Educational Leadership and Administration

Teaching and Program Development

CAPEA
Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development

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Spring 2014 Edition

Welcome to Volume 25 of *Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development: The Journal of the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA).* CAPEA is celebrating its twenty-fifth year of the journal. This year the editors accepted contributions from a variety of perspectives concerning the profession of school leadership and school leadership preparation. This year's journal is organized into four areas of investigation. Section One examines issues of equity and social justice spotlighted by the featured article of the journal which charts the work of CAPEA around these issues. The journal continues with sections dedicated to Governance and Policy; Instructional Leadership; and Leadership Program Reports.

As we go forward, we are looking to expand the purview of the journal to incorporate various types of manuscripts. We, the Editors, are drafting the Call for Papers for the next edition that will incorporate these types of manuscripts. We expect to release the Call for Papers by summer.

This journal would not have been possible without the efforts of numerous people. We, first, thank all of the authors who contributed manuscripts and encourage you to continue contributing to the journal in the future. A very special thank you is offered to the Editorial Review Board members for their guidance to us as the new editorial team. In addition, we would like to thank Peg Winkelman, CAPEA President for her constant encouragement and support. Furthermore, special thanks go to Franca Dell'Olio, the past editor, for her insights and advice. Lastly, this journal would not exist without the support of NCPEA and NCPEA Publications. Ted Creighton, NCPEA Publications Director has been an invaluable member of our team and for this we are extremely grateful.

To all readers, we hope that the journal will provide for you an opportunity to expand your insights into the field of school leadership and reflect on your own practice. We, furthermore, hope that this reflection brings you to a deeper commitment to our crucial work for our nation's youth.

Further information about the work of CAPEA including information about membership, upcoming conferences, and resources can be found at www.capea.org.

Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development

Section 4: Leadership Program Reports

California Association of Professors of Educational Administration: Promoting Equity and Excellence in Educational Leader Preparation

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This feature article charts the efforts of the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA) to move from primarily a policy-driven organization that lacked a significant number of diverse members and perspectives to a values-driven organization committed to equity and cultural competency. This is a chronicle of the journey as the organization moved with a newfound direction, passion, and commitment in a quest for equity to be "the innovators of change in practice that is focused on creating social justice leaders for the future." The article was developed during the spring and summer of 2013 by members of the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice Committee of the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration.

The California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA) views educational equity as a paradigm well beyond diversity and equal treatment. Equal access–even to rigorous, relevant, and culturally responsive curriculum and learning experiences–is not synonymous with equity in education. Equity in education is about equal outcomes. Equity-principled leaders ensure that all students are provided with the individual support they need to reach and exceed high levels of achievement and well-being. Equity-principled leaders assume responsibility and accountability for the success of all students in school and in preparation for their lives and futures. Equity-practicing leaders are instrumental to helping individuals and institutions make the paradigm shift from equality to equity through the promotion and support of policies and practices that are based on equity-principled beliefs, values, and assumptions.

The article begins with a brief history of CAPEA from its humble beginnings and lack of organizational focus, to various steps forwards and backwards in the direction of equity, to a newfound purpose and invigorated core. The evolution in the organization´s membership from a predominantly white male organization to a greater balance of gender and the increasing membership of professors of color helped CAPEA to begin to see itself differently and to work towards a vision of cultural competency.

Recent CAPEA conferences have been aligned with that vision. In 2011, a day-long preconference included visits to two elementary schools that were high poverty, high minority population, and high student achievement. The conference then opened with a keynote presentation by Tim Wise, nationally renowned speaker on racial and diversity issues. A panel of minority superintendents shared their views of leading culturally diverse organizations.

In Spring 2012, the CAPEA Conference theme was Leading Equity-Principled Communities of Practice with keynote speakers Etienne Wenger and Linda Lambert leading the membership to reflections on building a strong culture within the organization. In the fall of 2012, the CAPEA Conference theme was Equity and Excellence: Leading Change in Educational Policy. Dr. Ken Magdaleno was the keynoter focusing on "Developing Leadership for Equity" and provided some key principles in his powerful message.

Another recent addition to CAPEA conferences that has added an unexpected and surprising richness to our organization was the addition of doctoral poster sessions. A number of doctoral students from member institutions of CAPEA have presented their research, much of which focused on issues of diversity and equity. These young leaders have taught us lessons that we can only learn by their presence at our conferences.

We invite you to read about our journey in the following pages, learn from our successes and challenges, and share with us your own experiences and reflections. This is a journey worth taking.

CAPEA History with Diversity and Equity Issues

Our organization, the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA), was born in the same post-World War II environment of white male predominance as was the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration, the national organization to which CAPEA is loosely affiliated. CAPEA professors, as was true for professors across the nation, tended to be white men who had been principals and, often, superintendents from K-12 school districts. This predominance of white male school administrators continued during the 1950s and 1960s as those decades witnessed a great expansion of compulsory education throughout the U.S.

In the early years, CAPEA meetings tended to be quasi-social events, held twice yearly in Fresno, convening noon Friday and adjourning not later than noon Saturday. Participants in those early decades were two to three dozen faculty members drawn largely from California State University (CSU) campuses. Agendas focused on sharing course information and materials and, by the late 1970s, preparing for program changes required by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) (formerly the Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing). No elective officers served in the manner we have today. A chairman and a secretary/treasurer were genially recruited to fulfill those roles and little effort was made to have recorded minutes other than treasurer reports. Few sessions were devoted to professional development. Friday evenings for many of the men involved playing poker, eating snacks, and enjoying adult and soft drink beverages. Other professors self-organized into other group activities.

The professoriate of this early era seemed to be largely immune to the emergence of race and gender topics within the civil rights movement or from school desegregation advances that were occurring in California and across the country. But, demographic changes occurring in P-12 schools portended changes in faculty recruitment and curriculum that were on the horizon for members of the organization and those changes were not readily embraced by all members. In the mid and late 1970's programs across the state began to recruit and hire women, African American and Latino faculty members. Though the number of women and faculty of color were modest, it became apparent that change was afoot, if not fully embraced.

By the mid 1980s CAPEA's changing demography of faculty was accompanied by a broadening of membership to include parochial and private universities. At that time, private schools such as National University, LaVerne University, and Chapman University were recognized as growing entities impacting enrollments in the CSU system. The common theme being addressed by all credential providers were increased requirements by CCTC to address issues of diversity, staff development, and improved field experience opportunities for candidates. At that same time CAPEA began to formalize the organization through the election of officers, maintenance of formal meeting records, and informal lobbying with CCTC and the California legislature.

A series of watershed events occurred in the mid-1980s with the election of the first women presidents of CAPEA. First, Vera Pitts from CSU Hayward in 1984, Jodi Servatius, CSU Hayward in 1988, and then Rosemary Papalewis from CSU Fresno in 1989 and again 1990. Not only were these women eminently qualified for leadership of CAPEA, they came to symbolize the demographic changes occurring in the professoriate. A growing number of faculty members entered the education administration classrooms from the field of research and professional development rather than the offices of retired superintendents or principals.

"Diversity" became a term of roundtable discussions and topics of faculty research presentations at the two-a-year CAPEA Conferences. As urban-rural k-12 inequity issues came into sharper view through the broader research field, however, we experienced a continuous struggle in the organization by factions who wanted to discuss or who wanted to minimize diversity and equity issues at our universities and in our own organization.

In the early 1990s, the term 'cultural proficiency" was introduced to the organization by 1992 CAPEA President, Randall Lindsey, from California State University, Los Angeles. The conceptual framework was presented as a lens to view the work of diversity in the programs' coursework and field experiences as well as a way for the organization to examine its policies and practices about equity and access. Following Randy's leadership, other Presidents, Jim Parker (1993), Linda Lambert (1994), and Rita King (1995) continued to challenge the organization to move forward with diversity and equity as a focus of planning conversations, conference presentations, and journal articles. Gradually, however, the topic was moved to the margins of organization agendas for a decade or more.

