action research.

Principals talked extensively about the instructional leaders' involvement in professional development for themselves and teachers. Before the instructional leader can provide professional development for teachers, they need to make sure that they have continued their own professional development. Kathy believes that the instructional leader needs to be professionally well-prepared and continue their professional development in order to meet the educational needs of the students in the school. Continued professional development and staying current included graduate level coursework (Peter), seminar attendance (Peter), reading professional literature (Hazel), and researching current trends in education (Alex). This professional development allows the instructional leader to speak to the trends and research in education (Alex).

When discussing the instructional leader involvement in professional development for teachers, the principals mentioned planning or attending, meeting teacher needs, helping weak teachers, supporting curriculum or students, and providing leadership opportunities. Stacy plans or helps to plan staff development and Allison supports efforts by attending all training for all staff members. Meeting teacher needs involves knowing teacher strengths or challenges and encouraging teachers to strengthen all aspects of their role as a professional educator (Andy). Allison feels that instructional leaders ask

teachers what they need instructionally for staff development as well as assess their needs. The instructional leader also needs to know curricular topics' coming down the pike that teacher needs to know (Alex and Christopher). Glenn feels that professional development should focus on helping teachers meet the needs of the students. While Glenn did not share the specific student needs, they could be curricular or based on individual student needs such having an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or being an English as a Second Language Learner (ESL). Once the teacher and student needs are determined, the instructional leader needs to find someone to provide the professional development if they are not knowledgeable about the topic (Allison and Hazel). Taylor believes that the professional development needs to expose teachers to state-of-the-art-practices that are proven through scientifically-based research and assist with instructional delivery. Peggy feels that the instructional leaders need to make sure that teachers follow through with receiving the appropriate professional development or training. Christopher makes sure that he brings professional development instructors in for follow-up so teachers do not receive "one day wonders." Instructional leaders also need to pull together resources for teachers that will allow them to do their jobs (Taylor). These resources might include books or coaching (Hazel). Sophia was the only principal to discuss providing teachers with leadership opportunities. These opportunities offer another source of professional development for teachers. Professional development needs to be pedagogically sound, based on research, and meet the needs of teachers, and the school or district.

When defining instructional leadership, only one principal spoke about school goals. These goals were not connected to professional development activities rather connected to school improvement. Stacy shared that the instructional leader looked at grade level goals with teachers and discuss how they want to improve in a specific grade level. It is the unknown of meeting academic standards and making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) that has taken emphasis away from individual school goals. If schools

are focusing on standards and making AYP, perhaps school goals need to be rewritten or rethought to reflect this new emphasis.

Impact of Accountability

Rather than sharing how their definition of instructional leadership has changed as a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), principals shared how their role as an instructional leader has changed. Principals' role in instructional leadership has changed based on the need to look at data and decision-making, make curriculum and assessment decisions, the student population, and interactions with teachers. These changes are the result of the consequences for poor performance. Principals who shared that NCLB had not changed their role as an instructional leader believed it was due to their professional background and school context.

Curricular and Assessment Decisions

As a result of NCLB, principals need to spend time looking at data and making curricular and assessment decisions. The instructional leader needs to understand and be able to make data driven decisions (Peter). As a result, Kathy, as an instructional leader learned how to read reports to help teachers understand student strengths and weaknesses. Time needs to be spent looking at PSSA results (Linda) that the community has access to (Geri). As a result of the public access to the information, the instructional leader needs to be able to speak to the public and address their questions or concerns (Alex). Clem, as an instructional leader, spends time looking at collective student progress and growth on district assessments. When making curricular and assessment decisions, it is important that instructional leaders have a curricular and assessment knowledge base (Peter). As a result of the NCLB, curricular and assessment decisions need to be made with the goal of improving PSSA scores (Christopher, Elizabeth, and Karen). The instructional leader needs to be a champion of curricular designs and anchor assessments that help stay on target with standards (Kathy). For example, at Andy's school they have

selected three curricular programs (Everyday Math, Kid Writing, and Writing Blocks) to ensure that anchor standards and eligible content are covered. While these programs provide a structure to meet standards, instructional leaders need to have the courage and leadership to make decisions about methodology and delivery strategies based on their individual school (Peter). Curricular and assessment decisions need to be made following an in-depth study of the topics and how it pertains to the needs of the district.

Concerns

Principals shared curricular and instructional concerns caused by No Child Left Behind. As an instructional leader, Taylor, believes that it is important to make decisions about what can be taken off teachers' plates as more is added as a result of accountability. While Donna and her co-principal are encouraging teachers to focus on testing areas, they have made the decision not to remove library, health, or specials from the academic day. Removing these subjects would allow teachers to double up instruction on tested curriculum. However, Donna and her co-principal feel that it would weaken the quality of instruction for students. Geri is concerned that teachers are changing teaching strategies doing less thematic units and focusing more on drill and practice in order to achieve on the PSSA. These concerns about amount on teachers' plates, potential to remove curriculum that is not taught, and emphasis on drill and practice illustrate how No Child Left Behind is impacting the educational landscape.

Students

No Child Left Behind requires that schools make adequate yearly progress (AYP) by raising the achievement levels of students. Particular focus is paid to students from under-represented groups based on race, socioeconomic level, students in special education, and students who speak English as a Second Language (ESL). These requirements for AYP by NCLB are impacting the principals interviewed for this

study and thus their instructional leadership. As a result of NCLB, Peggy shared that more is being done for the lowest achieving students. Students in Special Education (Amy, Danielle, and Sophia) and those who speak English as a Second Language (Geri and Sophia) are impacting schools' PSSA results and concerning principals interviewed for this study. Andy and Sophia are also concerned about students on the bubble or at-risk for not making proficiency. Due to the need to make AYP and concern about specific student populations, schools have to take action. Two principals, Peggy and Hazel, shared actions that their school or district has taken. Peggy's district has created a district summer program to provide academic support for lowest achieving students. Her district has also increased Title I supports in mathematics to include additional grades. Hazel's school is providing student with extra support after school in a Power Hour³⁹ program. Hazel has also chosen to focus on student attendance because she believes that improved attendance will improve test scores. The information shared by principals illustrates the challenges that they are facing with special education and ESL students and how the steps they are taking as instructional leaders to address the challenges.

Teachers

Principals talked about how the context of accountability is influencing the role as an instructional leader when working with teachers. Accountability is impacting the teacher causing time to be spent helping teachers accept the current context, then take action, and finally celebrate successes. NCLB is causing teachers to put additional pressure on themselves (Sophia), work harder, and are suffering from emotional wear-and-tear (Clem). Andy feels that one of the pressures that teachers face is the pressure of not having enough time to cover all of the material. As a result, NCLB is hurting teachers'

³⁹ The *Power Hour* program at Hazel's school provides additional, after school instructional support for students who did not reach minimum proficiency on the PSSA tests.

confidence in their instructional practices (Kathy). Glenn had a very different perspective; he believes that teachers not valuing NCLB or the PSSA can make instructional leadership harder and negatively affect the school culture. As a result of teachers' potential difficulty accepting NCLB, instructional leaders have to work with teachers to get to the point where they accept new teaching requirements (Geri) in the context of accountability in education. Donna feels that before the acceptance can occur, instructional leaders need to give staff the opportunity to vent about NCLB and PSSA testing.

Instructional leaders have the responsibility to lead teachers to facilitate change needed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and avoid punitive action (Donna). They need to talk to teachers encouraging them to look at anchor standards (Christopher) and determine how they are implementing new programs, curriculum, and standards (Sophia). To help support implementation of standards and curriculum, Clem is spending more time informally and formally observing teachers. Danielle checks teacher lesson plans to know where teachers are implementing and teaching the standards. She has created a pacing chart for teachers to layout timelines during the school year to ensure that all standards have been covered before the assessment. Without emphasizing it to the teachers, Danielle keeps a record of teachers anticipated progress, based on the pacing chart, verse their actual progress, based on information from the lesson plans. Additionally, Danielle analyzes student performance on district quarterly exams to determine where teachers are succeeding and where they are facing challenges. As an instruction leader, Peggy, reminds teachers too regularly use vocabulary found on the test, have students practice bubbling on tests, and to make sure they review all material covered on test before test. Hazel has found PSSA software to enhance and support teachers' instruction and help students make AYP. When sharing PSSA scores, Sophia prefers to meet in small grade level groups rather than as a whole staff in order to facilitate discussion. These examples of how instructional leaders are leading teachers in change necessitated by No Child Left Behind illustrate how the context of education is changing.

These changes have come about due to the consequences that schools face for poor performance. Principals talked about schools being judged by PSSA performance and the concern or threat of not doing well and being on the improvement list. As a result of these consequences, it is important to note that principals, as instructional leaders, spoke with pride about their teachers PSSA accomplishments and the need to celebrate success. Christopher and Danielle discussed their pride in the hard work by teachers to be above the cut line for proficiency. Linda and Sophia talked about the importance of celebrating the PSSAs. Assessment and testing have changed the way teachers teach. The score and actual progress each year has made each staff member and the principal more accountable. However, the increased accountability raises the question if schools are forced to teach to the test.

Closing Thoughts on Instructional Leadership Definition

The categories of activity identified by the participants in this study and discussed in this chapter amount to the key dimensions and subdimensions of instructional leadership for currently practicing school principals in PA. These key dimensions and subdimensions of instructional leadership include the best interests of the learner, learning, professional development, and curriculum and assessment decisions. Figure 20 on the next page illustrates the key dimensions of instructional leadership determined during the research of this study.

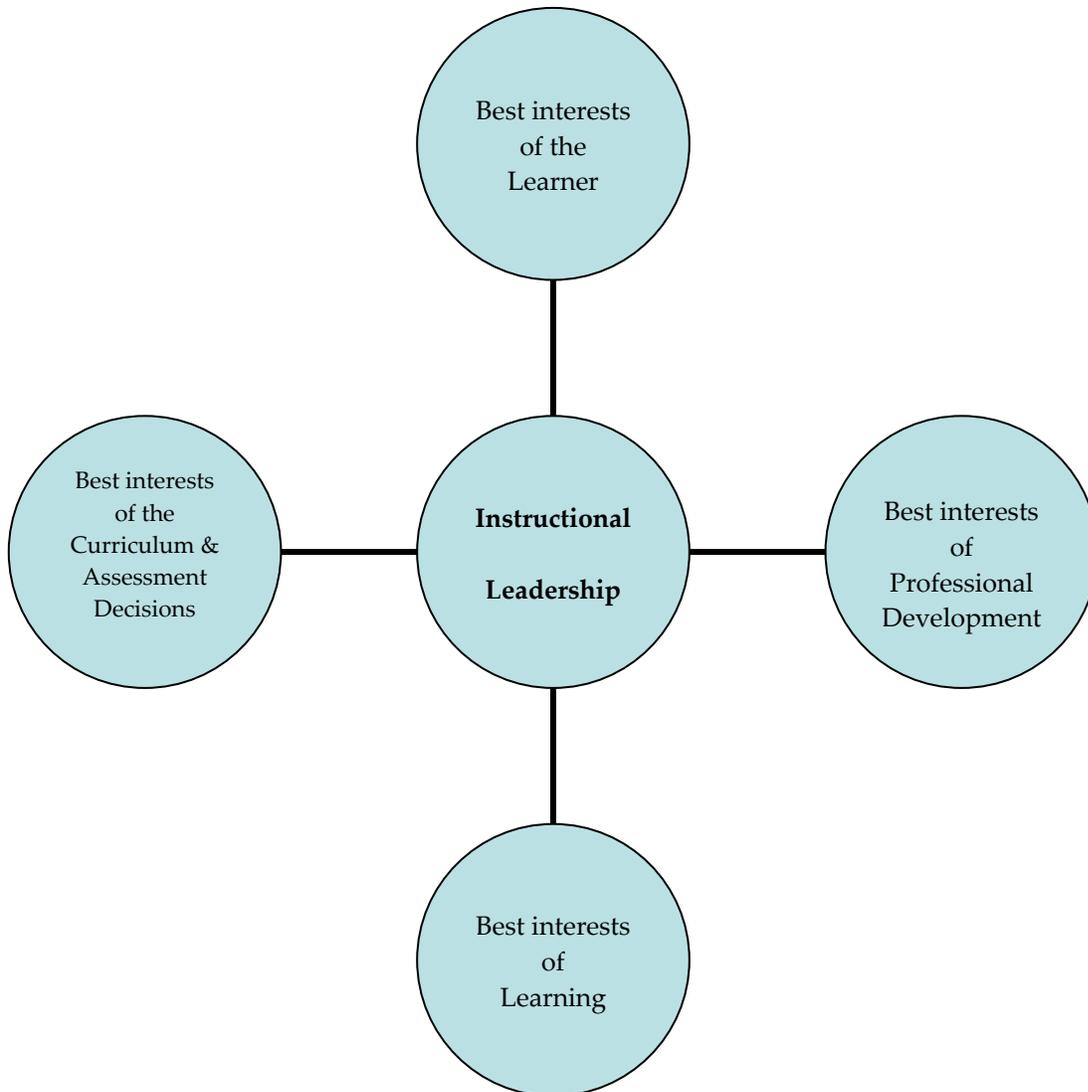


Figure 20: Key Variables of Instructional Leadership

The principals interviewed for the study defined the core dimensions of instructional leadership as the best interests of the learner, learning, professional development, and curriculum and assessment decisions. The best interests of learning included discussions about learning as a central role of school, knowledge about curriculum, instruction following academic standards, promoting technology, teaching skills, and inclusion, scheduling to maximize time for learning, finding resources to support learning, and observing teachers. Principals talked extensively about the instructional leaders' involvement in professional development for themselves and teachers

