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Induction

The Big Picture

Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Every day we hear more stories about the shortage of good principals, the lack of quality and diversity among applicants seeking to enter the field, and the stress and heartache of those already here. We see so many others who have the potential to continue as great assets to schools who are thinking about leaving. It tears at my heart to see good people struggling to be productive as well as survive in schools that face the huge challenges of today. As society has changed, so have our schools. Students, teachers, and administrators come to school stressed and worried by myriad problems in their daily lives. For many, teaching and learning is the last thing on their minds. Just making it through the day or week is the larger problem. Life has become a rat race. People are pushed and pushing to get more done in less time than is reasonable to expect. Sooner or later, life takes its toll, and anxiety and burnout start to take over. Another good educator bites the dust. The pay is low, and the stress is high. Societal problems manifest at school. Political agendas contrary to the developmental needs of learners are apparent at both the state and federal level, and a support network to nurture and encourage educators seems to be nonexistent.

All of this is particularly true for administrators. Therefore, it is no surprise that the documented and growing shortage of quality principals continues to rise (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Million, 1998; Potter, 2001;

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Richardson, 1999; "Study Warns," 1998; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000–2001). Some things must change, and that is what this book is all about.

In the midst of this blur and confusion, another generation of students comes to school. Why do they come? Some come because it is the law or because it is a family expectation. Others come because the school is the one safe place they know where they can be warm in the winter, cool in the heat, and get a decent meal. Others come for social reasons. They want to see their friends. Others come because there is just no other place to go. Then there are many who come, but don't really want to.

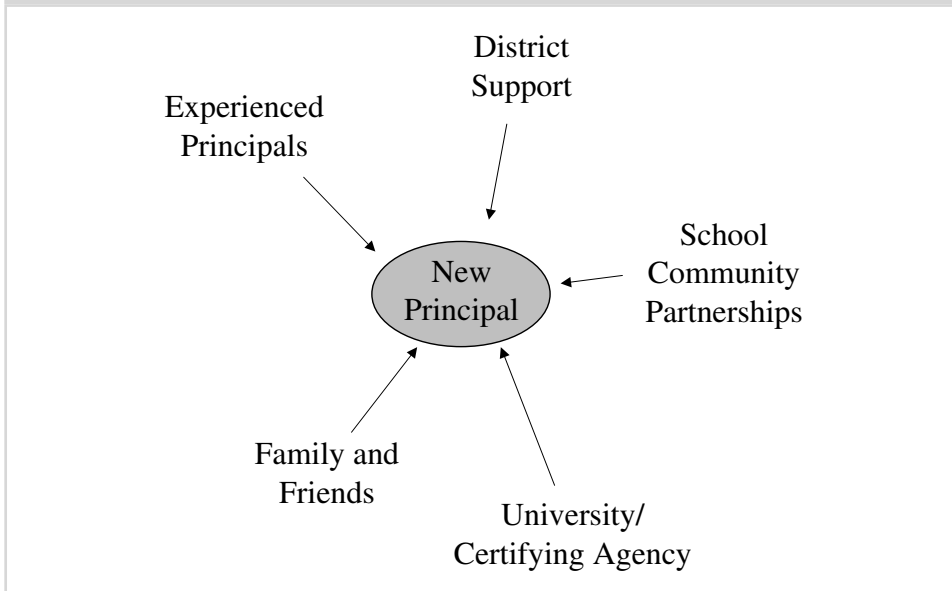
When they get here, there are those who want to learn. Others don't begin to care. Some create a ruckus because any attention from the teacher or their peers beats no attention at all. Some students are bright and motivated. Others are bright, but not motivated at all. Others are not so bright, have learning difficulties, or are simply bored. Who knows? It is easy to conclude that not every student comes to school with an undying desire to learn—simply for the sake of acquiring knowledge. It is also safe to say that not all educators show up with a burning desire to make a difference in the lives of every student with whom they come in contact throughout the day. Time, repetition, and life have turned many motivated educators into perfunctory deliverers of knowledge instead of interested and stimulating developers of young people.

THE BANDWAGON

My students often call me Pollyanna the Idealist. I correct them and say I am a pragmatist who wants to change the world one school at a time. Then I ask them to come help me. They grin. I can almost hear them thinking, "That's our Dr. Wilmore. She's on a bandwagon all the time." I smile silently to myself because by the end of the semester, they are encouraging others to join us in our crusade to make our schools and society a better place.

That's what this book is all about. It's the bandwagon for us all to join as we develop strategies and ways to support principals in the field. This book is particularly designed to help new administrators as they attempt to sail the hurricane-force winds of their induction years in the principalship. It is about providing them with multiple mentors who have a specific induction plan to support yet will prod new leaders to professional and personal excellence (see Figure 1.1).