As PreK-12 teachers and leaders in our programs struggled with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) under President George W. Bush, called No Child Left Behind (2001), education administration professors faced our own struggles with how to prepare emerging leaders to meet the new Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) leadership standards. CAPEA partnered with the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and the California School Leadership Academy (CSLA) to work with CCTC to identify what those standards might be. CAPEA members serving on the CCTC "Design Team" worked hard to ensure that diversity, inclusion, and serving all families and communities were part of the new standards.

In 2008, under the leadership of Gary Kinsey (Cal Poly Pomona) as President, the question of elevating "diversity" to a committee level surfaced for CAPEA Executive Council. With President Kinsey's advocacy, CAPEA/ACSA Committee member, Franca Dell'Olio, from Loyola Marymont University, wrote a Position Paper to create an Equity, Diversity, and Achievement for Social Justice Chair Position on the Executive Board of the CAPEA organization. After a couple of years of discussion and design, CAPEA President 2010, Wayne Padover from National University established the Diversity Committee and appointed Delores Lindsey as the Committee's first Chair. President Padover set forth "action goals" from each committee and the Diversity Committee, chaired by Delores Lindsey from California State University, San Marcos, established the following goals for the first two years:

- focus on membership training, support, recruitment & retention, internal capacity building, internal leadership, data collection, and communication & relationships as they relate to equity, diversity and achievement for social justice;
- identify "diversity" categories for membership form;
- design a new membership form using identification categories;
- establish a goal for membership increase in conjunction with Membership Committee;
- make personal contact with prospective members to recruit specifically for areas of diversity reflected in the overview statement;

- work closely with the Membership Committee Chair to communicate strategies and monitor progress of membership data;
- work closely with Conference Committee Chair to ensure continued CAPEA Conference focus on diversity and social justice;
- present and/or recruit members to present Conference presentations on current research, instructional strategies, and performance assessment tools for advocating for and addressing social justice and diversity.

As a result of the efforts of the Diversity Committees (2011-present under Linda Purrington, Pepperdine University) and the leadership of Dr. Padover and the following CAPEA presidents, Don Wise (2011) from Cal State Fresno, and Chris Thomas (2012) from University of San Francisco, equity and social justice became the focus and major topics of interest at the Fall and Spring Conferences from 2009 through 2012. President Franca Dell'Olio (2013) and Diversity Chair Linda Purrington have continued with the following goals for the committee and the organization:

- focus on membership training, support, recruitment & retention, internal capacity building, internal leadership, data collection, and communication & relationships as they relate to equity, diversity and achievement for social justice;
- identify "diversity" categories for membership form;
- design a new membership form using identification categories;
- establish a goal for membership increase in conjunction with Membership Committee;
- make personal contact with prospective members to recruit specifically for areas of diversity reflected in the overview statement;
- work closely with the Membership Committee Chair to communicate strategies and monitor progress of membership data;
- work closely with Conference Committee Chair to ensure continued CAPEA Conference focus on diversity and social justice.

CAPEA Fall 2011 Conference
Leading for Equity and Excellence in Leadership Preparation

One of the main goals of the CAPEA Fall 2011 conference was to highlight exemplary superintendents, principals, districts and schools leading the way in the area of social justice and equity. To this end, educational administration professors from across the state kicked off the conference by visiting two high performing, high poverty and high minority schools in San Diego Unified and later heard from a panel of superintendents leading the charge in this area.

The two schools visited were Edison Elementary and Garfield Elementary, both with 100% of their students living at or below the poverty line as defined by the National Free and Reduce Lunch Program (United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). Edison's student population was nearly 100% Latino. Garfield had a more diverse population in which 64% of the students were Hispanic, 15% were African American and 13% were Caucasian. The site also had 14% of its students qualifying for Special Education. At both schools more than half the students were second language learners. Yet in spite of language barriers and poverty,

students at both schools were able to exceed district and state results in the areas of English language arts and mathematics as delineated in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1
Edison Elementary School State Standards Testing Performance Data Compared to District and State Data

California Standards Tests (CST): English Language Arts and Mathematics

Percentage of students achieving at the proficient or advanced levels (meeting or exceeding state standards):

| | English Language Arts | | | | | | | | | Mathematics | | | | | | | | |
| | School | | | District | | | State | | | School | | | District | | | State | | |
Gr	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12
2	70.0	68.5	64.4	57.0	58.9	59.8	53	56	58	75.0	56.2	67.3	66.1	66.3	64.8	62	66	64
3	42.7	55.1	53.4	46.8	49.4	52.5	44	46	48	85.5	74.4	80.0	67.8	69.0	72.7	65	68	69
4	67.1	76.9	78.2	67.4	68.2	68.9	63	64	67	76.9	89.9	81.8	71.0	71.6	70.5	68	71	71
5	67.1	68.6	67.1	63.2	65.8	67.0	58	59	63	81.2	76.4	87.0	62.7	65.0	65.7	60	63	65

Table 2
Garfield Elementary School State Standards Testing Performance Data Compared to District and State Data

California Standards Tests (CST): English Language Arts and Mathematics

Percentage of students achieving at the proficient or advanced levels (meeting or exceeding state standards):

| | English Language Arts | | | | | | | | | Mathematics | | | | | | | | |
| | School | | | District | | | State | | | School | | | District | | | State | | |
Gr	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12	09–10	10–11	11–12
2	44.4	64.8	41.4	57.0	58.9	59.8	53	56	58	52.4	76.1	48.3	66.1	66.3	64.8	62	66	64
3	38.9	43.1	50.9	46.8	49.4	52.5	44	46	48	78.8	63.5	70.7	67.8	69.0	72.7	65	68	69
4	80.6	72.7	76.6	67.4	68.2	68.9	63	64	67	82.3	83.6	72.9	71.0	71.6	70.5	68	71	71
5	80.0	85.2	73.7	63.2	65.8	67.0	58	59	63	85.5	87.3	74.5	62.7	65.0	65.7	60	63	65

At the time of the conference, the principal at Garfield was just beginning his third year there. Garfield had entered Program Improvement (California Department of Education Accountability Performance Index, 2013). Garfield entered Program Improvement in 2003-04 and the 2008 CST data showed only 35% passing ELA and 40% passing Math indicating that the school had made little progress in five years. In spring of 2009, the statewide rank for the school was a 1 (Garfield, School Accountability Report Card, 2010).

The Garfield principal received his undergraduate degree from Wheaton College and his master's from Harvard University. He entered teaching through Teach for America [TFA] (Teach for America, 2011) and taught for four years before becoming a vice principal for six years at three different sites, working with the same principal. Garfield's principal's philosophy was that every child regardless of their background deserved quality *first* instruction, targeted intervention to fill learning gaps, and support to meet their home environment needs. He believed in rigorous *first* teaching scaffolded to provide support with learning gaps. He also believed it was his job to ensure Garfield students were matriculating

into middle schools with a track record of successfully meeting the needs of kids like his. He spent most of his time in class rooms, meeting with teachers in small groups; collaboratively developing unit plans; acquiring resources for his teachers; and finding ways for them to meet, plan and make decisions based on student data.