Principals' experience or background played into their definition of instructional leadership. As a teacher, Amy always focused on learning to teach better and the use assessment and instructional leadership is second nature. Andy's definition of instructional leadership comes from his background as a counselor, school psychologist, and responsibilities in special education. Like Andy, Peter also has a background in counseling, which taught him to value accountability measures, evaluations, and assessments which is required by the instructional leader in the context of accountability. Since Elizabeth is new to the position of principal, she was unable to provide a definition of instructional leadership. Instead of being an instructional leader, Elizabeth sees herself as a "learning leader" since all of her professional experience was working at a middle and high school level and she is still learning the elementary environment. Based on her statements, she must not view teachers as having the option to be instructional leaders. Unlike Elizabeth, Glenn believes that good teachers are the true instructional leaders in the school. Danielle believes that the instructional leader needs to be a teacher to bring everyone together.

Questions # 5 and # 6:

To what extent and in what ways do these principals perceive the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practice as an instructional leader? What contextual forces and influences facilitate or hinder principals' use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement?

When discussing perceptions of availability or absence of time impacting the role as an instructional leader, principals were either impacted by the absence of time or they were not impacted by the availability or absence of time. During the pilot interviews, the term "professional practices" was removed from the questions due to the questions and confusion it caused respondents.

Impacted by Absence of Time

Half of the principals interviewed for this study discussed being affected by the absence of time. Within their responses, they shared factors requiring their time, what they would do if they had more time, time strategies, and passions and frustrations.

"Other" job responsibilities that make finding time for instructional leadership challenging included discipline, meetings, special education classes, parent or teacher concerns, and committee or professional organizations, personal stressors, and supervising two buildings. Geri talked about personal stressors including a low energy level, exhaustion, and insecurity about listening to gut instincts. Peggy and Karen find that running two buildings cause a variety of items to crop up and crunch their time. Karen shared that even though she works 12-, 13-, or 14-hour days, there is not nearly enough time to be in classrooms and around the building more often. These responses show the effect that long hours and stress are having on principals in the context of accountability.

If they had more time, principals would study research, work with teachers, attend or develop teacher professional development, examine assessments, and work with parents, community, and special education. When looking at an overview of the list, wishing for more time with or about students was not mentioned. This makes sense since the principals made such a focus on student related activities. Two

principals (Alex and Geri) wished for more time to read, understand, and become well-versed and comfortable with research on curriculum and best practices with instruction. For example, Alex wishes she had the time to read a book from front to back on the Six Traits of Writing that her district has adopted. Five principals (Donna, Karen, Kathy, Geri, and Sophia) wished for more teacher time for discussions, interactions, observations, and meaningful evaluations. Kathy shared that discussions could occur during school day building meetings, small group meetings, or one-on-one teacher feedback meetings. Finding this time is challenging for Sophia because of how busy teachers and principals are. When a teacher is free, a principal might not be available and vice versa. Donna feels that a solution to this difficulty is to hire really well and then put faith in staff. Two principals (Geri and Kathy) wished for more time to attend or develop teacher professional development. Geri wished to attend all teacher professional development so she could fully understand curricular efforts. Rather than attending professional development, Kathy wishes for more time to develop well-constructed and thoughtfully developed professional development for teachers. Two principals (Geri and Karen) wish for more time for assessments. Principals also talked about wishing for more time to work with parents and community (Karen), attend entire IEP meetings (Karen), and complete paperwork (Alex). The majority of these time wishes relate back to instructional leadership.

Principals discussed strategies used to address absence of time, which included technology, leadership team, and tough decisions about instructional minutes. Technology allows parents and teachers to always get in touch with Sophia, she follows-up all communication with a prompt response via telephone or e-mail. Taylor is frequently out of the building for meetings for a professional organization. His school has a standing leadership team to ensure that the building does not fall apart and the program, curriculum, and instructional pacing moves forward in his absence. As a result of the leadership time, teachers know what needs to be done or who to go to if a situation arises and the

principal is not in the building. Donna makes tough decisions about what is put on teachers plates for instructional minutes in the school day. These decisions require understanding about what will or will not get done. Principals' strategies included communication, structure, and tough decisions.

When discussing absence of time, principals discussed their passions and frustrations. Geri is very passionate about students at-risk and children in special education. Danielle is very frustrated with her superiors' timelines for adopting new curriculum. Geri's passion comes from being a parent of a child with special needs and having to fight for opportunities for her child. Danielle's frustration comes from her classroom experience and curricular knowledge to ensure that teachers have proper time for implementation of curriculum. Both of these principals' passions and frustrations come from their personal and professional experiences.

Availability or Absence of Time Not Impacting Instructional Leadership

Half of the principals interviewed for this study discussed the availability or absence of time not impacting their instructional leadership. Within their responses, they shared individual time focus, time requirements, impact of time at school, experience and time at school.

Principals shared that instructional leadership needs to be a focus. Linda and Amy both feel that instructional leadership is important so they find or make time to be an instructional leader. Louis prioritizes what needs to be addressed, first taking care of anything pertaining to the educational program, student or teacher needs and then getting to the other stuff. These comments illustrate that the availability or absence of time is not impacting instructional leadership because it is something that the principals value.

Time requirements included paperwork, instruction, students, and need for change. While the availability or absence of time is not impacting these principals, they talked about time for paperwork. However, they had strategies to deal with the paperwork including closing office door (Elizabeth), help

from good staff (Hazel), and extra time after school (Louis). Principals talked about a focus on instruction and instructional time. Hazel feels that she is very focused or even obsessed on instruction. Peter makes sure that students' instructional time is not compromised and chooses not to get involved with things that may steal their instructional time. Rather than focusing on instructional time, Andy focuses on the schools climate interacting with students as they enter school, during lunch, and as they leave school. As an instructional leader, Stacy feels that she has to spend time to bring new thoughts or ideas and then help to reinforce change efforts to ensure that they are successful. These time requirements have a very different tone than the time requirements mentioned by principals feeling an absence of time. These comments focused on instruction, students, and the need for the change. Even the comments about paperwork were positive in focusing on strategies to deal with the time required by paperwork.

Like the principals talking about an absence of time for instructional leadership, these principals also talked about personal stressors and time crunch. Hazel spends all day and night at school to get the job done because that is what she is there for. Like Hazel, Amy spends long hours for her job. Both Linda and Amy feel that their personal lives have suffered because of the long hours. These long hours are possible for Amy because her children are grown. Glenn and Clem talked about finding time to fit everything in or get things completed and Linda discussed about things coming up and taking over the day yet the minutia aspect of the job still needs to get done. Time pressures are due to something being wrong, due, or not having enough time can affect principals emotionally. As a result, long hours, personal stressors, and a time crunch can make instructional leadership challenging.

Experience caused a difference of perspective about instructional leadership. Elizabeth feels that as she gains more experience as a principal, she will change how she spends her time. Unlike Elizabeth, Hazel has experience as a principal and finds time for instructional leadership. However, Hazel was very critical of other principals' experiences, practices, or excuses. She feels that other principals were not

trained as instructional leaders and as a result focus on spending time in the office doing neat paperwork. As a result, Hazel does not see other principals as instructional leaders rather as “fancy clerks” doing paperwork. It is unknown whether as Elizabeth gains experience in the principalship, she will become an instructional leader or a “fancy clerk”? While principals interviewed for this study talked about paperwork challenges, the challenges existed because of all of the other responsibilities they were attending to.

Impact of No Child Left Behind

In talking about the impact of the availability or absence of time for instructional leadership, only one principal discussed the impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Peter feels that “it is no child left without a behind” because students’ “asses” are being tested off beginning in third grade. To satisfy benchmarks, teachers’ time is taken for tests to be scored, diagnoses made, a prescription plan written, and a tutorial assigned. As a result of all of the testing, valuable instructional time is being lost for factors that really are not germane to having each child really realize his or her potential. Peter warns individuals working in education to make sure that they are not narrowing the curriculum so it focuses solely on assessments. In order to focus on Pennsylvania academic standards and anchors, Peter worries that the curriculum is being narrowed and teachers are losing their opportunity to pursue other curriculum enrichment opportunities. Peter’s concerns illustrate the extent to which the availability or absence of time in the context of high stakes accountability is impacting teaching and learning.

Contextual Influences

Principals shared two main contextual influences which were meetings and people, who control or influence their time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement. Twelve of the 22 principals interviewed for this study believed that they controlled their own time and made the decisions regarding how their time was used. Principals spoke about how they support or monitor teachers’

instructional progress and student learning. Embedded within discussions of student learning and instruction was extensive explanations about curricular efforts, knowledge about the curriculum, discussing curriculum with teachers and supporting teachers with new curricular efforts. When principals talked about student achievement, they spoke specifically about the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) and strategies to improve student outcomes. The accountability from the PSSA tests appeared to always be on their mind.

Forces or Influences Hindering Time

Principals shared two main contextual influences which were meetings and people, who control or influence their time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement.

Meetings

Meetings were for administrative, district, special education, or professional organization purposes. Principals either needed to be at the table for these meetings or run the meetings. Some of the meetings were known in advance and other meetings principals had to rearrange, redo, reschedule, or cancel items on their calendar. Principals had different perspectives on whether or not meetings were meaningful. They believed that meetings that allowed decisions to be made were valuable. However, elementary principals questioned whether they needed to be at the table when items were discussed or decided regarding secondary education. They also felt that meetings to just share information, news, or announcements could have done over e-mail. Time spent in meetings took away principals time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement.

People

Time with people included interactions with parents and regarding special needs students. Interactions with parents included things popping up and needed to be responded to or discussions to keep parents informed. Other parent time was spent working with the parent teacher association or

organization (PTA/PTO) with the events or programs they plan or run. These were “special” events or programs which were typically fun or for school fund raising and typically outside of the scope of instructional objectives. As a result, principals who shared these interactions as influencing their time felt that they needed to work with parents. Time with parents took away from their time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement. However, it can be argued that student learning and achievement is improved through strong and positive home/school relationships. Robinson and Fine (1994) found that “parents from all socioeconomic backgrounds can have a positive effect on school achievement if they become active participants in their child’s education” (p. 2)

Principals shared that time addressing the needs of a few children with special needs can consume large amounts of time, which take time away from the instructional, learning, and discussions about achievement of other children. For example, Allison had a child with autism, who could come extremely violent, and required parts of the building to be closed for student safety. Due to the number of special needs students at Geri’s school, 60% of her time is spent in meetings for window of several months. Especially in an era of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability, the instruction, learning, and achievement of children with special needs must to be addressed by principals. These principals’ were concerned about the amount of time spent for a few children with special needs at the expense of the rest of the student population.