But this book is not just for new principals. This book is for all of us who together want to make a difference in schools that will manifest itself

Figure 1.1

through increased student learning, a better economy for all families, social justice and equity, and a better, more democratic society for everyone. We cannot have schools that are led by qualified, diverse leaders if they quit, burn out, or die while trying to survive the storms. They have got to have some help. Even principals who have been successful for years need a place to rejuvenate and prepare to face the challenges of each new day. This model will do that for each of them.

THE COAST GUARD HAS ARRIVED

That's where this book comes in for you and me. Together we will learn about the standards-based Induction Partnership Model for Administrator Development. Together we are the Coast Guard coming to the rescue. We're here to help. Put on your life jacket because we just arrived. It's time for all of us to go make a difference, one school at a time (Wilmore, 2001), beginning with our novices. If they do not survive these first few years, they cannot effect true and lasting change in the lives, histories, and legacies of schools and society. It is not someone else's job. It is our job. If we don't do it, it won't get done. Won't you come along with us?

From a different perspective, this book is also for the seasoned veterans who want to be of help to new administrators but really don't know how.

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It's for the existing administrators, university professors, and community leaders who want to be a part of positive change, of making schools better, and of becoming empowered in the process. This book has something for everyone, from the new principal; to the wise and experienced veteran; to those in the field who have been there, done that, and burnt out; to business and community leaders, central office administrators, school board members, and state and federal departments of education. It is time for all the various groups with varying ideas, policies, and philosophies to come together for a common cause. As shown in Figure 1.2, it is time to nurture, groom, and develop each other so we all can become everything we have the potential of being. It is a growth process aimed at improving schools by enhancing the human and leadership qualities of their administrators.

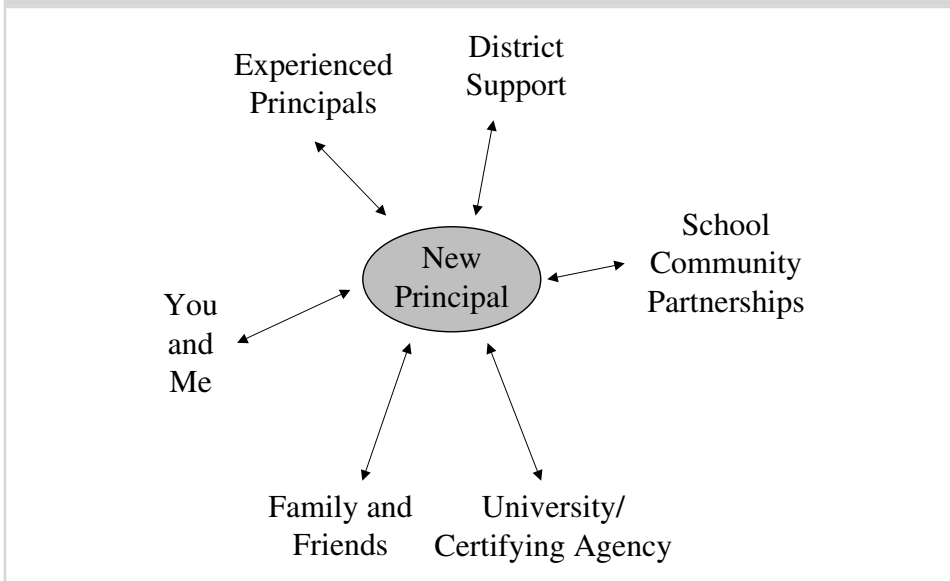
Research has long validated the single most important characteristic of effective schools is their principal. Forget Democrat, Republican, or Green Party. Forget vouchers or charters. Let's form our own party, the For the Future Party, and create partnerships with high ideals. For our time together in this book, let's focus on improving *every* school for *every* student by cultivating *every* principal. Let's not leave our people out there to drown in the storm. The Coast Guard is here, and it is you and me. Let's go get 'em.

INDUCTION

Webster defines induction as "the act or process of inducting (as into office)" or "an initial experience" (Agnes, 2001). Principal induction fits both descriptions. Beginning administrators are experiencing an initial reaction in the journey of becoming school leaders. Most new administrators are already successful teachers, but even the most seasoned of veterans experience culture shock when they leave the classroom and take on the responsibilities of assistant principalships or, in some cases, becoming the actual principal. That's where the rude awakening sets in. No matter how good their internship has been, unless it was a long-term, daily experience in which the inductee actually performed the job full time in a university-school collaborative partnership, it is natural to feel overwhelmed during the transition. Even under the best of circumstances, induction is difficult.