The Edison principal received her undergraduate degree from the University of San Diego and her masters at San Diego State University. She had been a vice principal for three years before becoming principal at Edison. She had been there for three years at the time of our visit, taking the helm in 2008. She, like the Garfield principal, was an instructional leader who placed a strong emphasis on strengthening teacher practice and maximizing student achievement. She believed her role was vital in supporting all teachers, building on their strengths and providing daily feedback as a result of instructional visits. The belief at Edison was that they are in a constant state of development and change. As was the case with the Garfield principal, she was well versed in the analysis of data and attended professional learning community and data meetings with the sole purpose of providing resources and support. She worked collaboratively with a team of teachers within professional learning communities, thereby establishing a culture of collective problem solving, shared responsibility and mutual ownership of student achievement. The Principal believed that she was responsible for ensuring that all students were meeting their goals and reaching proficiency. She was highly aware of the power of collaboration and shared decision-making and used these combined factors to make decisions on behalf of the wellbeing of the students at Edison. Finally, aligned with the findings of Ron Edmonds (1979), the Principal protected instructional minutes and eliminated all barriers that would have served as a potential challenge to teaching and learning. She understood that for children in poverty the time spent in school would have the most direct impact on their academic success.

One of the premier conference events was the Superintendents' Panel discussion in which urban district leaders, leading the way in equity and access, engaged in a set of reflective structured questions about building systems of equity and promoting social justice. The panel discussion focused on the tenacity of the district leaders and their vision and commitment to creating pathways and support systems for historically underperforming students to achieve success. In every case, the superintendents were the visionaries for their districts demanding equity, excellence, and building support from school board members through open dialogue, awareness building, and training. The superintendents were also creative about finding resources to support their programs and used student data, both hard and soft, to determine how to best build pathways. Each led their school boards to develop policies around equity and each developed partnerships with outside agencies to find ways to fund their programs. It was clear from their work that they dedicated their lives to ensuring equity and access for all students.

One such panel member was Chris Steinhauser, Superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District. According to Chris, educating all children well is a matter of social justice. Superintendent Stienhauser adheres to Ron Edmonds (1982) renowned quote, "All children are eminently educable and that the behavior of the school is critical in determining the quality of that education." "We can whenever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us." (Edmonds, 1979, p. 20). Steinhauser who has led Long Beach Unified since 2002 leads the district by four goals, two of which are explicitly focused on the student:

- Goal 1: All students will attain proficiency in the core content areas
- Goal 2: All students will graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary and career options

Under each of these goals, are the objectives and the strategies to see each goal to realization. These were Steinhauser's goals when he attended the conference and will remain the district's goals through 2016 when the district will revisit its strategic plan (LBUSD, Strategic Plan, 2011). The goals are not just written on paper. They guide the superintendent's every decision (Steinhauser, 2011). So when Steinhauser saw that there were issues with black and brown students, specifically males, he started a Male Academy to bring black and brown kids together and develop their skills including becoming adult males. This academy started as a pilot on one high school campus and now is on every high school campus with over 700 students. Over 90% of these students go on to college. Moreover, the model has been replicated by more than a handful of districts in California. Steinhauser has developed over 40 pathways to the university through the districts' linked learning program. He has increased the number of high school graduates for his most at risk students and opened Advanced Placement classes to all who desire to take them. The Advance Placement courses, to date, have a 55% passing rate with Latino students as the largest ethnic group represented. Steinhauser and the Long Beach district have also opened every high school to every student through a school of choice option as long as there is room. He also continues to work with the Long Beach Community College so that district students can receive credit at both the college level and the district level for courses taken at City College. Steinhauser's work is strongly aligned to his belief in social justice, equity, and access for all children.

CAPEA Fall 2011 Conference
Leading for Equity and Excellence in Leadership Preparation

Keynote Address
Tim Wise

CAPEA was also pleased to welcome Tim Wise, noted anti-racist author, speaker, and educator as the keynote speaker for the 2011 CAPEA Fall 2011 Conference. Wise's works include such works as *White Like Me: Reflections on Race From a Privileged Son*, *Colorblind: The Rise of Post-Racial Politics and the Retreat from Racial Equity*, and *Dear White America: Letter to a New Minority*. In addition, Wise has provided numerous anti-racist trainings to school leaders throughout the United States around the issues of white privilege and systemic racism in America's schools. Following the conference, Wise was interviewed to give his insights into the role of CAPEA around issues of diversity and equity and what should be the next steps for CAPEA.

An Interview with Tim Wise

As an anti-racist speaker and writer, how should an organization like CAPEA (California Association of Professors of Educational Administration) which has historically seen itself as primarily as a policy advocacy group for its own membership, transition itself into an organization who sees its primary role to advance the cause of equity and social justice in California schools through the preparation of school leaders? What should be our initial actions? How can we create greater buy-in to this effort within our profession?

I think the first step is to acknowledge the centrality of equity and social justice to fulfilling even the most basic mission of the organization. Equity and social justice are key components of developing effective educational leadership in the 21st century. These are not secondary or tertiary matters, or luxuries to which an organization like CAPEA should only attend once other concerns are addressed. In a state whose students are already mostly children and young adults of color, and in which the pool of potential teachers is also mostly of color, remaining blind to the obstacles -- some formal, others informal -- that continue to produce unequal access to quality education and quality employment as educators, is a recipe for disaster. One cannot prepare effective school leaders in the 21st century -- even in Iowa or Vermont, let alone California -- without directly confronting the issues of race, class, language and culture, and the inequities that too often revolve around these identities. Students are not simply students: they are a complex mix of experiences, informed by their identities; so too with teachers and staff. Strong administrators have to not only know this, but create school environments that offer all within the school the opportunity to speak to concerns about inequity, to challenge policies, practices and procedures that maintain inequity, and to ultimately make equity and social justice central to the educational mission. I think buy-in comes by clearly and without apology making it clear to all within CAPEA that this **IS the work**. It is a matter of doing one's job better, more fully, and restoring to education that social mission that was always at its core, but updating it for a modern era in which multicultural democracy is not simply something we'd like to have, but something without which the nation can't survive.

Do you know of any examples of organizations such as CAPEA who have made this transition and what was the outcome of this transition?

It strikes me that many organizations are struggling with the same issues, some more effectively perhaps than others, but that none have fully transitioned to a full-on social justice paradigm. But this isn't cause for alarm, per se. Fact is, every institution in this society, to one degree or another, was established with inequity at its core. We have never lived up to the billing we offer ourselves, as a truly equal opportunity society. Schooling was established not to break down inequity but to serve existing power structures; so to the job market, criminal and civil justice systems, the military, you name it. So with that kind of history, it is hardly surprising that equity and social justice fail to come naturally to our institutions. They require a fundamental rethinking of our basic national narrative. As such, it takes time. But that doesn't mean that we can't make real progress in that direction, and that's what I see many folks -- including folks at CAPEA -- willing to do.

You have mentioned before in your writings and speeches that many times in anti-racism work that organizations have to be willing to allow for two competing ideas to be present to do the work fully. For example, in the preparation of school leaders we are well aware that many of the policies and practices a school leader will have to implement are socially unjust, yet failure to do so will place the school leader in jeopardy of loss of employment and/or legal action. How should we who are in the business of preparing schools leaders create learning opportunities from these sorts of conundrums? Furthermore, what knowledge and skills should we be equipping our students so they can face these conundrums?