Controls Own Time

Twelve of the 22 principals interviewed for this study believed that they controlled their own time and made the decisions regarding how their time was used. These 12 principals included Alex, Christopher, Elizabeth, Glenn, Hazel, Karen, Kathy, Peggy, Peter, Sophia, Stacy, and Taylor. When looking at their responses regarding controlling time, several interesting comments emerged. Principals were thankful that their superintendent and school board gave them the autonomy to use their time as

they saw fit. Principals' control over time was compared to experience and other positions in education. Peter believes that his experience in the principalship and in the district allows him to control his time because he knows how things work. Sophia feels that principals' have more control over time than teachers. Teachers have less control because they have to schedule reading, writing, and math during a structured day. Kathy believes that the job of assistant principal is more of an on-demand job than the principalship. Principals also talked about the unknowns or unexpected that happens during the day and just need to be dealt with. None of the principals felt that these situations controlled them. Principals' controlling their own time demonstrates that they determine how time is spent specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement.

Instruction and Student Learning

Principals spoke about how they support or monitor teachers' instructional progress and student learning. Instructional progress is supported by providing time to plan, time to meet, and helping teachers to grow. In Geri's school, teachers and specialists are provided with half day release time to plan thematic units. This time helps to support the instruction that students receive. Andy provides teachers with common planning time to facilitate grade level team meetings. These meetings allow teachers to discuss instruction but also discuss individual students and the difficulties they may be having. Andy also supports instruction and provides encouragement by having daily contact with every teacher and child. Allison believes that helping teachers develop and grow will help improve the quality of instruction and student achievement over time. She believes that growth is possible by providing teachers with time to plan, giving positive feedback, and celebrating successes. Like Allison, Danielle shared the importance of celebrations of learning. She likes to participate in and support these learning celebrations because they support teachers' instructional efforts and students learning efforts. These sources of support by principals help to facilitate a positive learning environment for students.

Teacher instructional progress is monitored by principals through reminders about covering anchor standards, checking lesson plans, providing pacing charts. Christopher emphasizes to teachers that they need to cover all anchor standards before the PSSA tests. Danielle takes Christopher's emphasis to the next level by physically checking teacher lesson plans each week. She was the only principal interviewed for the study to mention checking lesson plans. Danielle feels that checking lesson plans is important because it allows her to know where they are. She then compares where teachers are to the pacing chart that she gave them at the beginning of the year. This comparison helps Danielle monitor if teachers are staying on track to hit all of the standards.

Principals also encouraged teachers to make different instructional efforts to prepare students for the PSSA tests. Peggy encourages teachers to use mathematical terminology on a regular basis to ensure that students are familiar with the vocabulary when they take the PSSA tests. She encourages them to make sure they cover all assessed topics prior to the PSSA tests and then cover it in more depth after the PSSA tests. To meet this encouragement, some teachers will teach extra mathematics lessons a couple times a month. This allows teachers to cover all of the material prior to the PSSA tests. Peggy encourages teachers to occasionally give students the experience of bubbling in test answers. The goal of these instructional "encouragement" is to increase student opportunity for success on the PSSA tests.

Curriculum

Embedded within discussions of student learning and instruction was extensive explanations about curricular efforts. When speaking about curriculum, explanations focused on the knowledge that principals need to possess, the sharing of curricular information, curricular decisions and concerns. Principals also discussed curricular efforts in reading, writing, and math. Little focus was placed on curricular efforts in science and social studies, which are currently not assessed by the PSSA tests.

Knowledge

Principals believed that they needed to be knowledgeable about the curriculum that was occurring in their school or within their district and to stay on top of best practices within the field of education. They believed that gaining additional knowledge about best practices came from graduate coursework, seminar and conference attendance. Several principals spoke about the need for principals to understand balanced literacy, guided reading, and hands-on mathematics. Knowledge about the curriculum allows principals to ask questions regarding: “what needs to be done,” “what needs to be tightened up,” “what factors need to be concentrated on,” “how the curriculum should be mapped,” and the development of the strategic plan. Danielle felt that principals, especially those with a background as teachers, need to be vocal about curricular decisions that are being made within the district. Questions need to be asked concerning whether new curriculum is realistic for teachers to learn and use or is the district giving them too much to do in not enough time. No Child Left Behind has facilitated more intense expectations of principals’ knowledge of the curriculum.

Information and Support

Principals discussed curricular information shared with teachers and supporting teachers with new curricular efforts. Christopher and Karen both mentioned providing teachers with curricular information. Karen provides teachers with current and updated information regarding what is going on with math, science, and reading curriculum. Christopher believes this information helps teachers instruct students and keeps the curriculum moving. Principals believed that providing teachers with curricular information was important because they did not have the time to find information themselves.

Geri, Karen, and Sophia believe that it is important to support teachers when implementing new programs, curriculum, and standards. Geri supports teachers by praising their efforts or putting a little pressure to try the new curricular. Karen might give a teacher verbal praise in the form of saying “wow

that was a good job” or put a “way to go” candy bar in their mailbox. Sophia offers support by spending time talking to teachers and asking curricular questions. How is the curriculum impacting lower achieving kids who really struggle with learning? How are advanced students receiving the acceleration and enrichment that they need? Are students in between the low and advanced achieving students also achieving? By providing teachers with curricular information and supporting curricular efforts promotes an environment which emphasizes the importance of instruction and student learning.

Decision and Concerns

In an era of accountability, schools want children to know and understand the curriculum and standards. As a result, principals have concerns about the current educational context and need to make tough decisions. School based decisions about the curriculum vary from school to school and district to district. In some districts, curriculum decisions are consistent for grade levels across schools. Decisions may be made by a curriculum office or by the school board. In other districts, schools have the flexibility to choose the textbooks that they want to use. While principals and teachers might not have control over the curriculum or textbooks, they need to make important decisions about instructional methodologies and strategies, which are appropriate for the student population in their school. In an era of accountability, these decisions are driven by data, trends, assessments, and test scores. Principals are concerned that education is being narrowed to focus primarily on content covered on assessments. Teachers are losing the opportunity to go off in different directions to enrich the curriculum or to teach thematic units. In education, do we want children’s perspective of learning to be focused on passing the text? If this is not the perspective of learning that educators want children to have then tough curricular decisions need to be made.

For example, some schools in Pennsylvania are removing health, social studies, and special subjects, like fine arts or library, from the curriculum because they are not areas that are assessed on the

PSSAs. Removing these subjects from the curriculum has allowed teachers to double up of reading and mathematics, which are assessed. Donna is an example of a principal who has made tough curricular decisions. She has helped teachers to clearly understand that they need to plan, prepare, and spend time in reading, writing, and mathematics. However, they have stood firmly against the practice of removing curriculum like social studies and specials. Once PSSA science tests are piloted in the 2006-07 school year, her teachers will place more emphasis on science instruction. While Donna's school is placing emphasis on PSSA assessed areas, they have also made the tough decisions not to remove nonassessed curricular areas.

Reading Curriculum

When talking about the reading curriculum, principals made direct connections to student performance on the PSSA tests or the intended improvement in student performance. For example, Louis's district has been using the same reading program for the past several years. As a result, teachers are comfortable and familiar with the reading curriculum. The reading curriculum was selected because students were falling through the cracks with the previous curriculum and their reading needs were not being met. Both Danielle and Karen's schools are using the Harcourt Brace Trophies Series. Danielle's district selected this program after looking at statistics and data from Oregon reading research and piloting two reading programs. They found that the Harcourt Brace series got better data. Karen's school selected this program because it involves more writing than their previous reading program. Since both Danielle and Karen's schools are in the first official year of using the program, they are hopeful that the new reading program will improve PSSA reading scores. As teachers work their way through the new reading program, both principals stressed the importance of supporting teachers through the process. Alex shared that her school had 78% proficiency in reading, while she was happy with the numbers, she knows that they cannot rest on their laurels and need to determine ways to continue improving reading

scores. Prior to No Child Left Behind (NCLB), principals and teachers focused on whether or not a child could read or what level the child was reading at. In the context of high stakes accountability, principals are also looking at what curriculum will best improve student proficiency in reading.

Writing Curriculum

Only three principals (Alex, Andy, and Stacy) discussed the writing curriculum and they all discussed Kid Writing⁴⁰. Kid Writing was selected so each of their schools could specifically meet individual student needs. To help support teachers with the new program, Alex brought the author of the program to her school to train the staff over the summer. This training will help teachers better understand the program and thus improve student instruction. Stacy feels that it is important to be watchful of current popular programs and recommends evaluating them, trying them out, and piloting the program. This is what Stacy has done with students in kindergarten and first grade. She feels that it is having significant impact on all elementary writing. This is important because every Pennsylvania student in fifth, eighth, and eleventh grade are assessed in writing.

⁴⁰ Kid Writing: A Systematic Approach to Phonics, Journals, and Writing Workshop (1999) was written by Isabell Cardonick and Eileen Feldgus and published by the Wright Group within McGraw-Hill. It is a writing curriculum designed to “integrate phonics instruction across the curriculum” and help to develop “fluent, proficient, and confident writers” in kindergarten through second-graders, as well as second-language learners and special education students. For additional information on *Kid Writing*, visit <http://www.kidwriting.homestead.com/>.

Mathematics Curriculum

Four of the 22 principals interviewed for this study mentioned the Everyday Mathematics⁴¹ curriculum and one principal mentioned the Houghton Mifflin Series for Mathematics being used at their school. Principals shared that their school selected this curriculum because it is research-based and is connected with the state standards. Louis' district learned about the program through the superintendent of a neighboring school district. Schools had either been using the program for several years or were in the first year of implementation. Linda's district decided to adopt the Everyday Mathematics curriculum seven to eight months before the implementation. This allowed teachers to have training and provided Linda with the opportunity to positively promote the program to parents prior to implementation. Two principals, Karen and Danielle, spoke about the stress that their teachers faced during the first year of implementation. Karen felt that her teachers needed to restructure their techniques and strategies for teaching a very hands-on curriculum. Danielle feels that teachers need time to get used to new programs. During first year of a program teachers are just surviving, during the second year teachers are adjusting instruction, and during the third year teachers make changes based on their individual style of teaching. Louis shared other challenges that his school has faced with the Everyday Mathematics curriculum. The curriculum does not offer assessments that can be sent directly home to parents to provide an idea of how their child is progressing. In order to meet this need, Louis generated tests and quizzes for each unit. Principals also talked about outcomes on the PSSA tests. Students in Karen's school had 100% math proficiency on the PSSA tests as a result of Everyday Mathematics and students in Danielle's school are

⁴¹ *Everyday Mathematics* is mathematics curriculum developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project and published by Wright Group/McGraw-Hill. The curriculum prides itself on real-life problem solving, balanced instruction, multiple methods for basic practice skills, emphasis on communication, home and school partnerships, and the use of technology. For additional information on *Everyday Mathematics*, visit <http://www.wrightgroup.com/index.php/programlanding?isbn=L000000004>.

“doing really well.” Only one other mathematics series was mentioned. The Houghton Mifflin Series for Mathematics is used by Alex’s school and students received 95% proficiency on the PSSA tests. It appears that the PSSA tests are affecting curricular decisions in Pennsylvania’s elementary schools. Curriculums that support the state standards and prepare students for the PSSA tests are being selected over programs that do not offer this support.

Student Achievement/PSSA

When principals talked about student achievement, they spoke specifically about the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). The accountability from the PSSA tests appeared to always be on their mind. Principals discussed PSSA test results, improving student outcomes, and the assessment pressures.

