A CASE STUDY OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE PRINCIPAL PARTICIPATING IN AN ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

DISSERTATION

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By

April L. Peters

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Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Cynthia Uline, Adviser

Dr. Valerie Lee

Dr. Frank Walter

Approved by

Adviser

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the leadership experiences of an African American female principal within the context of an Administrative Leadership Academy. The current context of education requires that principals not only be responsible for management of schools but for instructional leadership, as well. Several tools can be employed to facilitate the development of instructional leadership skills. These tools include effective mentoring, portfolio development and other professional support and development. This study examined ways in which the tools provided within the context of an Administrative Leadership Academy were utilized in the participant’s instructional leadership practice.

Although the challenges of leadership are many, they can prove even more daunting for nontraditional leaders, who often lack access to the conventional networks of information and support. It is important to study the experiences of such leaders. For African American female administrators this research is particularly compelling, given that the experiences of such leaders are not often reported.

This study utilized the complementary theoretical frameworks of Afrocentric feminist epistemology and feminist poststructuralism to understand and explicate the experiences of this leader as she employed tools of instructional leadership within her school context.
DEDICATION

This effort is dedicated to two of the strongest, most beautiful Black women the world has known.

From Black Bean Soup
To Seafood Gumbo,
From Baked Alaska
To German Chocolate Cake
From Sweet Rolls
To Homemade Biscuits
From Suburban New Jersey
To Rural Louisiana,
Where North Meets South
I stand,
The intersection
Of beauty and strength
Humility and pride
Grace and power
Grandmother
And
Big Mama
THANK YOU!!

Yvonne A. Range Echols—“Grandmother” (1928-1988)
Grandmother, I hope after all these years I’ve made you proud. Thanks for the beauty and the talent you possessed and shared. Your style and grace have been models to follow.
Thank you.

Irma Dean Brown Bickham—“Big Mama” (1915 -2002)
Big Mama, thank you for the shining example of spirit, courage, wisdom, and communion with God. You lived the life of the virtuous woman. I can only hope to follow in your footsteps.
Thank you.

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Thank you both for your strength, courage, wisdom, spirit and beauty. These were the foundations that you laid in this realm, the example that you guide by from the next. You are loved and so very missed.
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VITA

April 10, 1971………………………Born, New Brunswick, NJ

1993…………………………………B.S. Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

1995…………………………………M.S.W. Columbia University, New York, NY

1995-1997…………………………...Dean of Students, North Star Academy Charter
School of Newark, NJ

2002…………………………………M.A. The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The complexion of schools is markedly different than schools of decades past. Various factors have contributed to the transformation of schools. These factors include advances in technology, alternatives to public school such as vouchers and charters, issues concerning accountability, and pressure from parents, communities and politicians (Task Force on the Principalship, 2000). In light of these growing concerns, skillful leadership is key to the success of schools. The task of effective school leadership requires adequate training and experience. The current shortage of principals and qualified candidates experienced by many districts underscores this pressing concern. The United States Department of Labor predicts that 40 percent of the nation’s 93,200 principals are nearing retirement. “[W]hile the role of principal is growing in importance, there is a growing shortage of qualified principals to assume this leadership role” (Moore, 1999, as cited in Skrla, Erlandson, Reed & Wilson, 2001, p. 95).

A projected increase in student enrollment compounds this projected principal shortage. The anticipated need for administrators may increase 10 to 20 percent by 2005 due to a growth in student enrollment (Murphy, 1992). In addition, assessments of on the job learning opportunities available to both veteran and novice school principals reveal experiences are limited, generally episodic, and often of questionable quality.
Nontraditional school leaders face particular challenges. Those individuals who are not generally found in positions of school leadership, including minorities, women, and notably for the purposes of this paper, African American women, are defined as such nontraditional school leaders. This term, “nontraditional school leaders”, is employed to capture the fact that members of these groups have had a different route to educational leadership positions than their white, androcentric counterparts: “Numerous theories and models have been developed to…identify and develop potential leaders, and to evaluate leadership effectiveness. These nontraditional career paths are characterized by particular challenges, rarely addressed in the literature. The design of much of this research, however, ignores the experiences of women” (Erickson, 1985, p.338). These theories and models often ignore the experiences of people of color as well.

The traditional school leader is often expected to be white, middle-aged and male. Over time, there has been a shortage of women and ethnic minorities in positions of school leadership. Only about 13 percent of the superintendencies in the nation’s 144,000 public schools, are held by women. That number is a mere five percent for minorities¹. However, there has been a slight increase in the numbers of female superintendents over the last decade. In 1992, there were 6.6% female superintendents. In 2000, 13.2% of superintendents were female. For minorities, 3.9% were superintendents in 1992. In 2000, 5.1% of superintendents were minorities. An overwhelming 86.6% of superintendents were male in 2000. Also, 94.4% of

¹These data (for 1992 and 2000) were furnished by a representative from the American Association of School Administrators. This information is compiled every 10 years from survey information on public schools in the United States. These data are the most recent information about the numbers of superintendents available at the time of this dissertation study.
superintendents were white in 2000. With an increasingly diversifying student population, it would seem that students would benefit from having a repertoire of role models and experiences that includes nontraditional leaders.

In a study of women administrators, Mertz and McNeely (1994) found a significant increase in the number of women administrators in urban areas over the twenty year time period between 1972-1992. Many of these increases have been reversals of positions of leadership traditionally held by males. Specifically, an increase was noted in the number of women in leadership at the secondary school level, positions traditionally held by male administrators. Mertz and McNeely (1994) assert that men have most often occupied positions in secondary schools and that these positions are often the gateway into higher administrative positions including the superintendency. Several reasons for this increase in female high school administrators exist. Urban areas are typically larger and therefore have more positions available than other kinds of school districts. They are also more likely to fill administrative positions more frequently, due to high turnover rates. Additionally, urban districts have the ability to fill administrative positions with female candidates without significantly changing the culture. “They have enough positions to ‘play with’ to bend the culture without changing it” (Mertz and McNeely, p. 368).

Although there has been an increase in the number of women in leadership in urban settings, the question remains whether the increase in numbers has also translated into an increase in power, particularly given the fact that much of the power in schools comes from positions women rarely occupy, most notably, the superintendency. Power in this instance is articulated as the exercise of leadership that exemplifies “control over
people, money and resources” (Hurty, 1995, p. 383). Within the discourse of educational administration, white males have dominated, creating a discourse in which women are situated differently than men (Gardiner, Enomoto & Grogan, 2000). Thus, women have rarely been placed in positions in which they experience “power over” within the masculine bureaucratized context of the school district (Hurty, 1995).

Dardaine-Ragguet, Russo, and Harris (1994) state “although the number of women principals and central office administrators in urban settings seemingly has increased in recent years, a glass ceiling has been virtually impervious to challenges thereby preventing many qualified females, especially minority women, from assuming leadership roles” (p. 300). This glass ceiling specifically refers to women in the superintendency. The number of women in central office positions (i.e. assistant, associate or deputy superintendent) has increased, but few actually ascend to the superintendency: “[W]omen are close enough to see the superintendent’s job clearly, but relatively few crack the barrier” (Keller, p. 22).

African American women aspiring to positions of leadership often find themselves in a position of double jeopardy. Dardaine-Ragguet, et. al. (1994) state, “Black women face even more discrimination than Black men since either their gender or their race may evoke negative responses from employers” (p. 405).

Revere (1987) notes that there were just 29 African American female school superintendents in the nation during the 1984-1985 school year. This number represents just .18 percent of over 16,000 public school districts. In a study conducted during the 1995-1996 school year, 45 Black female superintendents across the United States were identified. This accounted for less than two percent of the nation’s superintendents.
(Alston, 1999). Currently, the data on school and district level administrators is
disaggregated for race and gender. Only 11% of all public school principals were
African American. At the elementary level, 11.8% of all public school principals were
African American. At the secondary level, 21.8% of principals were female and 8.4%
were African American. Of the total number of public school principals (elementary and
secondary combined), 43% were female and only 11% were Black\(^2\). Data for the
participants’ state were not available from the State Department of Education or from the
state school administrator’s association.

Nontraditional leaders represent a potential pool of untapped resources. There are
a number of reasons why nontraditional leadership benefits schools. Nontraditional
leaders should be represented within the ranks of school administration not only because
they are qualified personnel to fill such positions, but also because such representation
sends a message to other staff and students. When faculty members of minority groups
encounter leaders who are also members of minority groups, they realize such positions
are possible to achieve. When majority staff members work with minority leaders, they
are exposed to qualified individuals who serve to diversify the work environment with
new perspectives and experiences. Students should have opportunities to encounter
nontraditional leaders as well. By doing so, they gain appreciation and respect for

\(^2\) This information was provided by a statistician from the National Center for Educational Statistics
(NCES). The information about principals is collected every four years. The next data will be collected in
the fall of 2003. However, these data do not accurately represent the numbers of African American female
principals, as they are disaggregated by race and gender. The researcher contacted the American
Association of School Administrators and the National Center for Educational Statistics via telephone to
obtain this information. Researchers at both of these organizations informed that these data are available in
draft form only at the time of this study.
individuals and groups of various backgrounds. Lovelady-Dawson (1980) asserts, “The challenge is to provide an education that uses these differences to broaden students’ experiences and awareness” (p. 24-25).

Notions of fit often surface within discussions about the recruitment and selection of nontraditional leaders. The extent to which a leader appropriately and effectively performs in a particular context characterizes the goodness of ‘fit.’ Several factors determine the fit of an administrator to a context. “The notion of fit recognizes that successful leadership is as much a function of careful placement as it is a product of special traits or thorough training” (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992, p. 34). And yet, it has been suggested that fit has been used in a discriminatory manner to keep certain individuals from obtaining leadership positions. A leader’s race, ethnicity or gender can be used against him or her in determining that, solely on that basis, the individual would not fit in a given context. Duke and Iwanicki (1992), assert, “Great care must be taken to ensure that fit is not used as a convenient justification for personnel decisions that are discriminatory and illegal” (p. 35). Race and/or gender differences should not prevent a competent nontraditional leader from leading within a given school district.

Statement of Purpose

Given the existing shortage of viable and willing candidates, particularly nontraditional leaders, and the importance of fit between leaders and the context, those who prepare school leaders recognize a need for programs to tap diverse pools of potential candidates. Such programs should be designed to expose such candidates to the challenges of the job and to assist them in understanding their own particular capacities to lead.
An Entry Year Program (EYP) component of an Administrative Leadership Academy (ALA) in a large, Midwestern state was created to address this growing shortage of school principals and the need for higher quality professional development. Although originally conceived of as a two-year pilot program, the Entry Year Program (EYP) now provides a cornerstone for a larger and more aggressive professional development initiative through the Administrative Leadership Academy.

The Academy provided meaningful professional development to encourage quality educational leaders to enter and remain in the principalship, finding acceptable levels of satisfaction within the job and performing it effectively. Ongoing evaluation of these professional development activities is essential in order that Academy planners might determine the effectiveness of the various EYP interventions.

The Administrative Leadership Academy (ALA) Entry Year Program (EYP) sought to provide early career principals mentoring, coaching, reflective dialogue and professional learning for the development of an administrative portfolio to early career principals. The early career learning experiences and administrative practices of an African American female principal were viewed within the context of this program.

Research Design

This case study sought to understand the ways in which African American female principals within the Administrative Leadership Academy employed the activities, structures, and processes provided within the academy to help facilitate their professional development, and the degree to which this learning happened in a comprehensive and proactive manner. This case study was part of a larger two-year, in-depth study of the Administrative Leadership Academy. A research team comprised of two faculty
members and three graduate research assistants conducted this evaluative study.

Research team members conducted three case studies of mentor/protégé pairs from three different regions of the state. The study explored the following research questions:

1. To what extent and in what ways did this Entry Year Program (EYP) principal gain understanding of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards in the context of her role as instructional leader and to what degree did she perceive ongoing reflection, including documentation, diagnosis, design and deliberation skills within her mentor/protégé group and by means of portfolio writing, as a viable tool of principal practice?

2. In what ways did this early career principal apply the knowledge, performances and dispositions of the ISLLC standards and the accompanying reflective skills within her school?

3. What was the evidence of impact on the school organization?

4. What was the impact of race and gender on leadership style and leadership experiences of an African American female school leader?

In addition to the above research questions, several broad areas of concern guided the study. These concerns were focal points of observing and coming to understand the administrative practice of early career African American women in leadership. The study considered how these professional development experiences assisted a nontraditional leader in particular ways, and explored how these experiences differed for this candidate. The following areas served as a framework for the Entry Year Program (EYP) goals:
In what ways did the Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program learning experiences support the entry year principal in her new leadership roles?

How did consistent veteran/protégé relationships provide meaningful support to principals (specifically African American female principals) in their early years of practice?

To what degree were these activities and interventions, particularly the development of administrative portfolios, capable of directing and improving administrator practice?

Given the skills identified as key to portfolio development, under what conditions and to what extent did these skills translate into administrator practice?

To what degree were these activities and interventions, particularly the development of administrative portfolios, capable of directing and improving administrator practice?

A qualitative design featuring instrumental case study (Stake, 1995) was employed. Stake defines instrumental case study as case study that is instrumental to gaining the understanding of something else (p. 7). A purposeful sample of three principals, including one African American female, was studied over a two-year period. The cross case feature of the larger study allowed comparisons across the early career principals including comparisons based on race, gender, school level, and geographic location.
The research focused on professional development facilitated by the mentorship process, and the development of necessary skills for administrator portfolio writing. This study documented the unique meanings and outcomes for the African American female principal in the study. A particular focus was the influence of the intersection between race and gender on the leadership practice of this administrator.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundation for this study was both grounded and literature based. It was guided by the literature on leadership and the principalship, as well as current literature on women and minorities in education administration, mentoring and portfolio development. The study was also guided by theory grounded within data. Themes and patterns emerging from rich descriptions of the study of an African American female principal contributed to the theoretical foundation.

In addition, many of the tenets of feminism, and in particular Black feminism, served to establish a theoretical foundation for understanding issues confronting African American female school leaders. Race and gender often intersect in the lives of African American women, negatively influencing outcomes. These leaders may find themselves in situations in which they confront racism or sexism or both. African American women (as well as other women of color) have found it difficult to rise to the upper echelons of many disciplines, including the field of education. This study utilized the lenses of Afrocentric feminist epistemology and feminist poststructuralism to explicate and give voice to the administrative and mentoring experiences of the participant.
**Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology**

An Afrocentric feminist epistemology frames the study. Such an epistemology is characterized by the following: a basis in concrete experience as a criterion of meaning, attention to and use of dialogue, an emphasis on caring and a focus on personal accountability (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Collins, 1991).

A basis of concrete experience asserts the importance of knowledge and wisdom (Collins, 1991). Thus, concrete experience is used as a method to validate knowledge claims. “Even after substantial mastery of white masculinist epistemologies, many Black women scholars invoke our own concrete experiences and those of other African-American women in selecting topics for investigation and methodologies used” (Collins, p. 209). In this way, lived experience provides more credibility than simply thought or research alone (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

The use of dialogue is a second important contour of this epistemology. Dialogue creates and maintains equal relationships. “The give and take of dialogue makes struggling together for meaning a powerful experience in self-definition and self-discovery” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 155). Dialogue is conversation that validates and affirms. Ladson-Billings (1994) states, “by ‘talking with’ rather than ‘talking to’ other black women, African American women have the opportunity to deconstruct the specificity of their own experiences and make connections with the collective experiences of others” (p. 155).

An emphasis on caring is the third component of this perspective. Collins (1991) states, “the ethic of caring suggests that personal expressiveness, emotions, and empathy
are central to the knowledge validation process” (p. 215). This importance of caring is identified in both black and white feminist scholarship. Caring extends from “women’s tradition [of] valuing emotion and expressiveness” (Ladson-Billings, p. 156).

The fourth dimension of this perspective is an emphasis on personal accountability. Personal accountability expects that people will be responsible for their knowledge claims. “Thus both what was said who said it give meaning and interpretation to claims” (Ladson-Billings, p. 156).

An Afrocentric feminist epistemology reflects elements of the feminist and Afrocentric traditions. Feminism asserts that women share a common history of gender oppression. An Afrocentric consciousness asserts that Blacks of African descent share a common history of racial oppression (Collins, 1991). Each perspective provides a unique standpoint for a basis of collective consciousness for group members. Standpoint asserts that members of marginalized groups own a dual perspective, that of the dominant, as well as that of the marginalized group. Within standpoint, knowledge is determined by one’s social, cultural and historical location (Kirsch, 1999; Collins, 1991; Hartsock, 1983).

This epistemology provides African American women a shared standpoint with others of African descent and with women. It also creates a new epistemology unique to Black women. Collins (1991) clarifies, “Black women’s both/and conceptual orientation, the act of being simultaneously a member of a group and yet standing apart from it, forms an integral part of Black women’s consciousness” (p.207). Therefore, this framework is appropriate for explicating black women’s unique perspectives, based on race or gender and the intersection of the two.
Such an Afrocentric feminist framework challenges dominant epistemological assumptions about knowledge production and works to confront epistemological racism (Scheurich & Young, 1997; Collins, 1991). While dominant research epistemologies implicitly favor the dominant group, epistemologies and research borne of other traditions provide members of marginalized groups a more comfortable, appropriate theoretical frame in which to conduct research (Scheurich & Young, 1997). Thus, it is important to establish this epistemology for Black women and research concerning Black women.

**Black Feminist Thought.** Black feminism in the United States grew out of and was a response to the Black Liberation Movement (encompassing Civil Rights and Black Nationalism) and the Women’s Movement, during the 1960s and 1970s. Black feminism emerged in response to the racial oppression black women experienced within the women’s movement and the sexual oppression they experienced within the movements for racial freedom.

The Black feminist movement provided Black women a space to comfortably express their identity in terms of both race and gender. Black feminism is borne of the experiences and struggles of oppression based on race, class, and gender. The term ‘double jeopardy’ has been used to describe “the dual discriminations of racism and sexism that subjugate black women (Beale, 1979). King (1995) adds a third ‘jeopardy’ of economic class oppression, states “the modifier multiple refers not only to several, simultaneous oppressions, but to the multiplicative relationships among them as well” (King, 1995). The concept of “multiple jeopardy” has been invoked to provide a clearer understanding of how race, gender and class oppression intersect (King, 1995).
Patricia Hill Collins (1990) suggests that Black women experience the world differently from those who are not Black or female, based on their work, family experience, and grounding in African American culture. The oppression that African American women experience within larger society often renders them invisible in the eyes of their oppressors. This invisibility serves to maintain the inequality that permeates the fabric of society that Black women experience. “Maintaining the invisibility of Black women and our ideas is critical in structuring patterned relations of race, gender and class inequality that pervade the entire social structure” (Collins, 1990, p. 5). Despite this, African American women have actively engaged in the intellectual and political discourse. Black women’s activism, as well as resistance, has been informed and inspired by their intellectual work.

Collins posits that Black women’s oppression occurs within three distinct dimensions. The economic dimension of this oppression has derived from the exploitation of Black women’s labor, including slavery as well as impoverished Black women in inner cities. Secondly, the political dimension has served to deny African American women the advantages and rights afforded to their white, male counterparts. Denying Black women the right to vote and hold political office is evidence of this. In addition, educational institutions have perpetuated a similar kind of disenfranchisement.

The third dimension, ideological images of Black women, assumed certain qualities are attached to Black women and then they are used to justify oppression. This dimension originated during the slave era. Collins (1990) posits,

From the mammies, Jezebels and breeder women of slavery to the smiling Aunt Jemimas on pancake mix boxes, ubiquitous Black prostitutes, and ever-present
welfare mothers of contemporary popular culture, the nexus of negative stereotypical images applied to African American women has been fundamental to Black women’s oppression. (p. 6)

These three dimensions work together to sustain the subordinated position that African American women experience in society. These dimensions have worked as a system of social control (Collins, 1991). This system has denied Black women economic and political power and has established a “place” of subjugation for Black women in society.

Further, while feminist theory and thought have been applied to the study of female administrators to a small extent, little of this kind of scholarship has been extended to the study of Black female administrators and other women of color. Understandings of a leadership style that differs from the mainstream might inform preparation programs as well as education and employment networks.

Research on African American women administrators is important for several reasons. Schools are situated within a broader context of a gendered and racist society (Gardiner, et. al., 2000). It is important to understand the impact of such a society on institutions such as schools. Little data have been collected consistently and specifically about the numbers of African American females in such positions (Shakeshaft, 1999). Tyack and Hansot (1982) have labeled the absence of this data on female leaders a “Conspiracy of Silence.” Without accurate information about administrators based on race and sex, it is difficult to determine how the profession and those who comprise it may be changing.
This conspiracy of silence allows African American women and other women of color to be left out of discussion centering on women in school leadership. This omission allows the tacit implication that African American women are not effective leaders and are perhaps not even interested in this kind of leadership.

Typically, the concerns of women in leadership do not reflect women of color. When the absence of African American women in school leadership is noted, it is not questioned. Their plight is often advanced to illustrate the absence of women in leadership, rather than to examine the experiences of Black women in particular.

Unlike their black male and white female counterparts, Black women do not have the dual role of oppressor and oppressed. Hooks (2000) states, “as a group, black women are in an unusual position in this society for not only are we collectively at the bottom of the occupational ladder, but our overall social status is lower than that of any other group” (p. 144).

In sum, key to understanding the experiences of African American women in school leadership is understanding the multiplicative impact of race, class and gender on their identity and experiences of oppression (King, 1995; Crenshaw, 2000). African American women aspiring to positions of leadership often find their ‘multiple jeopardies’ (King, 1995), or multiple burdens (Crenshaw, 2000) impacting their opportunities to occupy such positions.

*Feminist Poststructuralism*

Poststructuralism is derived from a form of postmodern philosophy (Fletcher, 1999). As a school of thought poststructuralism, derives from the work of several French theorists, including Derrida, Althusser and Foucault (Weedon, 1997). Poststructuralism
advances fundamental assumptions concerning knowledge, language, and discourse (Weedon, 1997; Calas, & Smircich, 1992; Cherryholmes, 1988; Scott, 1988). In addition, poststructuralism gives voice to marginalized perspectives and challenges the systems that impose such marginality (Fletcher, 1999). It examines the ways in which the dominant perspective is validated and accepted as knowledge.

Within poststructural inquiry, the relationship between power and knowledge is examined. Knowledge production is viewed as an exercise of power. Fletcher (1999) acknowledges, “The goal of poststructuralist theory is to disrupt the relationship between power and knowledge by bringing what are called ‘subversive stories’ into the discourse” (p. 22). Subversive stories are the experiences and voices of individuals not traditionally considered involved in knowledge production.

Poststructuralism acknowledges ambiguity (Calas & Smircich, 1992). It seeks and reveals alternative points of view. Thus, notions of fixed, universal truths are challenged within this perspective (Fletcher, 1999).

Within poststructuralism, the sources of power are widespread, diffused and operate through discourse. The concept of discourse is largely based on the work of Michel Foucault (Lather, 1991). Scott states, “a discourse is not a language or a text but a historically, socially and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories and beliefs” (p. 100). Discourses are controlled by rules and power (Cherryholmes, 1988). Lather (1991) suggests that in poststructuralist discourse there is a shift from “a focus on researcher ontology and epistemology in the shaping of paradigmatic choice to a focus on the productivity of language in the construction of objects of investigation” (p. 13).
Language is a central focus of poststructural analysis. Meaning is shaped by language. All knowledge is founded in language. Language is a transaction of power. In poststructuralism language is viewed as “any system—strictly verbal or other—through which meaning is constructed and cultural practices organized and by which, accordingly, people represent and understand their world, including who they are and how they relate to others” (Scott, p. 99). Simply, poststructuralism acknowledges that language simultaneously reflects a certain reality and acts to sustain the power relationship suggested by that view of reality (Fletcher, 1999).

Feminist poststructuralism applies the same principles to matters of gender “with a focus on the gendered nature of knowledge production and the way it maintains and reinforces the power relationships between the sexes” (Fletcher, 1999, p. 21). Poststructural feminists “attack the fundamental structures of research and theory as male gendered and view the practice as male-dominated. Both theory and practice accept only males’ ways of knowing and understanding” (Uline, 1995, p. 234). Feminist research does much to validate multiple and diverse perspectives. Gardiner, et. al., (2001) clarify, “feminist poststructuralist theory rests on assumptions of the social creation of realities and the nexus between oppression and personal and collective action” (p. 31). This approach, grounded in feminist thought, validates personal experience and is informed by understanding of marginality, specifically given the historical subject position of women in male-dominated fields (Gardiner, et. al., 2001 Fletcher, 1999).

Within the context of this research, this feminist poststructuralist perspective was used to challenge traditional notions of mentoring relationships. The discourse of mentoring has been dominated by white males. The good old boy network serves as a
vehicle for men to network and mentor other men. Historically, white men have mentored white male protégés. As Gardiner, et. al. (2000) note, “One of the ways to perpetuate the attitudes and beliefs that constitute the dominant discourse is to pass them on through mentoring” (p. 191). This study examined the concept of mentoring and the mentoring relationship utilizing the lens of feminist poststructuralism to do so.

The experiences of an African American female principal were analyzed across the components of the Entry Year Program. These components included understanding the changing role of the principalship related to instructional leadership, the mentoring relationship, and portfolio development. The following section provides a brief overview of the literature across each of the components of the study.

Overview of Literature

This section highlights the literature that informs this study. Several broad areas concerning school leadership are covered. The literature includes research on the principalship and instructional leadership, women in educational administration, minorities in education, African American women in school leadership, mentoring and portfolio development. Chapter 2 will cover these areas in more depth.

The Principalship/Instructional Leadership

The role of school leadership is changing. Although, for years, principals were thought of and trained as managers of the school, these educators are now expected to take on a leadership role. Murphy and Beck (1994), propose several forces that are shaping the altered conception of the principalship. The first is the demand for accountability. The collecting, recording, interpreting, and presentation of data is
becoming increasingly important as school leaders find themselves responsible for providing objective evidence that all students are achieving desired outcomes.

The second force addressed by Murphy and Beck is the prevailing economic crisis. Education, as a whole, continues to consume a large percentage of the nation’s budget, while the perceived quality of the provided services is declining.

The third force shaping the conception of the principalship is the changing social fabric. A rapid increase in the number of non-English speaking persons, single parent homes, poverty, crime, and the need for social services, all add complex challenges to the day-to-day operations of the school, with the principal performing the role of servant, moral agent, organizational architect, social advocate and activist, and educator. Principals are expected to restructure and transform schools, while maintaining the stability expected of the educational organization (Murphy and Beck, 1994)

Realizing and understanding the need to elevate the quality of educational leadership, the Council of Chief State School Officials (CCSSO) created the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). In 1996 the Consortium articulated a set of standards for school leaders based on research about effective leadership in schools. Through its development of Standards for School Leaders, ISLLC provided a shared vision for effective school leadership based on continuous standards-based professional development (Appendix A). The standards are designed to promote stewardship in the areas of: vision, school culture, learning organization behavior, community support, ethical behavior, and school in the greater society (Green, 2001).

Skrla, Erlandson, Reed & Wilson (2000), suggest that the ISLLC standards, aimed at school principals, are based on the following premises:
- A renewed struggle to redefine teaching and learning for all students,
- A movement away from the established bureaucracies and hierarchies which have dominated school environments,
- The increased impact and partnership with parents, the corporate sector, and varied community agencies and groupings (p. 54).

*Women in Administration*

While the role of school leadership is changing, particular challenges face certain groups who aspire to school leadership. Schools are located within the broad context of a gendered and racist society. The context and fabric of the gendered and racist society in which we live must be negotiated as female administrators struggle to achieve success within leadership roles. “Administrators who are women, white and of color, are struggling to find their own voices as they bring their unique heritages to the bureaucracy of schools” (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000).

The differences in how male and female administrators are viewed can be understood by examining the underlying theories guiding these views. Women have not typically been thought to possess the innate qualities held as indigenous to leadership. Women’s approach to leadership often is perceived as similar to a human relations approach (Harder & Waldo, 1983). This approach is concerned with the needs of individuals within the organization. Women leaders are seen as nurturing and concerned with human relationships, rather than with organizational tasks.

In contrast, the scientific management approach typifies a more masculine approach to school leadership. This approach embraces bureaucratization, division of
labor, and top-down hierarchical authority, and is concerned with task completion and efficiency (Shakeshaft, 1999). This is characterized by attributes such as logic, routine and order (Harder & Waldo, 1983).

Perhaps because of the differences in paradigm which undergird stereotypes of men’s and women’s leadership styles, women may find themselves disenfranchised from systems and networks of information within schools. The traditional “good old boy” networks have traditionally not been sources of support and information for women in education. Women find themselves excluded from these networks largely because men (typically white males) still dominate positions of educational leadership. Access to positions of leadership and information about such has historically been denied women, as well as minorities (Lovelady-Dawson, 1980, Harder and Waldo, 1983, Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993).

Schools provide an interesting paradox in which to view leadership. Although the majority of teachers are women, men comprise much of public school leadership (Shakeshaft, 1999; Doud, 1989). It has been suggested by some that this imbalance illustrates a perceived lack of women’s competence for leadership roles within schools. “One explanation for the differential treatment of women stems from the assumption that women lack the aggressiveness, leadership ability, etc. often required of management positions” (Harder and Waldo, 1983, p. 37). These data also demonstrate that although women dominate in numbers, men dominate in power (Shakeshaft, 1999; Lovelady-Dawson, 1980).
Minorities in Leadership

Minorities in positions of school administration endure unique challenges as well. Several barriers make it difficult for minority leadership aspirants in education administration.

Like women, minority leadership aspirants also lack access to the conventional networks of information. These networks are instrumental in providing a system of mentor/sponsor relationships, as well as information about job opportunities. “Minorities’ traditionally limited participation in educational administration has denied most of them the chance to learn the dynamics of the system and a way to become involved in them” (Jones & Montenegro 1983, p. 22).

Even when considered viable candidates, many minority leaders are placed in schools which serve predominantly minority student populations (Edson, 1988, Lovelady-Dawson, 1980). In such schools, minority leaders are appointed with the expectation that they will solve problems within these schools. “Too often, they are defined as ethnic experts and treated as an expendable resource valued only during a crisis” (Dardaine-Ragguet, Russo, & Harris, 1994, p. 405). Specifically, the value of minority leaders is most often recognized when their expertise is needed regarding situations where race (or gender) is an issue.

African American Women in School Leadership

Although African American men in administration have faced myriad challenges, black female school administrators have had to contend with similar challenges, as well as those specific to gender (Doughty, 1980). The black female administrator has been, “for statistical purposes, invisible” (Doughty, p. 166).
African American women aspiring to positions of school leadership often find themselves victims of double jeopardy (King, 1995). They experience discrimination based on both gender and race (Banks, 2001). Doughty (1980) has labeled this phenomenon a “double bind.” These terms suggest that both race and gender disadvantage the African American female administrator, as her subject position situates her in such a way that both are devalued. Dardaine-Ragguet et. al., (1994) state, “Black women face even more discrimination than Black men since either their gender or their race may evoke negative responses from employers” (p. 405).

Minority women in leadership also may experience role conflict from their dual membership within two groups underrepresented in school administration.

Female school administrators are often pulled by two sides – by women’s and minorities’ groups and organizations. If a woman affiliates herself with both, tremendous demands are placed on her time, and neither side treats her as a whole person with some of the same problems as her female or minority counterparts as well as some different ones. (Jones, et. al., p. 23)

Black women administrators may experience role conflict based on dual membership in two underrepresented groups within administration. Her subject position as both African American and female creates a new status based on race and gender (Banks, 2001). “This dual status necessarily creates a third status, black female, an anomaly in the executive suite” (Doughty, p. 165).

Research on African American women in administration seemingly devalues the presence of this population as leaders. The numbers of minority women in education administration was seldom reported prior to the 1970s (Shakeshaft, 1987). Current information on numbers of administrators is typically not disaggregated for race and gender.
Mentoring

Nontraditional leaders benefit tremendously from effective mentoring relationships. Although they have traditionally lacked access to systems of support and information, mentoring serves to bridge this gap. Further, mentoring provides benefits to both mentor and protégé. “The potential of mentoring as a component of professional development is gaining ground as a legitimate professional development activity” (Skrla, et. al., p. 125). The definition of mentoring and the structure of effective mentoring relationships varies. Mentoring can be conceptualized as coaching, guiding, sponsoring, advising and more.

The mentoring dyad typifies traditional concepts of mentoring, defined as an “intense, lasting, and professionally centered relationship between two individuals” (Moore & Salimbene, 1981, as cited in Gardiner, et. al., p. 10). It has been argued that the culture of education and educational administration has been largely androcentric, dominated by a white, male hegemony. Mentoring has been a vehicle employed within this culture. Mentoring relationships have often been power relationships, where the mentor is the supervisor, or authority figure and the protégé is the novice (Collins, 1983). Thus, it is important to consider how mentoring relationships are established and whom they benefit.

Women have often been excluded from mentoring relationships, and when they have received mentoring the effect has been more debilitating and less empowering. These negative effects of mentoring can be attributed to imposed stereotypes about women, and the assumption that women’s style of leadership is inferior to men’s
(Gardiner, et. al., 2000). However, several other mentoring models exist. These models include emphasis on peer relationships, mentoring triads, and other reciprocal relationships (Gardiner, et. al., 2000).

As women gain access and entry into leadership positions, they are perceived as new and different. Still, “[w]omen are in a position as newcomers, to transform leadership through mentoring. It is from the borders and margins that we are best positioned to open up new forms of understanding” (Gardiner, et. al., 2000, p. 1).

Mentoring, as it relates to female school administrators, may be viewed through the lens of feminist poststructuralism. This framework is used to deconstruct the concept of mentoring for women within the K-12 administrative culture. Further, this perspective “questions the very assumptions of mentoring which has tended to be grounded in traditional leadership notions of power and authority” (Gardiner, et. al., 2000, p. 3).

Rather than reproducing patriarchy, women administrators can deconstruct mentoring to be both same and other (different/marginalized) within educational administration.

**Portfolio Development**

In addition to mentoring, portfolios have become significant tools in professional development for school leaders. Although portfolios have been widely used by teachers and students, principals have only recently begun to use portfolios as a tool for professional development. The use of portfolios within the field of education follows the call for accountability and excellence. This call has forced educators to review the teaching and learning process in an attempt to determine how schools ensure educational success for all children.
Portfolio development has several benefits for principals. Principals can utilize portfolio development for professional growth, evaluation, reflection and career advancement. Principal portfolios have garnered comparable results to those of teacher portfolios.

Principals who engage in portfolio development enhance their professional growth, leadership skills, self-assessment skills, self-confidence, risk taking, professional dialogue and reading, goal setting, and integration of individual goals with campus and district goals. (Brown & Irby, 1997, p. 4)

The role of the principal has become more accountable, as the expectations of school leadership have evolved. The principal portfolio serves as a tool of professional growth for administrators. As an evaluation tool, portfolios are beneficial as well. “The use of portfolios for evaluation of principals offers a new vision of evaluation” (Brown & Irby, p. 5). Additionally, portfolios provide a realistic picture of the practice of leadership employed by a principal. Portfolios also provide insight into administrator’s leadership capabilities.

Portfolios may be used as tools of reflection and reflective practice. Reflective practice enhances professional practice by encouraging self-awareness and broadening understanding of administrative challenges. “Used reflectively, portfolios can give tangible form to themes and issues that are otherwise elusive” (Skrla, et. al, p. 121). The contents of portfolios may vary, however, suggested contents include: mission statement, goals, information on professional development workshops, and documented personal achievements (Brown and Irby, 1997, Skrla, et. al., 2001).

The literature demonstrates several key points related to this study. The demographics of the principalship and nontraditional school leaders specifically, illustrate the need for more attention to an untapped pool of potential administrators. Professional
development literature highlights the benefit of mentoring, again, particularly for nontraditional leaders seeking positions in school leadership. As school districts move toward preparing administrators to meet accountability standards, tangible indicators of administrative capacity, such as the portfolio become important tools for reflection and professional growth. The literature highlights various uses for administrator portfolios. The following section briefly addresses the research methodology guiding the study.

Data Collection

The data were collected from multiple sources. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants at various times throughout the duration of the study. In addition, interviews were conducted with the participant’s mentor. Additional interviews were conducted with a teacher, a parent, and a paraprofessional. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed.

In addition to interview data, observation data were collected to gain greater understanding (Stake, 1995). Observations were recorded in a field journal and on tape. Participants were observed in a variety of contexts, including regional Administrative Leadership Academy meetings, faculty meetings, and in the school context.

Data collection included collection and analysis of several pertinent documents. The following documents were collected and analyzed during the study: portfolios, school documents (including continuous improvement plans, handbooks, etc.), meeting agendas, memos, school newsletters, school report cards, school artifacts, and proficiency data. Visual artifacts of the physical environment (i.e. bulletin boards) were collected/recorded as well.
Data Management and Analysis

All data were recorded, transcribed, and where necessary scanned onto the word processor. Field notes of observations and reflections were recorded in a journal. Field notes were typed and entered into NUD*IST for computer assisted analysis. Hard copies as well as back up disks of data were maintained.

Data analysis was ongoing. Data were coded and NUD*IST was used to generate themes and patterns for codes. All data were securely stored during the study and will be destroyed after a period of time subsequent to completion of the study.

Validity

Several strategies were employed to ensure that validity was maintained (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Triangulation of data sources included document analyses, interviews and observations. Member checks were conducted periodically with participants as data were collected. Although the larger study was conducted over a two-year period, the study of the nontraditional leader presented began with pre-pilot regional Academy observation data. The researcher entered and remained in the field for the duration of the academic school year, ensuring prolonged engagement and persistent observation. Attending to the possibility of negative case further ensures trustworthiness within the study. Glesne (1999), defines negative case analysis as “conscious search for negative cases and unconfirming evidence so that you can refine your working hypotheses” (p. 32).

Limitations

The case study design was a limitation of this study. Although it was an opportunity to obtain an in-depth, detailed look at an African American female principal
involved with the Entry Year Program component of the Ohio Principal Leadership Academy, as a single case it is not generalizable to an entire population of African American female principals. However, the goal of qualitative research is particularization rather than generalization. “Qualitative researchers treat the uniqueness of individual cases and contexts as important to understanding. Particularization is an important aim, coming to know the particularity of the case” (Stake, p. 39).

Definition of Terms

**Administrative Leadership Academy (ALA)** – pseudonym given to the large Midwestern principal academy presented in the study.

**Administrative portfolio** – a document compiled by a school administrator to demonstrate that individuals effectiveness as an instructional leader. Portfolios can be used for several purposes including: career advancement, assessment or personal growth (Brown and Irby, 2001; Deitz, 2001)

**African American** – refers to African descendants of slaves born in the United States.

**Androcentrism** – the elevation of the masculine to the level of the universal and the ideal. The honoring of men and the male principle above women and the female (Shakeshaft, 1987).

**Black** – A term inclusive of all peoples of African descent. This terms includes people of African descent born in America, as well as in other countries throughout the world.