I think we must confront the contradictions openly. The worst thing we do as a nation, sometimes, and as institutional leaders, is hide behind a veil of neutrality or innocence, and pretend that we are somehow not implicated in the injustices that take place around us. So if I don't deliberately set out to hurt you, I have no responsibility if and when you get hurt. So if the schools were created to maintain inequity and the power of those who have it, so be it, but hey that's not my fault because I didn't set them up like that...I'm just a teacher in the school, or a principal, or whatever. But that's a cop- out and everyone in the community being badly served by that school system knows it. It's like when a cop says "well, I don't racially profile. I mean, my colleagues do, but I'm one of the good ones, and I don't, so therefore I don't have to do anything to change the culture." Wrong. You do. I think you have to speak out about the contradictions, let the families you serve and the students and communities know that YOU know. That you see what they see. And that with their help and involvement, you're willing to do all that you can to change those dynamics. And yes, occasionally, you do have to be prepared to go to the mat, so to speak, for your principles. Better to do so with some support though, rather than alone. So I think of those courageous teachers in two of the Seattle high schools recently, who simply refused to administer state assessments that they felt failed to authentically assess their students. Not only should school site leaders and central office folks not have threatened their jobs, they should have applauded them for standing up for authentic education and the integrity of their students. If, ultimately, comfortable, short-term job security is more important to someone than whether or not students are treated equitably and justly, then that person should probably not be allowed within 50 yards of a school, let alone be running one.

At the conference presentation in 2011, you mentioned the work that the state of Washington has done around creating standards for school leaders around issues of social justice and anti-racism. What do you see as the successes and challenges of these efforts?

Well, on the one hand, the standards were never adopted because the legislature balked at the idea that teachers would be, in effect, screened by the criteria and assessment tool that had been developed by two of the multicultural educators' groups in the state. So, in that sense, the efforts failed.

And yet, what was still valuable about the process of developing an anti-racism, anti-bias rubric was the process of thinking through what such a thing should be assessing. How SHOULD we be evaluating teachers and administrators in the modern era? What are the skill sets we're looking for and how will we know when folks have attained them? So despite the fact that these criteria and rubrics weren't adopted, I think the folks in Washington learned a lot and have been able to teach others about how better to select with antiracism and social justice in mind, even if it's only voluntarily so, because of the squeamishness of the lawmakers.

In your writings and speeches, you mention often of the concept of Racism 2.0. Could you provide a definition of this and give examples of how this manifests itself in our schools? Furthermore, what do you see should be the strategies of school leadership programs in addressing Racism 2.0?

Racism 2.0, to me, refers to that kind of racism a person is manifesting when they will gladly allow for "exceptions to the rule" but still, by and large, believe that "the rule" (in terms of how they perceive racial, ethnic and cultural groups other than their own) still stands. In other words, the kind that allows for white folks to have "black friends," or to love various non-white cultural traditions, but ultimately to still view most of those "others" as lesser than, as a compendium of stereotypes, as people who are different than one's friend, or the "good ones" that we feel comfortable around. It's what millions of white folks did when they pulled the lever for Barack Obama, in fact. Because according to surveys taken shortly before the 2008 election, a large percentage of white Democrats -- and persons who said they were going to vote for Obama -- nonetheless admitted to believing any number of anti-black stereotypes to be true. So they carved out an exception for the one person of color who made them comfortable, while still viewing the larger group in negative and decidedly more hostile terms.

In schools this plays out in the way that teachers and administrators sometimes end up playing off individuals and groups of color against one another. So, it might be by holding up one or two black or Latino kids as exemplars, while still having a pretty negative view of the larger black and brown communities from which they come. Or it might be by holding out certain other groups, like Asian Americans, as "model minorities," in our schools, not recognizing how that process -- while seeming to be positive about a group of color, and thus not racist in the traditional, 1.0 sense -- actually is incredibly racist in the 2.0 sense. First, it serves to denigrate non-Asian minorities (and the history of "model minority" rhetoric is actually one in which this concept was created exactly for that purpose); and then secondly, it perpetuates a horribly one-dimensional understanding of Asian American folks as well, completely glossing over the racism and discrimination that Asian American and Pacific Islander kids and families experience, or their disproportionate poverty rates in places like California. So 2.0 SOUNDS less offensive to some, because it allows for some faint praise to be offered to non-white persons, but in the end, it is equally insidious or worse, and precisely because it operates behind that seemingly ecumenical cloak, and therefore is harder to pin down.

School leadership programs are encouraged and in many cases required to obtain both national and state accreditation. As a part of this process, the programs are asked to provide evidence of diversity in the makeup of the program's faculty and student body, in the schools that we serve, and in our curriculum. What is your opinion of these efforts by accrediting agencies? How might these expectations be beneficial to the program? How might these expectations be lacking? How might a program work with the accrediting agency to move them from a diversity paradigm to an anti-racist and social justice paradigm or vice versa?

Well, I think evidence is good. It serves as a way to gauge our effectiveness, our progress and the depth of our commitments. But sadly, "evidence of diversity" often gets boiled down to a very simplistic, bean-counting exercise, devoid of depth or context. So if the numbers look fairly representative of the various communities being served by the schools, then we sometimes figure our work is done. And if the numbers don't measure up, we think that the most important thing is the numbers. But in both cases, the bigger issue might be climate and leadership. On the one hand, even when the numbers seem indicative of real progress, that may mask a real deficiency of leadership, and a school climate in which we have diversity without equity, or even real discussions about equity and what it means, and how we maintain it. On the other hand, if we don't have the "good numbers," we might need to focus on climate

and leadership FIRST, precisely because problems in those two areas may be the reason for the lousy numbers. And no one is served by recruiting greater diversity only to place those folks who add to the diversity of an institution, into a setting where justice and equity are given short shrift. That's a set-up, and clearly not helpful. To move to a social justice and equity paradigm will require us to ask fundamental questions about the very purpose of education. What is the point? What is the mission? And how might that mission be different, depending on the population being served by education?

Paulo Freire in Pedagogy of the Oppressed writes, "It is only when the oppressed find the oppressor out and become in the organized struggle for their liberation that they begin to believe in themselves. This discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action; nor can it be limited to mere activism, but must include serious reflection: only then will it be praxis." What do you see are the necessary elements to social justice leadership as praxis? How should CAPEA commit ourselves to this process?

By not always waiting around for some supposedly objective, data-driven piece of evidence to "prove" that equity and justice are important or somehow critical to the educational mission. I mean, I think that evidence is out there. But we find it by taking action, by having this conversation in the communities served by our schools. That's what Freire meant by praxis: acting and learning as complementary elements of the whole. To wait until all the evidence is clear to you is to invite paralysis. Likewise, to act but not be open to new learning, new evidence and the inputs of the marginalized would be equally destructive. It wouldn't be paralysis, but it would amount to colonialism. So educators should be opening the discussions about school governance, classroom management and core mission to the community. Not because the community is going to completely take over or make the decisions over the wishes of the principals or teachers, but because unless school leaders and the community make those decisions together, it isn't just equity and social justice that get compromised. Democracy itself is undermined.

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CAPEA Spring 2012 Conference
Leading Equity-Principled Communities of Practice

Reflections on a Dialogue with Dr. Linda Lambert

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With CAPEA's renewed and reinvigorated focus on leadership for social justice, a critical dialogue facilitated by one of the organization's former Presidents and a leading scholar-practitioner in the field of education, none other than Dr. Linda Lambert herself, was thought provoking, relevant, and inspiring. Dr. Lambert is a professor emeritus at California State University, Hayward. She began her career in the field of probation where, after a relatively short time, she would come to find that to better influence the lives of children one needed to help shape education. Subsequently, Dr. Lambert has served as a teacher leader; a site principal; a district and county professional development director; the coordinator of the Principals' Center and Leadership Academy at California State University, Hayward; the designer of major restructuring programs; an international consultant; a professor; and most recently, a world renowned novelist. Dr. Lambert's research and consultancy interests include, but are not limited to, leadership, leadership capacity, professional and organizational

development, and school and district restructuring. Some of her key leadership texts include: *The Constructivist Leader 1995), Who Will Save Our Schools: Teachers as Constructivist Leaders (1997), Building Leadership Capacity In Schools (1998), and Leadership Capacity For Lasting School Improvement (2003).*

One weekend in October 2012, Dr. Lambert delivered a keynote address at the annual conference of the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration entitled, *Constructivist Leadership and Equity* (Lambert, L. 2012). More than a mere address, Dr. Lambert led the participants down a path of self-discovery and reflection centered on values, beliefs, and professional practice, poignantly pivoting about the notion of constructivist leadership and equity. Dr. Lambert and participants explored the concept of shared purpose and the crucial link between teaching, leading and learning. The purpose for the day long conversation with Dr. Lambert was to examine how would **attention to leadership as "purposeful, reciprocal learning in community" create an equitable culture in which all could learn and could lead.**

Dr. Lambert's vision of leadership is centered on an organizational approach that reflects the importance of engaging all stakeholders' voices in improving schools. As described by Dr. Lambert, leadership is about learning together toward a shared purpose. Leadership is a form of learning that moves the community toward their shared purpose. Furthermore, this conscientious practice, that includes all voices in the dialogue to construct knowledge and meaning, then poises all constituencies for action that inextricably ties leadership to equity. This notion proposes that building leadership capacity through broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership invites all into the dialogue, process, and actions of leadership.