PSSA Results

Principals spoke about their pride in PSSA test results. For example, after analyzing the PSSA test results, Linda announced to teachers that the results were great and they had done a super job.

Christopher proudly shared that his schools scores were above the cut line and 86% of the third graders were proficient or advanced in mathematics. Like Linda and Christopher, Clem is proud of his staff and students for the yearly progress that they are making on the PSSA tests. Both Peggy and Sophia, shared that their suburban districts are have very high PSSA test results because of their clientele and are 20 or 30 points ahead of the state curve.

Principals spend time looking at the PSSA results. Linda spends time once a year analyzing PSSA results. During the 2005-06 school year, she created a PowerPoint presentation to present the analyzed data to teachers. She feels that it is important that data is presented to teachers so they can understand it and have time to think through the results. Kathy would not have chosen to pay attention to assessment results and has had to learn how to read reports explaining PSSA test results. Like Linda, this skill allows

her to help teachers understand strengths and weaknesses in the building. Like Kathy and Linda, the PSSAs have caused Danielle to become a “statistical crazy woman.” She does a great deal of analysis looking at how students are doing, why particular strategies are being used, and the direction that students are going. Allison and Clem like to look at PSSA test results over time. Clem went into more depth explaining that he looks at growth trends on district quarterly assessments to ensure that students are moving towards the right direction to be successful on the PSSA tests.

Improving Student Outcomes on PSSA

Principals spoke about strategies used to strengthen or improve student outcomes on the PSSA tests. Stacy spends time spent talking about students with parents, teachers, IST people, and counselors to developing individual plans for students. Like Stacy, Karen spends time talking with teachers and asking a variety of questions about student achievement. These questions include: how students are achieving, what is happening, what is being done, what is occurring, what is being hit or missed, and how outcomes can be improved to bring up PSSA test results. The intent of these questions is to improve student outcomes on the PSSA tests. Karen also focuses on questions to improve student outcomes. However, rather than asking questions, she does an item analysis of PSSA test results to determine what questions students missed. This information helps teachers to know what they need to cover or reinforce. Principals also looked at areas outside of instruction that will improve student achievement. For example, Hazel has focused on student attendance because she feels that if attendance is high, the PSSA test results will improve. These strategies shared by principals are very practical and proactive in working to improve student PSSA test outcomes.

Principals also spoke about improving PSSA outcomes for struggling or “on the bubble” students. Andy shared that looking at a couple of “on the bubble” students and helping them to achieve proficiency can make all of the difference in his school making adequate yearly progress (AYP). To help

these “on the bubble” students, Christopher’s school is looking at how to break instruction into smaller groups. For example, rather than having whole class reading instruction, teachers are working in students in homogenous reading groups. Additionally, a principal in the district, who was a former Title I teacher, developed reading and writing assessments to identify what skills students are lacking. The assessments are given six times a year and allow teachers to know what instructional areas they need to help specific groups of students with. Like Christopher’s school, Taylor’s school is working to pin down explicitly what particular student needs are and where they are failing. Teachers then provide direct instruction to students based on their needs. Again, these efforts to improve PSSA outcomes for students “on the bubble” are practical and instructionally sound.

In addition to students “on the bubble,” principals expressed concerns about PSSA outcomes for English as a Second Language (ESL) students and students with special needs. In Geri’s school, she has a large population of students who do not speak English as their first language and speak 18 different languages. She expressed concerns about non-English-speaking students, who are new to the United States from another country, are expected to take the PSSA. Geri questioned the logic of assessing students on reading English when the student has not had enough time to become an English speaker. Like Geri, Sophia does not feel that assessing ESL students or students with learning disabilities, who test two years below their reading level makes sense. Neither Geri nor Sophia shared strategies that they are using to improve PSSA outcomes for these students. However, their concerns highlight the pressures, tensions, and stress the educators place regarding PSSA outcomes.

Pressure, Tensions, and Stress

Principals shared the pressures, tensions, and stress from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the need to make adequate yearly progress (AYP). They talked about the stress they feel, time spent on paperwork, and pressures teachers feel. In Clem’s district, central administration puts a lot of pressure on

administrators regarding PSSA results and sometimes creates more work. Geri is “paranoid” that the community or central administration will ask why her schools scores are the lowest in a high achieving district. She worries that they will not realize the number of English as a Second Language Learners that are in the school and how they are impacting the scores. Principals talked about the time consuming nature of documentation and paperwork needed to support the PSSA tests. For example, principals have to do school reports, teacher ratings, teacher evaluation, student database entry, and other documentation to support No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the PSSA tests. Andy shared the concerns by a teacher who felt that she had no spare time in the school day and no wiggle room. As a result of needing to meet anchor standards and eligible content by testing time, teachers and students were unable to relax. One must wonder the impact on student instruction when teachers must teach and students must learn in a stressed learning environment. In this type of environment are principals able to focus on the best interests of the student and instruction or must they focus on PSSA outcomes?

CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter summarizes the findings of this study of the strategies Pennsylvania elementary school principals employ to manage their time in order to maintain a focus on instruction when time is in short supply, priorities compete, and there are multiple expectations. A summary of findings is presented here as well as a discussion of implications for theory, practice, and future research.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to examine strategies principals use to manage their time in a context of accountability. In particular, the researcher explored how principals established priorities when time was in short supply or when priorities competed. The research focused on how principals maintained a focus on instruction while mediating multiple expectations. The research was structured by the following six questions:

1. In what ways do Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time?
2. What strategies do these principals employ to manage their time?
3. What do these principals consider the most important uses of their time? Conversely, what do these principals consider the least important uses of their time?
4. How do these principals define instructional leadership? How, in their perception, has the context of accountability changed that definition?
5. To what extent and in what ways do these principals perceive the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practice as an instructional leader?
6. What contextual forces and influences facilitate or hinder principals' use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement?

A purposive sample selection process was used to ensure a cross section of Pennsylvania elementary principals for the study. Data collection methods consisted of individual interviews with 22 participants. Criteria for the purposive sample included experience (entry level, midcareer, and experienced), geography (rural, suburban, urban), and gender (female, male). An entry-level principal was deemed to have 0 to 5 years' experience in the principalship; a midcareer principal, 6–12 years' experience; and an experienced principal, more than 13 years' experience. In addition to career phase (entry level, midcareer, and experienced), the study was also sensitive to the influence of federal policies on principal practices. For example, an entry-level principal would have begun his or her tenure during the time of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, a midcareer principal would have experienced the Goals 2000 Movement, and an experienced principal could be associated with the era of the "Nation at Risk" report. The experience levels of the 22 participants were divided up as follows: 4 were entry level, 10 were midcareer, and 8 were experienced. Among the 22 participants, 7 were from rural districts, 8 were from suburban districts, and 7 were from urban districts. Of the 22 participants, the ratio of female to males was 18:6, or a 2:1 ratio. **Table 19** on the following page demonstrates the makeup of the sample.

Table 19: Stratification of 22 Participants

		Rural District		Suburban District		Urban District			
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Number of years of experience as a principal	NCLB		Donna – 3 months (2005)		Kathy – 3 months (2005)		Amy – 2 years (2003)	4 participants	
	2001 or after								
	0–5 years								
	Goals 2000	Linda – 6 years (1999)	Danielle – 7 years (1998)		Hazel – 7 years (1998)				
	1994 – 2000					Elizabeth – 9 years (1996)	Peggy – 7 years (1998)	Allison – 10 years (1995)	Melissa – 13 years (1992)
	6–12 years								
	Nation at Risk	Andy – 12 years (1993)		Stacy – 19 years (1986)	Taylor – 16 years (1989)	Peter – 20 years (1985)			
	1983– 1993	Louis – 15 years (1990)					Glenn – 21 years (1984)		
	13–23 years	Christopher – 17 years (1988)						Clem – 23 years (1982)	
	<i>Participant count</i>	3	4	0	8	4	3	22	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female			
District type	Rural		Suburban		Urban				

Data analysis actually began during data collection. The researcher began to understand the subjects' perceptions through the "progressively focussed interviews" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 76). The 22 interviews were guided by focused questions, which followed the same pattern for each interview and probed for additional information. Interviews were transcribed from analog and/or digital audio recordings. The transcribed interviews were read and reread to determine themes or patterns among the individual interviews and across the interviews.

The first research question considered the ways Pennsylvania elementary public school principals think about and speak of time. Principals explained how they thought about time from the practical perspective of how they actually spend their time in performing their job. For the most part, the pie of time seemed to be sliced based on the routine benchmarks of the day such as arrival, lunch, and dismissal. However, the pie of time was often reorganized due to unanticipated events that could not be planned for but required attention. Fifteen themes of time usage in the principalship were identified: meetings, discussions with teachers, students with special needs, observations, beginning and end of student day, budget, discipline issues, environmental checks, classroom visits, paperwork, parent organizations, assessment results, unexpected situations, electronic mail, and other responsibilities. Ten of the 15 themes (meetings, discussions with teachers, students with special needs, observations, beginning and end of student day, discipline issues, classroom visits, parent organizations, assessment results, and unexpected situations) related directly to the principals' interactions with individuals in the school community (students, staff, and parents). Four of the 15 themes (budget, environmental checks, paperwork, and electronic mail) were managerial in nature. This is a significant finding because it shows that the principals' job in the current educational context is focused more on people and their needs rather than on the managerial aspects of the position (i.e., budget, paperwork, and e-mail).

The second research question looked at strategies principals employ to manage their time. The main theme that emerged was the need for fine-tuned organizational skills. These organizational skills included keeping an up-to-date and accurate calendar, color coding the to-do list and prioritizing the to-do list, knowing when and how to best use the secretary, delegating jobs that could be done by others, and extending the day. This is a significant finding because a principal cannot successfully complete all of the required tasks without being highly organized.

The third research question looked at what principals consider the most important and least important uses of their time. The most important use of their time related to people (children, staff, and parents), curriculum/instruction, and a strong presence. The least important use of their time is related to parents, paperwork, meetings, and e-mail. This information is significant because it supports the hypothesis that the current-day principal focuses on the humanistic rather than the managerial aspect of the principalship. Parents fell into both categories of most and least important uses of time. If parents wanted to solve a particular problem or had a concern about their child, the humanistic principal thought that it was important. However, if a parent wanted to complain about trivia and more-managerial topics, the humanistic principal did not think this was important.

The fourth research question looked at definitions of instructional leadership and how the context of accountability has changed the definition of instructional leadership. Definitions of instructional leadership strongly emphasize the accountability factor brought to schools by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Principals talked about instructional leaders needing to be knowledgeable about the curriculum: ensuring the instruction follows academic standards, maximizing time for learning, and finding resources to support learning. These ideas support the hallmarks of NCLB. Interestingly, principals did not talk about data analysis within their definitions of instructional leadership but did talk about time they personally spent looking at data. While the principals felt that

their personal and professional backgrounds influenced their actions as instructional leaders and they were not influenced by NCLB, their responses indicated otherwise. This illustrated the underlying impact that NCLB is having on schools today.

The next research question looked at the extent to which and in what ways principals perceive the availability or absence of time as having an impact on their professional practice as instructional leaders. Only half of the principals interviewed felt that their role as an instructional leader was being impacted by the absence of time. The “other” job responsibilities that made finding time for instructional leadership challenging were discipline, meetings, special education classes, parent or teacher concerns, committees or professional organizations, personal stressors, and supervising two buildings. Half of the principals interviewed felt that the absence of time did not impact their role as an instructional leader and identified instructional leadership as something that they value and that they give high priority to. This is a significant finding because principals’ personal and professional backgrounds strongly influence their perspective on instructional leadership and determine whether time as an instructional leader is allocated.