**Black Feminist Thought** – theoretical frame that encourages a collective identity amongst African American women by providing Black women with a different view of themselves than that offered by the dominant culture. A key tenet is that Black women have a self-defined perspective, or standpoint, on their oppression (Collins, 1990).
Feminist poststructuralism – a perspective which focuses on how some voices are heard and counted as knowledge, while others are silenced, marginalized, or excluded, with a particular focus on the gendered nature of knowledge production and the way it maintains and reinforces the power relationship between the sexes (Fletcher, 1999).

Instructional leader – school leader who “keeps the schools focus on instruction, sets a constructive tone and high expectations, works to ensure a common curriculum, and provides leadership for teachers” (Christie, 2000).

Multiple jeopardies – a term used to describe the multiplicative effects of factors such as race, class, gender, and so forth, on Black women’s oppression (King, 1995).

Nontraditional leaders – individuals who do not traditionally hold leadership positions in schools, in particular, women and minorities.

School leader – individual administrator at the building level (e.g., principal)
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature across several areas pertinent to the study of an African American female principal in an Administrative Leadership program. The first section will present an overview of the principalship including demographic data, as well as an analysis of the changing responsibilities of principals in the current era of accountability. Particular to this discussion are responsibilities related to instructional leadership. Assisting principals in becoming instructional leaders is a primary goal of the Administrative Leadership Academy. The review also provides a definition of effective instructional leadership, speaking to the benefits of this kind of leadership.

After broadly discussing the principalship and instructional leadership, a historical overview of women in education and African American women in educational administration is provided. This overview attends to the challenges these groups have faced, as well as the reasons for ensuring that these groups are represented in school leadership positions.

Professional development, as an important component of the Administrative Leadership Academy, including mentoring and administrative portfolio development are discussed. This portion of the review speaks to the importance of mentoring for nontraditional leaders. Finally, a review of the literature on the significance of administrative portfolios is presented.
The Principalship

The role of the principal is multifaceted. Historically, principals have been responsible for effective daily management of schools. Activities such as scheduling, managing the budget, maintaining student discipline, and observing teachers were under the purview of the building principal. While these activities remain functions of the principal’s role, the role of instructional leader and visionary have emerged as integral, more significant aspects of the job of principal. The following section highlights the current context of the principalship, as well as the responsibilities of principals as managers instructional leaders.

The Current State of Affairs/ Demographics of the Principalship.

Certain demographic facts underscore the need for more diversity within school and district leadership. Members of minority groups are an underrepresented population within the principalship. Doud (1989) reports that in 1989, whites occupied nearly 90 percent of elementary principalships. The National Council of Educational Statistics reported the percentage of minority principals increased from 13 percent in the 1987-1988 school year to 16 percent in the 1993-1994. During school year 1993-1994, this figure was 84.2 percent for whites and 10.1 percent for African Americans. Currently, Blacks, Hispanics and Asian Americans combined make up 15 percent of elementary school principals (Ferrandino, 2001).

In 1988, males made up 20 percent of teaching positions in elementary and middle schools, but 80 percent of principalships (Doud, 1989). Data from the National Council of Educational Statistics demonstrate that in the 1993-1994 school year 65
percent of public school principals were male. Data from this school year also
demonstrate that secondary principals more likely to be male (86%) that elementary
principals (59%).

Although men have held the majority of principalships, the number of female
principals is increasing. In 1987-88, 25 percent of principals were women. This figure
was 34 percent during 1993-94. The number of women leading secondary schools
increased to 14 percent in 1993-94, up from nine percent in 1987-88. Among principals
with five years or less experience, sixty-five percent are women (Ferrandino, 2001).

The data also demonstrate a difference in principal demographics based on
geographic location. In central cities, 35 percent of principals were members of minority
groups during the 1993-1994 school year. The percentage decreases as administrators
move away from the city. Minority principals made up 15 percent of urban fringe/large
town school leaders and seven percent of rural school leaders. In districts with 10,000 or
more students, 29 percent were minorities.

In public schools with less than 20 percent of students eligible for free lunch,
seven percent of principals were members of minority groups in 1993-1994. In schools
with 50 percent or more eligible for free lunch, 32 percent of principals were members of
minority groups. These data stand in stark contrast to the expected 55 percent of minority
children anticipated to enroll in elementary schools nationwide by 2004 (Ferrandino.
2001). Thus, while the numbers of minority students attending public schools is
increasing, the number of minority administrators is not. As the principalship continues to
become more inclusive, Doud (1989) notes, “a critical aspect of any principal
identification process will be the recruitment of minorities and women” (p. 12).
The Changing Role of the Principal

Traditionally, the role and responsibilities of the principal have limited themselves to a stereotype of the principal as the “keeper of the keys” (Colon, 1994). And yet, the principalship has become more demanding now than in past decades. The principal role has changed and evolved from the days when the primary responsibility was to run a tight ship (DuFour, 1999). Although the role of the principal has changed, the importance of the principalship has not (DuFour, 1999).

External Forces. Murphy and Beck (1994) suggest four forces that shape new conceptions of the principalship. These forces include the increased demand for accountability, the current crisis in the economy, the changing social fabric of U. S. society, and the global effects of a postindustrial world. A brief discussion of each is outlined below.

In the face of an increased demands for public school accountability is the notion that principals should be evaluated on some set of standards. In 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) articulated a set of standards (Appendix A) for school leaders. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) is a nationwide consortium comprised of representatives from 24 state education agencies and eleven professional education associations, operating under the aegis of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (Green, 2001). These standards were drafted based on the research about effective leadership in schools. ISLLC has developed six standards “that focus on knowledge, performance and disposition of school leaders” (Green, 2001). The six ISLLC standards are vision stewardship, school culture stewardship, learning
organization stewardship, community support stewardship, ethical behavior stewardship, and school in the greater society stewardship (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).

In some cases, the increased demand for accountability often comes from professionals outside the field of education, including politicians and business leaders. Accountability outcomes are largely based on student academic achievement, typically measured via standardized tests. Principals are viewed as responsible for influencing teachers’ performance to ensure student success (Murphy & Beck, 1994).

The crisis in the economy is a second factor in shaping the principalship (Murphy & Beck). The United States’ decreased footing in the world economy is at the base of increased demands for accountability. This assumed relationship between education and the economy has implications for school leadership. First, critics argue that U. S. public education expenditures continue to increase even when enrollments decline, putting the country at an economic and competitive disadvantage. Further, those constituents who have been most critical of schools have asked the leaders of schools to institute and carry out reform. “Parents, policy makers, and business executives seem content to accept the notion that the persons they consider most responsible for educational problems are those in the best position to provide remedies” (Murphy & Beck, 1994, p. 7).

The third force shaping the principalship is the changing social fabric. Significant demographic shifts continue to affect public education and America (Ferrandino, 2001; Tirozzi, 2001). The number of students representing ethnic minorities is steadily increasing. The numbers of English language learners are steadily increasing, as well.
The traditional two-parent, one-income family is increasingly more atypical as the number of single parent and dual income families increases. In addition to these demographic factors,

\[ \text{[t]he number of young people affected by poverty, unemployment, crime, drug addiction and malnutrition is increasing, as is the need for a variety of more intensive and extended social services in schools. (Murphy and Beck, 1994, p. 8)} \]

With these changes in demographics, the responsibilities for elementary and secondary principals have expanded (Ferrandino, 2001). A study conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) revealed that, compared to their counterparts in the past decade, the typical principals works a longer day; has a larger student body, (with approximately 425 students); and has a larger staff (Ferrandino, 2001). The evolution toward a postindustrial world presents the fourth force currently shaping the principalship. Bureaucratic models of organization are no longer beneficial, given the “demands of our demographically diverse information society of the 21st Century” (Murphy & Beck, 1994, p. 8). Cultivation of commitment and creativity necessarily replaces the hierarchy of authority. This requires changes in the principalship as well. These changes involve appropriate professional development, establishing horizontal structures that encourage diffuse leadership and cultivating collegiality.

Principal shortage. As schools struggle to meet rising demands and identify qualified leaders, these challenges are exacerbated by a shortage of such candidates (Ferrandino, 2001; Kennedy, 2001; IEL, 2000; Christie, 2000). The role of the principal is characterized by high levels of responsibility absent the incentives necessary to keep qualified individuals in these roles (Tirozzi, 2001). The shortage of qualified building administrators is attributable to conflicting demands of leadership, including the small
pay differential between teachers and principals, the short job tenure of principals and the impact of high stakes assessment and accountability (Christie, 2000). Principals are often held accountable for student achievement, but seldom have authority to hire and fire their own personnel. Other suggested reasons posited for the shortage in interested or qualified candidates include long work weeks, low parental involvement, low status of principals, and tremendous responsibility (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2000).

Ferrandino (2000) suggests several reasons that contribute to the shortage of principals. Inadequate compensation is a significant factor inhibiting potential candidates from seeking the principalship. In 1999-2000 the national average salary for principals was $69,407. For this salary, principals shoulder tremendous responsibility. Few teachers are willing to take on this amount of responsibility for a relatively low pay increase.

Job related stress is also an inhibitor to the principalship. Because of the level of responsibility they are expected to assume, principals experience a great deal of stress. Ferrandino (2001) states,

To cite an example of these pressures, one of every ten principals surveyed by NAESP had been named in civil law suit arising from a playground accident, a disciplinary action, or some other work-related activity. (p. 441)

Time fragmentation is a final factor contributing to the shortage of principals. Principals have more responsibilities than time in the day to meet them. They are faced with managerial tasks, such as scheduling, discipline and budgeting, as well as instructional tasks such as staff supervision and curriculum development. Elementary school principals’ time is further fragmented without the ‘luxury’ of an assistant principal to share the load (Ferrandino, 2001).
Interestingly, the shortage of principal candidates is not necessarily caused by a shortage of individuals with necessary credentials. “Too few credentialed people are prepared adequately for the job. And too few qualified educators want to be principals” (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2000). Attrition accounts for the shortage in principals to some degree. The attrition rate for elementary school principals is 42 percent for the decade between 1988-1998 (Ferrandino, 2001). This rate could reach 60 percent as members of the baby boomer generation reach retirement. Early retirement in general affects attrition rates as well. However, attrition and anticipated attrition is occurring in a climate of rising school enrollments, further underscoring the need for qualified school leaders.

All of these forces work to shape and influence the job that principals do. Principals of the 21st century will need to develop skills to meet the challenges they will face. The specific knowledge and skills sets required will be addressed later in this chapter.

*Management versus. Leadership*

For the past century principals have been expected to serve in managerial roles. As suggested above, their job requirements have expanded to include the role of instructional leader (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000; Skrla, Erlandson, Reed, & Wilson, 2001). Descriptions of school administration often portray the role of principal at either end of two extremes namely: managerial versus instructional leadership (Crow, Matthews, & McCleary, 1996).
Broadly understood, leadership relates to influencing, while management connotes directing (Crow, Matthews & McCleary, 1996). A deeper understanding of both managerial and instructional functions is important in explicating the role that a principal must fulfill. In fact, effective administration is a composite of leadership and management (Achilles, Keedy & High, 1994).

**Management functions.** Management emphasizes a supportive status quo, providing people stability in the workplace so that they can work in relative comfort. Management suggests a directive authority and responsibility for presiding over organizational functions (Gardner, 2001). Traditionally, the managerial rather than instructional role of leadership has often gained more attention. This is largely due to the fact that concepts of administration in schools have been borrowed from the field of business. Crow, Matthews, & McCleary (1996) acknowledge, “Principals were assumed to be more like business executives, using good management and social science research to run schools effectively and efficiently” (p. 2).

Clearly, sound management in schools is necessary to maintaining status quo with regard to certain activities that keep the organization on an even keel. Principals may use some of their managerial skills to influence their staff and other stakeholders. In this way, management becomes a leadership activity (Donmoyer & Wagstaff, 1990). Principals also exert instructional leadership through everyday managerial tasks and responsibilities. The managerial behavior of principals is strongly related to school effectiveness (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982). Bossert, et. al., (1982) assert, “principals can play an important management role by making decisions about school-
level factors that fundamentally shape classroom instructional organization” (p. 42). For all these reasons, management is an important skill in education administration (Achilles, Keedy & High, 1994).

**Leadership functions.** In contrast, leadership describes dynamic efforts, such as translating into action a vision for the organization, creating change and developing new policies (Achilles, Keedy & High, 1994). Gardner (2001) defines leadership as

> [t]he process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers. (p. 3)

Principals of today may understand their leadership responsibility in a variety of ways: leaders for student learning (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2000), leaders of other leaders (Skrla, et. al., 2001), developers of leaders (Crow, et. al., 1996).

Leadership has become more systemic and less based on the decision-making authority of one person (Crow, et. al., 1996). Top-down decision-making is now being replaced by decision-making at all levels. In this manner, principals must assume both leader and follower roles. Principals may be leaders in certain situations and followers in others. Crow and colleagues (1996) assert, “by exhibiting follower behavior, principals can influence teachers to lead in collaborating and experimenting with new school improvement models” (p. 33).

Leadership and management are not mutually exclusive concepts. Successful school administration must include fulfillment of both leadership and management roles. “Paradoxically, leadership is not likely to occur easily unless management provides consistency and a nurturing status quo in a which there are few surprises” (Achilles,
Keedy & High, 1994, p. 32). Gardner (2001) describes the individuals who accomplish both leader/managers. Simply stated, these individuals are visionary leaders who responsibly conduct the managerial tasks within their purview.

*Instructional leadership*

Schools of the 21st century will need visionary leaders with skills in instructional leadership. Instruction is the core technology of the school (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982). Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning, professional development, data-driven decision making and accountability (IEL, 2000, p. 4). Several definitions of instructional leadership have emerged in the literature. Cawelti (1987) suggests a formula for instructional leadership: clear goals + strong incentives + appropriate skills = Instructional Leadership. Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) define an instructional leader as someone who has a significant impact, for better or worse, on student opportunities to learn in the classroom. Christie (2001) notes that an instructional leader “keeps the school’s focus on instruction, sets a constructive tone and high expectations, works to ensue a common curriculum, and provides leadership for teachers” (p. 100). Andrews and Basom (1990) define instructional leadership as “behavior that is highly connected to positive growth in academic performance” (p. 38).

The literature on successful schools highlights the role of the principal as an instructional leader (Bossert, et. al., 1982). The principal, or instructional leader, plays a significant role in coordinating the “instructional program.” Such efforts on the part of the principal have inspired the maxim, “effective principal, effective schools” (Bossert, et. al., 1982).
The literature defines instructional leadership as a set of behaviors that promote professional development for teachers in order to ensure growth in academic achievement and performance for students. Instructional leaders must therefore be proficient in assessing faculty needs, availing themselves of new developments in curriculum and instruction.

As instructional leaders, principals have wide influence over the success of their schools (Cawelti, 1987). The idea that the principal is the primary instructional leader of a school is now a widely held belief among educators and the public. However, the principal’s work day is often consumed with management responsibilities (Fink & Resnick, 2001). As stated earlier, these dual functions (management versus leadership) are indicative of the bifurcated nature of schools. On the one hand, the administrative branch is hierarchically structured and comprised of the superintendent, deputy superintendent(s), principals and teachers. On the other hand, the curriculum and professional development branch reports to the superintendent. This branch is concerned with special programs, curriculum, assessment and professional development (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Relations between the branches are often strained. Although the administrative branch is responsible for student achievement, curriculum and programming choices are largely controlled or significantly influenced by those in the curriculum development branch (Fink & Resnick, 2001).

The bifurcated structure of school districts forces educators seeking positions outside the classroom to choose either the administrative line or the curriculum/professional development line. This forced choice has the dual effect of
distancing administrators from curriculum, instruction and learning; and distancing curriculum specialists from the “details and demands of day-to-day school practice” (Fink & Resnick, p. 599).

Such a system makes instructional leadership more challenging, but not impossible. School leaders must navigate the system in order to answer the demands for accountability and lead successful schools. This requires new understandings of principal roles and responsibilities. Such understandings may be used to reframe more traditional notions of the principalship. Four broad areas of responsibility characterize this new leadership. These areas include: goals and production emphasis, power and decision making, organization/coordination and human relations (Bossert, et. al., 1982).

First, principals in successful schools emphasize achievement by setting clear instructional goals and establishing a climate that promotes student achievement. Next, effective principals demonstrate power and decision making through strong participation in areas of curriculum and instruction. They are powerful leaders across the district, using their influence to advance their school’s goals. Further, they are effective in community relations and able to navigate community power structures.

Also, successful principals lead organized schools. Bossert and colleagues (1982) state, “principals in effective schools…apparently devote more time to the coordination and control of instruction and are more skillful at the tasks involved” (p. 37).

Finally, effective principals encourage high quality human relations. They recognize the needs of their teachers and assist them in meeting those needs. This assistance may help to fulfill the teacher’s higher order needs.
The literature does demonstrate a relationship between gender and instructional leadership. Several studies have found that female principals spend more time on instructional leadership than their male counterparts (Achilles, et. al., 1994; Andrews & Basom, 1990, Bossert, et. al., 1982). This behavior is characterized by effective communication, visibility throughout the school, and regular interaction with teachers. A study by Smith and Andrews (1989) found that women are more likely to be viewed by their teachers as instructional leaders than their male counterparts.

Effective instructional leaders interact well with their constituents, including staff, parents, students and community members. Andrews and Basom (1990) state, “female principals communicate more frequently and positively with each of these groups than males” (p. 39). The instructional leadership behaviors of women often differ from those of men. Women are more polite than men, utilize language to encourage community building, to communicate the vision for the school, and employ more collegial, democratic decision making styles than their male counterparts (Shakeshaft, 1987).

Women school leaders have unique strengths that they bring to administrative positions. These strengths, although different from male leaders, allow competent women to be strong instructional leaders. Andrews and Basom (1990) assert,

Rather than trying to make female principals into clones of male administrators, we need to work at the strengths of both and determine how those strengths can help both men and women become the instructional leaders our schools so desperately need. (p. 40)

Thus, women, as instructional leaders, have important strengths to bring to the principalship. The following section provides an overview of women and nontraditional leaders in education.
Nontraditional Leaders in Education

Most school leaders come to administrative positions through the ranks of teaching. In order to understand the ways in which nontraditional leaders have been excluded from administration, it is important to look historically at their role as teachers.

Historical Overview of Women in Education

Historically, women never dominated in positions of school leadership. Given that the path to school administration often begins with teaching, women have long struggled to be included and taken seriously in the field of education. The teaching profession was not always open to women. Early records document that teaching was done by men until the late eighteenth century (Shakeshaft, 1999). When women were admitted to the teaching profession, their role was substantially smaller than that of their male counterparts. In spite of the fact that the teaching profession has been “feminized” and has been viewed as women’s work, women were not permitted to teach until shortages of men provided a need as well as an opening for women within the profession (Rury, 1989).

When the United States was predominantly an agrarian society, education focused on skills related to societal values. Male teachers instructed typical village schools. The teacher was often a college student or in seminary. Other teachers were males with disabilities who were ill-suited for the rigors of farm life (Hoffman, 1981).

In some cases, women did teach. However, they taught small groups of very young children. Often these women were poor, older widows. Dame Schools, as they
were called, provided basic information to small children in exchange for a small sum or in-kind goods. Young women also sought to teach as an alternative to farm life (Hoffman, 1981).

During the 1820s and 1830s, many men who might have considered becoming teachers opted to enter business and industry, as they were growing fields with many opportunities. Also, during this time, the number of school-aged students grew due to an increase in immigration. Shakeshaft (1999) states, “The combination of increased need and a shortage of men available to teach were pivotal events in the inclusion of women in the profession of teaching and late managing” (Shakeshaft, 1999, p. 102).

The Civil War afforded women many more opportunities to teach due to a shortage of men who were enlisted as soldiers. This resulted in a drastic change in the teaching profession because of the large number of men who were needed elsewhere. In 1870, nearly two-thirds of teachers were women, (Rury, 1989; Davis & Samuelson, 1950). By 1900, almost seventy-five percent of teachers were female (Blount, 1998; Rury, 1989). According to Rury (1989), the profession became feminized largely as a result of “a combination of labor market forces, changing demands for teachers in the wake of education reforms, and underlying shifts in popular perceptions of female roles” (p.15). Teaching was noticeably feminized in large cities because of the difficulty of large urban cities had in retaining male teachers. Ultimately, feminization of teaching has meant “the development of school systems in which relatively young women teachers were supervised by older men” (Rury, 1989, p. 28).

Women were encouraged to enter the teaching profession, because it would afford training on how to handle young children and prepare young women for eventual
motherhood. A second reason posited for having women as teachers is the civilizing
effect they would have on young, rowdy boys. However, women were primarily
assigned to the primary grades, because they were thought too weak to discipline older
boys (Kerber, 1983).

Although teaching did ultimately become feminized, women faced several kinds
of discrimination at various times throughout the evolution of the profession. While
teaching offered many women a viable alternative to marriage, there were consequences
for teachers who did marry. Many districts had policies forbidding married women to
work. Some school districts would hire married women to teach only under special
circumstances (Davis & Samuelson, 1950). When women did marry, they were forced to
resign their teaching positions. Of these no-marriage policies, it was said, “rules against
marriage are part of a long-standing stereotype of the ‘old-maid school teacher’ that is a
significant limiting factor in the whole field of education” (p. 29). As a result of these
stipulations, in 1900 ninety percent of female teachers were unmarried.

School boards also stated that they did not want to invest time and resources into
short-term employees, the manner in which they characterized women who left the
profession for marriage. Interestingly, men didn’t remain in teaching significantly longer
than did women, but their departures weren’t characterized nearly as negatively. Men
often left the profession in search of other professional opportunities, offering higher pay
or higher status (Shakeshaft, 1987). Because women were considered undependable, as
they would leave the field for marriage or to rear children, not only their teaching
opportunities, but their administrative opportunities were limited as well.
Women teachers were also less financially valued than were men. In terms of salary, women often earned only a fraction of the salary that men did for the same work. Women also suffered lower status within the profession than did their male counterparts. Shakeshaft (1999) notes, “In common schools, men were the masters or principals whereas women were the assistant teachers; in high schools, males were called ‘professor’ and females were addressed as miss” (Shakeshaft, 1999, p. 102). This was illustrative of the fact that women were identified by their gender, whereas men were identified by their professional roles (Shakeshaft, 1987, 1999).

Despite the fact that they were not valued in status or pay in the same manner as were men, women teachers still flocked to the profession. One reason women found teaching appealing was because it offered a viable alternative to being completely financially dependent on their families. Industrialization was another reason that females flocked to teaching. Industrialization decreased the need for women to work inside the home, and therefore made teaching a much more desirable profession.

Several prominent leaders, such as Catherine Beecher, validated women’s entrée into the teaching profession (Shakeshaft, 1999; Hoffman, 1981). Beecher actively promoted women in teaching rather than in other professions. As Shakeshaft (1999) explains, “Beecher crusaded fervently against the employment of women in mills and factories, believing that women were ‘designed by God’ for this type of work and that women did not belong in these spheres” (p. 26). Such leaders popularized the concept that teaching was women’s true work, because women were more predisposed to be nurturers of children.
The bulk of teachers have been women clustered at the elementary level. Women have also dominated the principalship at the elementary level, but have been conspicuously absent from the principalship at the middle and secondary levels. Although viewed as capable of teaching and nurturing, women were not viewed as capable of enforcing the necessary discipline required of a principal (Apple, 1985). “Women were thought to be constitutionally incapable of discipline and order, primarily because of their size and supposed lack of strength” (Shakeshaft, 1987, p. 39). Very few women held administrative posts between 1820 and 1900 (Shakeshaft, 1999; 1987). Those that did typically were head administrators at schools they founded.

In various states, the requirements were different for men and women to become administrators. In New Hampshire, for example, the requirements were different until 1858 (Shakeshaft, 1999). Some states created laws to prevent women from holding administrative positions.

Attainment of the right to vote in 1920 and the disparity in salary inspired women educators to become more politically active. Women teachers began to lobby for an equal pay scale. Within the first ten years after women won the right to vote ten states passed equal pay laws for teachers (Kerber, 1983). In addition, teachers in urban districts began to form teacher associations. These organizations were established in major cities at the turn of the century, including New York, Atlanta, Chicago, and Pittsburgh (Shakeshaft, 1999; Kerber, 1983).

The first big city superintendency to be held by a woman was Ella Flagg Young in Chicago, in 1909 (Shakeshaft, 1999; Blount, 1998). Other women began to hold positions in school administration in the first several decades of the 1900s. This period
became known as the golden age for women in administration. During the first three decades of the 1900s, women primarily held elementary school principalships and county superintendencies. “By 1928, women held 55% of the elementary principalships, 25% of the county superintendencies, nearly 8% of the secondary school principalships and 1.6% of the district superintendencies” (Shakeshaft, 1999, p. 104). Although women had made some gains in obtaining positions in school administration, the higher status, higher paying jobs (high school principalships and district superintendencies) were still held by men.

Many changes have occurred in education as the profession has evolved. The demographics of the teaching profession changed notably in the nineteenth century. The profession, which once excluded women from becoming teachers, became extremely feminized (Shakeshaft, 1999; Blount, 1998; Rury, 1989; Kerber, 1983). The numbers of teachers increased, as education became the right of all children. The profession became more bureaucratized, evolving from a small schoolhouse with one teacher, to a more formal structure where an administrator made executive decisions. Administrators became a part of the fabric of schools as women flocked to the profession. Blount (1998) states, “the male educators who remained had to assert their masculine qualities somehow, thus many became administrators to control the labors of women…teaching had become a woman’s profession—controlled by men” (p. 37).

*Women in Educational Administration*

Organizational theories borrowed from the corporate world and the military may be inappropriate for understanding the role of women in educational administration. Theories that emerge from male dominated fields and male consciousness may not
adequately explain female behavior (Shakeshaft & Nowell, 1984). These theories are androcentric, they view and explain the world through a masculine lens. Existing perspectives of organizational theory are largely androcentric and thus, “create imprecise, inaccurate and imbalanced scholarship” (Shakeshaft & Nowell, p. 188). These theories therefore can render females invisible, to be seen as “other.”

Gender is a category of experience. Men and women experience the world differently as a function of gender. Thus, men and women may “experience and interpret the role of school leadership differently” (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 17). Among the available research on women and minorities in educational administration, considerably more research has been conducted on women than on people of color (Banks, 2001). However, American women have also been denied a voice in history, as history is often written by, for and about white men (Lerner, 2001).

Although not a numerical minority, women are often seen as members of a minority group because of their lack of access to power. Nevertheless, the experiences of women are not homogeneous. White women have enjoyed and benefited from privileges not granted to others because of their race. “Race socialization frequently privileges white characteristics and marginalizes characteristics associated with people of color” (Banks, 2001, p. 222).

There are a number of reasons contributing to the lack of nontraditional leaders in educational administration today. The impact of these factors is often discriminatory. Nontraditional leaders seeking leadership positions have the disadvantage of not belonging to the ‘old boy’ networks that provide information about the availability of
administrative positions. Therefore, they do not have access to the informal informational channels to which their white male counterparts are privy (Hudson, 1994; Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987; Doughty, 1980).

Several researchers have cited Estler’s (1975) models of women in educational administration. These models can be viewed as a framework for understanding the barriers women face in obtaining positions of school leadership. The “woman’s place” model assumes that women have not participated in administrative careers based primarily on norms of sex role socialization. Therefore, women would pursue occupations that are more appropriate for their gender. The “discrimination” model assumes that women have been discriminated against and systematically excluded from administrative positions. The “meritocracy” model assumes that the most competent individuals for the job are hired. This model implicitly assumes that men occupy top positions of school leadership because they are most competent (Shakeshaft, 1987; Clement, 1980; Jones & Montenegro, 1983; Frasher and Frasher, 1979).

In addition, many theories have been used to explain the under representation of women in school leadership. The following sections discuss the various theoretical approaches that have been used to explain and at times justify the lack of women in school administration.

Leadership Approaches

Women have not typically been thought to possess the innate qualities held as indigenous to leadership. Women’s approach to leadership is often perceived as similar to the human relations approach. This approach is concerned with viewing the needs of individuals within the organization. Women leaders are seen as nurturing and concerned
more with human relationships than organizational tasks. Dardaine-Ragguet, et. al., (1994) write, “women with human relations perspectives tend to dominate staff development jobs or remain in the classroom longer than men, following staff rather than line career paths” (p. 406).

In contrast, male leaders are often viewed through the lens of the scientific management approach. This approach focuses primarily on the tasks to be completed and the most efficient way to do so. Positions of leadership have traditionally viewed as necessarily corresponding with the perceived masculine scientific management approach, rather than with a ‘feminine’ human relations approach. Characteristics corresponding to the scientific management approach include: being rational, logical and unemotional.

This approach has been utilized by male leaders in the military and business (Burstyn, 1980). Female leadership aspirants have rarely been considered in this vein. Harder and Waldo (1993) suggest, “from the beginning, essential traits required for successful management more nearly corresponded to the traits characteristic of men than of women” (p. 37). Belief in this approach kept women out of administrative positions. This is attributed to the fact that the belief in this approach as most effective led women and men to view men as leaders and women as followers (Shakeshaft, 1999).

In schools, although the majority of teachers are women, much of school leadership is comprised of men. Some suggest that this imbalance reflects a perceived lack of women’s competence to lead schools. This perception often stems from the (incorrect) assumption that women lack aggressiveness and leadership ability needed to
lead and manage schools effectively (Harder & Waldo, 1983). In many ways, this view still has women characterized as the “weaker” sex, unable to assume appropriate leadership roles.

Role Socialization

Role socialization has the unique distinction of being a two-way process. Both the socializer and individual being socialized may be changed in significant ways (Banks, 2001). The concept of sex role socialization has been offered as a rationale for why women have been underrepresented in school leadership. (Banks, 2001; Harder & Waldo, 1983). Research on sex role socialization suggests that characteristics and behaviors considered masculine are more highly valued than those considered feminine (Banks, 2001). Sex role socialization and stereotypes can limit women’s access to and perceived effectiveness in leadership positions.

The problem of sex role stereotypes is compounded by the structural characteristics of organizations that hinder women’s rise in management and limit the effectiveness of those who do attain managerial positions (Jones & Montenegro, 1983, p. 232).

Role Conflict

Role conflict represents an internal barrier that has been effective in limiting the numbers of nontraditional individuals in school leadership. Role conflict occurs when the multiple roles filled by women and minorities in educational leadership cause tension or anxiety (Banks, 2001; Jones & Montenegro, 1983; Harder & Waldo, 1983). Ortiz (1982) found that role conflict among white males entering their first administrative positions tends to be lower than that of women and minorities entering their first administrative positions. The “reform role” that many black (and Hispanic)
administrators are expected to fulfill also leads to role stress and conflict (Banks, 2001; Jones & Montenegro, 1983). These reform roles often take shape in expectations for turning a failing school around.

Montenegro & Jones (1983) suggest that Black women in leadership experience role conflict accompanying the ascribed status of being female and African American. They therefore often feel role conflict based on loyalty to two different groups,

Two sides often pull female school administrators – by women’s and minorities’ groups and organizations. If a woman affiliates herself with both, tremendous demands are place on her time, and neither side treats her as a whole person with some of the same problems as her female or minority male counterparts as well as some different ones (Jones & Montenegro, 1983, p. 23).

Women’s entry into administration is often much less traditional than men’s. Although both genders enter administration through teaching, women typically teach for a much longer period of time than men. Women traditionally progress to administrative positions by attaining specialist positions, then supervisory positions, and then an elementary principalship (Shakeshaft, 1987). Women rarely lead middle or high schools, or continue on the administrative continuum to the superintendency.

Women in educational administration, particularly the superintendency, tend to be more highly educated, have more experience, and be older than their male counterparts in similar positions. Women are over represented in teaching and the elementary principalship, but are underrepresented in secondary principalships and the superintendency (Shakeshaft, 1999). Superintendency positions held by women have typically been in small districts where the position is combined with other positions.
African American Women in Education

Not unlike the history of women in education in general, teaching and learning were risky, even dangerous ventures for African American women. An understanding of the history of Black women’s experiences in and with education is a necessary prerequisite to understanding current practices and experiences of African American women in educational administration.

Because education has not been free from the deleterious impact of racism and sexism, Black women have shared the plight of other marginalized groups. Black women have been subjected to a society in which they are devalued based on both race and gender (Doughty, 1980). Spelman (2001) suggests, “a Black woman cannot be ‘female as opposed to being black’; she is female and black” (p. 78).

Because African American women embody two status roles, related to gender and race, research has tended to ignore this group. Research on women has often ignored women of color and research on people of color has not focused significantly on women of color (Edson, 1987). “Black women have been doubly victimized by scholarly neglect and racist assumptions” (Lerner, 2001, p. 45). This tendency ignores women of color as an integrated whole and presents them as fragments (Banks, 2001). However, research that highlights the underrepresentation of minority women and acknowledges the multiplicative aspects of gender, race, class, etc., helps to publicize the problem as well as providing a departure point for research as praxis (Banks, 2001; Crenshaw, 2000; Johnson-Bailey, 1999; King, 1995).

Historically, black women have shared with black men the discrimination and deprivation that characterized their sojourn from slavery to freedom. They have shared with white women some legal prescriptions that have limited their access to public institutions. However, despite the common problems, their historical
experiences in every area of American life have been in very specific ways
different from that of black males and white females (Collier-Thomas, p. 174).

The threat of physical danger was imminent for those African American women
seeking education as well as those seeking to educate. The history of education for
Blacks in America began with the struggle of antebellum slaves attempting to learn to
read and write. Free Blacks in the South rarely received any education. Even in the rural
South, Blacks did not hold teaching and administrative positions until the first half of the
20th century. In the North, free Blacks were permitted to attend integrated Sabbath and
public schools (Collier-Thomas, 1982). Black women did not gain recognition or status
in the teaching profession until the nineteenth century.

With so few opportunities available to Black men, the areas of teaching and
preaching came to be dominated by Black males. Some black females operated
private schools and a few taught in co-educational institutions; however, the
majority of Black schools were kept by males. It was only in the last decade of
the nineteenth century that black women became a major force in the segregated
educational system of the South (Collier-Thomas, p. 175).

Although teaching and learning were very dangerous undertakings for Black
women, they were not deterred. Several accounts illustrate both, the tenacity of Black
women in pursuing education, and the perilous nature of such pursuits. In 1833, in
Connecticut, Prudence Crandall, a Quaker teacher, was arrested for opening a school for
training Black girls to become teachers. Local residents tried to burn down the school
and physically harm the teacher and students (Shakeshaft, 1999).

In 1851, Myrtilla Miner faced a similar situation in Washington, D. C., when she
opened a school for African American students. The school was attacked several times.
The students and director risked their personal safety to attend, but the school endured for
ten years (Shakeshaft, 1999; Kerber, 1983). Miner wanted to open the school in the
nation’s capital because “she believed the nation’s capital should have a model school for free black children” (Kerber, 1983, p. 16). Miner was accused of educating black girls ‘beyond their station in life’ (Shakeshaft, 1999, Kerber, 1983).

Charlotte Forten, an African American teacher, also taught African American students. She was sent to live with an abolitionist family in Massachusetts in order to receive an education. She graduated from a teacher training school in 1856 and was offered a teaching position in Salem, Massachusetts. Instead, she moved to the Georgia Sea Islands to teach in a newly formed school, along with many other blacks who moved South during Reconstruction to teach black students (Shakeshaft, 1987; Kerber, 1983).

Black women often found it difficult to find teaching jobs, particularly in the public schools, as many of the schools only employed white teachers. When Black women were able to acquire teaching positions, they were usually found teaching in rural schools and were paid less than white teachers (male or female) and black males (Collier-Thomas, 1982). In addition, black teachers were employed in jobs where they taught black children exclusively. These jobs were difficult to acquire, given that white administrators resisted hiring blacks until they were compelled to do so. Black teachers were not hired to teach in the New York African Free Schools, schools established to educate the children of free blacks, “until 1832, more than forty years after they were established, and then only after a successful boycott of the schools organized by black community leaders” (Rury, 1989, p. 21).

Opportunities to teach opened to black teachers as whites began to avoid teaching positions in black schools. Given that in the mid 1800’s, many people still lived in rural areas rather than large cities, teaching as an occupation employed few nonwhites.
Although black teachers had earned respected roles in their communities, “they were too few in number to seriously affect the overall social profile of American teachers” (Rury, p. 21).

The number of teachers continued to grow throughout the nineteenth century. Remarkably, despite the hostility and risk of personal safety that black female teachers faced, their numbers grew throughout the nineteenth century as well. After 1890, the numbers of black female teachers was greater than the numbers of African American men. Over 4,000 African American women had graduated from normal schools and universities by 1905 (Jones, 1905).

Very little information exists about blacks in school administration prior to the second half of the century. There are few books, essays or scholarly works that chronicle and evaluate the contributions of African American women to the history of education (Collier-Thomas, 1982). Much of the information that exists remains incomplete. After the Civil war, blacks operated clandestine schools (Jones & Montenegro, 1983). The schools opened because African American students were not permitted to attend schools for white children.

Quaker sponsored schools were the first schools to employ blacks as administrators. “Black administrators and faculty also wielded influence in determining the educational objectives and practices of Quaker-sponsored Black institutions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Jones & Montenegro, 1983, p. 2). At the turn of the 20th century, Quaker Anna Jeanes provided a one million dollar endowment to assist in the maintenance of Southern schools. Her million dollar endowment was a fund set aside for “the furthering and fostering of rudimentary
education,” again in small, rural Negro schools (Jones, 1937, p. 18). The endowment was utilized to support the Jeanes’ Supervisors. Jeanes’ Supervisors were predominantly women of African descent who worked to improved “educational programs in segregated schools” (Williams, et. al., p. 15, as cited in Shakeshaft, 1999, p. 5).

Jeanes Supervisors focused their efforts on uniting the school and community, and elevating the standard of living. “Later, they trained teachers by assisting with curriculum development, demonstrating new teaching methods, and conducting in-service education designed to disseminate recent findings on child growth and development” (Jones & Montenegro, 1983, p. 6). The Jeanes’ Supervisors also employed their experiences to create strategies for educational leadership and professional development. They often collaborated with area universities as well.

Eventually, as schools became more bureaucratized and the numbers of black principals increased, the Jeanes’ program declined. After the decline of Jeanes’ Supervisors, black principals were employed in segregated all black schools. Initially, the responsibilities of the principal were no more than those of a head teacher responsible for supervising two classroom teachers (Jones, 1983; Jones & Montenegro, 1983). However, this changed as schools and class sizes increased and the need for management increased accordingly.

As an occupation, education was ranked seventh for African American women by 1920 (Shakeshaft, 1987). During the 1950s and 1960s, as schools began to desegregate, integration meant the loss of minority teachers and principals (Banks, 2001). Districts which formerly employed both minority and nonminority administrators, eliminated the minority administrators when forced to consolidate.
There have been no national surveys conducted to ascertain the number of minority principals prior to 1960s. Inaccurate data have been recorded on a consistent basis about women in administration as well. This supports the ‘conspiracy of silence’ theory posited by Tyack & Hansot (Shakeshaft, 1999, 1987), wherein data based on sex (and race) have been largely unavailable, due to lack of appropriate data collection. According to the 1992 U. S. Bureau of the Census, by 1986 only eight percent of all school administrators and 13 percent of elementary and secondary principals and assistant principals were African American. Shakeshaft (1999) suggests “a historical account of the ebb and flow of women in administration either details the experiences of white women only or obfuscates the lives of women of color by subsuming them within statistics and reports of women in general” (p. 21). Thus while the black male administrator has often been ignored in literature, black women’s stories have been neglected to an even greater extent (Doughty, 1980).