Dr. Lambert continued her conversation by inviting participants to examine their assumptions of leadership. To those ends, Dr. Lambert and conference attendees delved into topics exploring the right, responsibility and capability to lead; leadership as inherently reciprocal and equitable; leadership as a form of learning; and the inevitability that how leadership is defined will determine who will lead and how they will lead. In other words, how leadership is defined, what assumptions we hold about leadership, and how we situate them within the framework of leadership capacity, together provide a clear context for equity. Working from Linda's definition that constructivist leadership is reciprocal, purposeful learning in community as our point of departure, we then began the journey to deconstruct the definition so as to ultimately construct newly shared knowledge and meaning of our own. Next examined was leadership as a form of learning, an autopoietic process of transformation. Dr. Lambert shared that autopoiesis, or self-making (self-organization), is a network pattern in which the function of each part is to participate equally (reciprocally) in the creation or transformation (learning) of other parts of the network.

As with any skillfully scaffolded lesson, the notion of emergence was introduced into the discussion. Linda explained that emergence is the way complex systems arise out of the interaction of simpler parts. Learning, leading, consciousness, school reform, societies, civilizations are all considered to be the result of emergence. She continued by tasking participants, albeit rhetorically, to figure out what parts or elements interact best to construct equitable systems.

Attention was then directed on three emergent properties in organizational change that when reciprocal, in that they influence and inform one another, lead to transformation:

relationships ↔structures↔ learning. We once again considered the definition of constructivist leadership by assigning meaning to each term used. *Reciprocal relationships* means being invested in and responsible for the learning of others while expecting others to assume similar responsibility for your own learning. *Purpose* carries the weight of sharing a vision, set of beliefs, and goals about schooling and student learning. *Learning* entails constructing meaning and knowledge together through dialogue, reflection, inquiry and action. A community is composed of a group of people who share common goals, aspirations for the future and who care about one another.

We concluded close to where we began – Constructivist leadership is "purposeful, reciprocal learning in community" where equity emerges from reciprocity, where learning is an autopoietic process from which leadership emerges, and where emergence arises from experiences that interact and create conditions greater than their sum of its parts (leadership capacity).

CAPEA was exuberant to have the opportunity to dialogue with one of their own and we thank Dr. Linda Lambert for spending the day in purposeful conversation with CAPEA Conference participants.

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CAPEA Spring 2012 Conference
Leading Equity-Principled Communities of Practice

Reflections on a Conversation with Etienne Wenger

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As professors of educational leadership and administration, CAPEA members paused to deepen our understanding of learning and communities of practice, and to dialogue about our role and responsibility in contributing to policy and instructional practice as we educate our current and future educational leaders. Etienne Wenger spoke with passion and conviction on the value of communities of practice for informing both policy and practice, and the implications for leading learning in the 21st century. This reflection on our conversation with Wenger will examine (a) a deeper understanding of the meaning of learning; (b) distinctions between horizontal and vertical dimensions of learning, and the importance of why the two should be integrated; (c) the meaning and characteristics of communities of practice; and (d) the implications for our work as CAPEA, professors of educational leadership and administration.

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The Meaning of Learning

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Wenger spoke of the notion of *meaningfulness* as a critical part of human learning. Meaningfulness, or making meaning, is a result of learning and is part of forming one's identity through interactions and dialogue with others. We are, and learn, as social beings. Wenger shared how traditional education is grounded in isolated individual learning followed by testing that is based on a set curriculum generally created from a specific political perspective. Wenger shifted our thinking to learning within a community of practice, learning with others who have a shared identity, shared interests, and shared passions. What if…students directed their own learning based on their talents, interests, and passions, and engaged as communities of practices, interacting with experts relevant to those interest and passions? Wenger proposed that when we engage in learning within a community of shared interests and passions, we learn to answer the following questions: Where do we belong–*Who*

is our community? Who are we becoming–*What is our identity?* What are we doing–*What is our practice?* What is our experience–*What is the meaning?* Wenger believes that people who are contributions to a learning community "are passionate, engaged, suffer through passions, and are a wellspring of creativity." We ask ourselves, "In our classrooms, when and where have our students participated in meaningful learning?"

Integrating Vertical and Horizontal Learning

Wenger noted how we are struggling with accountability in today's educational systems and proposed that two opposing constructs–horizontal learning and vertical learning–might be integrated in order to provide the most meaningful learning for today's students. Communities of practice–individuals sharing the same identity, interests, and passions–engage in horizontal learning as they construct meaning through dialogue, interact with experts, and hold each other accountable to the community's standards of knowledge and skills. This, Wenger states, is known as horizontal learning and horizontal accountability. In horizontal systems, members of the community are equal as learners, and hold each other accountable for the knowledge and skills that bring meaning to their identity as a community of practice. Diversity and diverse perspectives are valued and enrich the learning of all members. Taylorism, on the other hand, is a vertical system of learning that has resulted in a set curriculum generally based on the dominant culture's political perspectives and beliefs. These boundaries for learning and criteria for accountability can many times be meaningless to those who are doing the "learning." Learning is in quotation marks because according to Wenger's definition, learning requires the learner to create "meaning" in order to "learn."

Wenger believes that horizontal and vertical learning and accountability are not exclusive of each other. He emphasized the need to make horizontal and vertical dimensions visible to each other, and to integrate the knowledge and perspectives from the *horizontal learning* of communities of practice with *vertical learning* from traditional organizational management. Vertical systems generally focus on what Wenger calls "currency," a numbers game of money in business and student scores in education. In horizontal systems, the "currency" is much more difficult to measure, as the currency is understanding and meaningfulness generated through dialogue within communities of practice. By integrating horizontal and vertical learning and accountability, each informs the other. The outcomes are more effective policy and meaningful learning, providing the foundation for students' education and preparation for thriving in today's world. While there is a tension between vertical policy and horizontal experience, making distinctions in language allows us to negotiate the tensions and be more intentional and rigorous in our learning.

Communities of Practice

Wenger defined Communities of Practice as groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. Communities of practice are identified by three primary elements: (a) Those within the community of practice share a *common domain* of interest, commitment, and competence; (b) They build *strong relationships* and engage in dialogue, discussions, and activities to support each other and learn from one another; and (c)

Through shared experiences, stories, and problems solving, they build a history of *shared practice* that provides resources for the entire community of practice.

Implications for Our Work

Wenger cautioned against the danger in mediocrity, inviting us to cut across traditional boundaries as we engage in our communities of practice. Why? Because innovation happens at the boundaries of communities. Know that practice is local. Use the voice of practice to inform policy. Manage the tensions of the polarity of vertical and horizontal learning, knowing that communities of practice are a significant and valuable partner with management. Understand that what are important are people coming together, caring passionately about something, and creating meaning and deep learning.