The last research question looked at the contextual forces and influences that facilitate or hinder principals’ use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement. Many of the principals did not believe there were forces or influences hindering their time because they controlled their own time. Principals were able to control their own time, because superintendents and school boards gave them the autonomy to do so. They felt that if they were not doing a good job, the superintendent or school board would let them know and might be more rigid with time directives. Instruction and student learning focused on knowledge about the curriculum (i.e., reading, writing, and math), finding support, hearing concerns, and making decisions. When discussing student achievement and the Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA), principals talked about the desire to improve student outcomes but

also the pressure, stress, and tension involved in doing so. As a result, principals felt very comfortable with the fact that they had control over their time usage and were responsible for guiding and supporting the instructional staff in reaching the desired academic results.

Implications for Theory

Three implications for theory have been isolated for discussion. These are a revised conceptual framework, concepts of time, and instructional leadership redefined.

Conceptual Framework

After conducting the research, it became apparent that a new conceptual framework was emerging. The initial conceptual framework, based on a literature review, portrayed time as moving in a linear fashion intersecting with perceptions of instructional leadership, which were impacted by three influences: personal, school and community, and policy and mandates. Figure 21 illustrates the initial conceptual framework. The conceptual framework that emerged after the research was conducted portrayed time moving in a linear fashion intersecting with principals' perceptions of and role as an instructional leader, which were impacted by four factors: personal attributes, professional influences, human interactions, and instructional context. Figure 22 illustrates the new conceptual framework.

Personal influences (*age, gender, certifications, district SES/type, critical incidents, experience as a principal, family, and ethnicity/culture*) in the initial conceptual framework needed to be broken up into personal attributes (*age, gender, critical incidents, ethnicity/culture, and family*) and professional influences (*certification, experience as a principal, teaching experiences, and educational background*) as two separate factors. This was done because personal attributes and professional influences have different impacts on principals' perceptions of and role as an instructional leader. School and community influences (*parents, taxpayers, teachers*) in the initial conceptual framework was reframed to remove taxpayers and insert students; which was renamed to human interactions (*students, teachers, parents*). This was done because

principals talked extensively about interactions with people. An instructional context factor was added focusing on district type (*rural, suburban, urban*), district socio-economic situation, and educational reforms (*NCLB*). This new factor augments the sub-factors in the policy and mandate influences in the initial conceptual framework, which were referenced in the literature but not by practicing administrators. The conceptual framework that emerged after the research was conducted reflects that personal and professional influences of the principal as an individual had an equal impact on instructional leadership as human interactions in the instructional context.

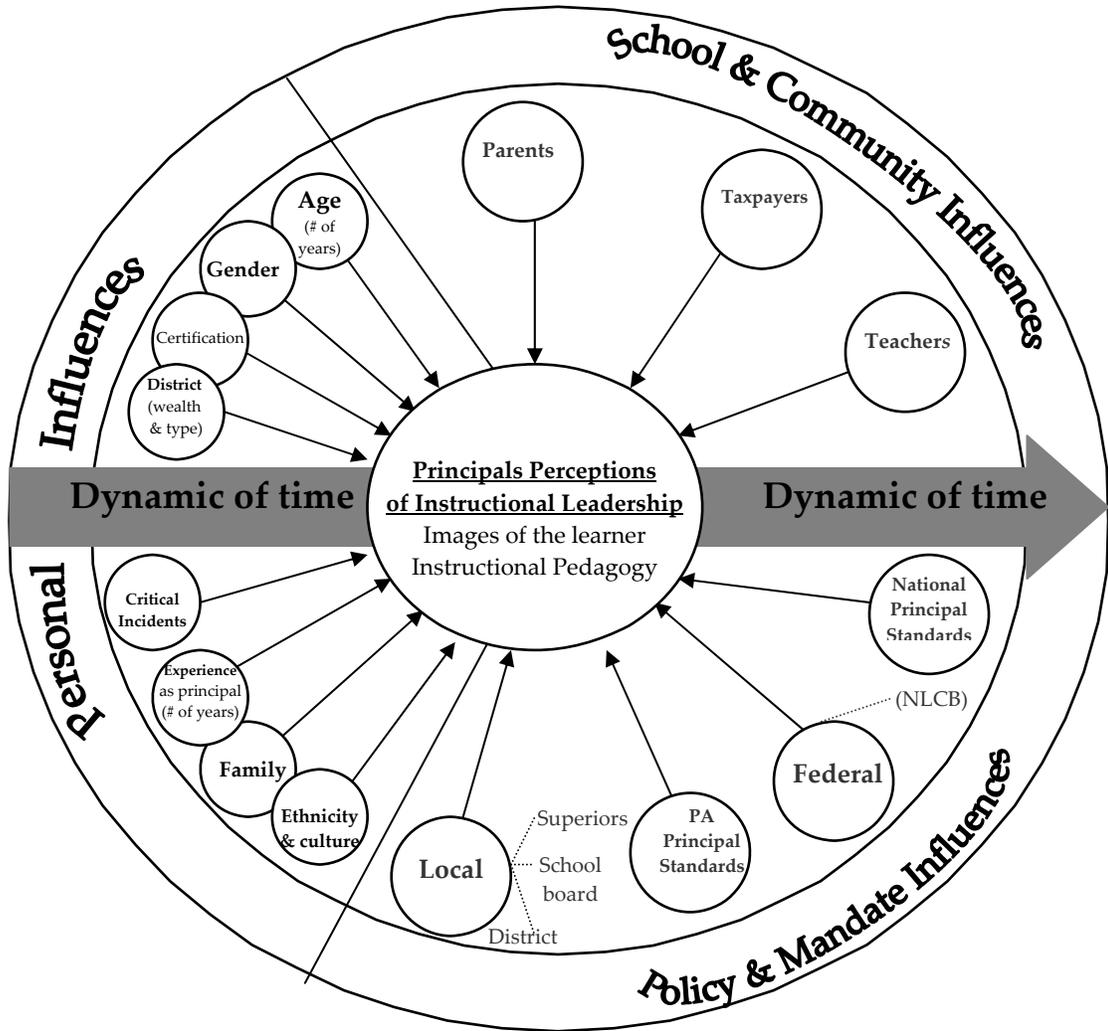


Figure 21: Dynamics of the Principalship



Figure 22: Dynamic of the Instructionally Focused Principal

Concepts of Time

Fourteen themes emerged explaining how Pennsylvania elementary public school principals spend time in the position. In order, from most mentioned to least mentioned, the 14 themes were: meetings, observations, student arrival and dismissal, budgeting, discipline, environment checks, paperwork, PTO/ PTA, special education, teachers, announcements, assessment analysis, the unexpected, and e-mails. Individuals tend to be more comfortable and likely to engage in activities where they have had prior success and feel likely to continue to succeed. Within any job, there are things that individuals do not want to do but have to do, and these tasks are likely to get placed at the bottom of the stack of responsibilities. Principals were then asked what they considered the most important and least important uses of their time. When they responded, the topic of parents was mentioned in both most and least important uses of principals' time. Parents were most important when solving a particular problem related to a student; however, parents were least important when the issue was trivial.

Four themes emerged in identifying how the participants' view of time has changed over the past several years. These themes included experience as a principal, change in position, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, and not having enough time. The themes of experience as a principal and change in position demonstrate the importance of sources of support and mentoring for new principals as well as for principals working in a new school or new environment. The theme of not having enough time illustrates how more and more is being added to principals' plates but little or nothing is taken away from their responsibilities. An example of more being added to principals' plates is support of NCLB, which was the fourth factor that has changed their view of time over the past several years.

Four themes emerged in identifying how principals define time. These time definition themes included metaphors, clock time, geometric terms, and body time. The metaphors used for defining time that were used in the literature and by principal participants all illustrate the size of what needs to be

accomplished within a given period of time. The linear, clock-time definitions of time illustrate that principals have x number of things to do in a certain window. The geometric definition of time took a theoretical concept and put it into a context of the reality of the principals' experience. The body-time definitions of time were facilitated by prior experience and training, which was also a theme of principals' priority determination.

Ten key time management strategies mentioned by more than one principal. These key time management strategies were calendar/scheduling, prioritization, secretary, arriving early/staying late/coming in on weekends, lists and notes, technology, color coding, paperwork, delegation, and literature. Other helpful time management strategies mentioned by only one principal were schoolwide discipline model, using humor, manual of important documents, set routines, and time-saving strategies on the phone. The implications for these strategies are explained in more detail later in the chapter in the Implications for Practitioners section.

Three or four themes emerged as key to most important and least important uses of principals' time. Principals shared three most important uses of their time: people (children, teachers, and parents), curriculum and instruction, and a presence in the building. The least important uses of time were parents, paperwork, meetings, and e-mail. The paradoxes of activities present both good and bad uses of time. The solution is for principals to give priority to those activities that are central to instructional leadership.

Changing Images of Instructional Leadership

The literature on instructional leadership provides a variety of definitions conveying different meanings and intents. As a result, prior to the research being conducted, the researcher used information from the literature, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals to develop the following definition of instructional leadership.

An instructional leader serves the best interests of the learner and learning, professional development, and instructional decision making.

- Serving the best interest of the learner, an instructional leader focuses on “teaching and learning, involved in curriculum development”⁴² promoting an instructional program conducive to the successful learning of all students.⁴³
- Serving the best interest of learning, an instructional leader considers learning a central role of schooling;⁴⁴ encourages instruction to follow academic standards;⁴⁵ promotes instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction, and inclusionary practices;⁴⁶ and does scheduling to provide maximum time for learning.⁴⁷
- Serving the best interest of professional development, an instructional leader creates a school culture of continuous learning for adults that is tied to student learning and other school goals.⁴⁸ This adult learning culture emphasizes study of teaching and learning, collaboration and coaching relationships, program redesign, and action research.⁴⁹
- Serving the best interest of instructional decision making, an instructional leader uses multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools,^{50 & 51} to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement.^{52 & 53}

⁴² Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁴³ Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996

⁴⁴ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁴⁵ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁴⁶ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁴⁷ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁴⁸ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁴⁹ Blase & Blase, 2000

⁵⁰ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁵¹ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

The definitions provided by the principals participating in this study emphasized instructional leadership from the practitioner perspective. This revealed additional dimensions that needed to be added to the definition and the things that principals may be doing but do not consider as part of their instructional leadership role. When looking at the learner, five principals talked about the learner or student, student achievement, and helping the teacher help the student. The principals' responses differed from the definition adopted by the researcher for this study in the aspect of student achievement. This additional component to the definition makes sense since the principals' work in the high-stakes context of accountability. When looking at learning, principals' referenced the categories in the definition but added three categories needed to be added. These were: locating resources to support learning, teacher observations to ensure that curriculum is being implemented, and providing feedback for improving instruction. Principals talked extensively about instructional leaders' involvement in professional development for themselves and teachers, which clarifies the definition written from literature prior to the research being conducted. When defining instructional leadership, principals did not discuss using multiple sources of data such as diagnostic tools to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement. However, the principals did discuss using data for instructional decision making just not in the context of defining instructional leadership. The researcher believes that while the principals may not consider these actions as instructional leadership, they are using data for instructional decision making, and based on literature, it is an aspect of instructional leadership. As a result of the research findings from this study, the definition of instructional leadership was revised and modified to the definition listed below.

⁵² National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁵³ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

An instructional leader serves the best interests of the learner and learning, professional development, and instructional decision making.

- Serving the best interest of the learner, an instructional leader focuses on “teaching and learning, involved in curriculum development”⁵⁴ promoting an instructional program conducive to the successful learning of all students.⁵⁵
- Serving the best interest of learning, an instructional leader considers learning a central role of schooling;⁵⁶ encourages instruction to follow academic standards;⁵⁷ promotes instructional technology, teaching skills, differentiated instruction, and inclusionary practices;⁵⁸ does scheduling to provide maximum time for learning;⁵⁹ locates resources to support learning; makes teacher observations to ensure that curriculum is being implemented; and provides feedback for improving instruction.
- Serving the best interest of professional development, an instructional leader creates a school culture of continuous learning for all adults (self, faculty and staff, parents) that is tied to student learning and other school goals.⁶⁰ This adult learning culture emphasizes study of teaching and learning, collaboration and coaching relationships, program redesign, and action research.⁶¹
- Serving the best interest of instructional decision making, an instructional leader uses multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools ^{62 & 63} to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement ^{64 & 65}.