In this vein, black female administrators have been rendered invisible in many ways. Doughty (1980) suggests that the dual marginalized status of being black and female necessarily creates a third status for black women. This status, based on race and gender, produces an individual in the unique position of experiencing dual marginalization. In the hierarchy of administration, white men have generally held the top positions, followed by black men, then white women, and finally, black women (Doughty, 1980). The fact that so few African American women attain top level positions in school leadership, indicates the “enormous amount of energy in the social system that must be directed towards keeping [them] out” (Doughty, p. 169). In addition, the perceptions that black women do attain top positions within educational leadership
are dismantled when one examines the actual positions held by black women leaders (Doughty, 1980). The reality is that many administrative positions held by African American women are administrative staff (such as specialists, or projects dealing with minority issues) rather than line positions (Banks, 2001; Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987).

The overall demographics of black women in educational leadership are unique and different from other groups. Black women typically assume administrative positions between the ages of 40 and 50 (Shakeshaft, 1987; Doughty, 1980). They usually enter administration after teaching for 12-20 years, in contrast to about five years for their white, male counterparts (Banks, 2001; Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993; Doughty, 1980). Often, Black female (and other minority female) principals lead in troubled urban elementary schools. Pigford and Tonnsen (1993) note, “Although [B]lack women school administrators are usually elementary principals assigned to the ‘so-called tough, predominantly black school[s]’, the expectations for their performance are extremely high” (p. 3).

Although many gains have been made in school leadership, sadly, much of the same segregation and discrimination still exist. A female high school principal, especially an African American female, is still an aberration. This is disheartening considering the fact that women are not represented in administration at the same rate that they are within the teaching profession.

Perhaps the most challenged of nontraditional leaders are African American women who have historically faced the obstacles and barriers of being female as well as a member of a minority group, and must continue to do so. Nevertheless, nontraditional
school leaders are an important part of our nation’s schools. Students need to be exposed to diverse leadership styles. Students who are female and/or members of minority groups, as well as all students, need positive role models. Qualified leaders need support and the opportunities to lead.

Professional Development

Professional development for the purposes of the Administrative Leadership Academy and this study include mentoring and portfolio development. Mentoring and portfolio development are key supports beneficial to new school leaders in developing their administrative practice. Mentoring relationships take varied shapes, not necessarily conforming to traditional mentoring perspectives. Administrator portfolio development enables new school leaders to reflect upon their administrative practice as instructional leaders.

Mentoring

The story of Mentor is known from Greek mythology. In The Odyssey, King Odysseus instructed Mentor to remain in Ithaca and be responsible for the royal household. Thus, a primary component of Mentor’s role was to see to the development of the king’s son, Telemachus, ensuring that he would one day be a fit and capable ruler ready to ascend to the throne. In assuming this responsibility, Mentor undertook several roles including father figure, advisor, friend, teacher, etc. (Carruthers, 1993; Playko, 1991). Interestingly, Athena, goddess of Wisdom, also takes Mentor’s form to speak at various times throughout. Thus, although seldom acknowledged within an androcentric, masculine paradigm, “Mentor is both male and female, mortal and immortal—an androgynous demigod, half here, half there. Wisdom personified” (Daloz, 1986, p. 19).
Although the term mentor originates from Greek mythology, the definition of mentoring is not static. There is no universal, succinct, concise definition of mentoring. Mentoring means different things in different settings and within different disciplines. Mentoring has different definitions depending on the author. Although the definitions vary, mentoring is a vital part of a process associated with developing and supporting ongoing education of individuals in a profession (Playko, 1991). The fluidity of the concept of mentoring can be a benefit to restructuring traditional mentoring relationships such that they are more beneficial to all parties. In the absence of a universal definition of mentoring, Galbraith and Cohen (1995) have identified several common themes pervasive across definitions:

Mentoring is a process within a contextual setting; it involves a relationship of a more knowledgeable individual with a less knowledgeable individual, provides professional networking, counseling, guiding, instructing, modeling and sponsoring, is a developmental mechanism (personal professional and psychological), is a socialization and reciprocal relationship, and provides an identity transformation for mentor and mentee (p. 91).

Because mentoring can be defined in many different ways, the kinds of mentoring relationships, and what is to be expected from those relationships varies as well. Carruthers (1993) suggests that most definitions of mentoring fall within one of two categories: those which emphasize the professional development of the protégé only; and those which emphasize professional and personal development of the protégé (p. 11). Given this variation, a person may have more than one mentor and may have a different kind of relationship with each. These differences in kinds of mentor/protégé relationships have been described in the literature as primary and secondary mentors (Phillips-Jones, 1982, cited in Carruthers, 1993).
Primary mentor relationships develop the protégé both professionally and personally. Secondary mentor relationships focus largely on the professional development of the protégé. Another way to conceptualize these relationships is major and minor mentor/protégé relationships (Darling, 1989, cited in Carruthers, 1993).

Mentoring relationships can thus be formal or informal. They may be initiated by the protégé, by the mentor or perchance (Pence, 1995; Carruthers, 1993). Formal mentoring is established when the authority within the organization has instructed and/or made provisions for such relationships to be established (Carruthers, 1993). Informal mentoring relationships occur as members of a mentoring dyad gravitate toward one another. Carruthers (1993) suggests that mentoring relationships benefit from both members of the dyad having an opportunity choose to work together. The research suggests that mentoring relationships characterized by some freedom of choice in the pairing are more successful than in those relationships with no such freedom. This freedom suggests a mutual attraction of both parties within the dyad.

Many organizations, including schools, instituted mentoring programs (Pence, 1995). However, within organizations, formal mentoring relationships exist more often than informal relationships. Carruthers (1993) suggest that this is “possibly due to the need for organisations to ensure that the culture of the organisation is perpetuated” (p. 14). Formal pairings help to ensure that the organization produces an appropriate number of mentors and proteges.

Although the nature of the mentoring dyad may vary, the mentoring relationship is important and key in socialization of new members of an organization. The goal of mentoring is to train people to do their jobs, rather than learning how to do a job by
watching someone else do it (Thody, 1993). The fundamental purpose of mentoring is learning (Zachary, 2000). In this vein, Zachary (2000) asserts, “when learning is not tended to, the mentoring process is reduced to a transaction, the integrity of the learning is compromised and the relationship is undermined” (p. 2). Therefore, experience is the force for understanding the learning relationship between mentor and mentee.

Gardiner, et. al. (2000) posit, “mentoring is lending personal and career support and not just giving the rules that are available about how to be successful” (p. 26). The experienced mentor provides his or her protégé with observation, discussion and reflection. The mentor observes the protégé and discusses those observations with him or her. Reflection is an introspective dialogue carried out in various forms (i.e. written or verbal) in order to stimulate questions, provoke the assessment of learning, and enable the integration of new learning (Zachary, 2000). Reflection is beneficial to the mentor as well as the protégé in that it gives the mentor an opportunity to reflect on his or her own challenges as well.

Gallwey (2000) suggests that this process of helping the protégé to reflect upon challenges be known as coaching. Coaching is a way of facilitating protégé learning and mobility. The concept is borrowed from the world of sports, where coaches work to elicit the best performance possible from members of a team. The coach must care for the individual as well as the outcomes. Rather than problem solving for the mentee, the coach “eavesdrops” on the mentee’s thinking process. Therefore, the coach’s job is “to help the person gain mobility toward his or her desired outcome” (p. 183).
**Mentoring in education.** Although a recognized institution in the corporate world, the practice of mentoring has not been as visible in the field of education. Although mentoring programs exist, “mentoring practices in educational administration are typically unintended and unsupported” (Funk and Fanchon, 1999, p. 88). While administrators’ need for mentoring relationships has been recognized the practice of mentoring remains largely on the periphery of education (Funk and Fanchon, 1999).

That said, typical mentoring relationships within the field of educational leadership share certain characteristics. Traditional models of mentoring have been based on an androcentric (specifically, white male middle class) perspective. This perspective can “perpetuate a monocultural perspective and scaffold for the reproduction of the status quo” (Rodriguez, 1995, p. 69). An androcentric perspective has in general characterized educational administration. Thus, mentoring in this context assumes the contours of this perspective. Further, this perspective has proven inadequate in many cases, particularly as individuals other than white males have entered into positions of school leadership.

As women have entered school leadership, they have experienced limited access to productive mentoring relationships, further limiting their access to school leadership positions. Essentially, the lack of mentoring and resultant low numbers of women in school administration limit the number of role models women can turn to when seeking positions in school administration. Typical concepts of mentoring have reflected hierarchical relationships where the balance of power is unequal (Gardiner, et. al., 2001). Funk and Fanchon inform (1999):

> Traditionally, females have not been a part of the networking and mentoring systems available to males and have not been socialized to operate in their work environment. (p. 87)
Teaching and learning relationships, which were previously hierarchical, are now reframed in more egalitarian ways (Mullen and Kealy, 1999). As the concept of mentoring is reframed, the notion of traditional one-on-one, hierarchical relationships is deconstructed. By reframing traditional notions of mentoring, these relationships can be more broadly defined such that mentoring roles are performed by several people simultaneously (Mullen and Kealy, 1999). This reframing of leadership “constitutes a decentralization of leadership (and power-based relationships) into more of a mentoring mosaic” (Mullen and Kealy, 1999, p. 191).

In order to accommodate the changing face of educational administration, traditional mentoring roles and relationships must necessarily change. Mentoring may mean many things when mentors are meeting protégé needs (Gardiner, et. al., 2000). When mentoring relationships are established, it is necessary to consider whom they benefit. (Gardiner, et. al., 2000). Often mentoring relationships fail to consider the importance of the connection between mentor and protégé. Such relationships should be characterized by mutual trust and respect (Playko, 1991). If there is no positive connection, an unhealthy relationship between mentor and protégé can result.

These considerations are particularly salient for individuals and groups traditionally excluded from school leadership and denied positive mentoring relationships. These relationships should acknowledge the unique needs of unique leaders. As Gardiner, et. al., (2001) suggest, “Administrators who are women, white and of color, are struggling to find their own voices as they bring their unique heritages to the bureaucracy of schools” (p. 26).
Effective mentoring is a learning process for all participants involved. Therefore, it will be beneficial to both the mentor and protégé. Playko (1991) offers, “mutual encouragement for reflective growth and development is essential for a mentor-protégé relationship” (p. 125).

Mentoring through the lens of feminist poststructuralism. Mentoring as examined via feminist poststructuralism further acknowledges that schools are situated within a larger context of race and gender. This perspective acknowledges that often mentoring for women is uncommon, and in instances where women do receive mentoring, the experience may be “debilitating rather than empowering” (Gardiner, et. al., p. 2). Within this perspective, it is assumed that traditional mentoring practice is hierarchical and not reciprocal. However, these typical notions have been challenged, as mentoring is reframed to be understood as “lending personal and career support and not just giving the rules that are available about how to be successful” (p. 26).

Although traditional mentoring relationships are commonly a dyad consisting of a mentor and a protégé, recent mentoring models also reflect various approaches to mentoring. As mentors work to meet the needs of their protégé’s, mentoring can take various forms and have varied meanings. Metaphors include mentor as coach, teacher, boss, parent, guide, peer, adviser, etc., (Gardiner, et. al, 2000). Such metaphors suggest the various roles that mentors assume within the mentoring relationship, with mentoring occurring in stages. Mentoring begins with the establishment of the relationship. A positive mentoring relationship should provide the protégé with the necessary guidance and support to lead the protégé to increased independence (Gardiner, et. al., 2000). However, a mentoring relationship should not just benefit the protégé, but the mentor as...
well. Galbraith and Zelenak (1991, p. 126, cited in Galbraith and Cohen) suggest that mentoring is a “powerful emotional and passionate interaction whereby the mentor and protégé experience personal, professional and intellectual growth and development” (p. 93).

Mentoring provides a supportive learning relationship, enabling the protégé to move toward greater professional independence, and in many cases, interdependence between mentor and protégé. The feminist poststructural perspective challenges the traditionally hierarchical nature of mentoring relationships, advancing a more equal relationship where both mentor and protégé can teach and learn. Gardiner, et. al., (2000) state that if mentoring has truly been beneficial to the protégé, likely “she has not been forced to disguise herself or fit into a gendered or racially acceptable notion of leader” (p. 196). More contemporary models support a nontraditional leader in becoming an effective administrator employing a leadership style in keeping with one’s own philosophy and experiences, rather than perpetuating the knowledge claims that a white, male androcentric leadership approach is the one best way.

*Portfolio Development*

Other professions (such as acting, advertising, modeling, photographers, architects, etc.) have long used portfolios to demonstrate individual’s talents and abilities (Hebert, Meek & Sarhan, 1998; Porter and Cleland, 1995). The term portfolio is a metaphor borrowed from artists, as educators can not visually represent their talents as artists do.
Several metaphors have been applied in portfolio development. The concept of portfolio as tool is a salient metaphor often applied to portfolio development. Portfolios are viewed as tools for reflection, inquiry and professional development (Walker de Felix, 2000). In administrative preparation, they are tools used to measure what graduate students are capable of doing. In administrator practice, they can be used as tools to measure instructional leadership, and to promote reflection.

A second, significant metaphor for portfolio development is portfolio as conversation. Walker de Felix (2000) suggests, "in the scholarly literature, the conversation appears from the time that students are taught how to prepare the portfolio until they receive feedback that they have achieved the final outcomes" (p. 5).

Portfolios demonstrate capabilities across a range of skills, beliefs and knowledge (Milstein, 1996). The portfolio also demonstrates an individual's development over time (Walker de Felix, 2000). Portfolio use is a relatively recent phenomenon in the educational realm. Although there is a good deal of belief in the utility of portfolios, they are still in the early stages of development.

**Portfolios in education.** Constant change is the new educational norm. Schools must be learning organizations and communities in which change is constant, as a vehicle for continued growth (Deitz, 2001). Portfolio development provides administrators the opportunity to examine change within the school context and the forum to deliberate about the impact of change on the learning community and the effectiveness of his or her leadership in managing such change.

Portfolio development is often aligned with a particular set of standards. Walker de Felix (2000) states, "the standards that guide portfolio development set clear targets
for instruction and learning" (p. 3). In addition, connecting standards to portfolio
development is critical to assessment. Standards and expectation provide opportunities
for reflection within the portfolio (Deitz, 2001). Pearson (1993, as cited in Deitz, 2001)
suggests that standards serve the following purposes:

- Direct momentum: standards provide a target and act as milestones which
  provide guidance en route to that target.
- Indicate performance: standards act as a yardstick that measures and defines
  progress.
- Clarify transactions, responsibilities, and rights: standards set boundaries for
  the accountability function and role of the standards in the learning and
  assessment cycle, including who will use the standards and how they will use
  them (Deitz, 2001, p.13).

Portfolios are used in a variety of educational milieus, including student
portfolios, teacher portfolios, and administrator portfolios. Portfolios are also used in
some administrator preparation programs. In order to prepare students, a growing
number administrative preparation programs are utilizing portfolio development courses
as part of the curricula (Milstein, 1996). In some doctoral programs, the portfolio has
actually replaced the dissertation requirement (Milstein, 1996).

In addition to the abovementioned, portfolios also have usefulness in higher
education as well. In 1991, it was proposed that college and university faculty develop
portfolios as a way to look at improving their teaching (Seldin, 1991, as cited in Hebert,
et. al., 1998). In higher education (as well as other settings) the three proposed uses of administrative portfolios include: assessment and development, performance evaluations, and personnel selection (Hebert, et. al., 1998).

**Purpose.** Portfolios have a wide range of purposes. Therefore, the portfolio purpose should be clarified at the beginning of the process (Deitz, 2001). Portfolios provide the means to document outcomes of professional practice, as well as documenting reflective practice and growth (Anson, 1994; Elbow, 1994). The main purpose of the administrative portfolio is to help the administrator gain a fuller understanding of his or her professional self. Improving administrator practice is also a significant purpose. Other purposes include personal and professional growth and reflection.

In general, there are three categories of portfolios. Portfolios are used to demonstrate professional/academic growth, for purposes of assessment/evaluation, and for career advancement, (Brown and Irby, 2001; Brown and Irby, 1996).

The process and product of portfolio development is recursive. As an assessment tool portfolios allow for the development of reflection and, therefore, improvement. Portfolios are also likely to enhance career advancement “as benchmarks designating development and professional growth are documented each year” (Brown and Irby, 1996, p. 1). Career advancement will also be enhanced as significant growth and development accomplishments are documented and included (Brown and Irby, 1996).

**Professional development portfolio.** Professional development has as its goal to improve leadership practice within schools. The professional portfolio focuses on educational standards and building leadership capacity (Brown & Irby, 2001). The
professional portfolio is "a purposeful collection of materials - documents, abstracts, certificates, letters, work samples, scores, etc. (Yerkes, Weikle, & Twitty, 1995, p.11).

The portfolio for professional or academic growth has an emphasis on self-assessment and is primarily for personal use. Although it is often not submitted for evaluation, in some cases, administrators work with peer groups to give and receive feedback on the portfolio. The professional portfolio demonstrates the requisite knowledge and experience necessary to support an application for a position. Typically, no evaluation or value judgement is assessed (other than possible peer coaching) in portfolios developed for professional or academic growth (Brown & Irby, 2001).

Summative evaluation portfolio. The portfolio for the purpose of summative evaluation is subjected to external assessment of principal effectiveness based on the content (Brown & Irby, 2001; Elbow, 1994; White, 1994). The purpose of the evaluation portfolio is to “present concrete evidence that their leadership performance meets or exceeds district expectations and results in positive outcomes for students, teachers, and the community” (Brown & Irby, 2001, p. 36).

The evaluation portfolio has significant implications for leadership practice. School leaders have increased breadth and depth of responsibilities. School leaders are accountable for teacher and student performance and school improvement (Brown & Irby, 2001, 1996). Current leadership evaluation methods are inadequate for assessing the broad span of leadership tasks faced by school administrators. The evaluation portfolio is an attempt to achieve effective assessment of leadership practice. Brown and Irby (2001) assert, “the evaluation portfolio fosters school improvement because the
reflection inherent in the portfolio assists the leader in informing his or her practice.”

The value of the portfolio as an assessment tool will be revisited in the section on assessment.

**Career advancement portfolio.** The career advancement portfolio is different from the other two kinds of portfolios. The career advancement portfolio is helpful for the pursuit of leadership positions and promotions (Brown & Irby, 1995). This type of portfolio is prepared with the intent to present oneself as a viable candidate for a particular position. Brown and Irby (2001) suggest,

> a thoughtful, well-organized portfolio gives interviewers important information about the candidate’s leadership strengths, professional values and ethics, problem-solving ability, organizational and communication ability, and objectivity regarding self that might not otherwise be revealed in an interview situation. (p. 46)

The career advancement portfolio also presents the candidate in ways not readily apparent with the traditional resume or vita. The career advancement portfolio also helps to present the candidate in ways that will enable him or her to stand out from others. Brown and Irby (2001) suggest several benefits of the career advancement portfolio including: candidates stand out from others and come to mind more easily after all interviews are conducted, the information presented in the portfolio provides significant information about the candidate that otherwise would not be provided, and the portfolio gives insights into the applicant that provide a closer opportunity to determine if the applicant will fit well into the campus team, culture, and community (p. 47-48).
Unlike the other two kinds of portfolios, reflective comments are not necessarily included in the career advancement portfolio (Guaglione & Yerkes, 1998). The materials that are included in this type of portfolio are typically specific to a particular position.

Content. In terms of content, teacher and administrator portfolios should contain primary and secondary documents. Primary documents are materials from administrator practice. Secondary documents are materials that demonstrate active, critical thinking (Anson, 1994). These secondary materials are vital if portfolios are to be considered for assessment rather than just a collection of papers.

Anson (1994) suggests, that teacher (as well as administrator) portfolios may contain: a.) Contents for assessment and purpose agreed upon by an outside body; b.) Contents that demonstrate administrative practice in action (both engagement in practice and reflection upon that practice) and; c.) Portfolios may contain several smaller portfolios, with different content intended for different audiences. In this vein, the portfolio invites in different audiences and compels the author to think about and write to those audiences. The portfolio may include documents with a target audience of staff, superiors, and or colleagues. These multiple, varied audiences force the author to think about and reflect on his or her style of response (Anson, 1994).

Yancey (1994) suggests that there are several supports necessary for effective portfolio development. These include adequate preparation time, resources, and guidance. The key elements in portfolio development include setting goals, determining outcomes, and learning/reflection (Deitz, 2001). The following section explicates the use of these various kinds of portfolios for school administrators.
Principal Portfolios

Although portfolios are not new to teachers (and their students), portfolio development by school leaders is relatively new. An administrator portfolio is a demonstration of one’s professional self (Guaglianone & Yerkes, 1998).

Principal portfolios provide benefits similar to those provided by teacher and student portfolios. Based on the assumption that portfolios effectively assist teachers and students in becoming more reflective and critical, it is logical that administrators would benefit from portfolio development as well. Nevertheless, many administrators may be hesitant to complete a portfolio, feeling that they just don't have time for one more task. Brown & Irby (2001) suggest, "portfolio development requires much thought, time, and effort" (p. 23). However, portfolios should be viewed as a tool to help administrators become more efficient. Deitz (2001) states, "the school leader's portfolio combines aspects of the learning portfolio and the assessment portfolio and as such builds one's capacity for leadership" (p. xvi).

For maximum effectiveness, portfolios should be adapted to suit the administrator's needs, to the extent possible (Anson, 1994). Administrator portfolios integrate a number of administrator functions, including: planning, goals setting, and professional learning. Deitz (2001) asserts,

The school leader's portfolio provides a framework for initiating, planning, and facilitating ongoing professional growth while connecting to the purpose and focus of the school leader, the school and the school community at large. (p. xv)

The process itself helps to focus the administrator on specific goals. To this end, the portfolio participants should have a clear definition of leadership. The administrator portfolio demonstrates evidence of the leader's effectiveness. An administrator portfolio
contains evidentiary support (via artifacts and school data) of attentiveness to state standards, or student outcomes (Deitz, 2001). Brown and Irby (2001) inform,

Principals who have been involved with the development of portfolios report that the processes of selecting viable samples of work and writing accompanying reflections have been beneficial in denoting areas of needed improvement, assisting in maintaining focus and providing new perspectives and creative insights. (p. 27)

Due to increasing demand for accountability and the changing role of school leaders, professional development has assumed greater importance. Administrator portfolios have the capacity to address issues of measurement in a way that attends to calls for increased accountability (Anson, 1994). Increased professional development can be demonstrated in a professional development portfolio. Brown and Irby (2001) state,

Leadership positions have been redefined, greatly affecting the knowledge and skills that school leaders must possess to fulfill the multiple roles as vision creator, instructional leader, staff development, community relations builder, and resource broker. (p. 25)

Although there are several purposes for portfolios, in general portfolio development involves: (1) selecting relevant artifacts (carefully selected documents that reflect attainment of or progress toward established criteria); (2) writing a reflection that describes, analyzes, and assesses the leadership experiences illustrated by the artifacts; and (3) a written plan for future actions based on the assessment and analyses (Brown & Irby, 2001).

Reflection. In addition to promoting instructional leadership and synthesis of meaning, portfolios also increase reflection (Milstein, 1996). The process of reflection is an important component of portfolio development. Principals who are reflective recognize the need for self-assessment (Brown & Irby, 2001). In addition, reflective principals model this behavior and coach their staff in reflection techniques.
Portfolios often utilize reflection as a means to assess the leader's effectiveness. Portfolio development provides opportunities for reflection and helps leaders to organize their thoughts (Deitz, 2001). Effective administration is reflective in its approach to decision-making and problem solving (Yerkes, et. al., 1995). In portfolio development, reflection may inspire revision, which may in turn inspire new thinking (Anson, 1994). Yerkes, et. al., (1995) state,

[T]he collection and decision-making process forces an applicant to evaluate his or her work and reflect on what has been accomplished, how others have responded, what has been learned and where experience gaps lie. (p. 11)

Brown and Irby (2001) suggest the following attributes of reflective principals:

▪ View self-assessment and reflection as priorities for school improvement.
▪ Recognize that external and internal challenges result in growth.
▪ Intentionally engage in activities aimed at challenging current beliefs and practice and expanding understanding.
▪ Understand that change is inevitable.
▪ Recognize that chaos often accompanies change.
▪ Share understandings with colleagues (p.27).

Assessment. The portfolio can be a useful tool for assessment. However, traditional forms of letter grade assessment are not the best assessment tools for evaluating portfolios (Milstein, 1996). "Portfolios bring teaching, learning and assessment together as mutually supportive activities, as opposed to the artificiality of conventional tests" (White, 1994, p. 27). With the increased demands for accountability, subjective, or informal forms of evaluation may be inadequate as well (Hebert, et. al., 1998). Hebert and colleagues (1998) posit,
Tightened budgets, declining enrollments, and increased public demand for accountability in education underscore the importance of excellent performance in these and other activities - and hence, development of a better system for assessing performance. (p. 15)

If portfolios are to be used for assessment, then they must be proven to have value as assessment tools (White, 1994). As an assessment tool portfolios have become more popular because they are useful for assessing without becoming entangled in the "hard issue" of assessment (White, 1994). The evaluation portfolio specifically provides for an assessment of the administrator’s leadership practice. Brown and Irby (2001) inform,

The evaluation portfolio provides for principals and supervisors to collaboratively develop and agree on standards, expectations, goals and/or proficiencies to be evaluated, and it addresses those standards, expectations, goals, and/or proficiencies directly. (p. 37)

Elbow (1994) suggests, "[B]ecause of the genius of portfolios as collection devices that hold many pieces of writing, they give us much better validity than other structured or formal assessment procedures" (p. 44). Portfolios are an extremely personal form of assessment. Assessment identifies strengths and weaknesses (Hebert, et. al., 1998; White, 1994). Portfolio assessment should be continuous and meaningful, rather than a one-time final event (Milstein, 1996).

Advantages/Disadvantages. Brown and Irby (1996) note there are several advantages of administrator portfolios, irrespective of their purpose. Administrator portfolios reveal more about the individual being evaluated than a specific score on an evaluative checklist. Portfolios are much more personalized than more objective forms of evaluation. Portfolios encourage renewal and continued professional development, through reflection. Administrator portfolios offer more ownership for those being evaluated, as it is a document that they create. They provide administrators opportunities
to expand their goals and plans on certain projects. Lastly, portfolios are cost-efficient.

School districts can train their own personnel to conduct the evaluations, rather than hiring outside consultants, which can be costly.

While there are many advantages to portfolio development for school leaders, there are a few disadvantages as well. However, the advantages seem to outdistance the disadvantages. Brown and Irby (1996) do note that disadvantages to portfolio development are that they are significantly time consuming and judging portfolios can be very subjective. However, training evaluators and utilizing scoring rubrics can alleviate some subjectivity.

Conclusion

The principalship is in a tenuous state. The roles and responsibilities of principals have expanded tremendously, while the numbers of interested candidates are shrinking. Standards provide a framework in which to understand the responsibilities of the principal in the atmosphere of accountability and the push for student achievement. The role of the principal has shifted from one of a manager to that of instructional leader. Knowledge about instructional leader behaviors is imperative if schools and their leaders are to be successful. Although the literature offers various definitions of instructional leadership, it is clear that specific sets of behaviors designed to improve student achievement are at the center of this concept.

While the principalship in general is being influenced by attrition and shifts in demographic diversity, nontraditional leaders remain an underrepresented group in school administration with the potential to bring specific talents to educational administration. Although women and minorities have at times been historically denied an education and
an opportunity to both, teach and lead this nation’s public schools, the changing demographics of society and the student population in particular, make it difficult to overlook them in filling positions of school leadership. The research suggests that women bring particular skills to instructional leadership, such as participatory, democratic decision making, and an ethic of care within leadership practice (Hurty, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1987), given their lengthy experiences as teachers prior to assuming school leadership positions. With this in mind, nontraditional leaders bring to educational leadership a unique set of talents and experiences, based both on their gender and race.

The Administrative Leadership Academy, within which the study’s main participant was involved, employed mentoring and portfolio development as two vehicles for professional development of early career principals. Professional support and development were important to instructional leadership. The mentoring component was significant for providing support to principals in light of the challenges that they face. This is particularly true for nontraditional leaders, who often have lacked access to necessary professional support. A feminist poststructuralist mentoring perspective was used to challenge traditional mentoring relationships.

Portfolio development, a second component of the ALA’s professional development activities is fairly new for administrators. Portfolios were used as tools for reflection and demonstration of administrative capacities. They were a tangible link between instructional leadership and standards-based measures.

Given the demand for instructional leadership within the scope of the principalship, the growing acceptance of standards-based measures, the growing diversity of student enrollment populations, and the need for a more diverse pool of school leaders,
this study sought to present an in-depth look at the preparation of a nontraditional leader enrolled in an Administrative Leadership Academy. By studying a nontraditional leader enrolled in an early career principal preparation program, this study attempted to provide illustration of the impact of race and gender on the developing administrative practice of a nontraditional leader.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is defined as “an umbrella concept…that help[s] understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption to the natural setting as possible” (Merriam, 1998, p. 5). Multiple qualitative epistemological perspectives work to frame this qualitative study. In the interpretivist perspective, reality is constructed through human interaction for the purpose of understanding people and how they interpret their worlds. Multiple realities are acknowledged in this perspective. A key purpose of the study was to understand the experiences of an African American female early career principal participating in the Administrative Leadership Academy. Additionally, interpretivist methodologies necessitate that the participants assist in constructing the inquiry. The participant in this case study assisted in constructing the inquiry by working collaboratively with the researcher. The information gained from this study will help to increase awareness of the challenges faced by this population in order to promote change.

This population was an important one to study, as little research has been done on African American female principals. In addition, there are few numbers of African American female principals in positions of school administration. Situating the study epistemology in this way was significant for challenging dominant constructions of leadership in education.
A form of qualitative research, feminist methodology within the postmodern perspective has as its goal research that is not only on women, but also by and for women as well (Kirsch, 1999). Within feminist research it has been suggested that there is a particular dynamic that occurs between women researchers and women participants (Johnson-Bailey, 1999). Many women enjoy being interviewed by women interviewers (Phoenix, 1994). It is also assumed that there is a unique empathic dynamic that occurs when Blacks interview Blacks (Johnson-Bailey, 1999). Phoenix states,

The argument that Black interviewers are best used for Black interviewees is sometimes rooted in a realist epistemology, the central tenet of which is that there is a unitary truth about respondents and their lives which interviewers need to obtain. (p. 213)

However, methodologically careful thought should be given to always having Black interviewers interview Black respondents. This could lead to further marginalization, and perpetuate the thought that only Blacks can research Blacks.

Nevertheless, there is some value to interviewer and respondent having race and gender in common. Johnson-Bailey (1999) suggests that in her study, race and gender were uniting forces, which bridged her relationship to the participants. Race and gender were uniting forces in the study because of similar experiences having to do with race and gender shared by the participants and the researcher. Johnson-Bailey (1999) reports that the respondents in her study spoke of race in a way that assumed the researcher shared their knowledge of racial difference.

Although no single methodology is feminist in itself, feminist scholars have recently begun to articulate feminist principles of research. Feminist research
distinguishes itself from other research methodologies by virtue of a feminist ethical and theoretical framework (Kirsch, 1999). Lather (1991) posits, “to do feminist research is to put the social construction of gender at the center of one’s inquiry” (p. 17).

Many feminist researchers engage in qualitative research and therefore, feminist methodology is a perspective with which to conduct research that is qualitative. The rationale for engaging in qualitative research that has a feminist perspective is that like feminist researchers, “qualitative researchers typically situate the work in its historical and cultural context and acknowledge the complexity and diversity of human experience” (Kirsch, 1999).

There are many characteristics common to feminist research. These characteristics include a commitment to:

- Ask questions that acknowledge and validate women’s experiences;
- Collaborate with participants as much as possible so that growth and learning can be mutually beneficial, interactive, and cooperative;
- Analyze how social, historical and cultural factors shape the research site as well as participants’ goals, values and experiences;
- Analyze how the researchers’ identity, experience, training, and theoretical framework shape the research agenda, data analysis and findings;
- Correct androcentric norms by calling into question what has been considered “normal” and what has been regarded as “deviant”;
- Take responsibility for the representation of others in research reports by assessing probably and actual effects on different audiences; and
Acknowledge the limitations of and contradictions inherent in research data, as well as alternative interpretations of that data (Kirsh, 1999, p. 5).

Situating one’s self methodologically is a key component of a feminist methodology. Kirsch (1999) underscores the importance of methodological situating, stating its purpose is “to reveal to readers how our research agenda, political commitments, and personal motivations shape our observations in the field, the conclusions we draw, and the research reports we write” (p. 14). This is a way to engage in ethical research practice. Situating oneself acknowledges the limitations in perspective and allows the reader to understand how these limitations shape the researcher’s research agenda, data collection in the field and the conclusions drawn.

Related to situating one’s self, Fletcher (1999) also underscores the feminist research tradition of telling the story behind the story. This is important to research, particularly feminist research, due to the recognition that “all research is value-laden and cannot escape being influenced by the history, life situation, and particular worldview of the researcher” (p. 7).

Feminist standpoint theory explicates the importance of “writing oneself into the research” (Kirsch, p. 14). Feminist standpoint (also known as women’s voice) research is based upon an interpretivist perspective (Fletcher, 1999).

[S]tandpoint theory holds that people who occupy marginalized positions in a culture acquire a “double perspective”—often a matter of survival—and, subsequently, understand the workings of both the dominant culture and their own marginal one. Thus, the reasoning goes, people who occupy marginal positions in a culture can offer more insightful, more complete interpretations of that culture than those who do not possess the double perspective (Kirsch, 1999, p. 15).
By virtue of the dual perspective, participants assist in constructing the inquiry, particularly related to providing insight to researchers and others unfamiliar with both perspectives.

Feminist standpoint is unique and distinct from other qualitative approaches in its sensitivity to issues of power (Fletcher, 1999). Feminist standpoint suggests that knowledge is based on one’s historical, cultural and/or social location (Kirsch, 1999; Collins 1990). Feminist research is therefore distinct from other research traditions in its “deliberate focus on gender combined with an emphasis on emancipatory goals” (Kirsch, p. 7). Thus, the focus remains on the ways in which knowledge reinforces power relationships between men and women (Fletcher, 1999). Research on women of color is particularly salient when viewed from this perspective. This is primarily due to the fact that the experiences of women of color have “only recently been considered worthy of study” (Kirsch, p. 9).

Inasmuch as the theoretical framework of this study includes an Afrocentric feminist epistemology (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Collins, 1990), a qualitative feminist methodology established by this framework was applied. The following discussion describes the details of the qualitative methodology to be employed in the study.

Research Design

This section illustrates the particulars of the qualitative research design for this study. Included in this detailed description of the methodology are specifics about participant selection, gaining access, data collection, coding and analysis techniques and attention to trustworthiness and ethics.
**Case Study.** The research design was that of an instrumental case study. Stake (1995) defines this as case study that is instrumental to gaining an understanding of something else (p. 7). Case study has an important role in advancing knowledge in a particular field (Merriam, 1998). Although the unit of analysis was the single case, it was important for the information that can be learned about the experiences of the participant in the Entry Year Program. Merriam (1998) elaborates, “a case study might be selected for its very uniqueness, for what it can reveal about a phenomenon, knowledge we would not otherwise have access to” (p. 33).

Qualitative case studies can be particularistic, descriptive and heuristic (Merriam, 1998). They are particularistic in that case studies focus on a particular phenomenon or situation. Generation of rich, thick descriptive data and narrative makes case studies descriptive. Lastly, they are heuristic because they “illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, p. 30).

**Cross Case Analysis.** The instrumental case study was situated in the context of a larger two-year, in-depth study. Three early career principals enrolled in the Administrative Leadership Academy: Entry Year Program (ALA: EYP) were studied to learn how the academy interventions and supports impacted early year principals’ administrative practice across race, gender, school level, and geographic location. Data from each case were analyzed and compared with the other cases in the study. Merriam (1998) states, cross case studies involve “collecting and analyzing data from several cases and can be distinguished from the single case study that may have subunits or subcases embedded within” (p. 40).
Gaining Access

Access in this case was gained through the Administrative Leadership Academy. Participants were purposefully identified based on their race, gender and demographic region. Patton (1990) states, “the logic and power of purposeful samples lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth” (p.169). The researcher was specifically interested in the leadership experiences of African American women in leadership and therefore, requested a case in which an African American female principal would be the subject of the study. Merriam (1998) states, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). Because the larger study involved a comparison across demographic regions (urban, suburban, and rural), and school levels (elementary, middle, high), the research team hypothesized that an African American participant would most likely be practicing in an urban area. Therefore, participant selection was focused on urban areas of the state where there are Entry Year principals. The primary participant in this dissertation study was an African American female elementary school principal. This participant was employed in a large, urban school district in the Midwest. The participant was selected because of her position as an African American female school administrator, as well as for her involvement with the Entry Year Program component of the ALA.

The participant for this study was identified by her mentor. Her mentor was involved with the ALA as a mentor the year previous to the commencement of the study. She was asked to identify a participant who fit the demographic requirements (African American female) and was involved with the program. The participant and her mentor
both agreed to participate in this study. The researcher contacted both the mentor and protégé to introduce the study to them and request their participation. The researcher explained her intent to conduct interviews with key informants, to attend meetings (including ALA regional meetings), and observe the participant in various contexts. Key informants were defined as individuals who had experienced the participant’s leadership in various ways. These informants included a teacher, a paraprofessional, a parent and two of the participants colleagues involved with the ALA:EYP. In addition, the district superintendent was invited to participate in the study on numerous occasions, however, this individual never responded to the researcher’s repeated contacts. Given the size of the district and the scope of his responsibilities, demands on his time were significant.

Each informant and participant was informed that her participation was voluntary and that any information provided would be kept confidential. The participant and her mentor agreed to participate in the study and completed consent forms (Appendix B) indicating their desire to participate in the study.

The researcher explained the study and her intentions to interview a number of key informants involved with the participant and her leadership. The researcher interviewed several other individuals who have experienced the participant’s leadership, including a teacher, a parent, and a paraprofessional. The researcher explained the research and methodology and intentions to interview these persons. The researcher informed all informants that their information was voluntary and confidential.

Sample Bias

Several factors may have contributed to sample bias. As there are few African American female principals involved with the ALA, the participant was purposively
selected. The sample was further constrained because the larger study is a cross case analysis of ALA early career principals across several demographics, including, race, gender, school level and geographic location. These constraints restricted the pool of potential participants. Because the research suggests that many African American principals are located in urban areas, the research team focused on locating the participant from an urban center, rather than suburban or rural geographic areas.