Wenger's constructs of horizontal learning and communities of practice offer promise for bringing about *greater equity*–through valuing diversity within horizontal learning–and *greater quality*–by embracing meaningfulness–to our students' educational experiences. In *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell stated that to be good at something required 10,000 hours of practice. To practice something for 10,000 most likely requires interest. Through interest, we engage. Wenger charged us to ATTEND to student interest. In closing, Wenger posed this question for our reflections: "What if…"fun" was a requirement for learning?"

A more in-depth examination of communities of practice and implication for us as educators maybe explored in "A Commentary on Etienne Wenger's Keynote Presentation at the 2012 California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA) Conference" by Drs. Philip Mirci and Linda Jungwirth.

CAPEA Fall 2012 Conference
Equity and Excellence: Leading Change in Educational Policy

Reflections on a Conversation with Dr. Ken Magdaleno

Speaking on the topic *Developing Leadership for Equity*, Dr. Magdaleno, Associate Professor, California State University, Fresno, led a rich discussion with interactive activities that evoked reflection from participants on our values, practices and policies with our diverse student populations. Dr. Magdaleno shared his concern about the loss of Mexican American students from K-16, reminding us that less than 1% gain a doctorate. Dr. Magdaleno said that our indifference to such outcomes is the opposite of love, faith and affirmation of life. We must acknowledge the gap and do something about it. A quote from James Baldwin was employed to make his points: *"Not everything can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced…"*

Dr. Magdaleno's teaching tool provided 3 categories of focus for the attendees: STOP DOING, KEEP DOING and START DOING (see Table 1). We focused on policy and practices at the most local level, within our spheres of influence. Selected responses included the following:

Dr. Magdaleno's Teaching Tool

Stop Doing	Keep Doing	Start Doing
Being indifferent!	Develop a PreK-16 pipeline.	Align assessments with earning goals and objectives.
Assuming that social Justice is a given; that it's found elsewhere.	Targeted recruitment for equity in representation of leaders.	Provide coherence-align and ground education doctoral program with roots of equity principles.
Backing up when students resist.		

Dr. Magdaleno commented, "Although change is slowly occurring….there is a belief system of deficit thinking that still permeates our schools and society". He stressed the importance of addressing the "school to prison pipeline" issue and to keep working to increase the effectiveness of education leaders in addressing equity issues. Dr. Magdaleno shared that we must acknowledge and act upon the reality that issues of race, ethnicity, class and culture affect student learning and workforce attitudes.

Dr. Magdaleno reminded us of the words of Paulo Freire that we must act and reflect together. We were admonished to discontinue operating from a deficit model of looking at students and their vulnerabilities. Rather, we must operate from a lens that acknowledges their strengths and incorporates their lives and knowledge into our teaching.

In summary, a definition of social justice by Scott (as cited in Marshall, C. & Olivia, M., 2010) applies to Dr. Magdaleno's presentation. It defines systemic equity "as the transformational ways in which systems and individuals habitually operate to ensure that every learner – in whatever learning environment that learner is found – has the greatest opportunity to learn enhanced by the resources and supports necessary to achieve competence, excellence, independence, responsibility, and self-sufficiency for school and life" (p. 262). We must develop leaders who will create such socially just systems and sites.

Doctoral Students Expand CAPEA's Community of Practice

The incorporation of a doctoral poster session in CAPEA conferences came about for several important reasons. First and foremost, CAPEA needed to expand in two very important ways. Membership needed to be challenged by our current students so we could see the needs of leaders across the state and our students are also a reflection of the ever changing demographics of our teachers/leaders across the State. We believed that doctoral poster sessions would bring a much needed student voice to the conference and at the same time push members to grow in their understanding of the diverse leadership in schools today. These sessions have helped bring a new voice to our CAPEA conferences, allowed membership to provide students helpful feedback on their research, and most importantly helped CAPEA grow as an organization. Student voices provide a needed element to the

CAPEA conferences. Understanding who and what our students are doing statewide can only help the entire organization grow.

As CAPEA's commitment to equity and social justice gained momentum, it seemed only logical to recruit doctoral students to participate in conferences. Along with private institutions, the California State University system was graduating the first and second cohorts of scholar-practitioners who were charged to lead K-12 school improvement efforts throughout the state. The spring 2011 CAPEA conference invitation included a call for doctoral poster presentations. Six students had proposals accepted, two from CSU East Bay, two from CSU Fresno and two from San Diego State University. The poster session was scheduled as a late afternoon reception before dinner. CAPEA members gathered around the poster displays entering into serious, but supportive dialogues on a variety of important research areas. The symbiotic nature of these conversations was palpable. For instance, Sylvia Greenwood submitted the abstract below for a study titled Teaching for Whom: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.

> In public education, we are faced with three realities: (1) our teacher force is mostly White, (2) our student population is highly diverse and growing in children of color and (3) children of color are precisely the students most at risk of being caught on the negative end of the achievement gap. There is a need to integrate culturally responsive practices to engage and promote success for our increasingly diverse student population. There is a plethora of theoretical work on culturally responsive pedagogy and a lack of work on how to implement pedagogies. The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of teachers attempting to implement culturally responsive practices. The methodology includes surveys, classroom observations, and dialogues. Culturally responsive pedagogy, critical race theory, and equity pedagogy formed the conceptual framework for this study. This study informs educational leaders on how to support teachers in using culturally responsive practices.

CAPEA members were intrigued by Sylvia's description of her "back door" approach to discussions of race and equity. As an African American principal of a predominately white faculty serving a predominately African American and Latino student population, she supported teachers in developing responsive teaching practices to increase their sense of efficacy before engaging them in conversations about institutional racism. Sylvia gained confidence as she answered questions and received positive feedback on her participatory action research. While Sylvia received this induction into the academy, these interactions also benefited CAPEA members as they considered a unique staff development approach to bridging the opportunity gap.

The other doctoral research topics for the conference including: Social Justice Leadership at a Charter School, Understanding Assessment Leadership in Schools, Intra-district Resource Allocation to Schools to Promote Equity, Factors Affecting the Attrition and Retention of Middle and High School Math Teachers, Administrator Development from Transactional to Transformational Under Federal and State Accountability Mandates, provided equally stimulating exchanges of ideas and resources. This inaugural event offered doctoral students an occasion to vet their research and CAPEA an opening to expand our understandings of as well as influences on the field of leadership for social justice.

The next CAPEA conference in fall of 2011 incorporated eight doctoral poster presentations: two from California State University at San Bernardino, one from Pepperdine University, and five from San Diego State University. Topics ranged from: African American Identity, Academic Persistence, and Career Aspirations in Education; Addressing Articulation Between High School and College Level English Courses; Perceptions, Motivations and Barriers of Earning a High School Diploma and Achieving Higher Education Among African American and Latino Adult Students; System-wide Change and Use of Data to Inform Instructional Practice; The Role of the District in Leading Systemic Reform; Special Education Teacher Leaders: Supports for Speech Language Pathologists; How Do Current Principal Evaluation Systems Impact Leadership Behaviors; and Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century: A Study of District Level Technology-focused Reform. CAPEA members had the opportunity to share in these research conversations and expand knowledge in the areas of cultural diversity, addressing needs of students of various backgrounds and leadership in schools.