⁵⁴ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁵⁵ Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996

⁵⁶ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁵⁷ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁵⁸ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁵⁹ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁶⁰ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁶¹ Blase & Blase, 2000

⁶² National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁶³ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

⁶⁴ National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.

⁶⁵ Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004

Implications for Research

Principal standards from the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) all address the principal's role in instruction. Principals feel having an impact on teaching and learning is important; however, managerial tasks and reactively putting out fires have always created the challenge of finding time to carry out this important role. The professional standards from ISSLC, PDE, and NAESP may hold principals accountable to serve as instructional leaders acting in the best interest of the learner and learning. However, given competing priorities that principals must attend to, finding time to fulfill this role is challenging.

There are relatively few empirical studies looking at how principals can find time to act as instructional leaders given diverse competing priorities. Studies focused either on conceptions of time or on instructional leadership. Time studies looked at theoretical (Filipcova, 1986; Adam, 2004), descriptive (Adam, 2004; Birth, 2004; Newman, 1999; Pronovost, 1986; Rezsosazy, 1986) and applied (Hawkins, 1997; Martin, 1981; Heck, 1992) conceptions of time. Other studies looked at theoretical (National Association of Elementary School Principals, n.d.; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2004), descriptive (Harchar, 1996; Southworth, 2002; Krug, 1992), and applied conceptions (DuFour, 2002; Southworth, 2002; Krug, 1992; Blase, 2000; Marks, 2003; Reitzug, 1997; Spillane, 2003; Wildy, 1993; Tallerico, 1991; Kleine-Kracht, 1993) of what constitutes instructional leadership. While these studies were of academic interest, there were no empirical studies or literature that attempted to merge the topics of instructional leadership and time.

Appropriateness of Methods Selected

This research was initially designed as a mixed-methods study with two phases of research. The first phase consisted of using qualitative research methods to interview a small sample (appropriately six

principals) via open-ended, semistructured interviews. After the first phase of research, the intent was to analyze the results and develop a survey. The survey would be sent in the second phase of research to a larger population (approximately 150 principals), and quantitative methods would be used for analysis of survey results. However, after interviewing the first six principals, the researcher determined the rich and in-depth descriptions in the participants' own language that was being acquired from the interviews and that could not be similarly attained via a survey instrument. After the researcher consulted with her thesis adviser, the decision was made to increase the sample size of the first phase of the study and defer the survey research portion of the study until a later date.

The literature supports and explains why the decision to use solely qualitative research methods was valid. "Qualitative researchers believe that rich descriptions of the social world are valuable, whereas quantitative researchers ... are less concerned with such detail. Quantitative researchers are deliberately unconcerned with rich descriptions because such detail interrupts the process of developing generalizations" (Denzin, 2000, p. 10). The context of education and the principalship is all about people and the process of learning; thus, detail does matter. The generalizations valued in quantitative research cannot be made in education without delving into the rich cache of personal contexts to understand the people and their perspectives. Qualitative research, which allows for open-ended questions and probing, provides participants the ability to respond with their own words, not forcing them to choose from rigid descriptions in a survey as the quantitative, second phase of the study would have required. The qualitative research methods allowed the researcher to better examine strategies principals use to manage their time in the context of accountability, to explore how principals established priorities when time was in short supply or once priorities were completed, and to learn how principals maintain a focus on instruction while mediating multiple expectations.

Limitations of Findings

The 22 participants were all elementary principals working in public elementary schools in the state of Pennsylvania. The specificity of research participants limits the generalizability of the study to other geographic locations such as other states or countries and to other educational contexts, such as middle or high school. Although 22 participants were interviewed, which is a relatively small sample population, there was considerable commonality among their perspectives. There are several possible explanations for the participants' commonality of thought. First, while a broad range of individuals were contacted to participate in the study, participants self-selected and often did so as a result of social networking or the snowball technique of qualitative research. Second, many of participants were pursuing a doctorate or had already earned a doctorate, and thus these individuals were already research oriented. Third, all of the participants in the study were Caucasian but had not been selected based on ethnicity. Last, approximately two-thirds of the participants were female and one-third were male. To make initial contact with a broad range of principals, an equal number of invitations went to male and female principals. It emerged that principals from the eastern part of Pennsylvania were less willing to agree to be interviewed. Future research could look at the difference between principals in the eastern, central, and western geographic regions of the state of Pennsylvania. Additionally, the research occurred over a one-year period of time, thus presenting a moment-in-time snapshot of principals' attitudes and perspectives. Conversely, a more longitudinal study spanning five or more years would have been potentially confounded by changing social expectations for the role over time. Interviewing the same principal in a different school year could result in a different perspective.

Advice to Researchers on Methods Selected

There is an art to conducting qualitative research. The technique of snowball sampling or chain referral sampling can truly become a qualitative researcher's best friend when the researcher is looking

for participants. Another strategy is to identify relevant professional organizations to determine leadership, members, meeting times, and locations for discussion of research interests and for recruitment of participants. The researcher learned to always have at least two devices available when recording interviews because unexpected technology problems can occur. For example, it's wise to avoid the use of speaker phones on either end of the call during a telephone interview because they can cause serious degradation of audio quality.

There is also an art to conducting dissertation research, which is very different from research conducted after the doctoral defense. In dissertation research, it is very important to find a good adviser and to always listen to the wisdom of the adviser's advice. One should accept that writing a dissertation is a time sponge and that hours can disappear in what seems like minutes. As a result, one should not give up, one should be persistent, and one should always realize that the end is in sight. As the defense approaches, one should realize that while one will miss the dissertation and "special" quality time, it really is OK to say good-bye and defend.

Areas of Future Research

Based on findings from this study, there are specific implications for future research within the areas of time, instructional leadership, and leadership. Two research questions related to time use by school principals emerged: How does an individual's ethnicity affect the person's definition of time and usage of time? and How does a geographic context or location affect time definitions and time usage? For example, does Pennsylvania principals' use of time differ from that of principals working in Kansas or California? How does principals' use of time in the United States differ from principals' use of time in England, Greece, or China?

Within the area of instructional leadership, additional research needs to be done to confirm the appropriateness of the definition created during this study to verify whether it also applies to other

geographic contexts. Within the context of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), what are principals as instructional leaders doing to maintain curricula in such subjects as art, music, and library, which are not otherwise mandated by law? What impact has the NCLB legislation had on the teaching and learning of students who qualify for gifted education?

Future research could look at how the context (i.e., elementary, middle, and high school) impacts the amount of time spent on instructional leadership and how the instructional leadership is carried out. How does an educational leadership position such as assistant principal or vice principal and principal differ in the amount of time spent on instructional leadership and the focus of that time? Are assistant superintendents and superintendents encouraging principals to spend time on instructional leadership, and if so, what form is this encouragement in? Are assistant superintendents and superintendents spending time on instructional leadership, and if so, how is their time spent?

Related to leadership, several of the female principals discussed jealousy among principals. Future research could look at situations where one principal has been jealous of another principal, where one principal was jealous of them, and whether gender impacts jealousy in the principalship. Future research focusing on assistant superintendents or superintendents could look at strategies for handling jealousy and reducing jealousy among principals. This would allow school districts to build on the strengths of individuals working in their district.

Implications for Practitioners

There are three implications for practice: the relationship of experience to professional priorities, advice for new principals, and time management strategies for practicing administrators.

Relationship of Experience to Professional Priorities

A significant relationship emerged between experience as a principal and the ability to establish professional responsibilities. An entry-level principal—one with 5 or less years' experience, was in the

beginning of the learning curve but also striving to keep their head above water with all of the day-to-day items that needed to be attended to each hour, day, week, and month. The midcareer principals were heavily involved in professional organizations. While they did not state the underlying reason for this involvement, perhaps they were looking at the long term to ensure their professional viability. Many of the midcareer principals had superintendent certification but either wanted more experience in the principalship, were not ready for a superintendency, or were not sure they even wanted the position of superintendent. The experienced principals seemed to be focused on personal health, balanced lifestyles, and surviving. They spoke at length about their families, the need for hobbies, and a life beyond the principalship. Perhaps like the midcareer principals, they are also looking down the road at retirement and the establishment of another phase of life. It appears that they are in the process of establishing new priorities to carry them into retirement and reinvent themselves.

Within the principalship there must be a continual growth process of learning. The requirements set forth by the federal NCLB act has required a continual growth and development process on the part of students, teachers, and administrators. The impetus behind these demands comes from new federal, state, and local programs; increased accountability mandates; changes in student needs; and changes in student demographics. As a result, while the entry-level principals began working in this environment, the experienced principals need to grow and adapt to continue to be successful in the new context. As a result, principals are encouraged to stay current in the profession by reading literature, attending conferences, taking graduate courses, joining professional organizations, and working collaboratively with other principals within and outside their school district.

Advice for New Principals

The 22 principals interviewed for the study offered 10 areas of advice for new principals. Their advice was: to have a passion and purpose, to create personal time, to accomplish professional-time

responsibilities, to utilize technology, to find a mentor, to stay current, to have the appropriate prior experience, to be hands-on with the school community, to work with teachers, and to understand how to effectively promote change. Table 20, entitled Ten Areas of Advice for New Principals From Practicing Principals, offers a checklist of helpful tips.

**Table 20: Ten Areas of Advice for New Principals From Practicing Principals
Part 1 of 4**

Passion/spirit/purpose of the principalship

- Need to have a passion for the principalship (Hazel – urban)
- Follow your passion (Geri – suburban)
- Have fun in the new position and with teachers (Sophia – suburban)
- Ensure that every decision is focused on students’ best interests (Andy – rural)
- Be dedicated to children rather than your career (Peggy – suburban)

Personal time, health, and sanity

- Schedule personal time (Alex – rural)
- Carve out time on the calendar for yourself (Sophia – suburban)
- Do not to be too hard on yourself (Sophia – suburban)
- Do not have to live at school to be a good principal (Andy – rural)
- Do not let people steal bits and pieces until there is nothing left (Andy – rural)
- Stay healthy and sane because it is critical to the overall effectiveness of the school (Andy – rural)
- If married or have children, get good help at home or have an understanding person at home (Hazel – urban)

Professional time

- Accept that the first couple of years will be overwhelming (Louis – rural)
- Realize that it is a time-consuming job, and do not to get overwhelmed (Hazel – urban)
- Accept that there is never going to be enough time (Stacy – suburban)
- Set aside time to learn routines, procedures, and protocol (Clem – urban)
- Realize that you have control over some things but not others (Glenn – urban)
- Learn to deal with spontaneity of job (Glenn – urban)
- Do not get bogged down with “admin-is-trivia” (Sophia – suburban)
- Prioritize what is important (Glenn – urban)
- Use good judgment, learn from mistakes, and be aware of politics (Amy – urban)
- Maintain a sense of humor, do not to take yourself too seriously, and be able to laugh when something is unknown or uncertain (Elizabeth – rural)
- Ask questions, be self-reliant, and think outside the box (Kathy – suburban)
- Carve out time on the calendar to be in classrooms (Sophia – suburban)
- Spend time doing the essential things to make a difference for students (Stacy – suburban)
- Find a way to keep up with stuff (Hazel – urban)
- Take notes immediately during or after meetings (Hazel – urban)
- Continually assess how something was done the previous year, and determine whether or not it worked. If it worked, do it again in a similar fashion. If it did not work, look at notes on problems and assess what changes need to be made (Louis – rural)
- Keep notes on practices and outcomes for future assessment and revisions (Louis – rural)
- Keep lists to prioritize what needs to get done (Alex – rural)
- Delegate tasks, and trust others enough that they will do those tasks (Alex – rural)

Ten Areas of Advice for New Principals From Practicing Principals
Part 2 of 4

Technology

- Always check e-mail (Hazel – urban)
- Maintain files on computer and then revise them as needed (Louis – rural)
- Speak to other principals to see if they are willing to share existing computer documents to help save time (Louis – rural)