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from multiple sources. This was done to both provide a fuller understanding of the experiences of the participant as well as to triangulate the data sources. Triangulation, the practice of relying on multiple methods, was an important qualitative research practice for ensuring trustworthiness of a study (Glesne, 1999). Stake (1995) terms this methodological triangulation. The following qualitative methods were employed for data collection: interviews, observations, and document analysis.

The primary source of data collection was in-depth semi-structured and informal interviews. Stake (1995) suggests that the interview “is the main road to multiple realities” (p. 64). Qualitative interviewing is not highly structured for the most part (Merriam 1998). Utilizing highly structured interviews may be problematic in qualitative research. As Merriam (1998) further explicates, structured interviews are difficult in qualitative research because “rigidly adhering to predetermined questions may not allow you to access participants’ perspectives and understandings of the world” (p. 74). Interviews that are less structured allow the respondent to describe his/her experiences in their own way.
Interviews. Interviews were conducted with the early career principal (Appendix C) and her mentor (Appendix C), a teacher (Appendix D), a Parent Partner/district paraprofessional (Appendix E), and a parent (Appendix E). Interviews were conducted at regular intervals. Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

The research team designed the initial interview protocols. Protocols were designed based on participant observations of various ALA meetings. Glesne (1999) states, “In qualitative research, the experience of learning as participant observer often precedes interviewing and is the basis for forming questions “ (p. 69). Questions were semi-structured and grouped according to several categories that corresponded with the components of the Administrative Leadership Academy. Interview questions were designed to reveal the early career principal’s administrative practice and elicit information about overall experience as an administrator as well as experiences with mentoring, portfolio development, reflective practice and other professional development. Additional interview protocols were designed based on themes and patterns, emerging from information provided by participants in previous interviews (Appendix F).

In addition to individual interviews, a focus group interview was conducted (Appendix G). The focus groups consisted of an African American female early career principal, and an African American female ALA mentor within the participant’s region. The purpose of the focus group interview was to investigate the experiences of other African American female principals employed within the same district, and involved in
the ALA:EYP, in order to compare these experiences with the participant. Patton (1990) clarifies, “the object is to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others” (p. 335).

**Observations.** Observation data were collected to gain fuller understanding. Glesne (1999) describes participant observation in a research setting “the researcher carefully observes, systematically experiences, and consciously records in detail the many aspects of a situation” (p. 46). Participant observation implies both involvement and detachment (Tedlock, 2000). As a method of data collection, observations were used to triangulate findings. Merriam (1998) suggests “they are used in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis to substantiate the findings” (p. 96). Observations can be used to check the information provided in interviews (Patton, 2002). Observation data is also important for foregrounding the context, as well as behaviors or incidents that may be relevant for subsequent interviews (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995).

Observation data were recorded in a field note journal. Field notes contained descriptive data, direct quotes where appropriate, data that reflects the researcher’s feelings and experience as observer, interpretive and analytic data (Patton, 2002; Glesne, 1999). As Patton (2002) notes, “field notes are the fundamental database for constructing case studies and carrying out thematic cross-case analysis in qualitative research” (p. 305).

Participants were observed in a variety of contexts, including regional Administrative Leadership Academy meetings, mentor meetings, leadership team meetings, faculty meetings. Observation data included: the physical setting, participants, activities and interactions, conversations, etc. (Merriam, 1998, p. 97-98).
**Document Analysis.** Documents and other records contain rich information about the culture of an individual or organization (Patton, 2002). Data collection included the collection and analysis of pertinent documents. Documents served to ensure the trustworthiness of interviews and observations (Glesne, 1999). Documents also provided demographic, historical and contextual data (Glesne, 1999; Merriam, 1998). Materials and artifacts can illuminate the gap between what people say and what they do. Patton (2002) suggests that document analysis “provides a behind-the-scenes look at the program that may not be directly observable and about which the interviewer might not ask appropriate questions without the leads provided through documents” (p. 307).

The three major categories of documents for analysis are: public records, personal documents, and physical materials (Merriam, 1998). Documents were recognized as primary or secondary sources. Primary sources are documents in which the originator is recounting firsthand their experiences. Secondary source documents are second hand reports of a phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). Documents were analyzed for content.

The following documents were collected and analyzed during the study: principal portfolios, school documents, meeting agenda, memos, school newsletters, school report cards, school artifacts, newspaper articles, and proficiency data. Visual artifacts of the physical environment such as bulletin boards and hallway decorations, were collected/recorded as well.

**Data Analysis**

Glesne (1999) defines data analysis as “the process of organizing and storing data in light of your increasingly sophisticated judgements...of the meaning finding interpretations that you are learning to make about the shape of your study” (p.132).
Data analysis was an ongoing process. Therefore, data collection and analysis were concurrent activities. Merriam (1998) suggests that data collection and analysis are to be simultaneous. Simultaneous collection and analysis allowed the researcher to both shape and focus the study (Glesne, 1999; Merriam, 1998). NUD*IST, a qualitative data analysis program, was used for computer assisted analysis (QSR NUD*IST 4, 1997).

Due to the fact that the study was situated within the context of a larger study, at times data analysis was collaborative. Thus, at times the research team analyzed themes and codes emerging from the study. This was done to provide a fuller perspective of the data. Collaborative data analysis was beneficial in that it interrupted the notion of the research as individualistic knower (Demerath, 2001, class note). The intellectual tension produced in collaborative data analysis was useful in the bringing forth of new ideas.

**Coding.** Preliminary coding of interview transcripts and field notes identified emergent themes and theoretical framework. Coding was done on two levels: identifying information about the data, and interpretive constructs related to data analysis (Merriam, 1998). Although coding is initially intuitive, Merriam (1998) suggests that coding is also systematic and is informed by: the study’s purpose, the investigator’s orientation and knowledge, and meanings made explicit by the participants themselves.

Glesne (1999) suggests therefore that interviewing (and other data collection methods) not be limited to data acquisition. She states, “it is also a time to consider relationships, salience, meanings and explanations—analytic acts that not only lead to new questions, but also prepare you for the more concentrated period of analysis that follows the completion of data collection” (p. 84).
Preliminary codes were developed along emergent themes (Glesne, 1999). A codebook was developed (Appendix H) in order to “facilitate developing and working with a coding scheme” (Glesne, 1999, p. 136).

Several tools of analysis including thick description, narrative vignette, assertions supported by evidentiary warrant were employed (Erickson, 1986). In addition, the researcher searched for disconfirming evidence to enhance the trustworthiness of the study.

Trustworthiness

Establishing validity of qualitative research must include techniques that ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the study. As Merriam (1998) suggests,

[R]igor in a qualitative research derives from the researcher’s presence, the nature of the interaction between researcher and participants, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perceptions and rich, thick description (p. 151).

Although generalizability is an outcome of positivistic research, it is not a concern in qualitative methodology. Stake (1995) notes, “the real business of case study is particularization, not generalization” (p. 8). Transferability, the transfer of authority to the reader, who decides whether or not the research applies to or has pertinence to his/her situation, is more appropriate than generalizability for qualitative research. Thick description is a tool which allows for transferability, by allowing “the reader to enter the research context” (Glesne, 1999, p. 32).

Similarly, positivist uses of reliability are inapplicable in qualitative research. Qualitative research is based on the premise that data is collected in relationships, thus no two researchers will see or experience a researched phenomenon in the same manner (Lather, 2000, class note).
**Triangulation.** Stake (2000) states, “triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (p. 443). Utilizing multiple data collection techniques helps strengthen each type of data collection and decreases the weaknesses of any single approach (Patton, 2002). Multiple methods were triangulated to ensure rigorousness of the study. Within an interpretivist perspective, triangulation served to both diffuse and create multiple stories such that a more complicated story emerges (Lather, 2000, class note). Data collection included several different methods (interviews, observations, document analyses, prolonged engagement). These various methods were triangulated against one another in order to present research that is trustworthy and credible.

Glesne (1999) further explicates triangulation as “the use of multiple data-collection methods, multiple sources, multiple investigators, and/or multiple theoretical perspectives” (p. 32). In this vein, the researcher employed many of the abovementioned triangulation strategies. In terms of multiple data collection methods, several methods were employed, including interviews, participant observation, document analysis and prolonged engagement.

With respect to multiple sources, the participant as well as several key informants including: a teacher, parent, a paraprofessional, and mentor were interviewed in order to present a rich, thick description of the participant’s administrative practice in terms of ALA as well as demographic factors (race and gender). A focus group of similarly situated principals (African American female early career principals and mentor) in the participant’s district was conducted as well to enhance information gained from multiple sources.
Given that this study is a part of a larger cross case study, the triangulation strategy of multiple investigators was a built in component of the study (Stake, 1995) . Although each investigator was responsible for a particular case, the cases were analyzed in comparison to one another. The information gleaned from each case was contrasted with and against one another to again provide a richer understanding of the affects of the ALA program across race, gender, demographic location and school level.

Similar to the utilization of multiple investigators, multiple theoretical perspectives were built into the study. Black feminist theory and feminist poststructural theory was employed to explicate and understand various components of the study.

**Prolonged engagement.** This study took place over the course of a year and a half. During this time the researcher established rapport and trust with the participant(s). An extended period of time in the field permitted the researcher an opportunity to establish rapport with the participant and key informants, as well as gain in-depth understanding of the participant’s culture and experiences. The researcher attended bimonthly regional Academy meetings from December 2001 through June 2003. In addition, the researcher attended monthly staff meetings at the participant’s school throughout the academic year (August through June). The researcher shadowed the participant bimonthly as well. Glesne (1999) alludes to the value of this, stating “extended time in the field [allows you] to develop trust, learn the culture, and check out your hunches” (p. 32).

**Persistent observation.** In addition to prolonged engagement in the field, the researcher engaged in persistent observation. Guba and Lincoln (1989) describe the purpose of persistent observation as “to add depth to the scope which prolonged engagement affords” (p. 237). The researcher therefore engaged in observation that was
persistent, in order to observe the participant in a variety of modes and contexts, to
generate a richer understanding. This richer understanding emanates from focused
observation of the participant, attending to the details “most relevant to [the] study
(Glesne, p. 151). Therefore, the participant was observed in staff meetings, regional
academy meetings and during the course of the school day with the researcher shadowing
her through daily activities.

Member checking. Member checking, the process of sharing interview transcripts,
and other data with participants in order to ensure that they are being accurately
represented (Glesne, 1999), was utilized as a triangulation strategy as well. The
participant and key informants were presented with interview transcripts for their input to
assure that they have been accurately represented.

Disconfirming data. The researcher searched for disconfirming evidence, data
that did not support the research hypothesis. Glesne (1999) terms this negative case
analysis, and defines it as a “conscious search for negative cases and unconfirming
evidence so that you can refine your working hypotheses” (p. 32). In addition to refining
the working hypothesis, negative case analysis provided more credibility to the research
in that it allowed for all the data to be honored.

Ethics

Qualitative research involved a greater level of interaction with participants than
does quantitative research. The methods were often highly personal and in-depth.
Qualitative research can also be more intrusive than quantitative methods (Patton, 2002).
Two major ethical issues for this study deal with confidentiality and informed consent.
Glesne (1999) suggests that, “participants have a right to expect that when they give you permission to observe and interview, you will protect their confidences and preserve their anonymity” (p. 122). In order to protect the privacy of the participant and key informants, pseudonyms were used. In addition, pseudonyms were used to refer to the name of the administrative preparation academy, the participant’s school, and other locations.

Informed consent can empower the research participants (Glesne, 1999). In addition, “[T]hrough informed consent, potential study participants are made aware (1) that participation is voluntary, (2) of any aspects of the research that might affect their well-being, and (3) that they may freely choose to stop participation at any point in the study” (Glesne, p. 116). For this study the participant and all key informants were asked to read and sign the consent form for Participation in Social and Behavioral Research.

Significance of the Study

Schools are increasingly being held accountable for student achievement. This necessarily means an expanded role for school leaders. While there are increased demands on schools, there are fewer people interested in undertaking the responsibility of school leadership. Individuals who don’t fit the traditional androcentric perspective of school leader have often been excluded from positions of leadership within schools and at district levels. Administrative preparation programs must address how to properly select a diverse pool of talented leaders and how to adequately prepare them to meet the challenges facing today’s schools.
CHAPTER 4
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This study investigated the impact of a race and gender on the leadership practice of an African American female elementary school principal participating in an Administrative Leadership Academy. Significant components of the Academy included mentoring and the development of an administrative portfolio. These components were considered key in providing effective professional development to novice school leaders. In addition to these data, other pertinent data were collected in order to better understand the influence of the ALA on leadership practice. This chapter begins with an overview of the research process, the larger context for the study, the district profile, and a profile of the Administrative Leadership Academy. In addition, data will support a discussion about portfolio development and mentoring as tools for development of instructional leadership practice. Finally, Chapter 4 ends with a brief conclusion and a preview of Chapter 5.

Overview of the Research Process

Data were collected in several ways during this study. Data collection included in-depth interviews with the principal, a teacher, the PTO president, a Parent Partner, and the mentor. In addition, a focus group interview consisting of other African American female administrators involved with the Administrative Leadership Academy was
conducted. Other data collection strategies included: shadowing the principal, document analysis of various artifacts (including newspaper articles, school newsletters, meeting agendas and handouts, portfolio components, etc.), and observations of the regional ALA meetings, and staff meetings conducted by the participant.

Interviews (including the focus group) were taped and transcribed. Interview transcripts, documents, field notes and artifact data were analyzed by the researcher utilizing NUD*IST, a method of cataloguing qualitative data.

**Larger Context of the Study**

In order to ensure understanding of the research, this study must be situated within the larger context of education and educational standards in the state in which the study was conducted. The larger context of this study must also include consideration of certain federal legislative mandates, specifically the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2002, the “No Child Left Behind Act”, in addition to subsequent related state requirements.

Further, the Academic Content Standards for the state play a part in shaping the larger context of the study. The State Department of Education mandates each school district in the state draft a strategic plan for the proper organization, administration and supervision of the school district\(^3\). The strategic plan guides the district, school and key stakeholders in the measurement of district operation or school performance to assure adequate progress toward short and long term goals, and the strategies necessary to achieve them.

\(^3\) Information about district strategic and continuous improvement plans was obtained from the State Department of Education website.
All school districts in this state are issued a report card that, in addition to providing data disaggregated for certain groups of students, including major racial and ethnic groups, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities and major income groups. The report card also provides information about how each school has done in meeting the proficiency standards for each subject area in which students are tested. Local report cards must be issued to parents and be available to the public.

In addition, school districts having report card ratings of: Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch and Academic Emergency are required to have Continuous Improvement Plans (CIP). Districts designated as Academic Watch or Academic Emergency must submit a copy of the CIP to the State Department of Education. Districts are encouraged to integrate strategic and continuous improvement planning.

*No Child Left Behind*

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was introduced in 2001 and signed into law in January of 2002 (No Child Left Behind Act, Pub.L.107-110, Jan. 8, 2002, 115 Stat. 1425). It became operational during the 2002-2003 academic year. This act serves as a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). No Child Left Behind provides federal resources to support state and local efforts to increase student achievement, particularly those students most at-risk. In fiscal year 2002, $22.1 billion were appropriated to support this reform.

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4 Detailed information about the school report cards will follow later in this chapter.

5 Information about No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was obtained from the Act, the Executive Summary of the Act, and from the Department of Education website in the state where the study was conducted.
A multitude of initiatives were enacted with this most recent reauthorization of ESEA. Title I of the Act traditionally provided supplemental aid for educating poor and disadvantaged children. No Child Left Behind mandates substantial changes to state and local educational systems, with respect to these students. While a series of significant reforms are mandated by this act, notably “the law requires state to ensure that within 12 years, all students (95%) in grades three through eight—including minority, low-income, disabled, limited –English-Proficient and other traditionally low performing groups—meet state standards for academic proficiency in reading and math” (State Department of Education website).

The business community played a significant role in shaping the contours of the No Child Left Behind Act. In this vein, the business community formed the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education (comprised of over 70 national business organizations and U.S. corporations), to facilitate support for the reauthorization of the ESEA. “The Coalition succeeded in having a tremendous impact on the legislation with most of its key recommendations incorporated into the new law” (Executive Summary, NCLB Act).

Along with provisions related to student achievement, there are several key reforms that characterize the act. These reforms address themselves to increased accountability for states, school districts and schools, adequate yearly progress for school districts, increased choices for parents and their students, more flexibility for states and local educational agencies (LEAs) in use of federal education dollars, and a stronger emphasis on reading.
Accountability. Increased accountability measures require that states implement systems of accountability covering all public schools and their students. These accountability standards include required yearly testing for all students in grades 3-8 and annual statewide progress objectives that ensure all groups of students attain proficiency within twelve years. Additionally, assessment results must be disaggregated by race, socioeconomic status, disability and limited-English proficiency, to ensure that no typically disadvantaged group is left behind.

Adequate Yearly Progress. School districts must demonstrate that schools have made adequate yearly progress (AYP). According to the State Department of Education, a school demonstrates adequate yearly progress by meeting the following conditions: at least 95% of students and 95% of each major subgroup of students take the assessment, and the percentage of all tested students and each of the subgroups are above the annual state goals; the percentage of all tested students and each of the subgroups at or exceeding the level of proficiency exceeds state goals using a three year rolling average; or the subgroup reduces the number of student not proficient by 10% annually and is making progress at or above the threshold on non-test indicators. In addition, the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency must meet or exceed state established minimum passing.

Increased choice. The No Child Left Behind Act provides parents and their students’ opportunities to choose schools that are performing well. Thus, Local Education Agencies (LEA) are required to provide students attending poor performing schools the opportunity to attend a better performing public school within the district,
including charter schools. In addition, LEAs must provide students attending persistently failing schools Title I funds to attain supplemental educational services, such as tutoring, from either public or private sector providers.

**Greater flexibility.** The Act allows states and districts wide flexibility in the use of their federal funds. This increased flexibility is extended to states and districts in exchange for strong accountability results. State and local school districts are provided flexibility to shift diverse federal program funds to match local priorities and achieve results. With the exception of “Title I” money, which is target at economically disadvantaged students, states and localities can decide how to allocate up to 50% of all other funds distributed by formula.

**Emphasis on Reading.** The language and funding provisions of No Child Left Behind demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring that all children are literate by the end of the third grade. The purpose as stated in the legislation is “to provide assistance to State educational agencies and local educational agencies in establishing reading programs for students in kindergarten through grade 3 that are grounded in scientifically based reading research, to ensure that every student can read at grade level or above not later than the end of grade 3.” The new Reading First initiative is a grant program that provides competitive 6-year awards to local education agencies to “support early language, literacy, and pre-reading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low income families” (No Child Left Behind Act). This support is provided to teachers through professional development and other support. The grant also provides assistance to state and local educational agencies for diagnostic, screening and classroom assessments, and in selecting and developing effective instructional materials.
The State Department of Education in the participant’s state defines the Academic Standards as clearly defined statements and/or illustrations of what all students, teachers, schools and school districts are expected to know and be able to do. The standards are typically discussed in terms of three different types: content standards, performance standards, and operating standards.

The content standards refer to the knowledge and skills that students should attain—what students should know and be able to do. Performance standards “are concrete statements of how well students must learn what is set out in the content standards” (State Department of Education website). Performance standards specify how competent or adept students should be at a particular demonstration of skill. Operating standards refer to the learning conditions. The State Department of Education explicates, “These can include specific expectations and additional guidelines for school districts, communities and families to use in creating the best learning conditions for meeting student needs and achieving state and local educational goals and objectives” (State Department of Education website).

The process for the development of the Academic Standards began in 1997. The Secondary and Higher Education Remediation Advisory Committee created a joint council to manage the realization of regulations. These boards worked to create a common agenda for education pre-k through 16. The Joint Council first established a draft of common expectations for what all students should know and be able to do upon
high school completion. The initial draft included student performance expectations in six content areas: the arts, English/Language Arts, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

In January 2000, The Governor of the State called for the creation of a Commission for Student Success. The Commission was charged with examining the Academic Content Standards, assessments, intervention strategies, accountability and alignment. In addition, the Governor appealed for creation of technology standards.

In March 2000, the Commission called for the State Department of Education to draft a set of academic content standards. The State Department of Education drafted a set of expectations for English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Currently, the Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies content standards are in place throughout the state. Standards for technology, foreign language and the arts are in process.

*School/District Report Cards*

School district report cards are generated for each district within the state, as well as each individual school. The information contained in the report card is intended to inform parents and teachers of student performance on the indicators of the proficiency tests. School districts’ performance on the report card is determined by the district’s academic rating system, ranging from excellent to academic emergency, based on the number of indicators met by the district. The 2003 State report card provides information

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*Information about Academic Content Standards was obtained from the website for the State Department of Education.*

*Information about School District Report Cards was obtained from the State Department of Education website.*
about the 2001-2002 Proficiency Test and demographic information based on 22 performance indicators. The number of performance indicators decreased from 27 to 22 on the 2002 report card, due to the elimination of the 12th grade proficiency test.

The report cards indicate how well the school and the district performed on the various proficiency exams, indicating the percentages of students who performed at or above the proficient level. The report card supplies information about how well students performed on the 4th, 6th and 9th grade proficiency exams. The report card provides the state standard passing percentage, compares the individual school with the results from the district, and compares the district’s performance with other similar districts. In the School Building Report Card, the district’s results are compared with the state’s results. Schools are rated based on how their students performed on the proficiency examination. The ratings are: Excellent- districts that have met 21 or 22 performance indicators; Effective- districts that have met 17-20 performance indicators; Continuous Improvement-districts that have met 11-16 performance indicators; Academic Watch- districts that have met 7-10 performance indicators; Academic Emergency- districts that have met 6 or fewer performance indicators.

Districts in Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch or Academic Emergency must create continuous improvement plans. These plans are required to demonstrate measurable goals and objectives for improving student achievement outcomes. The report card also contains information about the school’s students and the district’s teachers. This information is disaggregated according to race and gender. Other
demographic information such as student socioeconomic status, percentage of exceptional students, percentages of limited English proficiency students, student mobility rates, per pupil expenditures, and student attendance are presented.

These contextual concerns had direct implications for the Mitchell City School District and Range Elementary in particular. As a result of report card proficiency scores, the Mitchell City District has been in Academic Emergency. The district maintained this ranking throughout the duration of this study. Given the larger context of accountability provided by recent legislation, academic content standards provide guidance about what students should know and be able to do. In order to facilitate student learning, school administrators must strive to meet certain standards as well. In much the same way that academic content standards delineate what students should know and be able to do, the ISLLC standards provide guidelines for the knowledge, dispositions and performances of school leaders.

Standards for School Leaders

As stated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium is a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers. The consortium crafted a set of model standards for school leaders. These standards illuminate the set of knowledge, skills and dispositions school leaders must employ to be effective. In addition to academic content standards mandated by the state, this study examined the principalship with regard to how the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards (Appendix A) shape and influence leadership practice.

The six standards focus on learning and teaching as well as the importance of a productive learning environment. In particular, they frame the ways in which school
leaders should be attentive to: creating a vision within the school; promoting an environment conducive to student learning and staff growth; ensuring management for the organization; collaborating with families and others within the school community; acting with integrity and ethically; and understanding the larger context.

District Overview and School Setting

The Mitchell City School District is the fourth largest public school system in the state, with over 37,000 students. The average teacher/student ratio in the district is 19 to 1 in grades K-6. The district operates 47 elementary schools, seven junior high schools, eight senior high schools and 13 specialized learning centers. The district has developed a total of seven smaller learning communities in which every elementary, middle, high and specialized learning center is a member. The participant’s school is located within the Brown Area Learning Community. In addition, the district is a member of the Council of Great City Schools, which represents 50 of the largest urban school districts in the nation, with a combined enrollment of 7 million students. Mitchell City employs about 4,800 people.

The Mitchell City School District had a 2002-2003 general fund budget of $320.3 million. Approximately 60% came from state tax revenue, 37% from local tax revenue and 3% from other sources. Per pupil expenditures totaled $8,726 during the 2001-2002 academic year. This was slightly higher than the average per pupil expenditures in the state, however, the figure was nearly $1,000 lower than the average per pupil expenditures for similar districts within the state.

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8 Information about the school district was taken from the district website and the district and school report cards.
The Mitchell City School District was listed in Academic Emergency on the 2002 and 2003 report cards. The district has a fairly large population of low-income families and students as measured by free and reduced lunch percentages. During academic year 2002-2003, over 50% of students within the district received free or reduced lunch. Nearly 70% of the elementary students within the district received free and reduced lunch, in stark contrast to just over 25% of high school students and about half of middle school students. At Range Elementary, the participant’s school, nearly 90% of students received free or reduced lunch. Nearly 90% of students in the participant’s small learning community received free or reduced lunch during academic year 2002-2003. This learning community has the second highest percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch in the Mitchell City School District.

Student mobility rates varied somewhat between the district on the whole, the participant’s learning community, and the participant’s school. During academic year 2001-2002, the district’s student mobility rate was just over 30%. Within the Brown Learning Community mobility rates were about 40%. Similarly, within the Range Elementary School mobility rates remained at 40%.

Student mobility rates, coupled with the increased choice provision of the No Child Left Behind Act, significantly effected student enrollment in the Range Elementary School. Range lost nearly 100 students between academic year 2001-2002 and academic year 2002-2003. Student enrollment in 2001-2002 was 479. In academic year 2002-2003, student enrollment plummeted to 379. The principal often commented on the fact that enrollment decreased due to No Child Left Behind. The mandate provided greater choice to parents in terms of deciding where to send their children to receive a public
As a result of this increased choice, several parents decided to remove their children from Range Elementary and enroll them in other, better performing schools.

During academic year 2001-2002, student attendance at Range met the state average, at 93%. All of Range’s teachers were certified in their area and the teacher attendance rate was 100%, higher than the state average of 95.3%. Teacher salaries, however, were lower at Range than the state average. The average teacher salary at Range was $37,631, while the state average was $42,995. Range Elementary School had 34 female teachers and 6 male teachers during 2001-2002. The teaching staff was comprised of two ethnic groups. There were 13 African American and 27 White teachers in 2001-2002. On their 2002 school report card, Range Elementary School reported an enrollment of nearly 500 students. Of this total enrollment, 67 pupils had disabilities. Nearly the entire student population was made up of African American students. There were 13 Hispanic students and 13 White students enrolled. Slightly more males (247) were enrolled than females (219).

The Mitchell City School District is currently in a state of Academic Emergency, having only met 6 of the districts 22 indicators during academic year 2001-2002. Student proficiency scores at Range and within Mitchell City were below the state average for academic years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. However, considerable growth occurred on the reading and writing performance indicators over the course of three academic years. Table 4.1 illustrates the percentage of 4th and 6th grade Range Elementary who passed the various performance indicators on the proficiency exam.

The table demonstrates that overall, in the fourth grade scores improved during the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 school years. Conversely, scores decreased during this
same period for sixth grade students. Fourth grade scores increased nominally, or remained the same between the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years, with the exception of science, which significantly decreased. The sixth grade scores decreased between 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years, with the exception of reading and writing, which increased tremendously. The largest gain was in reading and writing for both 4th and 6th grade. While reading scores increased overall, other scores declined.

As the data will show, there was a strong culture of literacy within the school community. Increased student literacy likely positively influenced student reading and writing scores. However, the increased push for literacy may have been at the expense of other scores, such as citizenship, math and science. This is to say that given the strong culture of literacy within the school, teachers appear to have more strongly emphasized the importance of reading (and indirectly, writing), over other curricular matter in their instructional practice.

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<th>Range Elementary Proficiency Score Comparison</th>
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Table 4.1 Range Elementary Proficiency Score Comparison
Profile of Participant and Informants

The participant in this study, Ms. Sanders, served as the principal of Range Elementary, a K-6 elementary school in the Mitchell City School District for two and a half years. Several informants provided information to assist in this study, as well. They each had a relationship to the participant either as her mentor, a teacher, a Parent Partner, or president of the PTO.

Ms. Sanders. Ms. Sanders is an African American female. Sanders grew up in a middle class community in the Mitchell City area. She is one of six children, each of whom has at least two degrees. She served as an administrator in public schools for the past eleven years. She taught eight years before becoming an administrator. Sanders taught at both the high and middle school levels. She taught Language Arts and English. Sanders began her leadership at Range in January of 2001. She chose Range from a selection of three elementary schools in the district. She received an invitation to participate in the Administrative Leadership Academy through Ms. Jones, who also served as her mentor within another leadership development program.

Ms. Jones. Ms. Jones is a white female. She served as Sanders’ Academy mentor. However, they both worked in the Mitchell City School District, and Jones mentored Sanders through another district-affiliated program. Jones has been a curriculum coordinator within the district for the past three years. Jones served as a school administrator for five years.

Ms. Templeton. Mrs. Templeton is a white, female 51 year old teacher at Range Elementary. She has taught there for the past six years. Initially, she taught fifth grade
However, she is currently a third grade teacher. She personally requested to move from teaching fifth to the third grade. Mrs. Templeton has a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree in education.

**Mrs. Salley.** Mrs. Salley is an African American female. She is a Parent Partner at Range Elementary School. A Parent Partner is a paraprofessional employed by the district to work with children in need of extra academic support. Mrs. Salley tutored at-risk first grade students in reading and math on a one-to-one basis. She has worked at Range for the past four years.

**Mrs. Somerset.** Mrs. Somerset is an African American female. She is the president of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). She has volunteered at Range Elementary for the past 36 years. Her children have attended the school and currently she has three grandchildren attending Range.

**Dr. Green.** Dr. Green is an African American female elementary principal in the Mitchell City School District. She completed her first year in the ALA at the conclusion of this study. Dr. Green earned a Ph.D. in education from a local university. She was a focus group participant.

**Ms. Payne.** Ms. Payne is an African American female. A former Mitchell City elementary school principal, she is currently employed as a mentor in the Mitchell City School District. Ms. Payne has participated in the ALA:EYP since the program’s inception. In addition to being a district mentor, she is a mentor in the Academy. Ms. Payne was a focus group participant.
Profile of the Administrative Leadership Academy: Entry Year Program

As described earlier in Chapter 2, the Administrative Leadership Academy operated throughout the large Midwestern state in which this study was conducted. The Academy began in 1997 when representatives from four state universities received grants to pilot three early career professional development programs for principals. These pilots focused on exploring ways in which the Department of Education might support early career principals.

In 1999, the three pilot projects consolidated and formed a statewide network to further the work. This partnership, comprised of practitioners and higher education faculty organized into five regions.

In 2000, the State Department of Education provided grants to the five regions to provide this program. The program was designed to address the needs of administrators in the beginning of their careers. Principals or assistant principals in their first year of administrative service who held a two-year provisional principal license and completed a minimum of 120 school days in an academic year were eligible to participate in the Academy. Principals who had been issued administrative certificates and were in the first few years of their career in administration were eligible to participate in the Academy on a space-available basis.

The distinction between administrator certificate and license is made due to the development of new state standards for licensure. Licensure standards are knowledge and performance based. The standards for licensure are therefore more closely integrated
with administrator standards. In the state at instant, the shift is swiftly being made from certification to licensure (for teachers and administrators) as a vehicle for eligibility to teach and/or serve as instructional leader in schools.

The Academy assisted early career principals in improving instructional leadership knowledge, dispositions and performances. The tools of mentoring and portfolio development were significant to assisting these protégé principals in transitioning to their new roles. Several goals facilitated this initiative: to nurture reflective leadership and learning practice; to nurture, guide and develop the knowledge, dispositions and leadership skills of beginning school administrators; to ground the development of participants in best practice and best research through the (State) Administrative Competencies; to explore the utility of administrative portfolios as a means of professional growth with the intent of informing future state policy regarding the use of portfolios for administrative licensure; to create more collaborative design for leadership development between the State Department of Education, universities, professional development centers, professional associations, local school districts, and other communities of intelligent practice; and to develop a mentor training curriculum and to begin the training of principal mentors statewide.9

Coordinators from each region met two to three times per year to discuss policy issues influencing the Academy and to share information about developing structures, strategies and events occurring in their specific regions. Regional coordinators and/or curriculum coordinators held faculty appointments at local universities. Regional participation was open to institutions of higher education with principal preparation

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9 Information taken from the June 2003 History of ALA:EYP Principal Mentor Training.
programs. Local university involvement helped to strengthen preparation programs for administrators. The Academy program was administered statewide through these five regional sites. Regions had a measure of autonomy in designing a structure that was most appropriate. Each region designed the structure of their meetings and mentor assignments somewhat differently. For example, some regions met regularly with large groups, while others met only within their small mentor cohorts. The curricula varied by region. However, each region’s curriculum provided professional development for its participants. Activities were based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. Curriculum, materials and delivery systems were designed around mentoring, portfolio development and active reflection. The dynamic structure of each region was unique and particular to the participants in that region.

The participant in this study was a member of the region located in the northern part of the state. The region is very diverse, containing many rural school districts and one very large urban district as well. In addition, there are several suburban districts included in this region. The region covers twenty counties. This region has a coordinator and two curriculum specialists. Regional meetings were held every other month. Meeting attendees included the regional director, the curriculum coordinators, novice principals (or assistant principals), mentors, graduate students, the researcher and occasionally an invited guest.

The most recent cohort of novice administrators included more assistant principals than building principals. Given that, initially, participation in the Academy was voluntary and that the requirements for successful completion were significant, many early career principals opted not to participate. However, as of January 2003,
participation in the Entry Year Program is now mandatory for all individuals seeking to serve as building principals in this state, as required by state legislation (Rule 3301-24-04).

Within the participant’s region, the regional director and curriculum coordinators met with the mentors prior to the start of each meeting. During these meetings, the mentors were trained in protocols to assist protégés and any other curricula for the day’s agenda. The large group (which included the novice principals) convened at the conclusion of this mentor meeting. Meetings were held on Wednesdays and lasted for the duration of the workday. General information was covered at the start of each meeting. This included items such as paperwork to be submitted for licensure, how to renew provisional licenses, policy and program updates, and other logistics. Where appropriate, novice principals and their mentors were able to ask questions pertinent to their own concerns regarding licensure and/or certification.

The curriculum for these regular meetings focused on professional development for mentors and their protégés. Professional development was structured to provide early career principals with opportunities for portfolio development and reflection related to instructional leadership. Structured protocols were regularly employed within the context of regional meetings as tools for reflection\(^{10}\). Protocols are structured procedures to provide for specific interactions. Often, protocols “specify who may or may not speak, and for how long, as ways to support participants through potentially difficult terrain by limiting the ‘noise’ of interruptions, diversions and disrespectful interjections” (Uline,

\(^{10}\) Descriptions of the various protocols are taken from the information provided to Academy participants in the region.
Tschannen-Moran, & Perez, 2003, p. 812). These protocols were first introduced to the mentors during their meeting with the regional coordinator and the curriculum specialists. This way, mentors had an opportunity to see the reflective processes modeled and to practice them before assisting their protégé principals. The instructions for utilizing the protocols were distributed to each participant (both the mentors and the novice principals).

In year two of this study, the 2002-2003 school year, mentors and protégés utilized two protocols in their work together. The ‘Sticky Issue Protocol’ was used to “help someone think through, solve a problem, or get advice regarding a barrier to learning in his or her building.” This protocol was employed to help new principals to reflect on solutions to problematic situations in their school. The protocol assisted in focusing the discussion specifically on areas of improvement without being judgmental or offering criticism. This protocol allowed the presenter to describe a “sticky issue” impeding learning in his or her building. All other participants listened during this time. Next, the participants asked the presenter clarifying questions. These questions allowed the participants to understand the issue presented. Then all listening participants discussed amongst themselves their thoughts about the causal factors at play in the issue described. The presenter was silent during this discussion. After the causal factors were determined, the presenter responded to the discussion and together all participants discussed possible solutions.

The ‘Charrette Protocol’ facilitated discussion between early career principals and their mentors related to portfolio development. Several existing conditions were required for the use of this protocol, including: an individual or a group experiencing difficulty
within some aspect of their work, an acknowledged barrier to continued progress, and additional minds to think through possible solutions. Within this protocol, a group of persons listened to the presentation of the work. Early career principals shared with their mentors and other protégés the progress they’d made working on the portfolio. The facilitator (mentor) observed, recorded ideas, and asked both, specific and broad questions. Proteges presented their work in progress, asking questions about their next steps. These questions varied from very specific to more broad. The group discussed the project after listening to the presentation. The emphasis of the group discussion was co-ownership of the problem. The goal of the group discussion was to “make a good thing even better.” The presenter listened to group suggestions, summarized what was learned from the group, and then stopped the process after he or she received what was needed from the discussion.

In addition to the ongoing reflection structured by way of various protocols, regional meetings provided background information to districts employing the mentor and protégé participants. The opening meeting of the year included the district superintendents of each novice principal in the Academy. This meeting introduced superintendents to the program and informed them of the various components of the Academy. Thus, superintendents were informed about the expectations for their district administrators participating in the Academy. Although these meetings were held during the school day, they involved all participants in ongoing professional development aimed at improving their job performance. Inviting the superintendents to the meeting informed them of the importance of the meetings, the benefits of regular participation, and the need for administrators to be out of the building on occasion.
Curricula for use by early career administrators within their schools were provided during regional meetings. During this year, Walkthrough training was provided for school leaders during one of the training sessions. A Walkthrough is a tool employed by administrators. This tool provides administrators information about the teaching and learning taking place in each classroom. During a Walkthrough the administrator focuses on specific features of a classroom, so that what is observed informs everyone concerned about the current state of instruction and learning. There are several purposes of a Walkthrough including: building understanding and teaching how to assess the efficacy of what is observed; focusing the school leadership and faculty on student work, and what the work says about teaching and learning processes; diagnosing areas of strength and areas in need of improvement; yielding details about teacher practice and student learning in the school; and providing evidence that teacher’s efforts are leading to desired results.

Walkthroughs were introduced as a tool for administrators to increase their visibility within classrooms and to facilitate instructional leadership. Training included visiting two schools (one urban and one suburban) to actively participate in Walkthroughs. Regional Academy participants debriefed with the teachers and the principals of each school at the conclusion of the Walkthroughs. In addition, a Walkthrough curriculum was provided for each novice principal and mentor. The researcher attended the Walkthrough training with regional Academy participants, noting:

*The group met at an elementary school in the Mitchell City Public School District. The principal greeted us and provided the group with information about the teachers whose classrooms we visited. She informed the group that all of the teachers in the school have been trained in the Baldridge Approach. This technique utilizes data and*
quality tools within the classroom curriculum. The principal also informed the group that the school has been in academic emergency for the past three years. In order to get teachers to agree to participate in this activity, the event was presented as an opportunity for outsiders to see the school’s use of the Baldridge Program. The principal met with the building committee first to secure their approval.

One of the curriculum coordinators for the region provided the group with further insight about the utility of the Walkthrough process for administrators. She stated that the process is not meant to be a “gotcha!” Rather, it is an opportunity to look for evidence of good things going on. She further stated that it is good to schedule walkthroughs like appointments. For further professional growth and development, teachers can be taught to do walkthroughs with their peers.

Each Walkthrough follows a set pattern: (1) talk to the individual whose class you’ll be in (to find out what standard they’re working on); (2) Complete the Walkthrough; (3) Debrief—engage in reflective discussion with reflective questioning.