The spring CAPEA 2012 conference in Sacramento elicited the largest group of doctoral students with six from California State University East Bay, one from Sacramento State University, one from Loyola Marymount University and one from CSU Fresno. The titles of dissertations represented a breadth and depth of research on leadership for social justice: The impact of administrative practices on freshman students' Knowledge of the Jeanne Clery Act; Finding Poetic Justice: How Teacher Collaboration and Communication Impact Elementary Math Instruction; The Perceptions of Secondary Students Overcoming Systemic Disciplinary Issues; An Exploration of How Teacher Collaboration Factors Impact Teacher Retention in an Urban High School Setting; The Impact of Coaching on New African American Female Principals; Algebra is a Civil Right: Increasing Achievement for African American Males in Algebra Through Coaching and Collaboration; Women Principals of Jewish Secular High Schools in Israel: Access and Progress; and The Effect of Leadership for Positive Behavior Intervention and Equity. One doctoral poster presentation titled, *Does 'Safe Schools Work' Really Create Safe Schools?* outlined a study evaluating a program designed to create a safe climate for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans-gender, and Queer (LGBTQ), youth. This Safe Schools program included board policy, inclusive curriculum, teacher professional development, and student support groups. While issues of race, poverty, language, gender and religion have been consistently examined at CAPEA conferences, one member stated that this was the first time she recalled gender identity being brought to the table.

Though we only had the pleasure of hosting three doctoral presentations at our fall 2012 Conference (one from the University of San Francisco, and two from Pepperdine), the topics continued to provoke lively dialogue on Filipino American Educational Leaders in a Northern California K-12 Public School: Challenges and Opportunities; The Disparity in a Free Appropriate Public Education: Disadvantaged Families; and Access Through Advocacy:

Empowering Economically Disadvantaged Parents via Support and Resources. We see common threads woven throughout these doctoral presentations: cultural diversity in many different ways (ethnic, economic, special needs), leadership in 21st century schools, collaboration, social justice issues, and administrative and teacher practices.

Etienne Wenger (2009) emphasizes the importance of an organization to build a community of practice. "Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (p. 1). By encompassing doctoral student research within CAPEA we are building and expanding

our communities of practice. Wenger (2009) states that " as a community of practice we take collective responsibility for managing the knowledge, providing a link between learning an performance, sharing and creating knowledge, and creating connections among people across the organization and geographical boundaries" (p. 3). If we are to model what will be expected of our future school leaders and serve our surrounding school districts and communities, it is incumbent upon us as a faculty to, not only build collaboration in our classrooms, but also to expand our practice into the districts, organizations, and communities we serve.

CAPEA Future Directions in Pursuit of Equity and Excellence in Educational Leadership Preparation

As this article has highlighted, CAPEA leadership has been working to change historic practices in the organization. The changes that have been highlighted were needed, but we as an organization cannot be content with these initial changes in our practice. Striving to be an organization that is focused on combining equity and excellence in leadership preparation is not easy. As a group of professors, we are a very privileged group of individuals in that we have a real opportunity to change how leaders are prepared across the state. We will become irrelevant to the field and the students we serve if we do not continue to change our practice. Issues of equity and social justice can no longer be an add-on to what we do, but should be embedded across all coursework and training. There are some who may challenge this notion, but every school leader across this state deals with issues of injustice and inequity (i.e. race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and so on). It is our job as professors of education leadership to challenge our students and ourselves to figure out ways to confront and address issues of inequity that confront students and communities each and every day. CAPEA as organization must continue to push our membership to embed new practices and theories that challenge how we best train our school leaders for the future. CAPEA must diversify membership (i.e. race, class, gender, sexuality, religion), listen and learn from practitioners, and be the innovators of change in practice that is focused on creating social justice leaders for the future. We have to be proactive in changing the way we do business and can never be content with our practice in training school leaders. We are confident that our current leadership and the future leaders of CAPEA will set forth a plan that will continue to challenge the organization and its membership to develop social justice leaders across the state that not only are exceptional instructional leaders, but change agents that are equipped to challenge and address the issues of inequity for the children of California.

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A Commentary on Etienne Wenger's Keynote Presentation at the 2012 California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA) Conference

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Pepperdine University

This commentary explains and expands upon Wenger's concept of communities of practice. Knowledge construction to improve common practice within a community committed to learning is critical. Vertical and horizontal communication, interactions within and between boundaries of organizations are necessary for creating learning organizations. One such organization is education.

This is a commentary on Eteinne Wenger's keynote presentation at the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA) conference held in 2012. The focus of the paper is on Wenger's work regarding communities of practice (Wenger, 1999; Wenger, McDermott, & Synder, 2002). The ideas shared by Wenger offer promise for bringing about greater equity and quality to the field of educational leadership.

Communities of Practice

Wenger (1999) described thirteen characteristics that are common among true communities of practice. Key to communities of practice is a sustained mutual relationship that exhibits shared ways of engaging in harmonious and/or conflictual conversations and interactions. Through these conversations, the flow of information propagates innovation through effective problem solving. The community of practice builds on the strengths and contributions of each member, and shares a common language, purpose, and ways of being.

Social Practice and Theories of Identity

Wenger shared in his presentation a social theory of learning whereby humans seek meaning. In the act of learning, a person simultaneously is learning about self and others. Through this process, one's identity as well as the group's identity is formed and transformed.

Theories of *social practice* address the production and reproduction of specific ways of engaging with the world. They are concerned with everyday activity and real-life settings, but with an emphasis on social systems and shared resources by which groups organize and coordinate their activities, mutual relationships and interpretations of the world.

Theories of *identity* are concerned with the social formation of the person, the cultural interpretation of the body and the creation of the use of markers of membership such as rights of passage and social categories. They address issues of gender, class, ethnicity, age, and other forms of categorization, association, and differentiation in an attempt to understand the person as formed through complex relationships of mutual constitution between individuals and groups (Wenger, 1999, p. 13).

In contrast to the assumptions about learning in our existing institutions, Wenger (1999) emphasized that informed practice occurs when we begin with our identity such that we address "the formation of identity in practice as the ability to negotiate an experience of meaning" (p. 17). This has meant that engagement in experiences has occurred consciously:

> . . . in a complex world in which we must find a livable identity, ignorance is never
> simply ignorance, and knowing is not just a matter of information. In practice,
> understanding is always straddling the known and the unknown in a subtle dance of
> the self. It is a delicate balance (Wenger, 1999, p. 41).

We must develop more complex ways of learning for ourselves as professors of educational administration so we can engage with our students in ways resulting in their attainment of mastery of practice.

Two Types of Knowledge as Dimensions of Learning: Vertical and Horizontal

Wenger spoke about two types of knowledge as Dimensions of Learning: Vertical and Horizontal He began by discussing the vertical dimension that has long existed in organizations.

An example of the vertical dimension was the thinking and work of Frederick Taylor. Leaders were to engage in science such that the science was reflected in each person's work. Thus, he stressed the focus was "getting employees to learn how to do the job the right way, in contrast to developing their own approach through experience" (Hodgetts & Greenwood, 1995, p. 218). He emphasized that work done conformed to his scientific thinking on efficiency where management did its duty to solve the "daily problems" of the workers and reward them (Hodgetts & Greenwood, 1995, p. 220). Rather than encouraging people to share about their practice in improvement of it, Taylor stressed, "dividing up the work" into jobs where people usually were compartmentalized and did not interact with others outside their departments (Hodgetts & Greenwood, 1995, p. 222). Taylor believed this resulted in productivity effectiveness. While this command and comply dimension has long held a place in organizations, it is not enough in a world where knowledge construction and improved practice are needed throughout the organization.

While this vertical dimension has tended to define organizations and may continue to have a place in organizational management, communities of practice are not about organizations, necessarily, but about learning. In contrast to the vertical dimension, the horizontal dimension emphasizes social equality because people come together in contexts of

learning beyond the formal roles of an organization. This type of interaction heightens the opportunity for the presence of equity, hopefully through the dialogue that values the diverse thinking and contributions of the members and maintains high regard for the rights of all people. This conversation creates a context for discussing fairness, equality, and commitment to helping those most in need.