Often the difficulty lasts long after the induction. We've all seen beginning and experienced administrators who have that "deer in the headlights" look as reality hits. New administrators who are so motivated to create change and do the right things—fairly and ethically—to help teachers teach and students learn confront the cold, hard reality of the

Figure 1.2



real-world, day-to-day workplace. Eventually they can lose sight of their passion and of their vision of excellence. Some become what they least wanted to be: They become status quo principals. They manage, but they do not lead their schools. They take care of the daily operations, organization, and resources but rarely take risks for school improvement. Although risk taking is creative and challenging, it can be problematic because not every risk is successful. That's why they call it "risk taking." These principals have become complacent and content in their status quo world and do not want to risk failure, even if the possibility of great reward is a possible outcome. In their minds, having a status quo school that is not in the headlines beats the alternative. Gambling with change is not worth the effort.

Sooner or later, all leaders learn the age-old adage, "It's lonely at the top." From the most thick-skinned to the most sensitive, each internalizes experiences differently. While some seem to be able to tolerate the stress more than others, when being most honest all would admit that the transition to administration is a scary process. When it stops being scary, you aren't taking the job seriously enough. The future of the United States, of society as we know it, and of democracy itself, is in the hands of the school children we serve. Yes, it is a frightening responsibility throughout your career. If it weren't, you'd have become a status quo principal. Either participate in rejuvenating, "stewardship of the vision" developmental

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activities or quit. Wal-Mart is hiring. Get a job there, or anywhere outside of education for that matter. Our schools' welfare and productivity is much too important to be led by those who are not fully committed to making a difference. Just showing up every day, going through the motions, and doing the right things is not enough. True leaders have a passion and commitment that will not let anything stop them as they search for new ways to meet the needs of all students. That is what school leadership is all about. Anything else will simply not do.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONSTITUENT COUNCIL STANDARDS

In this book, we will look at the induction process—who can and should be involved and for what reasons. We will study the standards-based Induction Partnership Model to see what it is, how it works, and for what purposes. We will tie the reality of practicality to the theory and research analyzed and synthesized by the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) into the seven leadership standards used today for principal preparation and, in our case, development. The ELCC is the arm of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) charged with the process of preparing and developing school leaders. These new standards are a joint effort of several professional organizations that focus on improved administrator preparation, development, and standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Murphy & Shipman, 1998; Murphy, Shipman, & Pearlman, 1997; Murphy, Yff, & Shipman, 2000; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2001; Thomson, 1993; Van Meter & Murphy, 1997). These organizations include NCATE, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), and each of their many member organizations. The purpose of the standards is to improve principal preparation programs and to serve as a framework for current administrators' professional development. Until this set of standards was adopted in 2002, preparation programs and districts providing developmental activities were faced with the cumbersome task of trying to address two sets of often-overlapping standards simultaneously. Through an extensive and time-consuming process, the original ISLLC and ELCC standards were synthesized into these new ELCC standards around which this induction model is built. Let's read them now as an overview. Chapters 3 through 9 will develop the standards fully and tie them to the Induction Partnership Model.

THE STANDARDS

It is a rare thing indeed when multiple professional organizations can debate, analyze, and finally reach consensus on one set of principal standards. This is what has occurred with the new Educational Leadership Constituent Council standards and what makes them the premier set of principles on which significant national work is being developed. They are also the framework used here for the Induction Partnership Model. The standards are as follows.

Standard 1

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.

Standard 2

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.

Standard 3

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

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Standard 5

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairly, and in an ethical manner.

Standard 6

Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Standard 7

The internship provides significant opportunities for candidates to synthesize and apply the knowledge and practice and develop the skills identified in Standards 1–6 through substantial, sustained, standards-based work in real settings, planned and guided cooperatively by the institution, and school district personnel for graduate credit.

In our case we are concerned with candidates studying to become principals, with new administrators, and with current practicing principals who need a shot in the arm to refocus on their personal stewardship of the vision. It is a tall ambition, but with focus, determination, commitment, and sheer grit, we will get it done.

ALL SET?

We have discussed the need for an induction process that supports and nurtures both beginning and existing school leaders. The standards-based Induction Partnership Model that we will analyze and apply here will provide the framework for a multiple “win-win” process (see Figure 1.2, page 5). Each person involved will grow. The Induction Partnership Model is a true collaborative with multiple stakeholders involved in creating mutual growth for everyone. Although the focus is on the mentee, attention is paid to all partners. A partnership does not consist of a single person. A partnership by definition involves more than one person, group, or organization. Chapter 2 describes the background and components of the Induction Partnership Model, defines the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder, and describes what’s in it for you.