The large group divided into smaller groups and completed Walkthroughs in four separate classrooms. Each Walkthrough was about twelve minutes long. We visited classrooms of all levels, from kindergarten through the fifth grade. At the conclusion of the Walkthroughs, the groups reconvened and debriefed with the teachers. The group asked questions about specific teaching techniques observed in individual classrooms, as well as general questions about the school.

The second Walkthrough was conducted at a nearby suburban high school. The group met prior to the Walkthrough. The curriculum director reminded the group that
when conducting Walkthroughs with faculty it is good to let teachers know that you are coming in advance. It is also possible to announce Walkthroughs at faculty meetings as a regular practice.

The principal of the high school provided information about the classrooms we were scheduled to visit. Some of the teachers were veterans, others fairly new. One had earned a doctorate in her field. Each teacher indicated what things they wanted the group to look for in completing the Walkthrough. The group again divided into smaller groups and visited each classroom for about ten minutes. During the debriefing, the group met with the teachers. Each class was different in terms of content and student academic level. Some classes were high-spirited and others were quiet and reserved. However, each of the teacher’s students were on task and focused on the activity at hand. Respect emerged as a key concept during the debriefing period. This included respect between teachers, between students, and between teachers and students. Teachers indicated that strong administration is the cause for such high levels of respect. In addition, collaboration was very helpful for these teachers.

The teachers in both schools had high praise for their administration. This seemed to be very conducive of the walkthrough process. If teachers see this process as a benefit to them professionally, it is less evaluative and more valuable as an instructional tool and a tool for professional development.

The final regional meeting focused participants on Professional Learning Communities. The purpose of this workshop was to help participants develop a concrete action plan for their schools in becoming Professional Learning Communities. The characteristics of a Professional Learning Community include: shared mission, vision,
values and goals; collaborative teams; collective inquiry; action orientation/experimentation; commitment to continuous improvement; and a focus of results. Participants worked in large and small groups to discuss the ways in which the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community might be employed in their own schools.

Each meeting also covered portfolio development. Specific attention was paid to the particulars of each component and when it was recommended that portfolio components be completed. This requirement shifted somewhat from early stages of the Entry Year Program, due to policy changes implemented within the legislature\textsuperscript{11}. Near the end of each academic year, more emphasis was placed on the due dates for the portfolio as well as the scoring rubrics. However, throughout the year, early career principals were to be gathering supporting documentation, and reflecting upon their experiences in order to facilitate successful completion of the administrative portfolio.

Administrative Portfolio Development

As stated, early career principals who participated in the Academy were expected to complete an administrative portfolio demonstrating their successful understanding of the ISLLC Standards (Appendix I). The portfolio served as a performance-based assessment of what early career principals demonstrated in their leadership practice. Portfolios were to include narratives, written by the entry year principal, as well as supporting documentation. Participants were given several guidelines about the completion of the portfolio. A quality portfolio tells a compelling story. Narratives were

\textsuperscript{11} An entry year program became a requirement for every new principal and assistant principal in the state in January 2003. Although the final format of the program continues to evolve, it will require an assigned mentor and the completion of an administrator portfolio.
to be specific to participants’ schools. Narratives were also to insightfully analyze supporting documentation. Quality portfolios maintained a specific focus. Early career principals directed their writing to an ongoing concern related to student learning and achievement within the school. This concern was to be connected to the larger framework of the components, revealing the depth and breadth of the concern.

The portfolio was designed to assess the principal’s capacity to learn and lead. Within the portfolio, administrators are asked to: document the pertinent educational conditions, processes and/or outcomes; diagnose the cause or nature of problematic conditions, processes and/or outcomes; deliberate over the appropriateness and effectiveness of actions taken to address targeted conditions, processes and/or outcomes; and design conditions and processes to improve desired performance outcomes.\(^{12}\)

Participants’ portfolios reflected a comprehensive knowledge of the organization, the stakeholders and necessary resources to actualize goals. Additionally, the portfolio clearly described participants’ role as the school leader. The written narrative demonstrated the leader’s ability to understand, communicate and collaborate on behalf of student learning, telling a compelling story about the school in question.

The participant in this study completed three portfolio components. These components centered on facilitating the vision of learning within the school community, sustaining a culture conducive of student learning, and collaborating with families and community.

\(^{12}\) Information taken from Portfolio development worksheet, Leadership and Learning Skill Sets, developed by one of the five ALA:EYP regions, February 2002.
While the portfolio was utilized as a tool to facilitate instructional leadership, there were several concerns that mentors and protégés voiced. In most cases, it was felt that the time commitment was the most significant challenge that new administrators faced in completing the portfolio. Given all of the time constraints on an administrator’s schedule, not to mention the stress experienced by a new administrator, lack of time to complete the portfolio presented a difficulty. Ms. Sanders, the novice principal who was the focus of this study, articulated:

> Given the number of reports that I have to write for the district, the number of surveys that have to be completed….[T]he biggest part of [the portfolio] is really getting the time to sit down and write it up….Because I certainly can not do it during the course of the day. I have to squeeze it in between all the meetings that the superintendent wants me to come to after work and all of the inservices that they have us scheduled to go to….When I was the assistant principal, I could knock it out because I had time. As the principal, it is a totally different world. Time is at a premium.

As an administrator, Sanders felt she lacked time to complete the portfolio requirements, given her myriad responsibilities. In addition to time being a challenge, focusing on the requirements of the standards-based portfolio presented a challenge for early year principals. Ms. Jones, the mentor who worked closely with Ms. Sanders throughout her participation in the ALA, stated:

> The biggest challenge is getting focused. There are so many things that happen in your workday, work week, work quarter….[The challenge] is getting it to be focused to a central idea. To get focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and all these other extraneous things that happen on the peripheral….So getting yourself to that point because it is so easy as a new principal to get bogged down with all the little, tiny crises that they don’t see as little.

These challenges were significant. In addition to focusing on those issues and events that are most relevant to student achievement, a new administrator must manage the daily operations of the school, addressing various practical problems as they arise.
Tiny “crises” present distractions, impeding progress toward identified goals. Here, the portfolio requirement was seen as an opportunity. In the case of the participant under study, the very thing that posed a challenge also functioned as a support. When asked how the portfolio would be of benefit to her administrative practice, Ms. Sanders stated that the portfolio “keeps you focused.” She explicated, “I think the standards in the portfolio can be like an anchor. It kind of holds you steady and allows you to move in these various directions without moving willy-nilly.”

The mentoring component was employed to support early career principals with reflection and tools for instructional leadership, all within the context of portfolio development. Mentors assisted their protégés through the portfolio writing. When asked how her mentor has been of assistance in completing her portfolio, Ms. Sanders said:

She is really great in terms of being receptive to my ideas and helping me to sharpen whatever it is that I want to do without imposing her own interests or value of what she thinks the answer should be….She has a way of asking those questions that lead me to fill in the answer, but the answer comes from my own heart, or my own plan and not from what she thinks should be in there.

Often the mentor served as a sounding board, making suggestions or keeping the participants focused on the portfolio and components. The mentor asked reflective questions as a way to guide the protégé through the portfolio development process without providing the answers. As a mentor, Ms. Jones articulated the following about assisting protégés through portfolio completion:

[I assist in] keeping them focused on what they are trying to accomplish….Getting them focused through a series of questions. Questions like: How does this query tie into another component? How is this tied to your vision? Can you explain or give me evidence of what you are talking about? As they start to talk, then they say, “Oh yeah, this really does fit together.”
So my role…is to get them to think and talk about it so that they can sort it out in their heads. Vision and instructional leadership, are [they] tied with this decision that you are making? Can you explain…to me or show me the evidence? Then saying, ‘[M]ake sure you save [that evidence] for the portfolio.’

Jones understood her role in facilitating completion of the portfolio. By asking reflective questions, she guided protégés to think through their administrative experiences and make important connections to vision, barriers to learning and strategies for strengthening the learning community. In doing this, she encouraged protégés to think about their role as instructional leader in the building.

In spite of the challenges participants experienced in completing the portfolio, participants report value in the process. Ms. Jones stated:

[These mentees] really had trouble doing the first component…for many reasons. Time, all bogged down with their new jobs, etc. But by the time two years are done, wow the growth. Then the light bulb goes on. After the second component is completed, then…the process is starting to fit together, ‘Now I see where it helps me in my work,’ where before they couldn’t see that.

Jones assisted protégés in managing the initial difficulties associated with completing the portfolio components such that they were eventually able to make connections between their instructional leadership practice and the portfolio process. This process required participants to struggle through the first portfolio component, usually completed during the first year, emerging more competent and knowledgeable at the conclusion of the second year, with three components completed.

The portfolio served early career administrators as a valuable tool for articulating a vision for the school and thinking through leadership strategies. The data presented in this chapter will refer to Ms. Sanders’ administrative portfolio as one source of evidence of her instructional leadership development.
Mentoring

As a significant component of the Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program, this study sought to understand the importance of mentor support for early career principals, to clarify the mentor/protégé relationship and in particular to determine the degree to which the Academy’s implementation of mentoring support may differ from traditionally held understandings of mentoring relationships. Across the Academy, mentoring assumed different forms in various regions of the state. However, in efforts to provide quality support for early career principals, certain standards were required of Academy mentors. Academy mentors were carefully selected. Typically, Academy mentors were principals employed in the principalship for not less than three years. If not currently principals, Academy mentors were persons in supervisory positions within a school district who had previously held a principalship for a number of years. The rationale was that individuals who are, or have been principals for some time (at least three years) were best suited to mentor early career principals, drawing from their own leadership experiences.

Academy mentors were initially selected through nominations from superintendents, university personnel, and/or designees of the school systems. Once potential mentors were identified, along with their district superintendents, they were asked to complete a form indicating their commitment.

In general, Academy mentors were current or former principals. However, in some regions of the state, particularly where there was a shortage of mentors, the
Academy recruited retired principals to serve as mentors. Retired administrators have the experience of having been a principal for many years, as well as the time necessary to devote to mentoring early career principals.

In some rural areas of the state, the Academy mentor was from one district, while each of the protégé principals were from different districts. In contrast, urban mentors and their protégés often worked in the same district. Thus, in some cases, the mentors and their protégés worked together prior to participating in the Academy, while in others, the mentoring relationship was established through the ALA.

During the first year, mentors across the state were called together to discuss the regional mentoring processes. Training occurred at both the regional and state levels, throughout the school year, and during the summer. As the ALA transitions from the pilot phase, where principal participation was voluntary, to an implementation phase, with required participation on the part of all entry year principals, additional mentors will be required. Therefore, as this study concluded, the State Department of Education initiated additional mentor training in order to increase the number of available trained mentors and mentor training facilitators. In the future, these trained facilitators will represent each region and will conduct the regional mentor training. Participants will receive a certificate of completion for the mentor training in order to provide verification of consistent training statewide.

Mentor trainees attended a two-day state sponsored mentor training. The mentor training program’s primary goal was to provide training that enhances the knowledge, dispositions, and performances of principal mentors so that they can more successfully assist Entry-Year Principals and Assistant Principals in promoting the success of all
students. The secondary goals were twofold: to clarify action steps that a Principal Mentor can initiate to help Entry-Year Principals and Assistant Principals successfully fulfill the responsibilities related to the entry-year; and to clarify action steps that a Principal Mentor can initiate to help Entry-Year Principals and Assistant Principals grow professionally and thus be better prepared to acquire a professional license. As discussed within Chapter 2 of this dissertation, the research suggests that mentors benefit from training that provides information and clear guidelines about expectations.

The mentor training provided by the Academy engaged trainees in eleven hours of interactive learning activities. These activities included simulations, role playing, professional discourse and collegial interaction. The training focused on the following: defining the mentor’s role and responsibilities, expectations and the reflective process; management issues related to tasks that principals need to accomplish prior to and during the academic year; leadership issues related to assessing the learning environments, standards-based education, academic content standards, multiple measures of student achievement and classroom Walkthroughs; and professional development, including the ISLLC Standards, design qualities for licensure programs, and entry year program options within the state.

Trained mentors were assigned 3-5 proteges in each region, with some variance between regions. In the region under study, mentor/protégé pairing has been consistent since the inception of the program. Urban mentors were assigned protégés who lead in urban schools. The urban mentors met and agreed on the mentor assignments. Suburban and rural mentors in the region were assigned their mentees by the regional Academy staff.
Mentors were provided with specific guidelines about the frequency and nature of their contact with protégés, as well as about their participation in the regional Academy. Specifically, mentors were required to: attend the regional meetings, meet regularly with their protégés, foster and facilitate a professional relationship with their entry year principal protégé, provide guidance to support the entry year principal through early career experiences, provide support and guidance in the completion of the ISLLC portfolio, document mentoring contacts by maintaining a reflective journal, and participate in the evaluation of the mentoring program.

The protégé principals had several responsibilities within the region as well. They were expected to attend and participate in the regional meetings, make contact with the mentor at least bi-weekly, maintain a journal of all mentor/mentee activities and contacts, meet with mentor to review portfolio components prior to submission, and provide feedback regarding program development and implementation.

In the case of Academy participants from the Mitchell City School District, the district provided district employed mentors for early career principals. These district mentors served in the capacity of evaluators. Several of the Mitchell City mentors were also involved with the Administrative Leadership Academy as mentors. Within the Academy, the mentor role was less evaluative and more facilitative. These varying roles required mentors to wear several mentoring hats with the same protégé. According to Ms. Jones:

Our system happens to have a mentor/mentee program. It is not a true mentor/mentee program from the fact that the mentor is the evaluator [in the district program]….So it has caused some difficulties in our system in separating the state [ALA] program, which isn’t an evaluated program [by the mentors], and the mentor program that is evaluation. [W]e have had some grey areas in our system with that.
Previously, district mentors evaluated their assigned Mitchell City School District principals and assistant principals. The high volume of administrators requiring mentoring caused a shortage in the number of available mentors. Consequently, the policy was changed so that, currently, principals are evaluated by their district assigned mentors and assistant principals are evaluated by their principals. In addition, Academy mentors, employed by the Mitchell City School District, mentored assistant principals as well as principals, due to the high number of assistant principals from Mitchell City enrolled in the Administrative Leadership Academy.

To further complicate matters, principals in Mitchell City were not only evaluated by their mentors, but they were also assessed by the curriculum coordinator for their learning community. These individuals often did not collaborate or even communicate with one another. Therefore, within this one district, the same early career principals were evaluated by a mentor, evaluated by the curriculum coordinator for their learning community and had responsibilities for evaluating their assistant principal(s). These cross cutting responsibilities caused role conflict and dissatisfaction among mentors, producing a shortage of qualified mentors for novice principals. The volume of novice principals combined with the magnitude of responsibility placed on the mentor, discouraged participation on the part of experienced principals. The resultant shortage left less qualified persons serving in mentor positions. Ms. Sanders shared these thoughts on mentor assignments within the district:

It shouldn’t be something that is based on seniority, which happens in this district. You have a lot of people who are mentors who have no business being mentors, but they are mentors because we are in a crunch. We don’t have enough people who can fill these positions.
As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the Mitchell City School District was divided into small learning communities, inclusive of elementary, middle, high and specialized schools. Ms. Jones and Ms. Sanders worked in two different small learning communities. Therefore, Jones didn’t serve as Sanders’ district mentor. However, Ms. Jones mentored Ms. Sanders prior to their participation in the Academy. In fact, this relationship was established via a cohort administration program facilitated in conjunction with a local university. Ms. Jones described this program:

Also, we have an urban leadership program…Perspective teachers, coming out of the program to get their master’s, [are identified as wanting] to be urban leaders. The university and the school system have a partnership. These candidates take intensive course work for two years and we share the teaching of the course work. The school district [personnel] are the practitioners and they help teach the course work from that angle. Then, the university does it from their perspective. That was a mentor program and I participated in that for two years also.

As noted in Chapter 2, mentor training should provide potential mentors with clear expectations, information about the benefits of effective mentoring relationships, and activities and resources that mentors can employ with their protégés in supporting their work. Within the context of this rather muddled urban mentorship structure, Mitchell City mentors who became associated with the Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program were afforded such clarity. Through carefully articulated expectations, substantive and continuous training, and research-based activities and resources, these mentors were well-prepared to assist their protégés, guiding them through the challenges early career administrators face, and helping them to strengthen their leadership practice.
**Mentor Qualities**

Analysis of interview as well as observation data reveals a number of ingredients and/or characteristics identified by Ms. Jones and Ms. Sanders as necessary to establishing and maintaining an effective mentoring relationship. Included among these were trust, respect, careful observation, continuous learning and setting aside one’s own biases.

**Trust and Respect.** Ms. Jones articulated the need for trust and respect within the mentoring relationship, “There has to be some trust. If for some reason the mentee doesn’t trust, then it will be very difficult to have a relationship going. The respect comes along with the trust.” These elements of an effective mentoring relationship were necessary in order to sustain the level of interaction that they achieved during their work together, eventually resulting in a strong professional and personal relationship. Likely, Sanders and Jones laid the groundwork for this trust even before participating in the ALA:EYP, given the fact that they worked together in a mentoring relationship previously. Jones described the development of trust between them:

Ms. Sanders and I just slowly began to work together. Basically, I just first listened to her needs, wants, desires and the process she was using to think through her tasks. As I listened, I would ask questions for information first, and then ask more probing questions to have her think at a different level.

Trust and respect emerge when both mentor and mentee have commitment to the relationship, rather than being involved only because of financial incentive. Sanders commented on the typical Mitchell City mentor support, “the person doesn’t even have meetings with you, never shadows you, you can’t get a decent answer from this person, they don’t return calls. So, then you know that this is something that the person is doing
because it does give them a few extra dollars.” Here, she suggested that key to establishment of trust and respect is a level of initiation and availability on the part of the mentor.

In addition to trust and respect, Ms. Jones suggested several other qualities that effective mentors employ to create a positive mentoring relationship, including observing, allowing protégé development, continuous learning, understanding, and appreciating diversity. She stated:

I think you need to be a good observer of human behavior. You need to take your own biases and set them aside because your biases, you really don’t want them to affect the direction they (the protégés) are going. You want them to develop and be nurtured…You need to be a continuous learner…You need to understand…I think you need to be educated in all types of diversity…I don’t think you need to be a dictator.

These qualities helped to facilitate the relationship between mentor and protégé. Ms. Jones employed them in her work with Ms. Sanders as well as with other Academy mentees.

**Observing.** In her role as mentor, Ms. Jones made herself available to observe Sanders within the school context in order to provide support and coaching. Jones participated with Sanders in her instructional leadership tasks. These activities provided her an opportunity to observe Sanders’ application of Academy suggested processes and strategies, in particular Walkthroughs and reflection. She noted:

[I] would shadow her, do walk-abouts with her. I would ask questions. She would clarify things for me and would give me the process[es] she was thinking and doing. Then, I would ask her to shadow me and in shadowing her [I] explained some of the processes I was using.

Jones led by example. She observed in Sanders’ school, asking clarifying questions about what she saw. She then asked Sanders to observe her, modeling techniques and
processes, as well as revealing the thoughts behind her actions. Thus, role modeling was a component of her observation. She learned how early career principals were leading by observing them in action, and they in turn learned techniques to strengthen their leadership by observing an experienced leader.

**Awareness of Biases.** Ms. Jones suggested that mentors need to be aware of their own biases, attitudes and assumptions that may influence the protégé in directions inconsistent with their own needs and the needs of their school. In her relationship with Ms. Sanders, Jones allowed Sanders to decide her own direction as a school leader, even when at times those choices differed from the manner in which she might choose to proceed herself. Related to assisting Sanders with data based decision making, she stated:

An example of that would be using data to do the school improvement process. She wasn’t as familiar with the data gathering and taking the data and using [it] within her own particular style. I was able to bring the data part to the table, because I had participated in some reform schools before. So she used the things she needed for her particular school, not the ones that I felt she needed. I gave her the whole thing and then she could pick and choose from there. It was really interesting to see her questions about the data and how she would plug it in to use within her school. There might have times when I would have gone in a different direction, but she did just fine with it.

She also helped Sanders make decisions related to matters of procedure:

When procedural matters arose, I would guide her to the policy books and ask her what she was comfortable with for her kids. Her focus was so on target that it wasn’t hard to suggest things. Sometimes, she didn’t agree with some of the methods I had used before, but that never got in the way because I didn’t believe she needed to use my ways. It was more important she develop her own style, as long as it was for the benefit of the children.

In her role as mentor, Ms. Jones provided the information Sanders needed. She then allowed Sanders to make her own decisions about the data and what was best for
Range Elementary School. Jones kept her biases about appropriate action in check in order that she could support Sanders in making suitable decisions about her own school.

**Continuous learner.** In her role as mentor, Jones was responsible for availing herself of information that would serve her mentees. At times, this meant gathering information from the research, from particular professional meetings, or from inservices that Jones attended. Often, because the Academy was a new program, Jones’ responsibility for continuous learning was strongly connected to assisting her mentees in making sense of the academy requirements. She related:

One day, the goals were set [for our meeting together]. We started them and a [school related] crisis came up for her so we stopped. It was quite a crisis and I said, ‘I have some information. I know right now you are not able to sit and talk over our [established] goal. Let me go get some [more] information. We will get back together…and work from there with the information that will help you.’

As a continuous learner, Jones was familiar with how to gather information for her protégés, even in a crisis situation. She set aside their predetermined agenda and focused her attention on the issue at hand. In this case, she shared responsibility for crisis intervention and sought out the resources to assist Sanders in addressing the problem.

Jones was aware that she was responsible to her mentees for finding out things that she didn’t know. As their relationship progressed, continuous learning became one vehicle to mutual learning. Particular examples will be explicated later in the section on mentor roles.

*Mentor Roles*

In order to meet the wide range of protégé needs, the mentor must assume various roles. The various metaphors for mentors often indicate the multiple roles that mentors
play in the lives of their protégés, including teacher, coach, guide, navigator, etc. The metaphors are suggestive of the many roles that a mentor holds during the evolution of the mentoring relationship.

Navigating through Ambiguity. In addition to the characteristics of the mentoring relationship, the researcher explored the mentor and protégé’s opinions regarding the role and responsibilities of the mentor. Both agreed that an effective mentor should be able to assist the novice in navigating through ambiguity. In the case of Ms. Sanders and her mentor, the pair began participating in the Academy in early pilot stages of the program. The Academy established the first statewide cohort of participants in 1999. Ms. Sanders entered the Academy in 2000. Because the Academy was in its early stages of development, portfolio content was unclear in terms of firm expectations for early career principals. Ms. Jones assisted her mentee through this process, largely by information gathering. Ms. Sanders shared:

By the time I came into the program (the ALA:EYP), they really didn’t have any firm guidelines about what made a good portfolio. [The] rubric wasn’t developed. So it was really by trial and error, but she was willing to learn as much as she could and help me as much as she could.

Ms. Jones noted the ambiguity that the early stages of the Academy’s portfolio requirements imposed. When asked about her most useful experience related to assisting early career principals with portfolio development, she stated:

Learning how the portfolio process fits into a new principal’s arena. The new principals absolutely balk [about the portfolio]. They don’t want to do it. I think it is extremely important in the first year. It forces the new principals to look at their community and to create a vision for themselves...[New principals] are so excited and have so many ways to learn, but if [they] don’t create a vision, then [they] really have difficulty building and continuing from there.
Jones understood the importance of portfolio development and guided her mentees through the ambiguity of the process by understanding the many responsibilities of new principals and assisting them in viewing and utilizing the portfolio as a tool for administrative practice. She conveyed to them the importance of creating a vision and using the portfolio as a means to think about and implement the vision within the learning community. Ms. Jones’ willingness to learn in order to assist her protégé through a new process demonstrated her own commitment to continuous learning.

Mentor as Teacher. Another suggested mentor role was that of teacher. The mentor possessed knowledge and information and, initially in the relationship, Ms. Jones provided this information to Ms. Sanders. Ms. Sanders suggested, “When I think of the mentor and the protégé, where the protégé is really growing, the mentor is teaching well.”

The role of mentor as teacher required that the mentor be responsible for having knowledge and sharing it, rather than the protégé being responsible for teaching the mentor. Ms. Sanders posited:

The mentee should not be the one who is teaching the mentor and the mentee should not be the one who is bringing all the ideas to the mentor, who in turn takes it to other mentees. The mentee should be able to learn something from the mentor. It should be a growing opportunity. It should not be a drain.

Although the role of mentor as teacher assumed the transfer of knowledge and information from the mentor to the protégé, the novice principal was encouraged to make her own decisions given the knowledge Ms. Jones supplied. Ms. Sanders characterized her learning experiences with her mentor:

Because she is so current and is so knowledgeable, it is just being able to dialog with someone who can give back and help [you] make things clearer for yourself. It is not like there is a brain drain there where I am just sapping up all her knowledge. She allows me to really sort things out through our discussion. I think that is where the real value is.
In her role as mentor, Jones recognized the value of discussion as a teaching tool and utilized this tool to assist Sanders. This perspective assumed that Jones was armed with information and shared her knowledge with Sanders to facilitate learning through dialogue.

**Mentor as Coach.** As the relationship between the mentor and protégé evolved, several other primary roles emerged. The purpose of mentoring was to move the protégé toward increased professional autonomy. Therefore, initially, the role of the mentor was more directed in providing information to the protégé. As the protégé continued to grow professionally, the mentor’s role became more facilitative. The Academy embraced a view of mentor as coach within several contexts. These contexts included the mentor as coach for the portfolio (with specific attention to the ISLLC Standards), coach for instructional leadership (with a focus on the state’s Academic Content Standards), and coach for sound management practices. Ms. Sanders and Ms. Jones both embraced the mentor’s role as coach/facilitator. In an interview with Ms. Sanders, she defined the role of the mentor in the following manner:

[I] would say a mentor is really a resource person as well as coach. The resource in a sense that they should be able to help you navigate the systems that [they] understand…Be there in the event that you have questions. Not to guide or direct, but to help you facilitate what your vision is and make sure it is in line with what the standards are supposed to be.

Likewise, Ms. Jones, the mentor, described her role as both a coach and a facilitator, absent evaluation or judgment:

My understanding of the role of the mentor is to be the person there [who] is a guide, a support and to be that person [who] helps the new administrator in any way possible during their transition…into their leadership position. I see myself
as...a coach. I am not an evaluator. I’m not the one making judgments. That is the hardest thing, to take the judgment out and just to be the coach, the guide and to foster a positive leadership role for that new leader.

In the role of coach, Jones didn’t assess performance or take ownership for professional problems. Instead, she provided support for protégé’s mobility toward a particular outcome, especially needed during the uncertain transition into a leadership position.

**Mentor as Sounding Board for Thoughts/Vision.** As her mentor coached, Ms. Sanders engaged in defining her own leadership style. Her relationship with Ms. Jones afforded Ms. Sanders an opportunity to articulate her own vision. Jones allowed Sanders to articulate this vision through engagement in a five year planning process for her school.

Ms. Jones posited, “You want them to develop and be nurtured so that they can develop their own style...within a good framework.” Ms. Sanders clarified:

This is a mentor [who] helps me to do my own work better because I have the opportunity to talk about my work...Range Elementary is not my mentor’s schools. This vision is not my mentor’s vision. It is my vision. In order to move this building in the direction it needs to go with me at the helm, it has to be a vision that I see and am able to develop a shared vision with the people in the building. It can’t be the mentor and the principal’s vision, it has got to be the principal, staff and parents’ vision, the constituents’ vision.

In this way, the mentor relationship created a space for the novice to explore a leadership style and a vision of her own, rather than providing a template for the novice to follow. Ms. Jones served as a facilitator, encouraging Ms. Sanders to identify her questions and concerns about Range. She, in turn, posed clarifying questions, pushing Sanders to a deeper analysis of the school’s needs. Once these needs were identified, Sanders could engage her faculty in defining goals, carefully constructing the five year plan for improved instruction at their school.
In discussing Sanders’ five year plan, Jones helped Sanders clarify her vision for the school. She then reflected on the impact of her leadership through the development of her administrative portfolio. These activities were closely aligned, one reinforcing and advancing the other.

Essential to quality mentoring are opportunities for the protégé to think through situations in order to generate a solution. This is done through reflection, dialog and role modeling. Ms. Sanders offered, “[You] ask questions, reassuring, and through the questions, [you] lead the person to think through the problems that they have so that they can come to their own decisions.”

Ms. Jones related:

You need to be a problem solver so that when problems do come up, you [can be a] role model for resolving them [this way] they can see and you can see how that will work.

Jones and Sanders worked together to solve problems related to curriculum at Range. The district failed to support Sanders’ school with adequate resources to address student needs in reading and support the Direct Instruction reading program. Together, they strategized how to approach this problem. Jones provided Sanders with a list of resources to investigate and choose from. They also problem solved related to professional development necessary to implement Sanders’ chosen strategy. Again they looked for resources together that would help teachers to become better at instruction.

Jones modeled the problem solving process for the protégés, rather than solving problems for them. She believed that novice principals would learn problem solving by observing it in action and then employing these skills within their schools.
Mentor/Protégé as Mutual Learners. Both the mentor and the early career principal in this study characterized the mentoring relationship as one in which mutual learning took place. Mutual learning occurred most frequently in the context of shared activities. As their relationship evolved, these activities increased in frequency and complexity. Many took place within the school environment and were directly related to leadership practice within the context of Range Elementary School. As trust was established, the mentor made several visits to the school to shadow the protégé and to attend staff meetings. These visits were followed by a debriefing period to discuss future strategies. Ms Jones described the activities:

At the very beginning…I would shadow her, do walk-abouts with her….I would ask questions. She would clarify things for me and would give me the process in which she was thinking and doing. Then I would ask her to shadow me and in [the context of that] shadowing [I would] explain some of the processes I was using so that she got to see the different types of processes we used.

In addition to activities related to the school context, the mentor and protégé also participated in informal activities together. These activities often reflected mutual interests outside of school. Ms. Sanders, the protégé, described these more informal meetings:

We meet frequently, mostly here [at her school]. We [also] have lunch or dinner together. I’m involved in that Critical Friends13 thing so I have been able to do

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13 A Critical Friend is a trusted person who asks provocative questions, and provides a critique of another person’s work as a friend. The key to the Critical Friends relationship is trust. Critical Friends groups grew out of a kitchen table discussion in New York in 1995. A group of educators met to talk about the challenges they face in schools. The members of the group were not making progress and decided to create an opportunity for experts to come together to struggle with these challenges. The group developed protocols to bring people together around best practices and research. In the face of standards and accountability, they decided to design a system where experts would have the opportunity to learn and work together to come up with solutions. The Critical Friends developed a set of protocols (frameworks) to take the work and infuse it with research on best practices to increase learning and improve student achievement. Members of Critical Friends groups are encouraged to use one another as resources for thoughts and ideas. Critical Friends groups were first employed within schools associated with the Coalition of Essential Schools, a national school reform initiative founded on the research and writing of Theodore Sizer (Sizer, 1984, 1992, 1996).
some subbing for the person who does that class. I have asked my mentor to be one of the facilitators because she had been trained in that too. So we have done that together. We do a lot of planning together, bouncing ideas off each other, both in terms of her career and mine.

Ms. Jones also described their informal interactions related to mutual interests outside of the school context in a similar manner:

So as we were working and I came upon research articles, we did a lot of sharing [of] research…books, research articles, anything that was pertinent with the school improvement process. We would go out and have dinner together with conversations totally on all of it, the research, the application, etc…We attended professional meetings together. If I went to a conference, I would share the information from the conference with her. We have also done some inservices outside the district.

These informal activities have also evolved over the two-year time period of the mentoring relationship. As this relationship has evolved and each has experienced professional growth, a more personal relationship in the form of a friendship has emerged. Ms. Jones explained:

So we have done presentations together, but that was at the end of the two year period. That is where the professional growth for both of us has been similar. [W]e have been able to mesh and actually become very good friends through all of this.

Effective mentoring provided the context for an emerging friendship. When she reflected on positive mentoring relationships (including her relationship with Ms. Jones), Ms. Sanders stated, “It was a positive experience. They were high energy people. I think from both of those [experiences] we also established a kind of friendship. I would call it a friendship.”

Thus, Sanders and Jones forged a relationship in which they experienced mentoring in different ways at different stages during the relationship. These stages were
not linear, but rather cyclical. Changes in mentor roles, content and context depended upon the protégé’s need across a range of situations. The various mentor roles were always already articulated in the mentor relationship. Therefore, the mentor always performed each of the roles. At times, protégé growth and development influenced the salience of one role over another. Clearly at the initial stages of the early career principal’s leadership practice, it was much more important for the mentor as teacher role to emerge. As the relationship continued to evolve, and both protégé and mentor experienced professional growth, the various other roles took salience. Ultimately, as a result of the trust and respect that they established initially, they progressed to a point of mutual learning. They were now able to communicate and share both personally and professionally, such that their relationship became an exchange of ideas from both sides, rather than a unidirectional flow of knowledge and information.

*Mentorship Experiences in Multiple Contexts*

Within the context of the current mentor relationship, Jones acknowledged, valued and utilized Sanders’ prior job and mentorship experiences. Prior to her principalship in Mitchell City, Ms. Sanders was employed as the Director of Development and Public Relations in a private school in an urban city within a neighboring Midwestern state. She had several mentors in this previous role. Although these earlier mentors were from the business community, she employed lessons learned within the current school setting. She reflected on one of these relationships in particular. She stated:

It was best because this was a person who was extremely well connected within the city. [H]e recognized what he felt was my talent and was able to help me to move, to navigate through [the city] and to make things happen for my school. He really helped us, not just me, but by helping me, it helped the school.
In particular, her experience with public relations and understanding the politics of the context provided Ms. Sanders with requisite skills to perform well in her current position.

This person really helped me in…sharpening my business skills and those PR kinds of things that you need to do in opening up doors….Then he actually mentored me through…the politics of working with these people…and asking succinctly for what I wanted.

Specifically, she utilized her public relations skills to create a successful reading program in her current school, *Reading for the Fun of It*, which was supported by the local community, including a U. S. Representative from her district. Her understanding of the larger context provided the impetus to involve all of the school and community stakeholders, including parents, business and community leaders, local organizations, and local politicians, engaging them directly in the school’s academic success.

So the mentors that…I have now, as much as I have been able to grow with them and as wonderful as some of them have been, they are so vastly different than the mentors I had from the corporate world in the big city…My approach towards our parents is totally different than the average approach that [you observe in] administrators who came out of the classroom. I know principals that [are] still standoffish. We claim that we don’t have parent involvement because parents don’t want to be involved. Wrong! We don’t have parent involvement because we really don’t want parents here. Because if we did, we would do things a lot differently than we are doing…So for that reason I draw upon the lessons I have learned from my mentors, a great deal from the corporate experience.

Ms. Sanders’ prior mentoring experiences provided a framework against which she checked the Academy mentoring experiences. Former corporate mentors emphasized openness and availability as a key component of relationships with clients and
stakeholders. She learned this from her previous mentors and then modeled it with parents in her current context. Welcoming them in and listening to their concerns and ideas, she encouraged their participation in Range as a learning community.

Her previous experiences also helped to prepare her for responsibilities related to instructional leadership. She explained:

I needed to do all of my fact-finding before I came to the table. I learned to read insatiably to find out things I needed to know in order to make these kinds of things happen. That is the way I am today…But because of the mentoring relationships….I learned to do my homework and be very thorough so that I would be prepared with an answer for whatever was going to be asked of me. I think that helped me to be a better visionary and a better administrator today.

Mrs. Templeton, a third grade teacher at Range Elementary, spoke to Ms. Sanders’ propensity to be thorough and prepared. When asked which ways Ms. Sanders was a role model, she stated:

She’s a good role model when it comes to dealing with parents…Being positive, but knowing what you are talking about. Have your ducks in order. Don’t come to a meeting with her or a parent and not have examples of what you are trying to get corrected…[she models] making sure you are prepared.

As a result of these experiences, she understood the need to research the issues at hand.

In her current context, fact-finding often related to the research on best practices. She engaged in this kind research and encouraged her staff to engage in this kind of research as well. She used her previous experience to interrogate certain activities within the school setting:

I have been involved in two different (mentoring) programs and I would say that the most beneficial ones are when that person is able to come into the building and shadow you and give you feedback on performance. So whether it is your daily routine or if there is a particular procedure that needs to be done or something that has to do with policy and you have to implement these things. It is when that person can be in the building, can watch how you are doing that and give you some feedback or pointers on how you can improve it or just to let you know what you’re doing is really good. To me, that is a true mentor.
Although her prior mentoring experiences differed from the experience with the Academy, with the guidance of her Academy mentor, she was able to make connections that helped to bring her vision for the school into focus. She related:

Actually what that did was to make me go back to my roots in program planning because I had already been trained. Little public schools really don’t do five year plans, but when I was in [the city], we always had five year plans. So when I was sharing some of that visionary stuff with [mentor] she said, “Bingo! [You] need to go back to that strategy.

Ms. Sanders therefore made connections between the skills that she had employed in previous settings and those strategies that were suggested by Ms. Jones, her Academy mentor. Her successful transition to an instructional leader within Mitchell City was facilitated by strategies she employed earlier in her career in the big city. Jones helped her recognize a use for those strategies within the new environment. She was also able to understand how those strategies would fit.

**Summary**

Traditional paradigms of mentoring hold the mentor as the source of information, instructing their protégés through an apprenticeship process. These traditional mentoring relationships often translate into power relationships, with the mentor creating the protégé in his own image. Such power relationships can inhibit the protégé’s independent growth and learning.

Within the Administrative Leadership Academy, mentoring relationships were established to provide support for early career principals in the early years of the principalship, through administrative portfolio development. Initially, the mentor serves as teacher, providing direction and information. The mentor also serves as coach,
guiding and supporting the early career principal through the first year of the principalship and portfolio development.

Key to establishment of quality mentoring relationships were qualities of the mentors themselves. These qualities included a willingness to be a continuous learner, being a good observer, and putting aside personal biases. The Academy mentors served as coaches, guides and facilitators, not as “dictators,” as Ms. Jones noted. Mentors were an important resource for the protégés. They provided information, support, and reassurance to early career principals. Although mentors often provided a great deal of information, the mentoring relationship between Ms. Sanders and her mentor, Ms. Jones, also demonstrated opportunities for mutual learning. In this way, they shared information and reflections with one another.

The nature of a nontraditional mentoring relationship such as this was inclusive of a myriad of activities that the mentor and protégé participated in together. The participants in the relationship in this study collaborated in the creation of a caring relationship. They created this by participating in a constant dialog in which the thoughts and experiences of both the mentor and protégé were necessary and valid. The relationship was therefore not confined by the boundaries of one person’s school building or experience. The relationship provided fertile ground for the emergence of mutual outside (but related) interests, respect, sharing, and ultimately, friendship.

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership refers to the behaviors that support professional development for teachers and guarantee academic growth and achievement for students. Given the mandate for accountability and the establishment of academic content
standards, school building administrators must now understand their responsibilities in terms of facilitating staff development in order to assist student achievement.

Early career principals have many different kinds of responsibilities. These responsibilities can be grouped into the broad categories of effective management and instructional leadership. These responsibilities can be complementary and work to enhance the administrator’s effectiveness and efficiency. Effective management is necessary for efficient maintenance of the organization, and thus, supports the notions of instructional leaders as: leaders for student learning, leaders of other leaders, and developers of leaders.