Mentor

- Find a good mentor within the system to learn expectations of job, parents, and community, which will prevent the new principal from getting blindsided (Allison – suburban)
- Find a mentor who has been around for a long time to go to for help, but be careful not to listen to everything the mentor says because the mentor may have an ax to grind (Peggy – suburban)
- Find a trusted mentor (Sophia – suburban)
- Find a mentor who has a good reputation, whom you respect, and who has been in the system for a long time (Clem – urban)
- Find a mentor through the district, or call the administrators association to find someone to help (Taylor – urban)
- Find opportunities to network with other principals (Taylor – urban)

Staying current

- Stay current with school code, laws, and special education regulations (Elizabeth – rural)
- Attend professional conferences to learn what is going on (Louis – rural)
- Establish professional contacts to talk to and brainstorm with (Louis – rural)
- Be knowledgeable about the curriculum and special education (Amy – urban)
- Get a subscription to “Educational Leadership” from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (Hazel – urban)

Prior experience

- Spend more time as a teacher, and make sure to enter administration for the right reasons (Danielle – suburban)
- Do not become a principal if you do not like teaching (Elizabeth – rural)
- Teach for at least seven years before becoming a principal (Elizabeth – rural)
- If you’re a counselor, gain teaching experience before becoming a principal (Elizabeth – rural)
- Beneficial to have experience as an assistant principal (Kathy – suburban)
- Have teaching experience in the particular context in which you wish to practice a principalship (Elizabeth – rural)

Ten Areas of Advice for New Principals From Practicing Principals
Part 3 of 4

School community

- Develop relationships with school staff such as custodians and secretaries because they are the keepers of the keys and understand the bigger picture of the workings of the school (Elizabeth – rural)
- Get to know the school community (parents, teachers, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, members of the PTO/PTA, and members of the school board), listening to what they have to say, learning from them, and interacting with them (rural principals)
- Build a relationship with the community (Peggy – suburban)
- Get to know little things like people’s names and their role in the school system, which will help in understanding the perspective of the person (Donna – rural)
- Listen to learn what individuals are most proud of or what they are complaining about, which can help in understanding the culture that underpins the school or organization (Donna – rural)
- Listen to teachers and others when they have a question or concern (Louis – rural)
- Be visible with and get to know the school community. This will help the community see the principal as a person rather than a position and will help the principal with the acclimation to the position (Christopher – rural)
- Sit, watch, and learn about the school community (Christopher – rural)
- Understand cliques that can occur in a school, and when necessary, step in to ensure that the individuals are working in the best interests of students (Elizabeth – rural)
- Do not be overconfident by thinking you know more than a parent or teacher (Elizabeth – rural)
- Listen, walk around, and observe (Peggy – suburban)
- Always let the secretary know your schedule because the secretary is extremely valuable to the running of the school (Alex – rural)

Teachers

- Meet the needs of kids, parents, faculty, and their boss (Glenn – urban)
- Be a team member, not a dictator, and always offer support when working with teachers (Amy – urban)
- Tell teachers that you want them to be successful and are not looking to damage anyone’s career (Amy – urban)
- Do not have a big ego or be overly ambitious when working with staff (Amy – urban)
- Do not to be a know-it-all when working with teachers (Glenn – urban)
- Be available to teachers at the beginning and end of the day, and listen to teachers (Sophia – suburban)
- Have an open-door policy (Peggy – suburban)
- Have fun with teachers (Sophia – suburban)
- Develop a relationship with a teacher who can be trusted (Sophia – suburban)

Ten Areas of Advice for New Principals From Practicing Principals
Part 4 of 4

Change

- Reflect on information to ensure the timing for change is correct and the decision to make the change is appropriate (Rural principals)
- Always talk to others to gather additional information before making decisions, which always need to be thought through and unknown ramifications learned (Alex – rural)
- Give yourself time to settle into the leadership role and not go into the position with both guns blazing (Donna – rural)
- Reflect on information and determine whether the change is really warranted (Donna – rural)
- Do not become gung-ho to make changes, once in the position, rather than carefully looking at the situation or context to determine what changes need to be made and making them gradually (Peggy – suburban)
- Build consensus and buy-in prior to making considerable changes to avoid resistance (Christopher – rural)
- Make changes in phases to ensure successful acclimation of the project or idea by the staff. (Christopher – rural)
- Wait until the second year of being in the position before making any major changes at a school to ensure that things were not attempted to be fixed that were not broken in the first place. (Elizabeth – rural)

Time Management Strategies from Practicing Principals

The 22 principals interviewed for the study offered 10 areas of time management strategies. Their advice including calendar and scheduling of events, utilizing the secretary, working extra hours, technology and tools, lists and notes, color coding of information, organizing paperwork, prioritization and delegation, and reading literature. The following table, Ten Time Management Strategies from Practicing Principals, offers a checklist of helpful tips.

**Table 21: Ten Time Management Strategies from Practicing Principals
Part 1 of 3**

Calendar and Scheduling of Events

- Utilize an at-a-glance calendar for quick determination of what needs to be attended to or done
- Scheduling or writing down events helps ensure that people know where they need to be and what they need to do. It also allows for events to be rescheduled when necessary
- Write notes in calendar of school meetings and events to provide documentation of what happened and when it happened
- Scheduling events allows proactive planning of different meetings, programs, and events
- Schedule monthly meetings with such individuals as secretary, assistant/vice principal, special education supervisor, curriculum director, and superintendent to plot out upcoming events
- If a paper day planner is used, keep a clip in the planner to organize additional papers and prevent them from getting lost or misplaced
- Block off pockets of time to return phone calls, return e-mails, format e-mails, and read
- Batch together such tasks as phone calls, e-mails, and document signing to ensure their efficiency
- Create a yearly and/or monthly school calendar of various school events and happenings for teachers and/or the school community. Such calendars allow key stakeholders to be on the same page and to plan accordingly.

Secretary

- Utilize individual strengths
- Properly train secretary to ensure that work can be done effectively and efficiently
- Ask/train to manage principal calendar and schedule appointments
- Ask/train to create a calendar for teachers and/or school community
- Ask/train to deflect nuisance calls and interruptions
- Ask/train to provide reminders of approaching deadlines or due dates
- Ask/train to handle filing of paperwork and sort mail
- Ask/train to document discipline notes in predetermined discipline system
- Ask/train to subdue minor crises of distraught parents, sick students, and concerned staff

Ten Time Management Strategies From Practicing Principals Part 2 of 3

Extra Hours

- Consider arriving early, staying late, going to work on the weekend, or working from home to be able to catch up on work, get ahead, and work in a quieter environment without interruptions
- Determine whether to arrive early, stay late, work on the weekend, or work from home based on personal preferences and responsibilities
- Consider how to work smarter rather than harder
- Ensure not to work too many extra hours so as to allow time for a hobby or personal responsibilities and to avoid burnout

Technology and Tools

- Save files and then revise in the future to save time
- Use premade letters and then cut, paste, add, and delete
- Use the technology of e-mail, the Palm Pilot, cell phones, and online minimeetings to communicate with different individuals
- Use Palm Pilots or laptops to take notes or check off information on a checklist while observing teachers
- E-Mail
 - Use e-mail to send teachers miniupdates, announcements, and reminders rather than having a staff meeting
 - Use the e-mail return-receipt feature to document that e-mail was received and read
 - Create e-mail folders to help organize e-mail
- Telephone
 - When speaking with parents on the telephone, say, "I just wanted to call you before I leave for the day" or "I have about 10 minutes."
 - If telephone conversations take more than 10 minutes, say, "I see how important this is to you, and I want to give you the proper amount of time to talk. How about if we continue this conversation on _____," and give a time
- Always back up information on the computer such as burning CD-ROMs or USB memory sticks

Lists and Notes

- Write daily to-do or daily priority lists or daily big goals to determine ahead of time what needs to be accomplished
- Continually reshuffle and juggle priorities and tasks on lists as the day or week progresses
- Check off tasks on list as they get accomplished to personally validate time expenditures
- Consider writing lists on sticky notes or using sticky notes to mark tentative plans in a planner
- Consider publicly announcing what needs to be accomplished and publicly sharing a completion date. This verbal strategy can be helpful for individuals who do not benefit from writing lists or notes
- Create written procedures and a system for schoolwide discipline
- Log received and returned telephone calls to ensure documentation of events

Ten Time Management Strategies From Practicing Principals
Part 3 of 3

Color coding

- Color code e-mails based on prioritization category
- Use different-color pieces of paper or sticky notes to indicate priority of task. For example, green stickies are “nice to-dos” and pink stickies are “things that really have to get done”
- Color code events (such as in-service days, important meetings, and vacation days) in calendar by using different-colored pens or highlighters

Paperwork

- Prioritize paperwork into baskets or piles/stacks based on “nice to know—look at in the future,” “time dated must do,” “needs to be done sometime.” Another strategy for organizing paperwork is using folders marked with “urgent”, “to do,” “review,” “file,” “faculty bulletin,” “discard”
- Make sure to regularly prioritize and clean out or throw out paperwork
- Create walk-through or observation forms that are very specific so as to consistently establish what is being looked for, and then communicate with teachers what was or was not seen
- Create a binder of important paperwork/information to ensure that it is easily found and that it references such information as different schedules, contact information, emergency contacts, passwords, observation forms, report cards, academic standards, and achievement results

Prioritization and Delegation

- Always prioritize what needs to get done, and regularly reevaluate those priorities
- Refocus conversations in meetings to focus on priorities of meeting or topics on agenda
- When delegating, ensure that staff can see the beginning, middle, and end of the task
- When time is limited, do what must be done and delegate other tasks (Weldy, 1974)
- Delegate tasks that require skills you yourself have already mastered, so as to ensure you’re working at the growing edge of your job (Weldy, 1974)

Literature

- Read books by Franklin Covey, including *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and the *Covey System*
- Read publications from professional organizations such as the American Association of School Administrators (ASSA), Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to stay abreast of current best practices

Other

- Remain flexible and understand that things will pop up
- Develop routines for standing events
- Use an open-door policy, but close the door when work needs to get done
- Always maintain and apply a sense of humor

Implications for Policy

This study found three major implications for policy: the need for ongoing professional development, the need for evaluation of principal preparation programs, and the impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Ongoing Professional Development

Policy makers need to offer financial resources for states, school districts, or professional organizations to provide ongoing professional development for principals. The professional development should be ongoing rather than a one-shot wonder, should be research based, and should be on topics that are of value and interest to principals. For example, within the era of accountability and the NCLB legislation, a professional development topic of value and interest would focus on effective strategies for improvement of school instruction, teaching, and learning.

A more data-driven strategy for determining areas of needed professional development by principals would be for the federal government or a state or professional organization to contract with a company such as Educational Testing Service (ETS). ETS could develop a formal assessment to determine principals' professional development needs. Such an assessment would be different from principal licensure assessments, which ETS already currently develops and produces. Principal licensure looks at basic requirements for becoming a principal; either candidates make the cut or they don't. However, the proposed idea could be developed for entry-level, midcareer, and experienced principals to determine their professional development needs.

Within such professional development funding, an online or in-person network of principals should be established to provide mentoring, peer coaching, and collaborative opportunities. The mentoring system would enable an experienced principal to mentor a new principal or, for a principal working in a new school, would facilitate the context to receive mentoring from a principal with

experience in that context. Peer coaching would enable two midcareer principals to work together and through conversation and observation, identify areas needing improvement and then develop strategies to improve those areas. Collaborative opportunities would enable principals to talk about successful strategies and find possible solutions to professional challenges. The funding for principal professional development would provide educational leaders with valuable tools, skills, ideas, resources, and training.