The Academy provided support through mentoring and development of a professional portfolio facilitating early career administrators’ understanding of their role as instructional leaders. As suggested in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, there are multiple definitions of instructional leadership. Common themes include: assessing faculty needs, providing professional development, a commitment to teaching and learning, promoting student academic achievement. The instructional leader at instant in this research was responsible for faculty development that in turn promoted student achievement.

Ms. Sanders’ instructional leadership practice was investigated utilizing observation and interview data, school artifacts and data provided within her administrator portfolio. This section examines Ms. Sanders’ instructional leadership practices from a number of perspectives, including: reflective practice as the engine for instructional leadership, principal as professional developer, school culture as defined through instructional leadership, and instructional leadership in the larger context.
The instructional leader must secure the resources and tools needed to facilitate student achievement. These resources include qualified teachers committed to professional excellence, academic materials for student use, professional development to support student achievement, etc. Ms. Sanders centered her administrative attention on instructional leadership. In support of her choice to focus on instructional leadership in her building, district leadership featured instructional leadership as the primary focus for principals. Ms. Sanders informed, “We have new leadership and his influence has shifted the focus of what principals do away from the day to day minutia to get instructional leadership.” This district-wide support for instructional leadership validated understandings of the principal as the leader on behalf of improved instruction rather than principal as manager of operations.

Much like a mentor coaches an early career principal to effective instructional leadership, an instructional leader must coach teachers to enhance instructional delivery to students. The role of an instructional leader is therefore akin to that of a facilitator and a coach. Just as Academy mentors served as coaches, allowing protégés to make their own decisions related to their administrative practice, Sanders served as instructional coach, allowing the teachers to take ownership for their instructional delivery. Teachers who mastered the necessary skills were asked to mentor other teachers. Ms. Sanders stated:

As an instructional leader we provide the coaching. So there are some teachers that I have actually approached and told, “You’re going to need to be a mentor or coach of other teachers.” Teachers like that.
Sanders’ mentor also incorporated notions of coaching into her understanding of the instructional leadership responsibilities. Ms. Jones saw the coaching role as central to instructional leadership as well:

The instructional leader of the school needs to know exactly where their students are in that school, needs to know where the teachers are in relationship to where the students are, needs to know what’s in the research, what supports those needs. Then [the instructional leader] needs to be out there coaching those teachers to help those students.

Therefore, the instructional leader has multiple responsibilities. Such a leader must be responsible for collection, analysis and presentation of data related to student achievement. Such an individual must lead a collective decision-making process, infused by these data. These data are instrumental in assisting the leader to define the needs within the schools, identify goals, and coach for sustained progress. The school’s continuous improvement plan is an example of how Sanders worked with the Building Committee to identify and address student needs. Continuous improvement plans identified the evidence of change and assessments for student academic achievement, discipline and parent involvement. Sanders and the Building Committee used this information to create goals for the upcoming academic year.

In addition to teachers, other key constituents played a role in facilitating improved student achievement. At Range Elementary, instructional leadership included understanding the need for coaching parents as well as teachers. Ms. Jones suggested, that in addition to coaching teachers, the administrator needs “to be instructing the parents on how to become a partner with that student and that teacher so that…So you have to provide the instruction for that.”

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Ms. Sanders coached parents in several ways. Within the monthly school newsletter, she always included strategies for parents to employ in working with their children in the area of literacy. For instance, in the January 2003 newsletter she included information about an online book club. In addition, this newsletter provided parents with strategies to increase student literacy such as reviewing their children’s favorite books from the previous year, establishing a reading schedule, and creating word puzzles. Feedback that she received from parents indicated that many parents found this to be a productive tool in order to help their students. She noted in her portfolio component addressing collaboration with families and community:

Parents receive timely, informative monthly newsletters that keep them informed about upcoming events in the school, and community programs they may need to attend. Each month a special publication about Reading is attached to the newsletter. Many parents thank us for the attachment. They state how helpful these pages are to them.

Further, Ms. Sanders facilitated a partnership between parents, teachers and students through the establishment of a School Climate and Communications Committee. This committee worked to “poll constituent attitudes, concerns and desires for improvements.” The committee provided a forum for parents and teachers to work together with the instructional leader to improve student achievement. These activities ensured the investment of all of the stakeholders in assisting student success.

Sanders also coached parents at the beginning of the school year, informing them about the school and giving them guidance on how they can support classroom instruction at home. She noted in her portfolio:

We designed Open House 2001 to be a resource and information sharing opportunity for parents and community. Principal Sanders used the forum as an
opportunity to teach parents and guests about the balanced approach to reading instruction and best practices in teaching and learning. These strategies are simple enough for parents to do at home with their children.

She coached parents and teachers on instructional practice with students. In this way, she created a three-way partnership, between herself, teachers and parents to facilitate student achievement. Sanders’ leadership practice was informed by curriculum, teacher instructional methodologies and best practice research. When asked to define the role of the instructional leader within schools, Ms. Sanders replied:

The instructional leader is the person who ensures that curriculum and best practices are working well together. By best practices I’m talking about the way in which we deliver the curriculum, the way in which we teach it, the way in which children learn. The principal’s role as an instructional leader is to stay current and make sure that if teachers aren’t clear, if there are problems in the delivery of the curriculum, then the instructional leader helps teachers identify through staff development or through professional development those strategies or classes or workshops they can take.

The instructional leader was responsible for assisting teachers in navigating through ambiguity. Sanders did this by identifying resources for teachers to employ that would improve instructional practice. She connected teachers with resources that provided information about best practices in instructional delivery.

On a daily basis, Ms. Sanders directed her attention to instructional tasks. She conducted Walkthroughs, answered questions for teachers and parents, prepared resources for teachers focused on the Academic Content Standards, and reinforced her vision of student literacy (often having students read to her during lunch). She familiarized herself with the curriculum in each subject area, observing classroom implementation in her school and other schools. When asked about the most important domains in her job, she responded:
Right now the majority of the day is spent on instruction. A huge amount of it is spent on instruction. I choose it, I force it to be that way. I make sure that I am in the classroom. I work with other schools. [I] go through training so that we could have the best balanced literacy program...I [make] sure that I am able to stay current so that I will be available to answer the questions that they may have about difficulties they are having in the classroom...It is important to me that I am seen as the instructional leader. So, curriculum and anything that has to do with curriculum is my area. I love it.

Sanders modeled characteristics of positive instructional leadership for teachers.

She availed herself of resources and knowledge that she could share with teachers to help them with instruction. She often provided these kinds of resources within faculty meetings. For instance, the researcher observed a faculty meeting in which Sanders met with teachers to encourage them to engage in grade level teaming. She provided resources in addition to the district-provided curricular materials. She met with groups of teachers to assist them in identifying needs of their students and to provide suggestions. In this way, she became a resource for teachers in addition to other professional development available to them.

The instructional leader must also understand and manage the political climate of education. In the current context of accountability, high stakes testing and No Child Left Behind legislation, Sanders was required to know the academic content standards, her students’ past performance, at the individual and school levels. Ms. Sanders used her position as instructional leader to familiarize herself, and consequently, her staff, with information needed to facilitate acceptable student performance. She viewed this preparation as integral to her role as instructional leader:

As instructional leader my job is to make sure that teachers have every tool, everything that they need that addresses the standards. Not just that we have the curriculum and the text, but that we have things that are going to address the standards [by which] they are going to be measured. So I have to stay current on that, I have to recognize where those gaps are.
Ms. Sanders also understood the importance of communication in her role as instructional leader. As an instructional leader, Ms. Sanders maintained relationships with her staff by communicating with them. She explained:

I have to articulate that and talk with the teachers. I have to be able to listen to teachers and listen to what their concerns are with the curriculum, or with the material or with the instruction, and I have to be ready to give them direction or a clue as to where they could go to get direction or where we could go to get direction. I am learning with them as well as at the same time, I am trying to influence teachers to try to learn on their own.

Her communication with staff enabled her to discern any difficulties that they were having with instruction. For her, communication was a two-way dialogue between herself and her staff. Allowing staff to articulate their concerns established a way for Ms. Sanders to tailor instructional leadership to the specific needs of staff and their students.

Principal as Professional Developer

In addition to curriculum and instruction, professional development, for herself and her staff, represented a focal point of Ms. Sanders’ instructional leadership practice. In terms of her own professional development, Ms. Sanders looked for professional development opportunities that would give her, “the answers I’m looking for.” She was very directed in the kinds of professional development opportunities, seeking out experiences and strategies to assist her staff. She stated:

[I] choose those professional development courses and workshops that are going to help [me] to understand what it is that I can do to help in terms of selecting a better inservice program or creating workshops for teachers so that they can continue to improve instruction so that the children are engaged. So I do like to
select those kinds of programs that are going to be beneficial to the teachers. After I have experienced them, then I try to find other ways of bringing that same type of program into our school.

In addition, she looked for professional development opportunities that she could offer to her staff, to strengthen instruction. She articulated:

…[I]f teachers aren’t clear, if there are problems in the delivery of the curriculum, then the instructional leader helps teachers identify, through staff development, those strategies or classes or workshops they can take.

Ms. Sanders viewed professional development as an opportunity to coach teachers and for teachers to coach one another in instructional practice. She recognized the value of the successful teachers she already had on faculty, acknowledged their contribution to the learning community, and encouraged them to continue. In the portfolio component she completed, which addressed Facilitating the Vision of Learning Within the School Community, she noted:

I am openly recruiting my best teachers to stay here at Range. I have personally contacted each, and shared how much I valued their work and how much Range students and teachers would lose should they leave…I further stressed a need for exemplary teachers who will act as mentors, model teachers, and coaches to help struggling teachers and novices to become exemplary teachers as well.

She acknowledged the imperative for the instructional leader to recognize the strong faculty members, support them, and encourage them to contribute to the learning community by coaching other faculty members. Thus, instructional leadership became a shared venture in the learning community, modeled to the faculty by the principal, who encouraged faculty to coach one another.

She maintained that for learning to be continuous, professional development should be ongoing, and should also incorporate some components of coaching, with
“teachers teaching teachers.” She conceived of staff professional development as a collaborative venture. She offered very specific insights about what professional development is and should be:

I think professional development has to be ongoing and another element has to be added to it…Making sure that we are not just becoming familiar or aware of concepts and theories and practices, but we have opportunities to try these out and we receive some kind of coaching…That it is not just the workshop and the inservices or preservices or traditional courses. That it is a mentoring and coaching opportunity for those people who are learning while they are on the job [so that] they get a practical application of the things they are learning by stepping in and trying those things.

Ms. Sanders believed that teachers would be more empowered to grow professionally when they had input into the plan for instructional delivery. In addition, she believed that staff development should be all inclusive. Therefore, whatever instructional strategies the faculty embraced, training and coaching would be available to all, not just the few fortunate enough to attend a professional development seminar. This way, universal support and understanding would be more likely to occur. She articulated:

I usually implement what I call teachers teaching teachers…The teachers come back and are required to train the teachers in the building and to come up with a plan of action from there. [S]taff development has to have a huge buy-in and implementation with the staff. I don’t believe in going out and doing any development where you just sit in professional development. You are going to get something, take it back, go into the classroom and close the door. So, staff development has to be an all inclusive, collaborative effort.

Teachers at Range were empowered and encouraged to be role models and peer coaches for one another. Sanders acknowledged that teachers needed to feel committed and invested in any changes to be implemented. With her support as instructional leader, teachers were able to support one another.
Ms. Sanders attended to teachers’ professional development needs related to the proficiency exams, specifically. She and her staff agreed to provide an inservice program that would assist teachers in teaching certain skills tested on the proficiency exam. Mrs. Salley, a Parent Partner, noted:

She has brought in a very special program where as teachers are being inserviced on how they can teach the children. One of the particular parts is on the fourth and sixth grade proficiency tests where they have to write the answer down [short and extended answer], I believe there are facilitators coming in and they are working with the teachers so they can proceed with the test.

Mrs. Templeton, a teacher at Range Elementary, also shared an example of how Ms. Sanders worked to develop universal awareness, knowledge and commitment to increasing student achievement related to the proficiency exam by getting parents, the community and teachers to attend a workshop:

The community, the parents, were invited….It was a full evening workshop where we broke off into different groups depending on what area you were interested in…She works endlessly in trying to get people involved.

Her mentor, Ms. Jones, stated:

One thing I can say is with the proficiencies, she really wants those scores up. Like I said, she has gotten a staff development program going on here where the facilitators are coming in to help the teachers teach the comprehension part of the test.

As instructional leader, she worked to establish a collaborative awareness and commitment amongst all of the stakeholders within the school community about the significance of student success on the proficiency exam. In this vein, she provided information to parents and community members. She provided resources to teachers to prepare them to assist students.

During visits to the school, the researcher observed Ms. Sanders’ commitment to providing the staff opportunities for professional development. Occasionally during staff
meetings, she would remind faculty of the importance of utilizing funds set aside for professional development. The researcher recorded the following during a faculty meeting:

*Range Elementary School has received over $24,000 for professional development, which must be used by December 2002. As long as professional development workshops cover the content standards and focus on reading and math, then they are covered by this funding. Ms. Sanders stated that $6,000 would be allotted to individuals on a first come, first served basis. All necessary information must be submitted to Sue, the secretary. In January, the school will receive another $12,000 for professional development and the process will begin all over again. She didn’t put any restrictions on teachers, other than they follow the guidelines. Teachers would even be allowed to travel a distance for professional development opportunities if they desire.*

*Because this opportunity will present itself again in January, Ms. Sanders asked that anyone who knows that they will have an opportunity in January, wait to request such funds. This would make disbursement equitable and allow as many individuals as possible to attend professional development opportunities. The remaining $6,000 would be targeted for use during grade level meetings. There are guidelines on what constitutes a grade level meeting as well. The meeting must be concerned with reading, math or a content standard area within one of those subjects. “The district really wants the teachers in the building to teach each other.” Ms. Sanders stated. She stated that teachers who facilitate the workshops would be paid with these dollars. “Based on what I’m seeing in your classrooms, everyone in here could teach something,” she encouraged.*
Mrs. Templeton further explicated the importance of professional development as Ms. Sanders has communicated this to her staff:

Oh, she always pushes professional development...Whatever comes through, she will put it in our mailbox and she will make an announcement if there is something that is really interesting that she feels the staff would be interested in and she doesn’t want them to just glance at this piece of paper in her mail...She is always instrumental in doing things of that nature.

Ms. Sanders valued professional development as a tool for continuous learning. She made her staff aware of professional development opportunities available and made them responsible for sharing information with other staff. She also acknowledged faculty talent, recognizing their areas of strength and challenge and encouraging them to coach each other and to teach and share their own best practices with one another.

Reflective Practice

For Academy mentors and their protégés, reflection represents a vehicle to support instructional leadership. Reflective practice fosters focused consideration of decisions and experiences across a given school day. Within the Academy, novice principals were encouraged to utilize the tool of reflection. Academy mentors guided their protégés through these reflective practices. As mentioned earlier, often mentors used protocols provided in regional meetings to reflect with their protégés. Novice principals were also encouraged to utilize these protocols in reflecting with their own faculty.

In spite of the importance of reflection to effective administration, early career principals faced many potential barriers to employing such reflection as a habit of their daily practice. Ms. Jones spoke to the difficulties early career principals face. She informed:

I think a new administrator is so tired. [Y]ou do a lot of paperwork and you say I just don’t want to take the time to do one more writing, one more thing. [Y]ou
are exhausted. I think it is like exercise. Exercise will reinvigorate you and I think the same things can happen with this. If you do it in a consistent manner, but because we do it so rarely, I think that is not understood.

Barriers such as lack of time, high volume of paperwork, and the frenetic and fragmented nature of job responsibilities take a toll on administrators. For Ms. Sanders, reflection was challenging in light of these barriers. However, reflection became a force of habit, a routine she exercised regularly in order to keep her skills fresh. Despite the barriers, Ms. Sanders took the time to utilize this tool to strengthen her administrative practice. She regularly reflected upon her day and decisions that she had made or may need to make. She stated:

Reflective practice…it validates me. It helps me to say, ‘No, I’m not crazy for all the years when I used to think about all that had happened to me during the course of the day,’ and it was okay for me to shudder as I reflected on it…driving down the street…I stop and take a look and think about things I did that day and the impact that it had on me. Could I have done this better? If I did it good, well okay. Just relish it and enjoy it and see if I can’t improve on it…I’m reflecting as I’m washing dishes, as I’m driving or vacuuming, doing laundry. I have some pretty heavy reflections.

In addition to administrator reflection, teachers need reflection as well. Ms. Sanders suggested that teachers at Range were not engaging in reflective practice as much as needed during the course of the school day. If reflection is indeed occurring, then there should be tangible, discernable results. As the instructional leader, Ms. Sanders took responsibility for whether or not teachers were reflecting. She was accountable for the outcomes of the reflection or lack thereof. She noted:

I don’t think reflection happens in my school, yet. I don’t think it happens in my school, because when you reflect, you sit back and you recognize that the problem lies within you. It doesn’t lie outside of you. The power to make change lies with you and starts with you. If there is a problem in this building, I have to ask myself what is it that I need to do. Both in terms of myself and in terms of what I give out. If our teachers were doing more the reflective practice, then we would see fewer students failing.
However, when students were failing and in danger of being retained, Ms. Sanders persisted, posing reflective questions to the teachers. She stated:

The retention means that this gives me an opportunity to talk with the teachers and have that series of questions. What do these grades represent? What do you recognize or realize about student learning? When does this child seem to have more success (because they can’t flunk all the time)?

Her mentor echoed the thought that reflection is directly related to a change in thinking and outcomes. She suggested the following for identifying whether an individual has been engaged in reflective practice:

Usually how you would know is when you are talking with individuals and they say words like, “I was thinking about,” “I went back to my thoughts on a particular day,” “I saw in my writing”…those kinds of things. The direct way is asking them if they do a journal.

Reflection evidences itself. Those who were actively engaged in reflection indicated this level of engagement in their conversations. And yet, at Range, Sanders had only begun to institutionalize this sort of interaction. Student achievement (or the lack thereof) did not evidence widespread teacher reflection. Thus, teachers had not started to make key connections between their own instructional practice and student achievement.

Ms. Sanders pushed reflection in her interactions with her staff. She asked them reflective questions and varied her strategies, depending on the need of the individual and the situation. When the researcher inquired about the tools she used to institutionalize reflection within her school, she stated:

Well, I use problem solving tools and certain situational leadership tools and some facilitating tools. I use all of those and I use some of the other tools, reversing how I would feel if this was being said to me, how would I say it to me so that when I got finished I felt that yes, this person really values what I am doing, but recognizes that there needs to be some improvement.
Ms. Sanders discussed a conversation she had with a faculty member in which she employed some tools of reflection:

The assistant principal was questioning about whether this [administration] was something she wanted to do. I recognized that you can’t throw people away. You’ve got to build in the support that they need to be better. If you’d seen me at the end of the day, you would have seen me wrestle with, “How am I going to state this in such a way that it doesn’t deflate the other person?” So, once I reflect(ed) on the problem…I would ask the challenging questions, “What is it you really want?” “Do you really want to be here?” And that is something only that person can answer.

As a tool for instructional leadership, Sanders used reflection to examine her instructional leadership as well as that of her staff. She used reflection as a way to validate and encourage her faculty, asking herself key questions about how she could provide necessary support. She also used this tool to pose important questions to faculty as a means of challenging them to improve their own instructional practice.

School Culture

Range Elementary provided a context for examining the ways in which Sanders’ instructional leadership defined and nurtured the school culture. The culture of an organization features emotional, behavioral and cognitive elements (Uline & Berkowitz, 2000). The teachers, students, parents and administration all helped to shape the culture at Range Elementary. Aspects of the culture were observed in meeting and in interactions between individuals within the culture, viewed through school artifacts, and gleaned through conversations with teachers, parents and administration. In addition, the school culture was identified by the physical appearance of the school.

Ms. Sanders expressed strong opinions about the role of the instructional leader in shaping school culture. Ms. Sanders maintained that a positive attitude on the part of the instructional leader was foundational. She explained:
If you don’t have positive attitudes in everything you do, [you will never have] all people working together within the particular building. That makes it much more difficult, but I think you have to role model that positive attitude. I think all children will do better if they know that they are going to go into this school building where it is positive. Even when they know that they (the children) have all these negatives in their personal lives, if you, in that building are positive, warm, and nurturing then everything else tends to work its way out.

She suggested that the instructional leader must nurture the culture of the building, in order to create a positive learning environment. This established the context in which learning would take place. In addition, this tone must extend to every constituent group within the building: teachers, students, and parents.

Because you have to be positive for the parents, you have to be positive with the students, you have to be positive with everyone. So the attitude is a huge part. If you have an attitude like, “Hey, I can’t help these kids. Its’ too bad.” It’s not going to be done. I think the leader creates the tone for that building. The leader has to show exactly what you want for that building. Because your staff takes on your tone, your students take on your tone.

Several artifacts within the physical appearance of the school indicated the importance of positive attitude within the building. Along the walls throughout the school there were many pictures of famous African Americans with positive images (politicians, athletes, entertainers, etc.). Given that the student population of Range was predominantly African American, this aspect of the school culture sent a message to students about the significant, positive accomplishments of other African Americans. Also, student work was prominently displayed in the hallways. This was a way to provide students with support and validation about their work.

The leader’s attitude set the foundation with each constituent group invested in co-creating the culture within the school. Because Ms. Sanders modeled for the school community her approach to the working with faculty, students and parents, she established the groundwork for approaching each new challenge.
Safety and Discipline. Safety and discipline procedures emerged as significant aspects of the culture at Range Elementary. Ms. Sanders established a culture where student safety and order were high priorities. This was primarily in response to a previous culture of fighting and disrespect amongst students. Therefore, safety and discipline coincided as aspects of the school culture. The culture of poor social skills in turn had a negative impact on student academic achievement. Ms. Sanders described this in her portfolio:

The poor reading achievement is compounded by inadequate social skills with which some of our children come to school. Neighborhood fights, family feuds, and breached friendships are regularly aired on school grounds or in the classrooms. These behaviors always get in the way of student learning. When kids fight, they are suspended. When kids are suspended, they are not learning.

This observation underscored the need for adequate school and community supports to encourage student demonstration of appropriate social skills. Sanders worked with her faculty to establish a school culture that valued appropriate social skills to promote student safety and discipline.

These aspects of the culture were articulated by various members of the school community and observed by the researcher. These rules and procedures became so ingrained into the culture of the school that they were nearly invisible, and served mainly to support the vision of student learning and achievement. The researcher observed the following during a visit to the Range Elementary cafeteria:

*Students aren’t allowed to speak with one another until all students have a lunch, then they are allowed to talk quietly using inside voices. Ms. Sanders is constantly reminding them to use their inside voices. When there are a few minutes left, students are called up by table (often girls first, and then the boys) to empty their trash, so that very*
little mess is left for custodians to clean up. Students are then to read again silently.

Teachers come down to reclaim their students and Ms. Sanders dismisses them by homeroom table.

The procedures for student behavior and discipline were vastly different before Ms. Sanders came to Range Elementary. The new procedures produced a more orderly school environment. Mrs. Somerset, PTO President, described the way children are expected to behave under Ms. Sanders:

Ms. Sanders has a new set of rules... No fighting, no kicking and [a] hall procedure... Okay, when you come down the hall your arms must be folded. You must walk in one line. You stay in the hall procedure and no talking. Ms. Sanders does not allow fighting. If you are caught fighting, you are given a warning... If you are caught again, most times it ends up with you having to do BIC in the evening time... BIC is a program where you have to study from 3:15-4:00. You get so many days for that... I'll tell you one thing, it has made a lot of little kids keep their hands to themselves. It works, it works.

Mrs. Templeton, a teacher, noted that the discipline under Ms. Sanders’ leadership is very different from her predecessor, saying, “The discipline has taken a 180 degree turn from the former principal. Her presence is well known throughout the school.”

Sanders enlisted the support of parent volunteers to reinforce the codes of safety and discipline related to student interaction with one another. In this way, she attempted to pre-empt many of the situations in which students could make poor choices. Ms. Salley stated:

She has gotten at least six parents. There is one gentleman that comes in... [S]he has provided him with a walkie-talkie and he patrols the outside lot. We have three parents that patrol the hallways and they are very strict. If someone comes into the building that hasn’t reported to the office, they make sure [to] direct them to the office. They have to get the kids onto the property at designated times in the morning. Then, after school, when the last bell sounds, and students are dismissed for the day, those same parent volunteers are here to make sure that they get the kids off the property and sent home.
Sanders worked collaboratively with parents to provide an adult presence for children. The parents were invested in supporting the safety of students and the entire school community.

In addition to the adult presence provided by parent volunteers, Ms. Sanders understood the need for her to be visible to students. Her presence served as a deterrent to students interested in misbehaving. She adjusted her schedule accordingly. This included being very present in the café at lunch times and being outside before and after school. In discussing her daily routine, she noted:

So once I get in here my routine is to say hello to everybody and find out who is in line first and deal with those issues…Then the routine is to go outside and be with those kids because I am in a culture where kids fight. They haven’t learned to resolve conflict without fighting. So the playground in the morning and I check the breakfast rooms. I say hello to everybody along the way…but I am on that playground from 8:30 to 8:45.

She understood the nuances of the school culture and responded accordingly. Although she worked to establish a culture where students independently chose more productive means of conflict resolution, her visibility was key to maintaining an orderly environment. Ms. Sanders attended to the culture of discipline by prioritizing her day, dealing with serious issues first, making sure to acknowledge the presence of everyone in the building, and then being visible to students. The researcher noted the influence that Ms. Sanders exercised simply by virtue of her presence during lunch:

Students who weren’t reading were told they would lose up to five days of recess. Disruptive students were moved away from their class groups. Students seemed to respond to her presence. They are quiet and on task when she is present (from kindergarten through sixth grade) and when she returns if she leaves the room. Ms. Sanders engaged all of the stakeholders in the Range community, particularly parents, to
partner with her in establishing and maintaining standards of safety and discipline. This foresight allowed her to be proactive and involve parents in positive ways rather than as a result of a disciplinary action. Her attentiveness to a safe school community established the groundwork for the community’s focus on issues of an academic nature such as literacy.

**Literacy.** In keeping with the academic content standards established by the State Department of Education in the participant’s state, Ms. Sanders established a strong culture of literacy within the school community. Her vision served as a vehicle to promote a culture of literacy. In an interview with Mrs. Templeton, a third grade teacher at Range Elementary, she stated:

I believe her vision is to make sure that everybody that leaves Range Elementary has good reading skills. She is a dynamic leader in that she really works with her teachers so that they pretty much have the same vision as far as reading skill, as far as passing proficiency tests, as far as working with different levels of ability. I think that the bottom line is getting the scores up, working with the community…There is a vision to replace all of the books in the library that are antiquated books, dating back to the forties and sixties, with new, up-to-date books for the children so that they will develop a love for reading and learning.

Ms. Sanders was instrumental in establishing a culture that celebrated student literacy. This commitment to improving student literacy and reading scores on the proficiency began with professional development for faculty and encouragement for students. The result was an increased excitement about books. Her mentor reflected:

…[S]he has gotten a staff development program going on here where the facilitators are coming in to help the teachers so that they can [understand] how to teach reading comprehension. We came up with a program which is called our PTO Book Club….The children read these books and fill out a card and then drop it into a box that is decorated in each of the lunch rooms….So that is encouraging them to read….She is stressing everyday reading. [W]hen you go to the library and read your book [you] make sure you pick up a card.
Ms. Sanders created innovative programs to facilitate the culture of literacy at Range Elementary. She started by providing incentives to encourage students to read. She recognized the importance of the investment of all stakeholders in this process. Therefore, she involved teachers, parents and students in assisting to create this culture within the school.

The researcher also observed firsthand the culture of reading so pervasive in the Range Elementary School. During a visit the researcher observed:

*There are three lunch sessions each day. Students eat in two different cafes. Ms. Sanders monitors lunch in one café, and her assistant monitors students in the other. Students bring a book to the café. They sit and read quietly until they are called up to get their lunches. Then they may eat and talk quietly. Ms. Sanders calls on individual students to come up and read to her. The rules are posted and the culture of the lunch time is apparent to all students.*

Her enthusiasm encouraged stakeholders within the school community to share responsibility for student literacy. This stimulated a commitment to involving the parents and community members as well. Parents and community members were invited to get involved through donations of new books and helping to staff the library. Mrs. Templeton described a program she chaired under Ms. Sanders’ leadership:

A program that I have worked with Ms. Sanders on, and she asked me to chair this program, is called *Reading for the Fun of It.* This was our second year. The first year, our goal was to raise $10,000 and we raised $17,000. So, [a Congressperson] from the U. S. House of Representatives, our Range representative who adopted our school….We had community leaders in, we invited parents in and had a wonderful presentation. The kids prepared some of their writing for [U.S. Representative]. They read to her…We got some publicity in that area, plus it helped [raise] up to $17,000…. to buy all new books. All new reading books for the children K-6 that will replenish the antiquated books in the library….We got the entire staff involved and all of the students. It was a great
program for our school and for the community. Ms. Sanders is very, very concerned about a positive public image of our school. She works very, very hard to provide a positive image. She will bring in parents, community leaders, whatever we have to do to get people involved.

This vision was also articulated to parents in the school community. The vision was so well communicated that nearly everyone who spoke of the vision utilized the same description. Mrs. Somerset, a parent volunteer, and president of the PTO, noted:

I know that Ms. Sanders is trying to improve their reading…trying to bring their reading up to score. As of now, she has them reading during their lunch period…She also is trying to improve our library, which was very much down. She has brought in [U. S. Representative] and we have nice donations for our new books and everything. The kids are reading much better.

Ms. Sanders has implemented challenging ideas for both staff and students, in an effort to improve instruction and increase student achievement. The culture of literacy Sanders worked to establish produced change and resistance. The next section examines these continuing tensions within culture at Range Elementary.

Change and Resistance. The culture at Range was one of change and growth for students and staff. These changes were exemplified in myriad forms. They ranged from an improvement in basic school conditions to an increase in proficiency scores on certain performance indicators.

Under Ms. Sanders’ leadership, the school obtained resources and basic materials that enhanced student learning. She worked to improve the physical environment of the school for students and staff. Mrs. Somerset noted:

Well, she has made the kids start reading and helped them in so many ways. She has cleaned Range up…We needed new stuff, because all our material was outdated. Since Ms. Sanders [has] come, we have gotten up to date material. The tables that were in the lunchroom had been here [for] 34 years, but now we have new tables. We’ve got new chairs…We’ve got new desks. She has made a great improvement…She has gotten things done that we never had done.
In addition to securing materials for the school, Ms. Sanders also worked to obtain resources and teaching materials for faculty. Mrs. Templeton discussed the following related to supplemental materials for the reading program:

Through her connections, she got some samples. She let everybody see these different types of books [and asked] what did they like about them? She was instrumental in getting the Comprehension Plus books for third and fourth grades for sure. Then she got other supplemental materials for the sixth grade teachers. She wrote a grant and got so much money. Then they [teachers] could pick out any type of books that they wanted for their classroom. She is a dynamic administrator and teacher when it comes to helping her teachers to get whatever they need to get the job done.

Ms. Sanders recognized the importance of new and updated materials to promote teacher investment and student achievement. This change helped to facilitate growth toward desired goals. Ms. Sanders’ vision for the school inspired change and growth in the school community as well. In a discussion with the researcher regarding student literacy, Ms. Sanders stated:

When I got to this school the library was a mess (many of the books were antiquated and there was no system for shelving them), the students didn’t have any books, they weren’t interested in reading. My vision was to start a program to get kids interested in reading. A large part of student reading occurs during the lunch period when students are required to bring and read books for pleasure, to get them interested in reading. I asked Ms. Sanders how her vision has changed this year. She said that in many ways the vision is still connected to the reading piece. She stated that students still needed to be interested in reading. Their scores have increased as a result of increased reading. Teachers have seen the increase and have become supportive of the students reading.
This growth resulted from the culture of literacy pervasive throughout the school community. Ms. Sanders instituted an annual reading program to foster community involvement and student commitment to literacy. In addition, she created policy regarding student reading during lunchtime. Her focus on literacy in the school community had a positive impact on student achievement in this area. Student proficiency scores have improved in reading and writing as Table 4.1 demonstrates. Student reading proficiency scores in the 4th grade improved from 16 percent of students passing the year before Ms. Sanders became the instructional leader, to 31 percent in the most recent academic year. In the 6th grade, scores improved from 21.7 percent to 45 percent. Notably, writing scores improved as well. In the 4th grade, scores increased from 44 percent to 61 percent. In the 6th grade, this increase was even more dramatic, with scores increasing from nearly 60 percent to 100 percent.

Change involved risk at Range Elementary. Based on what the data demonstrate, students were being held to a higher standard, both in terms of behavior and academic performance. Teachers were being held to a higher standard in terms of instruction. Related to proficiency scores, there was an increase in student reading and writing performance over a three-year period, however, in some cases this increase involved a slight decrease in scores, first. Scores in citizenship, math and science dropped noticeably over this three year period, as well.

During this time, Range was experiencing a leadership transition. Ms. Sanders began her principalship at Range in January of 2001. The drop in scores may represent teacher and student adjustment, and in some cases, resistance to that change.
Further, Sanders noted that teacher expectations for student success were not high enough during the 2002-2003 academic year. She acknowledged that 93% of fourth graders passed the fourth grade guarantee\textsuperscript{14}, a goal set by the teachers. However, most of them did not actually pass the proficiency exam. Although the stated goal was accomplished, Sanders was dissatisfied because, ultimately, many of these students failed to meet the state standard. Next year the goal will be that 93% of fourth graders will pass the 4th grade proficiency test. Sanders maintained that if teachers and students know that the goal is passing the proficiency, they will direct their instruction toward helping students to pass.

A portion of the faculty and students continue to resist these higher expectations. Among students, Ms. Sanders noted that the older students were most resistant to change. They resisted changes in the discipline procedures as well as the culture of literacy Ms. Sanders worked hard to employ. During lunch one day Ms. Sanders pointed out the resistance that the sixth graders had to the lunch rules. She noted that this was because they had been in the school much longer than their peers and had been given much less structure under the previous principal. She pointed to the food stains on the ceiling and noted that lunch time was not monitored by the previous principal. The older students (fifth and sixth graders) were resistant to the lunch rules concerning bringing a book. Many of them either didn’t bring a book, didn’t read the book they brought, or decided to draw instead of read.

\textsuperscript{14} According to the State Department of Education, the 4th grade guarantee is a way of evaluating students who score below passing on the proficiency. Failing scores are divided into two categories: basic and below basic. The 4th grade guarantee provides for a promotion/retention decision to be based on whether a student meets the basic level of performance rather than the proficient level.
Certain members of the teaching staff were resistant to the changes Ms. Sanders implemented. There were teachers who resisted new policies that Ms. Sanders implemented requiring them to do more work. In a staff meeting concerning the upcoming conference night, she suggested that teachers send home personalized letters encouraging the parents to attend. The researcher observed:

Ms. Sanders passed around a letter with an RSVP card attached from the superintendent’s office. Ms. Sanders stated that a personalized letter, along with just the RSVP card, should go home. She stated, “We’re going to have to do some intensive kinds of things to make sure we get parents in.” She stated that she called other schools to see how they’re doing this [the report card and parent notification], and other schools are doing it the same way. There was some grumbling amongst a few teachers about having to send personalized letters inviting the parents to school. Ms. Sanders was unwavering in the need to send these letters home. She stated, “mailing the letters home seems to make a difference.” In her office after the staff meeting, Ms. Sanders stated that last year (her first year at the school) it was difficult to make some of the teachers send letters home. That is why she checked to see that the letters were mailed and when they weren’t, she mailed them herself.

In particular, many of the seasoned teachers were more resistant to the changes that Ms. Sanders made in the school. Mrs. Templeton suggested that initially, Ms. Sanders may have been too “overpowering” for these staff members. She suggested, “For somebody coming on board and maybe not realizing that some of these teachers have been in this building for twenty-five or thirty years. What is the saying, ‘you can’t teach an old dog new tricks?’ Some of these teachers had a hard time with that.”
In other cases, some newer staff members were also resistant to certain new innovations being employed in the school. At times, this resistance was more surreptitious than at other times. For instance, Ms. Sanders hired a professional development facilitator to coach teachers in teaching reading comprehension. In certain classrooms, teachers were not involved with the presentation. Thus, the presenter was teaching the students directly with the teacher refusing the strategies. These resistors were observed sitting at the desk instead of circulating the room and interacting with students.

Other examples of resistance were more blatant, with the faculty (through the Building Committee) voting against continued implementation of the Direct Instruction\textsuperscript{15} program for the following year, even though reading and writing scores had significantly increased with the implementation of this program. In other cases, a faculty member chose not to participate in a professional development activity. The researcher observed the following during a staff meeting where teachers were working together in small grade level groups:

\textit{Mrs. Phillips came and sat beside me. I introduced myself and told her why I was there. She told me she had been a teacher for 26 years. She taught sixth grade special education. She has taught at Range for the past 21 years. We talked about several things, including her starting salary, but Mrs. Phillips never joined a group of teachers.}

\textsuperscript{15} Direct Instruction is a fast paced, scripted reading program designed to help children to decode phonetically and phonemically, as well to increase fluency. Range Elementary adopted Direct Instruction to help low achieving student to increase their reading achievement (www.adihom.org/phpshop).
This was in spite of the fact that in the larger staff meeting, Ms. Sanders informed the staff that the special education students would be tested this year and their scores would count.

Ms. Sanders noted in her portfolio the pervasiveness of this culture of resistance at Range Elementary. Some of this resistance is institutional, supported by the teachers’ union bargaining contract:

Within each building, a group of elected teachers called the Building Committee-headed by a Building Representative-collaboratively plan and execute school improvement plans with the principal. As per the Mitchell City Teachers Union bargaining contract, all matters that directly impact teachers must be jointly approved and signed by the principal and the building representative.

Because of this structure, principals often find it difficult to get information, resources, or support in the most expeditious manner. Frequently, this organization structure is conducive to finger-pointing and blame since the bureaucratic structure can cause massive delays in making important purchases, hiring the appropriate personnel, or releasing inadequate personnel.

Resistance was an impediment to change at Range. However, it was important for the instructional leader to identify the resistance, and minimize its effects on student learning. Ms. Sanders was able to counter some forms of the resistance by sanctioning, as she did with the older, resistant students, or by persistence, as she did with insisting that teachers send letters home to parents.

Larger Context

Ms. Sanders was quite effective in involving stakeholders from the larger community within the school activities. Most notably, she established a relationship with parents, bringing more parent volunteers into the school on a regular basis. Parents volunteered in the mornings in the cafeteria, on the playground, in the classrooms, and in the school library. She acknowledged and commended parental presence in the school
although initially Range teachers felt that parent involvement was lacking, Sanders stated “parents are participants in significant numbers when the school is clear about what we want our parents to do.”

Thus, a Parent Involvement Committee was established. The purpose of this committee was to develop a plan designed to increase parent participation in decision-making and volunteer service. The goal of the committee was to create activities to foster positive parent-teacher-principal interaction that increase student achievement.

She also created opportunities to personally interact with families in order to provide them pertinent information about their children. She did this at the start of her tenure at Range Elementary School. Mrs. Templeton noted:

I can remember her first coming and having a big dinner to talk, just to talk. To have people come and meet her so she could share with the community, parents, children, everybody. She invited the Superintendent, the Learning Community leader, and the teachers. She wanted everybody to know that this is their school…Not just the teachers, not just the students’, not just the administrators’. It is everybody’s school. This is everybody’s home.

Ms. Sanders worked to increase parent involvement at Range Elementary School. Currently, there is an active PTO (with about 25 parents involved). Further, parents volunteer in the school building on a daily basis. Ms. Salley, a Parent Partner at the school, stated:

[W]e have a very active PTO here. We have parents that are volunteers with the teachers as far as running dittos and making copies and helping them with bulletin boards and that kind of thing. It makes the children feel good to have their parents in the building. We do know that when we have parents in the building, the students do better.

Mrs. Templeton credited Ms. Sanders for the increase in parental involvement at Range Elementary and the benefit this increase has had on the students:
When she first came, we had hardly any parents working in our school. Now we have a gentleman who is in our school a number of hours a day, walking the halls, making sure that things are not chaotic. We have a number of parents who help out in the breakfast rooms in the mornings. Then they have the children lined up and ready to go to the classrooms in an orderly fashion, which never happened before. It is really beneficial for the children because they are seeing their community, parents of other children involved, their parents involved.

Ms. Salley commented on the number of parent volunteers in the school:

I would say we have about fifteen faithful parents that are in the building practically all the time. We have two parents who come in and volunteer with the kindergartners as far as helping the teacher. We have three parents who come in and supervise in the cafeteria. We have parents who come in and they are there until the breakfast is over. Then some of them come back at lunchtime…the ones that are not working and come back.

Parents were involved in the school community. They assisted the teachers and students where needed. In this way they provided support to the teachers, and were visible to students. Parents, teachers, students and administration co-existed harmoniously in the school. One of the parents in the school community noted in reference to Ms. Sanders dedication to keeping parents informed:

I believe it was back in September of this year where the school levy was getting ready to be placed on the ballot….When parents would come in, in the morning and drop their kids off, she would just make small talk with the parents and I guess it made the parents feel more comfortable and relaxed. So after about a month of talking to them one-on-one, she was able to invite them to the forum. She allocated money to purchase T-shirts and invited all the parents in. We did hot dogs, chips and pop prior to the send-off where we left here and went over to the high school. As a matter of fact, Range School had the largest amount of parents turn out.

Ms. Sanders facilitated parental involvement by first creating a comfortable atmosphere. After establishing such a welcoming environment, she encouraged them to actively assume roles within the school and in the district. In her role as instructional leader, she utilized opportunities to interact with parents to give them pertinent
information. She facilitated a sense of unity and belonging amongst the parents by providing t-shirts with school logos. In this manner, she established a partnership with the parents, valuing their involvement in school and district issues.

Ms. Sanders’ relationship with families in the community was symbiotic. She asked for support from this community, but she also utilized school resources to encourage parental participation and help families where possible. Mrs. Salley, a Parent Partner, indicated:

Christmas we gave out I believe 25 turkey dinners. We made sure our parent volunteers would come in. We did a ticket type thing to where when they came in for parent teacher conferences in November…So she printed out tickets and the PTO gave those tickets out to the teachers and every time a parent came in for a conference, they were able to fill out the ticket and drop it into a box for a drawing…It was a complete turkey dinner with all the fixings…So she has a very, very, very close relationship with the staff and parents here.

Ms. Sanders also utilized school resources to maintain a healthy relationship with various organizations in the community. Ms. Sanders worked to personally become acquainted with the services that community organizations could offer to Range Elementary students. She noted in her administrator portfolio:

I met with the various directors of after-school off-campus tutoring programs: Faith Community Center, The Four Corners Program, and Mitchell City University Center. I wanted to determine the nature of their programs and their potential for adequately providing reading assistance. I also wanted to determine what resources or assistance they may need from Range, and to determine to what extent Range may be able to provide training for their tutors.

Mrs. Somerset noted:

She has so much going on at school…I leave at 4:00 pm …someone is always coming in to ask her for use of the gym. She writes down and sees the Board about using the gym. So that helps the community out a whole lot. She lets them have different things in the gym. [S]he doesn’t have to let them use it, you know.
In addition to establishing a relationship with parents and local community members, Ms. Sanders also developed relationships with larger organizations within the local Mitchell City area. These relationships developed into partnerships that were very beneficial to the students of Range Elementary. Mrs. Salley noted:

We have St. Peter’s Hospital as our partner in education. They have helped us to purchase a marquee for the school…A sign for our yard where we are able to post bulletins and important messages and that kind of thing. We have volunteers from the Kiwanis to come in and do reading with the children.

Ms. Sanders was satisfied with some of the relationships she established with community members. She also recognized the work that needed to be done to strengthen and maintain these partnerships. In addition, she envisioned the ways in which these relationships can continue to grow and benefit the students of the school. She noted:

There was some anger, so teachers kind of shut down on all extra things. That did impact what I would like to see happen with the community. We have some strong business partners and community social service partnerships: the Kiwanis Club, churches, the University. I would like to see, I envision this group of people working as a team…planning, collaborating with our building committee and parents. We’re all planning the direction this school is going to take and the direction the instruction is going to take.

While Range Elementary had a number of programs that involved parents and community members, the most salient example of this connection was the Reading For the Fun of It event. This academic year marked the one year anniversary of the program’s inception. A congresswoman from the U. S. House of Representatives participated by reading to students and sharing in their writing. In addition, parent volunteers donated their time to working in the library to shelve new books and decorate. Other community donors participated as well. The researcher attended the rehearsal for this event. The entire school was full of energy preparing for this event.
In the library a group of parents were working together to decorate in preparation for the “Reading for the Fun of It” event with a member of the U. S. House of Representatives. Ms. Sanders told the parents that she really like the way the library looked. This event was sponsored last year as well. A U. S. Representative will read to the students and them to her. Invitations were sent to parents and last year’s organizational donors. In addition, invitations were sent to the individuals who were donors last year. Ms. Sanders and I spent some time on the phone, calling donors to see if they’d attend. Last year, donors attended and brought a book to donate to the library.

In the midst of involving key community players and parents, Ms. Sanders never lost sight of the import of this event to teachers and their students. She supported teachers by providing necessary materials and checking in with them periodically to make sure that their students were prepared.

Ms. Sanders stated that she was so pleased with what the teachers had done to prepare for the event. They had taken the idea and run with it. They decorated the gymnasium and got the students involved with the decorations and the speaking parts. Ms. Sanders seemed really pleased at the outcome of the program and the ownership that the teachers seemed to have in the preparation for the program, stating, “teachers are so excited about it,” and “they’ve done a marvelous job.”

This event engendered widespread enthusiasm amongst the entire school community. The widespread community involvement neutralized skepticism and encouraged ownership of ideas and collective commitment to improvement.

Ms. Sanders established herself as an instructional leader within the school, embracing staff professional development with an emphasis on student literacy,
welcomed and supported by school and local community. As the instructional leader at Range Elementary School, she worked to increase student achievement. She was able to do this by prioritizing student needs and focusing staff development in this direction. She also utilized reflective practice to recognize and work through the resistance she encountered. At times, she worked through it by confronting it, such as with defiant students. At other times, she allowed the staff to influence one another through her “teachers teaching teachers” approach. And in other situations, she moved around resistant staff, such as when she made sure personal letters went to the homes of students whose teachers refused to send them.

Experiences of Race and Gender

In addition to data provided by Sanders, the researcher conducted a “focus group” interview with two Academy participants (Ms. Payne and Dr. Green), a mentor and an early career principal, both employed in the Mitchell City School District, to learn about their administrative experiences regarding race and gender. Further, Ms. Jones, Sanders’ mentor, spoke about challenges she experienced as an administrator that she perceived to be related to gender.

During the initial phases of the study, Sanders’ experiences related to race and gender were not mentioned as salient factors in her leadership practice. However, she acknowledged certain experiences, involving other’s response to her as a nontraditional leader and her respect for others, in which she perceived race and gender to be factors, in the concluding months of the study. The experiences reported by these African American
female administrators are in some cases obvious and in others, more covert. Several themes emerged from this data, including challenges to the African American female principal’s position or authority, respect for others, surveillance, and networking/support.

**Challenges to Position/Authority.** A significant experience for each of these administrators was the response of others to their positions as leaders. These administrators had the perception that at times others did not accept their authority because of their race and gender. Ms. Sanders noted that feedback she received from a staff evaluation of her had some negative comments, with one individual rating her as a tyrant. She stated:

That disturbed me. If I were a white male, it would be different. A white male can say something in the harshest way possible and a Black female can say something in a [more gentle] tone and they [the staff] respond more favorably to the white male.

To further evidence this, she observed that her assistant principal (a white male) often received a different response to his requests than she:

I can tell Mr. Atkins [assistant principal] to tell the teachers to turn something in, he will go and tell them just as nasty as he wants to, and it will be turned in. I can say it ever so nicely, and there will be a bunch of grumbling. They don’t even know that I’ve told him to tell them. But because it comes from him, they’ll do it.

She thus perceived resistance from her faculty to be, at times, the result of their reaction to her race and/or gender. Further, she understood their compliance to her assistant principal to be based on the validation of his inherent authority as a white male.

Ms. Payne had a similar experience when she was a principal:

I had a white male assistant principal. There were plenty of times we would both be in the office and whoever came in would go straight to him. Just walk right past me and say I want to see the principal. I stand there and I watch them because sooner or later they want to see the principal. They are going to have to talk to me.
Just as Sander’s faculty validate white maleness as authority, Payne’s experience demonstrated that parents (black and white) did as well.

Similarly, Dr. Green experienced challenges to her position as an African American female administrator when she applied for an administrative position within her district:

A community leader asked me, ‘What are you going to do when your job closes?’ I said, ‘I applied for two positions.’ One of our board members was there too. I said, ‘One of the positions that I applied for is the International Studies Director.’ Then the board member turned and asked me, ‘Do you have a foreign language background?’ The community leader said, ‘You asked an international person if she has a foreign language background?’ The previous person did they even know how to spell French? So it is like a double standard, that double jeopardy standard. You are speaking to somebody who understands Spanish, who can speak French, and write in five or six different dialects and has a wealth of international experience.

Dr. Green felt that her knowledge and experience were not validated because she was seen as a Black woman before being seen as a very educated individual with substantial credentials to be successful in the position for which she applied. Based on her race and gender, she felt that her knowledge and talent went unrecognized and unrewarded.

Ms. Jones also discussed several experiences in which she experienced challenges to her leadership because of her gender. These challenges were specifically related to others’ perceptions that administration is a “man’s job.” She stated:

In the past, it has been a lack of respect. You are a female. Your role should be the motherly role. There have been put-downs...I still have to say certain people in a certain generational age are very much into that mode of “you are a woman,” as a put-down. [There is] no encouragement to go into administration because that is a man’s role, not the woman’s role. You might think about curriculum, because that is okay for a woman.

Jones acknowledged that there was a perceived dichotomy in terms of administrative positions. Certain positions were traditionally held by women and were therefore
acceptable for women administrative aspirants. Conversely, she was often discouraged from administrative positions (such as the principalship) that weren’t seen as appropriate for women.

Respect for others. These nontraditional leaders made the point that they were always respectful to others, particularly in the ways that they addressed students, faculty and colleagues. Ms. Payne suggested, “We’ve got answers for all of their [faculty] questions, before they even ask them, but we give them in a nice, unthreatening manner. We get our point across.”

Sanders also suggested that tone of voice was important in dealing with students and faculty. She stated,

I will be the first one to tell you I am not going into that cafeteria hollering at them [students]. When, I snap my finger, I want them to do as I say, and they know I love them. They [faculty] know that too, but I am not going to change the me to suit the you because this is who I am. I have never disrespected adults. I don’t chew adults out. I have never belittled adults. I have never hollered at adults, but when the time comes for me to tell you, I am going to tell you and I will do it behind closed doors.

It was important to these leaders to speak with students and adults with respect. Likely, the effects of this behavior were twofold. In treating others with respect, they could request respect from others. In addition, these leaders were mindful of the ways in which they were perceived by the school community. Addressing others in more forceful (arguably masculine) ways might increase the levels of resistance (by adults and students) already experienced by these leaders.

Surveillance. Surveillance, the feeling of constantly being watched, emerged as a theme within the focus group. Collins (1998) suggests that “[W]hereas racial segregation is designed to keep Blacks as a group of class outside centers of power, surveillance aims
to control black individuals who are inside centers of power” (p. 20). Specifically, this technique is employed to monitor Blacks as they enter domains typically characterized by white (usually male) leadership and power.

These administrators articulated feelings of being monitored by the faculty and colleagues. This was attributed to being a minority leader, and often a result of being the sole minority. Ms. Payne noted, “They are going to be watching me more than they are going to be watching others. They watch minorities more, especially if you are the only one.”

This surveillance was based on race, gender or both. Payne continued, “If you are the only woman in the group and you are white, and they are all white men, they are going to watch you.” Sanders noted that within the Mitchell City School District, the buildings having difficulty are “historically headed by African American females.” She stated that in these buildings a number of teachers have submitted formal grievances against their administrators. Sanders posited that these administrators experienced resistance “because of who they are” (African American female leaders).

These leaders reported that the feeling of being monitored was pervasive in formal as well as informal social situations. Ms. Payne stated:

Then we [the group] goes out to dinner, if I am the only Black female, they will remember what I ate, how many drinks I had, what I talked about, what I had on. The reason I know they will remember it is that I hear about it later...When I go out with them, I do not drink. I do not drink with those groups because I know they are watching me.

Dr. Green added, “Somebody else will come and tell us, “Oh, somebody saw you yesterday. They will get to the place where you will be labeled.”
These experiences of feeling monitored and then labeled by others, influenced the ways in which these nontraditional leaders interact with colleagues and faculty. As such, these feelings of being watched ensured that these leaders regulated their behavior, feeling less free to engage in activities which they thought could possibly cast them in a negative light.

**Networking/Support.** Nontraditional leaders benefit tremendously from supports provided through networking. The focus group participants suggested several ways in which networking has been of benefit in their professional careers. Ms. Jones suggested that several females in administrative positions influenced her decision to become a principal when she was a teacher:

I was not interested in administration. I had a person within the system that nurtured me to go down this road. Within our own school system, I had an informal mentor who kept approaching me as I was teaching. I kept pushing her away and saying no, I wasn’t interested. She said “Tell me exactly why you aren’t interested.” I said “Because I don’t believe that when I leave the classroom I will be able to affect children as much as I do [now].” She gave me some scenarios and said, “Look how you could affect more children. Instead of 20 or 30, you could affect 200 or 300 or more.” And she said, “That is what we need, people who can reach that level.” And I had never thought about it from that angle. She kept patting me on my back and saying “Keep at it, its okay.” She was fabulous….I had my degree in educational administration…but I went back to refresh myself. That is when I got my specialist [certification] and a professor, an adviser, [became] my second nurturer/mentor.

Jones acknowledged that having the support of a nurturing mentor was key to becoming interested in an administrative position. The mentoring she received from these experienced individuals supported her through her decision to become an administrator and served as a resource for her within the role of administrator.
Ms. Payne suggested, “If you are a minority, get to know the minorities. Don’t be standoffish. Introduce yourself…You are going to hook up with somebody who can help you.” She also suggested that experienced nontraditional leaders have an imperative to assist novice leaders:

We, as professionals…owe it to the young people. If there is a new principal just named, I introduce myself to them and let them know that they can call me. I let them know that I am available. We took in a group of twenty-five new UDLP [a partnership between the Mitchell City District and the local university to support new administrators] people and there were five or six Blacks in the group.

Something told me I should talk to these people. I always make it known, white or Black, if you are new, I’m going to help you. I may even go out of my way to help the minorities more.

As a mentor, Ms. Payne was aware of the need for nontraditional leaders to receive coaching and mentoring. She stated,

A lot of African Americans need coaching and mentoring. [They need to know] How to go to that job…how to be the first to get your job…Then when you get in, just because you got the job doesn’t mean everybody likes you. That good ole boy or good ole girl network is very prevalent.

Dr. Green suggested that there are a number of sources in which to find mentoring. She suggested that in addition to the mentoring support she received from Ms. Payne, she also has maintained connections with individuals in her university. She also suggested enlisting the support of informal mentoring relationships, “So, you call on those people, those professional mentors. Then when you come to the job, you find yourself two people who are nonthreatening to you.”

In addition to mentoring, these leaders intimated that support networks were vital to them. The kinds of supports vary, but, they provide the leaders an opportunity to focus on other interests and to feel fulfilled in other ways. Ms. Sanders and Dr. Green both noted the importance of spiritual networks for them. These supports also influence their
leadership, compelling them to employ integrity into their leadership practice. Ms. Sanders stated, “I walk uprightly.” She noted that her support comes from her spiritual beliefs and through church membership. Dr. Green emphasized, “You have to believe in something higher than you…on a daily basis. I have to be covered by a supreme being before I can leave my house and go face [the day].” Payne added,

You can give these people 8-5. That’s all they are going to get. Then I switch gears. We go home, we’re with our friends, we go out. It can be your church. It can be your sorority sisters, it can be your neighbor next door. You’ve got to know what you’re about…It’s like you have to realize what’s lasting and what’s not lasting.

These nontraditional leaders utilized various supports for both professional and personal purposes. Mentoring was compelling for them in terms of learning the profession and helping other novice leaders to learn. In addition, given some of the challenges they experienced, they availed themselves of various supports from spiritual to social networks in order to have the strength to face the challenges they articulated.

Conclusion

The Administrative Leadership Academy provided support and resources in which to view Sanders’ instructional leadership. This support was proffered through the tools of mentoring and portfolio development.

Portfolio development provided Sanders an opportunity to deliberate about the barriers to student learning students faced at Range Elementary. She used this tool to articulate her vision for student learning, increase professional development for teachers and involve the large community in the vision for student learning.

In addition to the portfolio, the mentoring she received supported Sanders in her role as instructional leader. Her mentor fulfilled many roles, including that of: teacher,
providing information about leadership; coach, facilitating the growth of Range in ways appropriate to Sanders’ leadership style and the needs of the school community; and navigator, assisting in reducing ambiguity often experienced by novice principals in their role as instructional leader. As her mentor, Jones provided information and resources to help facilitate Sanders vision.

Given her subject position as a nontraditional leader, Sanders realized many of the challenges that these leaders in particular face. Understanding these experiences is important in assisting nontraditional leaders in navigating through the early career process. Given that support is significant to supporting all leaders (particularly nontraditional leaders) through their early career, the Academy support of mentoring was a significant factor in assisting Sanders through these particular challenges.

Chapter 5 will examine the ways in which Academy lessons and experiences influenced leadership practice, and explicate the ways in which race and gender affected her leadership practice through the lens of an Afrocentric feminist epistemology.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 1 provided information about the current state of affairs of school leadership and of nontraditional leaders in particular. The research questions posed in the study and the theoretical frameworks were introduced. Chapter 2 reviewed the literature concerning instructional leadership, nontraditional leaders as instructional leaders, mentoring and portfolio development. Chapter 3 highlighted the methods utilized in this study. Chapter 4 presented and analyzed the data. This chapter summarizes the findings of this study, discusses the theoretical framework for understanding the leadership practice of the principal under study and suggests implications for future research.

Summary

This study sought to understand the ways in which an African American female principal within the Administrative Leadership Academy employed the activities, structures, and processes provided within the Academy to help facilitate her own professional development in a comprehensive and proactive manner. Specifically, the study sought to understand the ways in which Academy activities and processes were integrated into the administrative practice of Ms. Sanders within the context of Range Elementary School subsequent to her completion of the Academy. Further, the study considered the degree to which this learning affected the organization, and ultimately, student outcomes.
Principals today face many challenges, including increased demands and accountability, lack of parental support and involvement, media negativity toward schools, lack of time, poor compensation (IEL, 2000). Nontraditional leaders, those members of minority groups underrepresented in leadership positions, face many challenges en route to such administrative positions, often related specifically to race and/or gender. Navigating these challenges can be especially difficult for novice and nontraditional leaders in the absence of proper support and guidance. The Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program attempted to provide administrators with the tools needed to become effective instructional leaders.

In an effort to understand the Academy’s effect on the leadership of this nontraditional administrator, the researcher conducted a prolonged study of the participant. This included several interviews with the participant, her mentor, a teacher, a parent, and a paraprofessional at the school. A focus group consisting of two other nontraditional leaders (African American female administrators) was conducted to further investigate the influence of race and gender on leadership experiences. The researcher attended regional Academy meetings, as well as regional coordinator meetings, from December 2002 through June 2003. In addition, the researcher attended monthly staff meetings at the participant’s school from September 2002 through June 2003. Finally, the researcher shadowed the principal through her day at the school on several occasions.

The research was conducted with the following research questions serving as a guide:

1. To what extent and in what ways did this Entry Year Program (ALA:EYP) principal gain understanding of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards as central to her role as instructional leader, and to what degree did she perceive ongoing reflection, including documentation, diagnosis, design and deliberation skills within the mentor/protégé group and by means of portfolio writing as a viable tool of principal practice?
2. In what ways is she applying this knowledge and these skills within her school?

3. What is the evidence of impact on the organization?

4. What is the impact of race and gender on leadership style and leadership experience?

A summary of the study’s findings is reported here with a particular focus to the research questions posed at the beginning of the study. Thus, the following discussion is organized by the research questions.

1.) To what extent and in what ways did this Entry Year Program (EYP) principal gain understanding of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards as central to her role as instructional leader and to what degree did she perceive ongoing reflection, including documentation, diagnosis, design and deliberation skills within her mentor/protégé group and by means of portfolio writing, as a viable tool of principal practice?

In Chapter 2, instructional leadership is defined as a set of behaviors that promote professional development for teachers in order to ensure student academic achievement. The role of the principal has expanded. No longer is the principal only responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the school building (DuFour, 1999; Colon, 1994). Given the push for accountability, high academic standards, increased expectations for student academic performance, and high stakes testing, principals must provide instructional leadership to ensure that teachers have the professional development and resources they need to ensure student achievement.
The Administrative Leadership Academy sought to provide effective professional development to novice school leaders. Specifically, the Academy provided professional development in the form of mentoring and portfolio development as tools to facilitate instructional leadership. Sanders’ instructional leadership practice was characterized by her attentiveness to professional development for faculty and her concern with student performance. Mentoring and portfolio development were components in facilitating and supporting Sanders’ instructional leadership practice.

Within the Academy, mentoring was employed to nurture and support early career principals toward effective instructional leadership. As discussed in Chapter 2, traditional understandings of mentoring relationships hold the mentor in a hierarchical position, as the sage instructing and evaluating the performance of the novice (Gardiner, et. al., 2001). These unidirectional relationships assume no prior experience or relevant knowledge, skills and dispositions on the part of the protégé, and negate the opportunity for the mentor to learn from the protégé.

Given more recent developments in theory and approach, notions of effective mentoring include particular qualities and characteristics, such as trust, mutual respect, (Pence, 1995), mutual learning (Fletcher, 1999), and mentor as coach (Gallwey, 2000). Ms. Sanders established a mentoring relationship with Ms. Jones in a manner that supported and nurtured her through her first year as principal at Range Elementary. Close examination of this relationship revealed several important qualities. Ms. Jones mentored Ms. Sanders by establishing a trusting and respectful relationship. In addition, she demonstrated the characteristics of a good observer, a continuous learner, and someone who is aware of his or her own biases. These qualities suggest that a mentor’s
responsibility, extends beyond showing their protégés “the ropes.” Within this extended definition, the mentor supports the novice in making sound professional decisions, taking advantage of situations in which the novice can teach the mentor, and being aware of biases that may negatively impact the mentoring relationship, and ultimately, the learning process.

Several mutually supportive mentor roles emerged from this study. The traditional paradigm of the protégé created in the mentor’s image was interrupted. This signals a transformation from the traditional androcentric mentoring paradigm “steeped in the masculine tradition of reproduction of self” (Gardiner, et. al., 2001). Although Administrative Leadership Academy mentors were experienced principals themselves, they did not assume the role of the mentor as the sage, with all of the information to be transmitted to the novice. Instead, they were able to guide novice principals on the journey toward becoming instructional leaders, shifting roles as appropriate to the given situation or concern, from mentor as teacher to mentor as mutual learner, and to mentor as coach. These various mentor functions supported this novice principal as she grew into her role as instructional leader.

In addition to mentoring, portfolio development was an important tool in facilitating instructional leadership. Portfolios are utilized a tools for reflection, inquiry and personal development (Walker de Felix, 2000). Portfolio components were directly linked to the ISLLC standards. Ms. Sanders noted that the portfolio helped her to focus on the ISLLC standards. In particular, she focused her portfolio on her vision for the learning community (Standard 1), collaborating with families and community (Standard
4), and sustaining a culture conducive to student learning (Standard 2). Connecting portfolio development to standards offered Sanders opportunities for reflection about ways to strengthen the learning community at Range Elementary.

The Academy portfolio required participants to address barriers to student learning within the school context related to the ISLLC standards, provide documentation of those barriers and engage in reflection about how best to remove those barriers. As a result of portfolio development, Ms. Sanders was able to articulate her vision for Range Elementary as well as deliberate about how to address certain challenges within the learning community.

The portfolio provided Ms. Sanders the opportunity to think strategically about the barriers to student learning at Range and think through how to address them. Student literacy was a significant barrier to student learning at Range. Sanders focused her instructional leadership on improving student literacy. She worked to secure materials and professional development resources for teachers. She also worked to provide tutoring support for students, both in school and through community organizations.

The portfolio was an important tool in helping her to think through the steps she might take to address needs within the learning community. She acknowledged the import of this process within her portfolio:

This process truly helped me to organize strategies and next steps that I may not have considered. For example, in trying to determine appropriate documents, it became clear that a written five-year plan for designing a Balanced Approach to DI [Direct Instruction] for Range that is published and shared with all constituents would truly be a useful tool to keep our vision and mission focused.

This structured exploration of her leadership practice viewed through the lens of the ISLLC Standards, ensured that Sanders was attentive to including the necessary
documentation, not only within the portfolio itself, but also as information to be shared with professional staff. Ultimately, the portfolio also helped her reflect upon the instructional leadership decisions made throughout the development process. Her reflections provided the opportunity to think about her own effectiveness in communication with staff, professional development, student achievement and other instructional leadership tasks.

2.) In what ways did she apply this knowledge and these skills within her school?

Ms. Sanders applied her knowledge of the ISLLC Standards within her school in several ways. In particular, she focused on Standards 1, 2 and 4 of the six ISLLC Standards in developing her administrative portfolio. Standard 1 is concerned with facilitating a vision of learning within the school community. Standard 2 focuses on creating and sustaining a school culture conducive to learning. Standard 4 attends to promoting the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members.

Ms. Sanders’ vision for the Range learning community focused on increasing student literacy. She was instrumental in creating a culture that supported this vision, promoting a collective commitment to improving the literacy skills of all Range students. Sanders created a school policy that required students to bring a book to lunch to read. She encouraged them to read to her and to each other. In addition, she provided professional development opportunities for teachers to increase their skill in teaching reading to students. Through the school’s building committee, she worked collaboratively with teachers to decide which professional development opportunities would best serve the teachers’ needs. As a result of this collaboration, the school
continued to employ the Direct Instruction program for teaching students reading skills. Also, in recognition of the increased significance of the proficiency exam and the school’s Academic Emergency status, Sanders and her teachers jointly decided to provide professional development that would coach teachers preparing students to take the proficiency exams. For instance, Sanders and her teachers decided to provide professional development that provided teachers information with teaching math operations, and extended response questions to prepare for the mathematics portion of the proficiency exam.

Sanders also worked with the larger community in facilitating this vision of increased student literacy. She worked collaboratively with stakeholders, including parents, community organizations, and individual donors to ensure their commitment toward this goal. Parents volunteered their services in various ways within the school in ways that supported the administrator’s vision and the school culture. Specifically, they volunteered their time to make the library a comfortable place for children. In addition, they also assisted the administration and teachers in maintaining a safe school environment, helping to keep disciplinary distractions at a minimum, so that teachers and students could be about the business of teaching and learning.

Sanders focused on increased parental involvement at Range, concluding that increased parental involvement would be beneficial to students. She ascertained that parents lacked important tools for assisting their children in mastering the necessary learning standards. By establishing a committee to address parent concerns, she helped to forge a strong, collaborative relationship between parents, teachers and administrators.
Sanders also involved community stakeholders in her vision of student literacy and the culture of literacy at Range. She did this by investigating the many community agencies that provided academic services to students and working with them to make sure that students were being appropriately served. She welcomed volunteers from a number of community organizations who provided tutoring and other after school activities for students at Range.

Ms. Sanders was mindful of the larger political context and incorporated this awareness into facilitating her vision. Given the mandates of No Child Left Behind, Sanders was attentive to the literacy thrust provided for in this legislation. Further, she made connections between the school community and the larger political context, in a manner visible to the public. Sanders designed a celebratory program to highlight the school’s commitment to increasing student literacy. Attentive to involving all stakeholders, she included a local congresswoman to be a part of this event.

3.) What is the evidence of the impact on the organization?

The impact of Sanders’ vision appears significant at Range Elementary. The culture of literacy within the school community at once created growth as well as resistance. Both forces were pervasive within the context of the school, and Sanders was well aware of their significance.

The force of resistance at Range was a response to the many changes that Sanders instituted. The prior principal had a different leadership style. Students and teachers were not nearly as accountable for their actions and the outcomes of those actions. Older students were resistant to new policies related to both behavior and academic achievement. They refused to bring their books to the cafeteria, and when they did, they
refused to read. Teachers were also resistant to the culture that Sanders established. Some refused the professional development that was provided; others refused to use the materials that were provided. Still others refused to use meeting time to work in collaborative teams with colleagues in order to participate in discussion about instructional practice.

In contrast to the resistance, there was also active learning and growth manifest within the learning community. Fourth and sixth grade reading and writing proficiency scores increased over the two-year period since Ms. Sanders assumed leadership of Range. While there was a dip in the scores following the initial increase, the increase in these scores was significant when compared to the scores prior to Ms. Sanders’ arrival in the spring of 2001.

This culture of growth was evidenced by the success of certain programs along with improvements in student achievement. The Reading for the Fun of It event was notably influential during its inaugural year. As teachers, parents, students and community members realized its impact, it became even more successful the next year. The school community was excited about celebrating student literacy. This event garnered widespread local attention, with media coverage on television and in print press.

4.) *What is the impact of race and gender on leadership style and leadership experience?*

Data provided by Ms. Sanders as well as the focus group reveal several themes concerning the experiences of nontraditional leaders related to race and gender, including challenges to African American female principal’s authority, respect for others, surveillance and the importance of networking and support.
These leaders recognized the validation afforded to white male authority. They understood that in their subject position as African American female in a leadership role, often their knowledge and experiences were not validated. Thus, the response from others often didn’t recognize and validate these leaders. However, where possible, these leaders used this to their advantage.

Race and gender clearly influenced Sanders’ leadership experiences and her understandings of how she was perceived in the school by faculty and staff. She was aware that administration was largely a “man’s world,” and at times made decisions accordingly. Most notably there were times when she would have her assistant principal, a white male, instruct the faculty rather than doing it herself, noting that the staff would receive the direction given from him more readily.

These leaders also recognized the importance of demonstrating respect for students and adults within the learning community. Demonstrating respect allowed them to expect the same from others. Further, they demonstrated respect through their use of dialogue. Specifically, these leaders articulated that they demonstrated respect for colleagues, students, parents and faculty in the ways in which they spoke. Essentially, they created an environment in which they spoke with others, rather than speaking to or at them. Thus, they engaged in conversation in which they attempted to validate and support other view points, while still articulating their own position.

Surveillance, or the awareness of being monitored was a pervasive theme for these leaders. This awareness caused the leaders to restrict their behaviors with colleagues and staff, in order to avoid being labeled negatively. Thus, social situations were often not comfortable for these individuals. However, they relied upon mentoring
and support networks in order to reflect upon these experiences. These mentoring and support networks also provided a means for the leaders to help prepare other nontraditional novice leaders. The following section discusses this study’s implications for the theoretical frameworks.

Implications for the Theoretical Frameworks

Within this study, two complementary frameworks were utilized to understand the ways in which race and/or gender influence the leadership experiences of this nontraditional leader participating in the Administrative Leadership Academy. The data support application of this framework as a means of understanding the leadership of the nontraditional leader at instant in the study. The following discussion focuses on the ways in which an Afrocentric feminist epistemology helps to explicate Sanders’ leadership experiences and style. Additionally, feminist poststructuralism informs the mentoring relationship co-created by Sanders, and Jones, her mentor.

Afrocentric feminist epistemology. This study used an Afrocentric feminist epistemology to examine Ms. Sanders’ leadership style. This framework provides for the unique standpoint African American women possess, based on their race and gender. It provides a space for African American women to own a both/and conceptual orientation, in which they are a member of a group and yet stand apart from it (Collins, 1991). This theoretical framework is characterized by the following four contours: a basis in concrete experience as a criterion of meaning, attention to and use of dialogue, emphasis on caring and a focus on personal accountability (Collins, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994). These contours are rooted in Afrocentric, as well as feminist values. To some degree, each of these emphases was apparent in aspects of Sanders’ leadership.
The first contour of an Afrocentric feminist epistemology, concrete experience as a criterion of meaning, gives credibility to the lived experiences of individuals claiming to have knowledge in a particular area. Although a novice principal, Ms. Sanders had several experiences that she brought to bear on her leadership at Range. She had several years of experience teaching Language Arts and English. Her goal of increasing student literacy, and supporting teachers toward this end, was based upon her experience teaching this subject matter.

Sanders had several years experience as the Director of Development and Public Relations at a school in a neighboring state. Her experience in this role, along with the mentoring she received in position, provided insight into involving all the school constituents and community stakeholders in her vision. Specifically, within the Reading for the Fun of It program she used her experiences in public relations to garner community support in the form of financial donations, as well as donations of books to support the school library. Further, she used her prior experiences in public relations to involve a local congresswoman and the media in this event to increase community awareness and support for student literacy at Range.

Within the knowledge validation process, use of dialogue is characterized by connectedness. Use of dialogue often refers to the “spontaneous verbal and non-verbal interaction between speaker and listener” (Collins, p. 209). Ms. Sanders used dialogue in several ways within her leadership practice. She utilized reflection in order to facilitate internal dialogue regarding her leadership practice. For her, this was already a habit. Her involvement within the Academy served to validate the reflective internal conversations she engaged in with herself. Further, she also engaged in reflective discussion with her
mentor and her faculty members. Reflective dialogue became a method for gauging student progress, and vice versa. Indeed, therefore, she also monitored student progress as a way to gauge whether teachers were engaging in reflection, with means and ends inextricably linked. She employed this reflective dialogue with faculty to create an environment in which she was able to both support and challenge their instructional practice.

Ms. Sanders uniquely demonstrated an ethic of caring. The Afrocentric feminist framework provides three interrelated components of the ethic of care: individual uniqueness, appropriateness of emotions in dialogues and the capacity for empathy. Ms. Sanders evidenced her caring in several ways. She worked to set a positive, nurturing tone within the school environment for students. Meeting concrete needs within the school community also evidenced her caring. The Thanksgiving turkey dinners that the school made available to needy families demonstrated Sanders’ caring toward students and their families. Finally, she evidenced an ethic of caring related to her use of dialogue with teachers and students. She spoke respectfully to members of the school community at all times.

She demonstrated her caring toward parents by involving them in the school community. She ascertained that parents would be more involved with the school if they were clear about how they were needed. She maintained relationships with parents that validated their participation in the school and acknowledged their contribution to the school community.

The ethic of personal accountability expects that people will be responsible for their knowledge claims (Collins, 1991). Within this aspect of the Afrocentric feminist
epistemology, “all views expressed and actions taken are thought to derive from a central set of core beliefs that cannot be other than personal” (Collins, p. 218). In Sanders’ instructional leadership practice, she took responsibility for challenges and barriers to learning at Range. She stated, “If there is a problem in this building, I have to ask myself what is it that I need to do. Both in terms of myself and in terms of what I give out.” As the instructional leader, she was invested in reflective practice, professional development, increased student literacy and she took responsibility for whether those things occurred at Range. These elements provided the framework for Sanders’ administrative experiences. She engaged in reflection for many years before she realized its essentialness to instructional leadership. However, because of her experience with reflective practice, she found it to be a tool of instructional leadership that provided her with validation. She believed teachers should engaged in reflective practice as well, linking student achievement or the lack, to the absence of teacher reflection, thus holding herself and the teachers accountable for student achievement.

As an instructional leader with a Reading/Language Arts background, Sanders took responsibility for increasing student literacy. Sanders knowledge claims related to increasing student literacy were based on her experiences teaching students and working as the Director of Public Relations in her prior position. She understood that involving all stakeholders was important to student achievement. She took responsibility for establishing a school culture where literacy was celebrated. Her strong beliefs, based on the knowledge she acquired through experience, regarding student literacy achievement propelled her to provide professional development for teachers, coaching for parents, and encouragement for students.
Further, when we spoke about the No Child Left Behind Legislation, Ms. Sanders expressed her ethic of accountability in this context as well. She was very much in favor of legislation that would “shake us all up like we are doing right now.” In this way administrators and teachers can be held accountable for student achievement, the very thing that they profess to be invested in as professionals.

An Afrocentric feminist epistemology provided a lens through which to view Sanders’ leadership experiences and decisions. Feminist poststructuralism adds nuance helpful to understanding the mentorship experience. The following discussion attends to the ways in which this framework influenced the understandings gleaned from this study.

**Feminist Postructuralism in Mentoring.** Feminist poststructuralism focuses on the way that knowledge is produced. This perspective reveals the gendered nature of knowledge production, specifically the way in which this knowledge production reinforces traditional power relations between the genders (Fletcher, 1999). The goal of feminist poststructural inquiry is to “add a specific marginalized voice to organizational discourse—women’s voice—and, by doing so, disrupt a particular system of power: patriarchy” (Fletcher, p. 21).

Overwhelmingly, women and minorities have had limited access to positions of school leadership. A significant reason for this relates to the lack of support and guidance necessary to propel such individuals into such positions. Educational administration is “traditionally male-identified domain” (Blount, 1983). Mentoring is a key encouragement for those individuals aspiring to administrative positions. Traditionally, mentoring is a special relationship in which the mentor guides and supports the mentee personally and professionally (Gardiner, et. al., 2001). However, in
educational administration, as with many other male dominated fields, mentoring relationships have been a part of the “old boy network.” Essentially, seasoned professionals (typically white males) seek to assist protégés who are “younger versions of themselves” (Gardiner, et. al., 2001).