Principal Preparation

Policy makers need to look at principal preparation programs. Are all principal preparation programs created equal? Are online principal preparation programs preparing students in the same way as, or less than, or simply in a different manner than traditional programs do? Are traditional programs sacrificing to their requirements and standards because of the online option for graduate education? Policy makers then need to look at what graduate students are learning in the principal preparation programs and determine whether the desired knowledge base is being gained. Data on this information could be gained by contracting with a company such as ETS to develop an assessment for students to take when they finish a preparation program, so as to assess what they've learned. The challenge in this idea is to determine how to get students to take or pay for the assessments. Higher education institutions could require such an assessment for graduation, or states could require the assessment for higher education accreditation. The goal in looking at principal preparation programs is to determine whether principals are preparing students adequately.

No Child Left Behind

The federal government needs to reexamine NCLB legislation so that schools and principals do not feel it is actually "No Child Left With a Behind" legislation. Modifications need to be made to ensure sufficient financial support for the legislation's requirements. Additionally, guidelines are needed that are related to English as a Second Language Learners, special education students, and highly qualified

teachers. Policy makers need to provide funding for research to determine whether NCLB is improving the learning results of students or whether it is encouraging schools to teach to the test.

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APPENDIX A: Preinterview Questionnaire

Name: _____

E-Mail: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: Work: _____ Home: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Fax: _____

of years in current position of principal: _____

of years in position of vice or assistant principal: _____

of years in position of teacher: _____

Total # of years worked in education: _____

Total # of schools worked in: _____

Total # of districts worked in: _____

Current district type (please circle): Urban Suburban Rural

Ever worked in another career? _____ Details: _____

Formal education (i.e., degrees):

Associates degree in _____

Bachelors of _____ in _____

Masters of _____ in _____

Doctorate (circle): D.Ed. Ph.D. in _____

Other _____

Certification (i.e., teaching & administrative):

Gender (please circle): Female Male Age: _____

Marital status (please circle): Single Married Divorced Widowed

Do you have children? _____ If yes, what are their ages? _____

APPENDIX B: Interview Schedule

Personal Influences (mainly addressed in preinterview questionnaire)

- Please tell me about yourself.

Dynamic of time:

- Probe -- Tell me about how you see time in your job and how you use time.

Follow-up questions (if needed):

- Using words or a picture, how do you describe time?
- What strategies do you employ to manage your time?
- What do you consider the most important uses of your time?
- What do you consider the least important use of your time?

Policy & mandate influences

- Probe -- How has your view of time changed over the last three years?

Follow-up questions (if needed):

- How have policy and accountability mandates affected your use of time?
- How have NCLB (No Child Left Behind) affected your use of time?
- How have superiors, your school board, or district affected use of time?

Community influences (parents, taxpayers, teachers, students, or other key-stakeholders)

- Probe -- Who controls how you uses your time?
- Follow-up questions (if needed)?
 - What, if any, community influences affected your use of time?
 - How have these community influences affected your use of time?

Instructional Leadership:

- Probe -- How do you define instructional leadership?

Policy & mandate influences & community influences

- Probe -- Who or what, if anyone or anything, has affected or changed your definition of instructional leadership?
- Follow-up questions (if needed):
 - How policy and accountability mandates have has changed your definition?
 - How has a superior, your school board, or district affected your definition?
 - How has NCLB (No Child Left Behind) affected your role as instructional leader?
 - Are you aware of national or Pennsylvania principal standards on instructional leadership? If so, what do these standards say
 - What, if any, community influences affected your role as instructional leader?
 - How have these community influences affected your role as instructional leader?

Time & Instructional Leadership

- How has the availability or absence of time had an impact on your professional practices as an instructional leadership?
- Community, policy, and mandate influences
 - What contextual forces and influences facilitated or hindered your use of time specific to instruction, student learning, and achievement?



APPENDIX C: Letter to Participants

<<Date>>

<<Salutation>> <<First_Name>> <<Middle_Initial>> <<Last_Name>>
<<Work_Address>>
<<City>>,<<State>> <<Zip>>

Dear <<Salutation>> <<Last_Name>>:

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in my dissertation research study. The purpose of the study is to examine strategies Pennsylvania elementary principals use to manage their time in a context of accountability and how priorities are established when time is in short supply or when priorities compete.

The study will utilize qualitative research methods allowing me to interview approximately 20 Pennsylvania elementary principals one-on-one. Principals will be selected based on district type (rural, suburban, and urban) and the number of years they have held the position. The purpose of stratifying participants based district type and on experience is to explore whether either of these factors affect time usage positively or negatively. It is hoped that the information will help to inform others about the current situation of the principalship from different perspectives, help principals discover time strategies, help University scholars and district develop professional development topics, and possibly bring the time challenges in an area of accountability to the attention of policy makers.

The data is being collected for the purposes of a Ph.D. thesis and may be used for subsequent research articles. Your school and district will not be associated with any publications or presentations from the research. The study will be carried out under the supervision of Professor Paul Begley, Professor of Education in the Department of Educational Policy Studies. Dr. Begley can be reached at (814) 863-1838 and pbegley@psu.edu.

It would help my data collection methods if you would please (1) read and sign the enclosed informed consent form (a copy is enclosed for your records), (2) complete the enclosed background questionnaire, and (3) please return the consent form & background questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope.

I look forward to talking to you at [time] [a.m./p.m.] on [day of week], [month] [day] at [location].

Thank you again,

Catherine F. Taylor
Ph.D. Candidate, Educational Policy Studies

APPENDIX D: Signed Informed Consent

**SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT FORM
FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH**
The Pennsylvania State University

Page 1 of 2

ORP USE ONLY: IRB# 21544 Doc. #2
The Pennsylvania State University
Office for Research Protections
Approval Date: 09/08/05 JKG
Expiration Date: 08/25/06 JKG
Social Science Institutional Review Board

Title of Project: Conceptions of Time and Competing Priorities in the Principalship:
The Challenge of Staying Focused on Learning

Principal Investigator: Catherine Taylor
Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Educational Policy Studies
Address: 200 Suite, Rackley Building, University Park, PA 16802
E-Mail: cft106@psu.edu Phone: (814) 235-1929

Advisor: Professor Paul Begley
Professor of Education in the Department of Educational Policy Studies
Office: 207B Rackley Building, University Park, PA 16802
E-Mail: pbegley@psu.edu Phone: (814) 863-1838

1. **Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this research is to examine strategies Pennsylvania elementary principals use to manage their time in a context of accountability and how priorities are established when time is in short supply or when priorities compete.
2. **Procedures to be followed:** You will be asked to do three items to participate in the study. First, complete a background questionnaire, which will take a maximum of five minutes to complete. Second, participate in a personal interview with me at a location convenient for you or over the telephone. The length of the interview will vary depending on how much you have to share but it is anticipated to take approximately one hour. With your permission, the interview will be recorded. Lastly, after the interview has been transcribed, you will be given the option of reviewing the transcription to verify the information is accurate and your intent was correctly captured.
3. **Discomforts and Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks for your participation in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

4. **Benefits:**

You might learn more about yourself by participating in this study. You will have the opportunity to reflect on your conceptions of time and how you manage your time. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on how you establish priorities when time is in short supply or when your priorities compete.

This research might provide a better understanding of the time constraints faced by principals. This information could help University faculty or scholars and school districts develop professional development topics that would benefit principals. This information might bring time challenges that principals face in the context of accountability to the attention of policy makers.

5. **Duration:** The three phases of the study will take approximately two and a half hours.

Page 2 of 2

6. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Unless you give permission for your name to be associated with your responses, only the principal investigator, Catherine Taylor, will know your identity and have access to the conversation, recorded with your permission. The data will be stored and secured in a locked file and on password protected computer. All recorded data will be destroyed by August 2008. The Office for Research Protections and the Social Science Institutional Review Board may review records related to this project. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.
7. **Right to Ask Questions:** You can ask questions about this research. Please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Catherine Taylor, at (814) 235-1929 or her dissertation supervisor, Dr. Paul T. Begley at 814-863-1838. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact The Pennsylvania State University's Office for Research Protections at (814) 865-1775.
8. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.
9. **Age Requirement:** You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.
10. **Voice Recordings:** Please choose two preferences for audio-records and associating personal identifiers with your responses.

Preference 1

- Yes, my name may be associated with my responses.
- No, please do not associate my name with my responses.

Preference 2

- Yes, I agree to be digital and/or audio-recorded during the face-to-face or telephone interview.
- No, I do not agree to be digital and/or audio-recorded during the face-to-face or telephone interview.

If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name and indicate the date below. You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent for your records.

Participant Signature

Date

Person Obtaining Consent

Date

APPENDIX E: Verbal Informed Consent

Hello - Did you receive the information that I sent you in the mail?

No I am sorry that you did not receive it. I am happy to resend it to you and will read the information aloud to you.

Yes Wonderful. Did you have a chance to complete the information and return it me to?

No No problem, I will read the information to you.

Yes Thank you very much. Did you have any questions about the research?

I would like to record this interview. If at any time, you would like me to stop the recording, please let me know. If you are agreeable, I will ask that you indicate your permission once recording is initiated.

No Probe why and ask questions – If still no, continue with verbal consent

Yes Start tape and re-ask question

The title of the research is “Conceptions of Time and Competing Priorities in the Principalship: The Challenge of Staying Focused on Learning.” This research examines strategies principals use to manage their time in a context of accountability. It will also explore how principals establish priorities when time is in short supply or when priorities compete.

Your participation is voluntary, you may stop at any time, and you may decline to answer specific questions. The length of telephone interview will depend on the information that you have to share. I would estimate that it will take approximately one hour.

All of the data records related to this research project will remain confidential. Unless you give permission, no personally identifiable information will be linked to your individual responses in future presentations or publications related to this research. There are no risks involved in the research beyond those of everyday living. The Office for Research Protections and the Social Science Institutional Review Board may review records related to this research project.

In order to participate, you need to be at least 18 years or older. Your participation in this interview indicates your consent to participate. Your participation is voluntary, you do not have to answer questions you do not want to answer, and you may stop at any time.

Based on this information, are you still willing to participate?

No OK, thank you for your consideration. Hang UP

Yes Thank you for your consent to participate in this research.

- TURN OVER PAPER-

Verbal Informed Consent – Page 2 of 2

Would you like to write down my telephone number and e-mail address in case you have questions about the research following the telephone interview? I'll be happy to wait for you to gather your writing materials. I also would like to give you my advisors contact information and the phone number for the Office for Research Protections in case you have questions about your rights as a research participant.

My telephone number is 814-235-1929 and my e-mail address is cft106@psu.edu. My advisors name is Dr. Paul T. Begley, his phone number is (814) 863-1838 and his e-mail address is pbegley@psu.edu. The telephone number for the Office for Research Protections is 814-865-1775.

Would you like your name associated with your response or would you prefer for a pseudonym to be used instead?

No No, please do not associate my name with my responses.

Yes Yes, my name may be associated with my responses.

Do I have their completed background questionnaire:

No I did not receive your background questionnaire, would you mind if I asked you the questions on the questionnaire before we begin the interview? See background sheet.

Yes Thank you so much for sending me your background questionnaire.

Do you have any questions before we begin the interview?

No Continue

Yes Answer questions

Are you ready to begin the interview?

No I can wait.

Yes Wonderful.

Begin interview ...

CATHERINE F. TAYLOR VITA

Catherine F. Taylor works as an assessment specialist at the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, New Jersey. Catherine earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary and Special Education with discipline in mathematics from the University of Delaware. After graduating from college, Catherine taught third-grade in Fairfax County, Virginia. She earned a Master's degree in Educational Administration and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the Pennsylvania State University. During graduate school, Catherine worked as a principal intern, a Residence Life coordinator, a research assistant, academic tutor, and a managing editor for Values and Ethics in Education Administration (VEEA) Journal. In April 2005, Catherine was a participant in David L. Clark National Graduate Student Research Seminar held by University Council of Educational Administration for outstanding educational administration and policy scholars. In February 2003, Catherine was selected as a Paul B. Salmon Educational Administration Scholarship Winner through the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). In addition to her teaching duty and academic study, Catherine is very active in various volunteer programs in the tri-state area.