The Academy framework for mentoring provided Ms. Sanders and her mentor guidance on the nature of the relationship, with the freedom to construct that relationship in ways most comfortable to both the mentor and protégé. Ms. Sanders and her mentor, Ms. Jones, worked together to create a mentoring relationship that enabled both to grow professionally. This relationship was one in which the protégé had the autonomy to make decisions she thought best for her school community, with significant input and guidance from her mentor. In many ways they were able to facilitate this kind of relationship because Sanders was not a subordinate of Jones’. Therefore, the power relationship typically inherent in a supervisory relationship was neutralized.

Further, the Academy used language such as “coach” and “facilitator” to describe the role of the mentor. This suggests a more collaborative, teamwork approach to mentoring, rather than a more hierarchical relationship. In addition, the Academy provided mentors training in coaching protégés. In the participant’s region, mentors also met in collaborative groups prior to each general meeting. This training fostered a method of mentoring that was less authoritative and more collegial. The mentor’s responsibility was to help facilitate the protégé’s progress toward instructional leadership, allowing the protégé to discover and define what worked best in his or her school context.

In this study, the mentor assisted the protégé through various challenges, while allowing her to articulate her own leadership vision and style based on her beliefs and
philosophies. It is through the mentoring process that the protégé negotiates a new
subject position. If the mentoring has truly served the needs of the protégé, the protégé
has not only moved up the ranks in administration, but she has also found a way to lead
from her new rank that reflects her own philosophies and convictions. She has not been
forced to disguise herself or fit into a gendered or racially acceptable notion of leader”
(Gardiner, et. al., 2000, p. 196).

The relationship between Ms. Sanders and her mentor was constructed such that it
met the needs of both parties. The mentor role was not static, and therefore, shifted to
accommodate the needs of the protégé. Thus, the relationship was not an evaluative one
and both received a benefit from participating. Contrary to traditional mentoring
perspectives, which hold that the exchange of information is passed from the mentor to
the protégé, Sanders and Jones engaged in a relationship that was conducive to mutual
learning (Fletcher, 1999). Fletcher describes this type of relationship as mutually
empowering. This terminology is used to capture the notion that contributing to the
development of another results in a kind of mutuality (Fletcher, 1999). Therefore, the
relationship meets the needs of both, and both engage in the learning process with one
another. The mentor and protégé engaged in activities around mutual interests,
particularly related to professional development. For instance, they both actively
participated in Critical Friends groups as a means of professional growth enhancing
personal interest. Ultimately, this kind of mentoring relationship allowed for mutual
learning.

As with the Afrocentric feminist epistemology, mentoring from the feminist
poststructural perspective embraces an ethic of caring (Collins, 1991; Gardiner, et. al.,
Jones and Sanders established a relationship that demonstrated Jones’ care for Sanders as her protégé, both professionally and personally. This is contrary to the traditional expectations of administrators to avoid “caring, connected relationships” (Gardiner, et. al., 2001). In other words, traditional understandings of mentoring relationships would support the growth of the protégé professionally, opposed to both personally and professionally. The mutual learning and mutual professional growth that occurred between Sanders and Jones was fostered by the “connected’ relationship they established together. In the relationship between Sanders and Jones, they were able to establish a friendship as a positive result of their affirming mentoring relationship.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is important to research the experiences of nontraditional leaders, particularly given the current educational (and political) landscape of high stakes testing, accountability and the push for instructional leadership. Such individuals often experience a more difficult route to positions of administrative leadership than do their white counterparts. It is important to study the preparation of these leaders as well as their experiences within such administrative roles. Future research should investigate the experiences of these leaders within a more heterogeneous context. This study examined an administrator in a school setting that was very homogeneous racially and socio-economically. However, what are the experiences of nontraditional leaders in setting where students are more diverse racially and socio-economically? Are the pressures of leadership different for nontraditional leaders in high performing school? What is the availability of mentors and role models for those aspiring to leadership positions within these settings? Minority leaders are often found at the helm of schools where the student
population is largely comprised of minority students. This is particularly true in large, urban school districts (Jones, 1983). The benefit is that these leaders provide minority students with role models. Minority school leaders are not limited to being role models for non-white students only. Further research should focus on the experiences of these leaders in such settings.

This study was conducted at an urban elementary school. Female teachers and administrators are concentrated at the elementary school level, and to a lesser degree at the middle school level. Further research might explore the experiences of African American women in high school principalships. Women do not occupy high school principalships and superintendencies comparable to their male counterparts (Shakeshaft, 1999). The question to be asked of these leaders is given the high level of commitment of a high school principalship, how do family responsibilities (such as motherhood) enhance or prohibit such leadership? What kind of mentoring and guidance is needed to departmentalized nature of high school curricula? How do the contours of an Afrocentric feminist epistemology (particularly ethic of caring and use of dialogue) fit in the high school setting? These two aspects of the epistemology seem to be a more natural fit in an elementary setting where the dynamic amongst adults and between adults and children tends to be more active and open across a school day. The answers to these questions may be very different for those interested in instructional leadership in secondary schools.

Finally, although this study focused specifically on an African American female participant, African American males (and other males of color) are considered nontraditional leaders as well. These leaders may possibly face challenges associated
with race in their quest for positions of school leadership. While many of these challenges are no doubt the same for their female counterparts, what unique challenges are faced by nontraditional leaders who are male? While some research has been done in this vein (Jones, 1983; Jones & Montenegro, 1983; Hudson, 1994), future research should endeavor to understand the challenges associated with such individuals in light of the current context of accountability, academic standards, and No Child Left Behind legislation.

Conclusions

The role of the principal continues to evolve. No longer is the principal only the operations manager, or “keeper of the keys.” Given the current context of accountability for student achievement, school administrators are required to be instructional leaders. However, even for seasoned administrators, instructional leadership presents a set of complex challenges. For early career principals, attempting to learn the managerial tasks along with the instructional leadership aspects of the job, the task can be daunting.

Therefore, early career administrators need support and guidance to facilitate their growth and development as visionary leaders. Given that nontraditional leaders face particular challenges associated with race, gender or both, related to positions of school leadership, they need this support all the more. Frequently, nontraditional leaders do not have other nontraditional leaders available as role models to whom they can turn for professional support and guidance (Gardiner, et. al., 2000).

The Administrative Leadership Academy provided early career principals with professional development opportunities to facilitate instructional leadership, with the guidance of a mentor/coach. The mentor assisted these leaders in developing an
administrative portfolio as a tool for instructional leadership. This mentoring departed from traditional notions of mentoring which hold the protégé as novice to be recreated in the mentor’s image.

The ISLLC standards provided a framework for Sanders to understand and conduct leadership. These standards emerged from many reforms instituted within the larger context, increasing accountability for teachers and administrators and demanding increased performance among students. The research demonstrated that mentoring as well as professional development (for example, portfolio development) were tools (directly linked to the ISLLC standards) that helped this nontraditional novice principal focus her leadership.

The Administrative Leadership Academy provided this nontraditional school administrator with many of the tools necessary for effective instructional leadership. Despite the barriers that such leaders may experience related to race and gender, such programs provide necessary tools to support leaders in meeting the challenges facing school administrators within the current context.


APPENDIX A
ISLLC Standards
ISLLC Standards

Standard 1.
A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL MASTERY of the following Knowledge indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>learning goals in a pluralistic society</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the principles of developing and implementing strategic plans</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>systems theory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effective communication</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effective consensus-building and negotiation skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL BELIEF, VALUE AND COMMITMENT in the following Disposition indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposition Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the educability of all</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a school vision of high standards and learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuous school improvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the inclusion of all members of the school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensuring that students have the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become successful adults</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a willingness to continuously examine one’s own assumptions, beliefs, and practices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doing the work required for high levels of personal and organization performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To what extent do I CURRENTLY FACILITATE PROCESSES AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES ensuring the following Performance indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the vision and mission of the school are effectively communicated to staff, parents, students, and community members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the vision and mission are communicated through the use of symbols, ceremonies, stories, and similar activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the core beliefs of the school vision are modeled for all stakeholders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the vision is developed with and among stakeholders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the contributions of school community members to the realization of the vision are recognized and celebrated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress toward the vision and mission is communicated to all stakeholders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the school community is involved in school improvement efforts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the vision shapes the educational programs, plans, and actions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an implementation plan is developed in which objectives and strategies to achieve the vision and goals are clearly articulated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assessment data related to student learning are used to develop the school vision and goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relevant demographic data pertaining to students and their families are used in developing the school mission and goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barriers to achieving the vision are identified, clarified, and addressed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needed resources are sought and obtained to support the implementation of the school mission and goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existing resources are used in support of school vision and goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the vision, mission, and implementation plans are regularly monitored, evaluated, and revised</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STANDARDS BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Standard 2.
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.

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL MASTERY of the following Knowledge indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student growth and development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applied learning theories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applied motivational theories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curriculum design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principles of effective instruction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>measurement, evaluation, and assessment strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diversity and its meaning for educational programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adult learning and professional development models</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the change process for systems, organizations, and individuals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the role of technology in promoting student learning and professional growth</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school cultures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL BELIEF, VALUE AND COMMITMENT in the following Disposition indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposition Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student learning as the fundamental purpose of schooling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the proposition that all students can learn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the variety of ways in which students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
can learn

- life-long learning for self and others  
- professional development as an integral part of school improvement  
- the benefits that diversity brings to the school community  
- a safe and supportive learning environment  
- preparing students to be contributing members of society

**To what extent do I CURRENTLY FACILITATE PROCESSES AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES ensuring the following Performance indicators?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all individuals are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional development promotes a focus on student learning consistent with the school vision and goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students and staff feel valued and important</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the responsibilities and contributions of each individual are acknowledged</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barriers to student learning are identified, clarified, and addressed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diversity is considered in developing learning experiences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life-long learning is encouraged and modeled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is a culture of high expectations for self, student, and staff performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technologies are used in teaching and learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student and staff accomplishments are recognized and celebrated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiple opportunities to learn are available to all students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the school is organized and aligned for success</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs are designed, implemented, evaluated, and refined

• curriculum decisions are based on research, expertise of teachers, and the recommendations of learned societies

• the school culture and climate are assessed on a regular basis

• a variety of sources of information is used to make decisions

• student learning is assessed using a variety of techniques

• multiple sources of information regarding performance are used by staff and students

• a variety of supervisory and evaluation models is employed

• pupil personnel programs are developed to meet the needs of students and their families
STANDARDS BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Standard 3.
A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL MASTERY of the following Knowledge indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>theories and models of organizations and the principles of organizational development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operational procedures at the school and district level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principles and issues relating to school safety and security</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>human resources management and development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principles and issues relating to fiscal operations of school management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principles and issues relating to school facilities and use of space</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legal issues impacting school operations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current technologies that support management functions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL BELIEF, VALUE, AND COMMITMENT in the following Disposition indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposition indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>making management decisions to enhance learning and teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taking risks to improve schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trusting people and their judgment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accepting responsibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high-quality standards, expectations, and performances</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involving stakeholders in management</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
processes

a safe environment 1 2 3 4

To what extent do I CURRENTLY FACILITATE PROCESSES AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES ensuring the following Performance indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of learning, teaching and student development is used to inform management decisions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operational procedures are designed and managed to maximize opportunities for successful learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emerging trends are recognized, studied, and applied as appropriate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operational plans and procedures to achieve the vision and goals of the school are in place</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collective bargaining and other contractual agreements related to the school are effectively managed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the school plant, equipment, and support systems operate safely, efficiently, and effectively</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time is managed to maximize attainment of organizational goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potential problems and opportunities are identified</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problems are confronted and resolved in a timely manner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>financial, human, and material resources are aligned to the goals of the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the school acts entrepreneurially to support continuous improvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organizational systems are regularly monitored and modified as needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stakeholders are involved in decisions affecting the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsibility is shared to maximize ownership and accountability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effective problem-framing and problem-</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- solving skills are used
  - effective conflict resolution skills are used 1 2 3 4
  - effective group-process and consensus-building skills are used 1 2 3 4
  - effective communication skills are used 1 2 3 4
  - there is effective use of technology to manage school operations 1 2 3 4
  - fiscal resources of the school are managed responsibly, efficiently, and effectively 1 2 3 4
  - a safe, clean, and aesthetically pleasing school environment is created and maintained 1 2 3 4
  - human resource functions support the attainment of school goals 1 2 3 4
  - confidentiality and privacy of school records are maintained 1 2 3 4
STANDARDS BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Standard 4.
A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL MASTERY of the following Knowledge indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• emerging issues and trends that potentially impact the school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the conditions and dynamics of the diverse school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• community resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• community relations and marketing strategies and processes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• successful models of school, family, business, community, government, and higher education partnerships</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL BELIEF, VALUE AND COMMITMENT in the following Disposition indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposition Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• schools operating as an integral part of the larger community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• collaboration and communication with families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• involvement of families and other stakeholders in school decision-making processes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the proposition that diversity enriches the school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• families as partners in the education of their children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the proposition that families have the best interests of their children in mind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• resources of the family and community needing to be brought to bear on the education of students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• an informed public</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**To what extent do I CURRENTLY FACILITATE PROCESSES AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES ensuring the following Performance indicators?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• high visibility, active involvement, and communication with the larger community is a priority</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• relationships with community leaders are identified and nurtured</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• information about family and community concerns, expectations, and needs is used regularly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• there is outreach to different business, religious, political, and service agencies and organizations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• credence is given to individuals and groups whose values and opinions may conflict</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the school and community serve one another as resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• available community resources are secured to help the school solve problems and achieve goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• partnerships are established with area businesses, institutions of higher education, and community groups to strengthen programs and support school goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• community youth family services are integrated with school programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• community stakeholders are treated equitably</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• diversity is recognized and valued</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• effective media relations are developed and maintained</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a comprehensive program of community relations is established</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• public resources and funds are used appropriately and wisely</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• community collaboration is modeled for staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• opportunities for staff to develop collaborative skills are provided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STANDARDS BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Standard 5.
A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL MASTERY of the following Knowledge indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the purpose of education and the role of leadership in modern society</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>various ethical frameworks and perspectives on ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the values of the diverse school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional codes of ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the philosophy and history of education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I have a CURRENT PERSONAL BELIEF, VALUE AND COMMITMENT in the following Disposition indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the ideal of the common good</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the principles in the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the right of every student to a free, quality education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bringing ethical principles to the decision-making process</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subordinating one’s own interest to the good of the school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accepting the consequences for upholding one’s principles and actions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>using the influence of one’s office constructively and productively in the service of all students and their families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development of a caring school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I CURRENTLY FACILITATE PROCESSES AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES ensuring the following Performance indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>examines personal and professional values</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstrates a personal and professional code of ethics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• demonstrates values, beliefs, and attitudes that inspire others to higher levels of performance
  1  2  3  4
• serves as a role model
  1  2  3  4
• accepts responsibility for school operations
  1  2  3  4
• considers the impact of one’s administrative practices on others
  1  2  3  4
• uses the influence of the office to enhance the educational program rather than for personal gain
  1  2  3  4
• treats people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect
  1  2  3  4
• protects the rights and confidentiality of students and staff
  1  2  3  4
• demonstrates appreciation for and sensitivity to the diversity in the school community
  1  2  3  4
• recognizes and respects the legitimate authority of others
  1  2  3  4
• examines and considers the prevailing values of the diverse school community
  1  2  3  4
• expects that others in the school community will demonstrate integrity and exercise ethical behavior
  1  2  3  4
• opens the school to public scrutiny
  1  2  3  4
• fulfills legal and contractual obligations
  1  2  3  4
• applies laws and procedures fairly, wisely, and considerably
  1  2  3  4
Standard 6.
A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

To what extent do I have a **CURRENT PERSONAL MASTERY** of the following **Knowledge** indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Knowledge</strong></th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the role of public education in developing and renewing a democratic society and an economically productive nation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the law as related to education and schooling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the political, social, cultural, and economic systems and processes that impact schools</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>models and strategies of change and conflict resolution as applied to the larger political, social, cultural, and economic contexts of schooling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>global issues and forces affecting teaching and learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the importance of diversity and equity in a democratic society</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent do I have a **CURRENT PERSONAL BELIEF, VALUE AND COMMITMENT** in the following **Disposition** indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Disposition</strong></th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>education as a key to opportunity and social mobility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recognizing a variety of ideas, values and cultures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>importance of a continuing dialogue with other decision makers affecting education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actively participating in the political and policy-making context in the service of education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- using legal systems to protect student rights and improve student opportunities

To what extent do I currently facilitate processes and engage in activities ensuring the following Performance indicators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>LITTLE</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>SUFFICIENT</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the environment in which schools operate is influenced on behalf of students and their families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication occurs within the school community on trends, issues, and potential changes in the environment in which schools operate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is ongoing dialogue with representatives of diverse community groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the school community works within the framework of policies, laws, and regulations enacted by local, state, and federal authorities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public policy is shaped to provide quality education for students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lines of communication are developed with decision makers outside the school community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B
Consent Form
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Protocol title: Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program Research Study

Protocol number: ____

Principal Investigator:

I consent to my participation in research being conducted by and his/her assistants and associates.

The investigator(s) has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures that will be followed, and the amount of time it will take. I understand the possible benefits, if any, of my participation.

I know that I can choose not to participate without penalty to me. If I agree to participate, I withdraw from the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

- I consent to the use of audiotapes. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study.

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. I can contact the investigators at 614-292-8836. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I can call the Office of Research Risks Protection at (614) 688-4792.

I have read this form or I have had it read to me. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Print the name of the participant:

______________________________________________________

Date: _________________________________ Signed:  ___________________________________ (Participant)

Signed: ________________________________ Signed:  ___________________________________ (Person authorized to consent for participant, if required)

(Principal Investigator or his/her authorized representative)

Witness: _______________________________ (When required)

HS-027 (Rev. 05/01) (To be used only in connection with social and behavioral research.)

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APPENDIX C
Mentor/Protégé Protocol
Introductory Statements:
The Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program intends to provide meaningful professional development so that quality educational leaders will enter and remain in the principalship, finding acceptable levels of satisfaction within the job and performing it effectively. Ongoing evaluation of these professional development activities is essential in order that Academy planners might determine the effectiveness of the various EYP interventions. How do Academy learning experiences support entry year principals within their new leadership roles? Does consistent mentoring and coaching, with the accompanying reflective dialogue, provide meaningful support to principals in their early years of practice? To what degree are these activities and interventions, particularly the development of administrative portfolios, capable of directing and improving administrator practice?

In order to answer these questions, a two-year qualitative evaluation study of the Entry Year Program is being conducted. The study will focus on the work of veteran/protégé principal groups, the nature of the mentorship process, and the development of necessary skills for administrator portfolio writing. Further, the study will consider questions regarding the application of these skills to administrator practice. The study will result in a descriptive analysis of Academy interventions, entry year principal activities, and the application of knowledge gained to leadership practice within schools and school districts.

Background
1. How long have you been an administrator? Include prior administrative experiences.

2. How long did you teach before becoming an administrator?
   a. Grade level?
   b. Content area?
   c. In addition to or instead of teaching, tell me about other professional positions you have held.

3. How did you become involved in ALA?
   a. What is your prior knowledge of ALA?
   b. Talk to me about your feelings regarding ALA and your involvement.
      Probe: Fears, anxieties, excitement?

4. Describe your administrator preparation program.
   Probe: What do you believe to be its strengths and weaknesses?
5. How would you define professional development?
   a. Describe your own professional development experiences.
   b. Tell me about one that was particularly helpful.
   c. To what degree have these past experiences: coincided with the real challenges confronting your school, emphasized teaching and learning, been continuous?
6. What or who influenced your decision to become an administrator?
   Probe: Particular person, experience, former job responsibilities?

7. List and then describe the important domains of your job. Which do you feel consumes the majority of your time? Why?

8. ISLLC Standards for School Leadership are relatively new to the field. Are you familiar with the ISLLC standards? (Please elaborate)

**Practice**: These next questions involve your own practice as a school leader.
1. Tell me about the mission of your school.
   a. When developed?
   b. By whom?
   c. Through what process?
   d. What vision of education (or values) does the mission of your school reflect?
   e. How is it communicated to school community and beyond?

2. What is your understanding of reflective practice?
   Probes: Thinking, questioning, seeking information, deliberating, pondering, assessing, recreating, rehearsing, evaluating, touch basing, consulting.
   
   a. Tell me a time when you reflected about a school problem or a need.
   b. If I had been with you, what would I have observed?
   c. Did you reflect with another person, other people?
   d. What was the outcome?

3. To what degree you value such reflection?

4. Name some tools you might apply as you reflect.

5. Can you tell me about a time reflection helped you as a leader?

6. What are indicators that reflection happens at your school?
   Probes: Curriculum
   Funding
   Programs
   Across grade levels
   On a system level
   Cross person probing/ ask teachers about students, administrators about teachers, teachers about administrators, etc.
7. What are the barriers to reflection at your school?  
a. How did/do you break down these barriers?

8. How would you describe the current culture of your school?  
   Probes: Norms, values, beliefs, myths, stories

9. Research has shown that school culture (norms, values, beliefs, and traditions that develop over time and influence individual and organizational behavior) plays a significant role in determining student motivation and achievement. If, as the research suggests, "the challenge for leaders is to develop a consensus around values that constitute an effective culture" (Stolp & Smith, p. 160), then what values, norms, and beliefs would you strive to develop so as to foster a culture conducive to student learning and achievement?  
   a. How steps would you take to change an ineffective culture to an effective culture?

   b. Once changed, talk about how you would continue to nurture and sustain that culture.

   c. What do you believe about staff development?
      - What is its purpose?
      - What is its relationship to student learning?

10. What particular ethical principles/values do you employ when engaged in decision making?

11. What mechanisms are in place to evaluate school programs, policies and procedures? (e.g. advisory groups, leadership teams)  
   a. What tangible results can you name?

12. What sorts of specific data do you collect at your school?  
   Probes: Student outcomes  
   Teacher outcomes  
   Parent involvement  
   Administrator decision making  
   Policy development  
   a. Now let’s consider your response regarding ___________________.  
   Tell me about some of the specific ways you use this information.

13. In what ways do you engage the community in decision making?

14. In what ways do you perceive of yourself as a role model and for whom?

15. Talk for a bit about what you perceive to be your role as instructional leader of the school.  
   a. Define instructional leader.
b. What would be your level of involvement?
c. How do you define the principles of effective instruction?
d. What is the impact of diversity on educational programs?
e. What are your thoughts on evaluation and assessment?
f. How might you go about ensuring the success of all student learners?
g. What about the other learners within your school community?
h. Given the capacity, what role do you see for technology in promoting student learning?

16. School administrators are both leaders and managers of their school organizations. As such, principals are charged with managing the organization, its operations and resources so as to ensure a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment. What experience or knowledge base do you think you have that will help you in your role as manager?
   a. What other knowledge would increase your effectiveness as manager?
   b. What factors currently in place help ensure a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?
   c. What, if any, barriers exist to your work as an effective manager?
   d. Talk about what you will do to improve the management of your school operations.

**Mentorship:** These next questions refer to your OPLA mentoring experiences.

1. What is your understanding of a mentor’s role.
   a. What are the qualifications of a good mentor?
   b. What makes a good mentor?
   c. What are the responsibilities of a mentor?

2. Research suggests direct mentor/protégé matching enhances such relationships. What factors might be important to consider in making such matching decisions?

2. Prior to ALA, what sorts of mentoring experiences have you had. Please describe.

3. Recall a conversation you had with your mentor/protégé that was particularly helpful/noteworthy.

4. What sorts of activities do you and your mentor/protégé engage in together?
   a. How often have you met?
   b. Was the usual duration of these meetings?
   c. Talk to me about your sense of the adequacy of this sort of schedule.

5. Describe a specific strategy you have gained or improved upon as a result of your work with your mentor, within your mentor/protégé group, as a mentor?

6. Take me through a day in the life of an entry year/mentor principal at .....
Supports

7. Describe the most useful part of your mentoring experiences within ALA thus far.

8. Least useful part. What would you change?

Portfolio: This last set of questions involves the administrator portfolio.

1. What is your understanding of the portfolio process? What are the purposes of an administrator portfolio?

2. Prior to ALA, what sorts of portfolio related experiences have you had. Please describe.

3. What do you expect to be your biggest challenge in writing the portfolio? Your biggest strength?

4. How does the portfolio relate to the ISLLC standards?

5. What sorts of knowledge do you predict that you will draw upon/ have drawn upon in writing your portfolio?

6. Do you think that the portfolio will benefit your work as a school leader? If so, how?

7. Given that this will be policy, in what ways, if any, do you think that the portfolio process can be improved? Usefulness to practice As a problem solving tool

8. How do you foresee your mentor being of assistance in the completion of the portfolio?

Summary

1. Is there anything you’d like to add regarding your own personal/professional experiences?
   a. as an entry year principal.
   b. As a mentor.
   c. within the Academy.
APPENDIX D
Teacher Protocol
The Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program intends to provide meaningful professional development so that quality educational leaders will enter and remain in the principalship, finding acceptable levels of satisfaction within the job and performing it effectively. Ongoing evaluation of these professional development activities is essential in order that Academy planners might determine the effectiveness of the various EYP interventions. How do Academy learning experiences support entry year principals within their new leadership roles? Does consistent mentoring and coaching, with the accompanying reflective dialogue, provide meaningful support to principals in their early years of practice? To what degree are these activities and interventions, particularly the development of administrative portfolios, capable of directing and improving administrator practice?

In order to answer these questions, a two-year qualitative evaluation study of the Entry Year Program is being conducted. The study will focus on the work of veteran/protégé principal triads, the nature of the mentorship process, and the development of necessary skills for administrator portfolio writing. Further, the study will consider questions regarding the application of these skills to administrator practice. The study will result in a descriptive analysis of Academy interventions, entry year principal activities, and the application of knowledge gained to leadership practice within schools and school districts.

The following questions are to obtain teacher background information:

1. Race/gender/age
2. How many years and what grades have you taught?
3. What is your educational background?
4. What is your current position?
5. What if any school organizations are you active with (e.g. leadership team, PTA, etc.)
6. How long have you served under your current principal?

The following questions relate to teacher practice under your current principal.

1. To what extent were you involved with the development of the school’s mission? --How effectively was the mission communicated to the staff?
2. How would you describe the current culture of your school?

3. How would you describe your prior involvement with professional development? Please describe those experiences. (Principal involvement?)

4. To what extent do you feel that the school community is involved with school improvement efforts?

5. Describe the way(s) in which life long learning is encouraged and modeled in this school?

6. Describe the way(s) in which students and staff accomplishments are recognized and celebrated.

7. To what extent is faculty expertise sought for curriculum decisions?

8. What kinds of data are collected at your school?  
   --Who collects it?  
   --How is it used?

9. Who are the stakeholders involved in decision making affecting this school?

10. How are problems confronted/resolved among staff, students, stakeholders in this school? (Principal involvement?)

11. What do you believe to be the role/function of an instructional leader?  
    --How does the way in which your principal leads fit with your understanding of this?

12. In what ways does your principal demonstrate him/herself to be an instructional leader?

13. Describe the way(s) in which your principal models community collaboration.

14. What, if any, outreach efforts have been made to agencies and outside organizations?

15. To what extent has your principal facilitated or influenced parent involvement at your school?
APPENDIX E
Parent/Parent Partner Protocol
Administrative Leadership Academy
Parent Interview Guide

Introductory Statements:
The Administrative Leadership Academy Entry Year Program intends to provide meaningful professional development so that quality educational leaders will enter and remain in the principalship, finding acceptable levels of satisfaction within the job and performing it effectively. Ongoing evaluation of these professional development activities is essential in order that Academy planners might determine the effectiveness of the various EYP interventions. How do Academy learning experiences support entry year principals within their new leadership roles? Does consistent mentoring and coaching, with the accompanying reflective dialogue, provide meaningful support to principals in their early years of practice? To what degree are these activities and interventions, particularly the development of administrative portfolios, capable of directing and improving administrator practice?

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1. Talk about your involvement with your school.
   Probes: number of years, children attending, activities you are engaged in

2. Talk to me the ways you are involved with your child’s overall educational experience.
   Probes: At home, at school, in the community

3. Are you familiar with the school’s vision and if so, how have you been made aware of it?

4. As a parent, in what ways do you have opportunities to provide input and/or evaluate the effectiveness of the learning environment?

5. Do you believe the principal values ______________, and if so, how does he/she show it? (Inserting three different scenarios: educability for all; high standards of learning; and continuous improvement

6. Tell me about the learning opportunities at this school.
   (Diversity is considered, multiplicity of opportunities)
7. How are student and staff accomplishments recognized and celebrated?

8. How do you feel about safety at your school?

9. What has the principal done to make this school a safe learning environment?

10. In what ways have you had the opportunity to observe the principal’s problem solving skills in action? (Are problems and opportunities identified; are problems confronted and resolved in a timely manner)

11. What efforts at collaboration has this principal made with families? with the community?

12. How has the principal taken advantage of community resources?

13. In what ways has the principal served as a role model?

14. How has the principal demonstrated an appreciation for and sensitivity to diversity in the school community?

15. Schools are front and center within the news of late, with much attention paid to school funding, proficiency testing, school safety.
   a. What evidence do you see of your principal understanding and addressing these concerns within your school?
   b. How has this affected teaching and learning in the classroom?
APPENDIX G
Follow Up Questions
Protégé Follow up Questions

1. You mentioned in our first interview that becoming an administrator was influenced by your dad. In what way(s)?
2. When we first talked, you stated that you didn’t think that reflection was happening at Range yet. What is your feeling on whether reflection is currently happening?
3. What are some of the most meaningful professional development experiences that you’ve had thus far in your career?
4. How has portfolio development improved your instructional practice?
5. What critical incidents have had an impact on your leadership practice during this academic year?
6. How has No Child Left Behind impacted your leadership? What does it mean for the children here in this school?
7. What early academic experiences (childhood) have you had that have been significant?
8. What early life, early development experiences influence your leadership today?
9. What other background information do you think it would be useful to know about you?
10. Compare/contrast your experiences in the big city with your experiences here in Mitchell City.
11. What is it about the students’ opportunities for instructional leadership that drew you to this district?
12. Why did you choose Range Elementary?

13. What are your fears? Frustrations? Barriers?

14. What do you receive from being an instructional leader here at Range?

15. Throughout your career, how has mentoring been helpful?

16. To whom do you turn for support?

17. How would you describe your relationship with your students and their parents?

18. How would you describe your relationship with your staff?

19. What hopes do you have for the students in this school/community?

20. How would your students (their parents, the staff) describe you?

21. How would you describe the relationship with your superintendent and colleagues?

22. How are you a different administrator now than you were when you first came to Range? How would your staff/students/parents say that you are different?

23. How do you feel race/gender has affected the way you are perceived by others (staff, students, colleagues, peers)?
Mentor Follow up Questions

Administrative Leadership Academy

- Describe the differences between the entry year program this year and last year.
  - Composition/demographics of the participants
  - Curriculum
  - Mentors
- What frustrations do you have with the program?
- What changes do you suggest?
- In what ways is the curriculum being implemented in the leadership practice of the program participants?
- In what ways is the portfolio useful?
- What difficulties are early career administrators having in completing it?
- What difficulties are mentors having in coaching the completion of the portfolio?
- How has the role of the mentor evolved since you’ve been involved with the program?
- In what ways can the mentor role be expanded or reframed in order to be more useful?
- What do you receive from your work with the program? What support do you receive?
Gender

- Describe how you come to be in a position of school leadership (who influenced you?)
- What experiences have you had professionally (or otherwise) that suggest gender is an issue (positive/negative)?
- How has gender influenced your experiences as a school leader?
- What were your relationships with colleagues (other principals, superintendents) like?
- Describe the relationship(s) you developed with parents, students and teachers in your role as school administrator
- Would you say that you’ve experienced or faced sex discrimination during your professional career?
- How does gender influence your mentoring relationships?
- Choose two very different mentoring relationships that you’ve had over time and describe the differences and similarities.
APPENDIX G
Focus Group Questions
FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Can you each state your name, educational background, other districts you have worked in and number of years in school administration and each position?

2. Describe your mentoring experiences thus far (positive and/or negative).

3. Discuss your thoughts on the portfolio. What makes it challenging for you? What strengths do you have that facilitate its successful completion?

4. What other supports do you have (either personally or professionally) as an administrator?

5. How do you identify yourself?

6. How do you think others see you (i.e. your staff, your colleagues)?

7. How do you react to the term, double jeopardy, which refers to dual oppression/discrimination of African American women based on race and gender?

8. Is one characteristic more salient than the other in certain situations? Please describe.

9. What experiences can you think of where you felt such oppression (related to double jeopardy)?
APPENDIX H

Code Book
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3(10)4 Delib  Deliberation
3(11) EvalTool  Evaluation Tool

4 ProfDev  Professional Development
4(1) Defined  Defined
4(2) AdltLearn  Adult Learning
4(3) CommPrac  Communities of Practice
4(4) Network  Networking
4(5) KSAVs  Pertinent knowledge, skills, dispositions
4(6) CritFrnds  Critical Friends
4(7) ALA  ALA as vehicle
4(8) RelwOthrs  Relationship with Others
4(9) UnivPrep  Educational Preparation Program

5 CIP  School Continuous Improvement
5(1) CommInvol  Community Involvement

6 Background  Participant History

7 EarlyCareer  Articulation of Experiences in Early Years

8 SchDis Profile  School District Profile

9 EYP Devel  Program Development
9(1) StakeInvolv  Stakeholder Involvement
9(2) Policy Opt  Policy Options
APPENDIX I
Portfolio Components
COMPONENT A1 – FACILITATING THE VISION OF LEARNING WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

1. THE COMMUNITY

What would you identify as the most significant features of the community in which your school or district exists? How do these features affect student learning? How do these features help shape your decision-making and your activities as a school leader?

2. THE STUDENTS

What are the defining characteristics of the students in the school or district? How do these characteristics affect student learning? How do these defining characteristics help shape your decision-making and your activities as a school leader?

3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

What is the organizational structure of the school or district? How does this structure influence your decision-making and your activities as a school leader?

4. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

What are the most significant aspects of the school's or district's curriculum, instruction, and assessment? How do these identified aspects affect student learning? How do these aspects affect your decision-making and your activities as a school leader?

5. REFLECTION

What do you consider to be the greatest strengths of the system in which you work, and what do you consider to be the greatest challenges posed by the system? How do you hope to draw on these strengths and address these challenges in order to promote the success of all students?
COMPONENT A2 – SUSTAINING A CULTURE CONDUCIVE TO STUDENT LEARNING

1. THREE BARRIERS TO LEARNING

Identify and describe three significant barriers to learning for either all students or subsets of students in your school or district. Why are these barriers significant? What is their impact on student learning?

2. THE STUDENTS

Choose one of the three barriers that you have worked to remove or reduce. Describe the students most affected by the barrier. What were the learning needs of these students, and how did this barrier keep these needs from being met?

3. THE STAKEHOLDERS

Identify the other stakeholders (i.e., parents, teachers, community members, other students) that you considered in addressing the barrier. What role did they play with respect to the barrier? How did you involve them in understanding and addressing the barrier?

4. STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING THE BARRIER

Describe the strategy that was used to address this barrier. Why was this strategy selected?

5. REFLECTION

Reflect on your experience addressing this barrier by explaining what worked well, and what you would do differently if given the opportunity. What have you learned from this experience that you can apply to other barriers you may face in the future?
COMPONENT B1 – UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO THE LARGER CONTEXT

1. IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

Identify and describe a statewide, multi-state, or national issue/trend that impacts student learning in your school or district.

2. IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING

Describe how student learning in your school or district is impacted by this issue/trend. Explain two specific examples of this negative impact.

3. LOCAL RESPONSE

Explain how you and your staff responded to this issue/trend. What was the impact of this response to student learning?

4. WIDESPREAD COLLABORATION

Explain how one collaborator from outside your school or district helped you understand and/or respond to this issue/trend.

5. REFLECTION

What have you learned from your experience addressing this issue/trend that has shaped your school leadership practices? How will you use this knowledge to anticipate and respond to statewide, multi-state, or national issues/trends in the future?
COMPONENT B2 – COLLABORATING WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

1. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
Describe one partnership that you, either individually or as a part of a team, have developed between your school/district and area businesses, institutions of higher education, and/or other community groups and leaders that had a significant impact on student learning in your school or district. Explain and evaluate the specific impacts that this partnership had on student learning.

2. PARTNERSHIP WITH A FAMILY
Describe and explain the ways in which you worked with one student's family in an ongoing way to help the student with a specific learning challenge or to help the student excel in an area of strength. Explain and evaluate how working with this family focused on the learning needs of the student and the specific impacts that this partnership had on this student's learning.

3. PARTNERSHIP WITH A GROUP OF FAMILIES
Describe and explain the ways in which you worked with a group of families to help students with a specific learning challenge or to help students excel in an area of strength. Explain and evaluate the specific impacts that this partnership had on the students' learning.

4. ESTABLISHING A CULTURE THAT PROMOTES COLLABORATION
Explain how you have established or facilitated a culture among school/district staff that encourages and promotes effective collaboration with the surrounding community. Give an example of how and when communication and collaboration between your staff and the community have advanced student learning. (The focus of this question is on the collaborative activities engaged in by your staff and how you supported these efforts - do not repeat the partnerships discussed in questions 1-3.)

5. REFLECTION
Based on the collaborative work you have undertaken in developing this Component, evaluate your strengths and weaknesses as a communicator and collaborator.
COMPONENT C1 – SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

1. SETTING GOALS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Describe the collaborative process that led to the establishment of two goals for a specific staff member in your school or district.

2. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Explain how the overall approach to professional development for this staff member focused on student learning. Describe one specific professional development activity that this staff member engaged in. Why was this activity chosen? Explain how this particular professional development activity focused on student learning.

3. MONITORING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

To what extent did this professional development plan impact the staff member's performance and student learning?

4. DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION SKILLS

Focus on the entire teaching staff or a significant subgroup, such as teachers at a grade level, a subject matter department, or an interdisciplinary team. For the group you have selected, describe one specific instance that shows how you developed effective communication and collaboration regarding teaching and learning issues.

5. REFLECTION

What have you learned from your experiences working with the individual staff member and with the larger group of staff that will help you in the future promote staff professional growth and to create a positive learning environment so that student learning is enhanced?
COMPONENT C2 – ORGANIZING RESOURCES FOR AN EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

1. IDENTIFICATION AND DEFINITION OF THE ISSUE

Identify two or more opposing individuals, groups, or factions who have competing claims over the allocation of resources. What was the claim regarding the allocation of resources in which they were involved? What were the potential educational impacts of allocating the resources in the various ways advocated by the contending parties?

2. SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

What were the educational goals and/or objectives for student learning that influenced the conflict resolution process? How were these goals and/or objectives identified?

3. IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL AND/OR ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES

In beginning to address this issue, what were all of the potential resources that were available? How were these potential resources identified? Why were these resources considered? If applicable, make sure that your response explores the full range of financial, human, and material resources available to you.

4. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

What process was used to move the competing parties toward resolution? Explain how you facilitated the negotiation and collaboration of those involved in the conflict.

5. REFLECTION

Recalling what were, in your opinion, the keys for the eventual outcome, what did you learn from this experience that you could apply to future, similar situations?