Wenger stressed that today's leaders must recognize the importance of the horizonal dimension in leading for equity. One of the most important features of the horizontal dimension of learning is social equality. Both the vertical and horizontal dimensions constitute a context in which the negotiation of meaning occurs.

A story appearing on multiple Internet sites illustrates the heart and outcome of horizontal relationships. Picture a group of children sitting in a circle with their feet touching and in the center of the circle is a bowl of fruit. The story begins when an anthropologist asks the children in the circle to compete to win a bowl of fruit. The anthropologist was dumbfounded when the children held hands, ran to the fruit together as one, encircled the fruit, and then smiled as they shared the fruit with one another. The anthropologist asked why each student did not try to win the basket for oneself. A child asked: "How can one be happy when others are sad?" This little story illustrates horizontal learning as characterized by: trust, mutuality, and collaboration. The circle of children carries with it the symbol of continuity and completeness.

Challenge and Opportunity for Professors of Educational Administration

The challenge and opportunity we, as professors of education administration, face is to see and tap into the potential that communities of practice have for allowing us, and our students, to understand and work with learning, accountability, and the construction of new meanings in a different way. Wenger shared that one or more communities of practice can exist within an organization but neither organizations nor parts of organizations in and of themselves constitute communities of practice.

A community of practice is an entity that emerges as a group grapples with issues they wish to share and resolve together. The advantage of seeing learning in this way is that it offers us an opportunity to reconceptualize learning. For professors of educational administration, it provides a means for broadening administrative leadership preparation and one's own learning and identity development.

Wenger has identified a way for people to come together to engage in learning that is related to practice and that impacts the identity of the learner. The power of communities of practice is that this approach to learning and problem solving provides an alternative to the vertical-only dimension where communication occurs according to policies and directives. Attention to the ways in which organizational structures have operated in the past is revealing institutionalized forms of discrimination (e.g., racism, ableism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, etc.). In other words, discussion has been traditionally limited in the realm of seeking social equality, equity, and the dignity of the human person.

The Role of Professors of Educational Administration

Increasingly, the work of professors of educational administration will involve pursuing their own learning, hopefully, within communities of practice. This will be important because

supporting people aspiring to become educational leaders and administrators must focus on them becoming competent and confident as instructional leaders. For example, if principals are evaluating teachers and education begins shifting according to the common core standards, teachers are going to need to become proficient in learning for "real world" applications. This involves professors working to create such conditions in the courses they are scheduled to facilitate. Paul (1992) revealed the choice educators face:

>The fundamental characteristic of the world students now enter is ever-accelerating change, a world in which information is multiplying even as it is swiftly becoming obsolete and out of date, a world in which ideas are continually restructured, retested, and rethought, where one cannot survive with simply one way of thinking, where one must continually adapt one's thinking to the thinking of others, where one must respect the need for accuracy and precision and meticulousness, a world in which job skills [practices] must continually be upgraded and perfected – even transformed. We have never had to face such a world before. Education has never before had to prepare students for such dynamic flux, unpredictability, and complexity, for such ferment, tumult, and disarray. We as educators are now on the firing line. Are we willing to fundamentally rethink our methods of teaching? Are we ready for the 21st Century? Are we willing to learn new concepts and ideas? Are we willing to bring new rigor to our own thinking in order to help our students bring that same rigor to theirs? Are we willing, in short, to become critical thinkers so that we might be an example of what our students must internalize and become?

>These are profound challenges to the profession. They call upon us to do what no previous generation of teachers was ever called upon to do. Those of us willing to pay the price will have to teach side by side with teachers unwilling to pay the price. This will make our job even more difficult, but now less exciting, not less important, not less rewarding. . . .Let us hope that enough of us will have the fortitude and vision to grasp this reality and transform our lives and our schools accordingly (p. 13).

Our classroom practice must change and we, as educators, must become committed learners. Only in this way can we be role models for students.

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Significance of Communities of Practice

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The significance of communities of practice offers hope and a sense of direction for those working in education. The first possibility is that communities of practice highlight what is being revealed or not being revealed about learning and identity as we interact with students and they interact with those whom they serve. In acts of learning about something important to the community of practice, this learning extends to a deeper understanding of the learner and others. The second benefit offered by the communities of practice approach is that learning is about meaning. We seek to make sense of our experiences and develop a shared understanding of our world. Multiple interpretations and a myriad of circumstances challenge the stability of meaning. This fluidity of meaning is a result of the mutual engagement that takes place within communities of practice as they "create a shared reality in which to act and

construct an identity" (Wenger, 1998, p. 177). The third benefit to embracing communities of practice and engaging in them is that we may collectively draw upon our power "to negotiate our enterprises and thus to share the context in which we can construct and experience an identity of competence" (Wenger, 1998, p. 175). The fourth benefit offered is that if communities of practice are visible and understood, more humans may be able to act in humanitarian ways.

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Effectiveness of California Higher Education Legislation (Senate Bill 1644) and National Implications of Higher Education as a Right or Privilege

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California legislature made a policy change with Senate Bill (SB) 1644 (2000), shifting Cal Grant Programs to focus on entitlement; counter to the national trend of merit based grant programs. This article describes a study examining effectiveness and extent to which SB 1644 is meeting its legislative objectives: increase in higher education opportunities and lower student loan debt. Additionally, demographic characteristic differences of student populations seeking higher education opportunities (20-year period) and factors influencing California policy to embrace entitlement grants are presented. The national implication and political (value) question derived from this study was: Is higher education a right or a privilege?

> *Education, beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of the conditions of men.*
>
> Horace Mann, Father of American Education, 1848

> *Education, especially public education, fulfills many of the nation's basic goals and has done so since the country's founding. According to the beliefs of Thomas Jefferson, it provides an avenue to ensure the continuation of U.S. Democracy.*
>
> Bernard Mayo, 1942

> *There is no more senseless waste than the waste of the brainpower and skill of those who are kept from college by economic circumstance.*
>
> Lyndon Johnson, *Special Message to Congress,* March 16, 1964

Democratic citizenry need to be educated in order to be active and engaged participants in a democratic process (Mayo, 1942; Gaus, 1947; Gawthrop, 1998; Kraft & Furlong, 2004). Kraft and Furlong (2004) contended that education has helped to assimilate large numbers of immigrants and is the primary mechanism for social mobility in the United States; arguing that educated people are better able to gain employment, which brings about social and economic status. A review of research revealed that poverty and education levels are correlated, and the national and state policies enacted since the 1980s have promoted economic segregation causing polarization; rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer, resulting in the loss of a middle class that was growing before WWII (Moffet, 1989; Kraft & Furlong, 2004; Harrigan & Nice, 2008). During the years of 1975 through 2002 for workers over the age of 18, the average income for high school graduates and some college increased from an income of $10,000 to approximately $30,000 (overall increase of approximately $20,000); however, the average income for education attainment of a bachelor's and advanced degree increased from an income of $10,000 and $15,000 to approximately $50,000 and $70,000 respectively, an increase of $40,000 and $55,000 respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

This article describes the mixed methods study conducted to examine the effectiveness of California's Higher Education Entitlement Grant Program enacted by passing SB 1644 and presents impact results with national implications. The 1980 national policy shift from cooperative to new federalism increased states' authority over education funds and allowed states the autonomy to enact their own system for providing education grants, with merit grants the predominant type over entitlement (Harrigan & Nice, 2008). Heller (2000) asserted that since the 1980s, the practice of awarding financial aid based on financial need was decreasing and merit aid was increasing. Heller (2003) contended, "The rise of merit aid with its resulting implications for college access is part of a broader trend nationally that has placed more emphasis of meeting the college affordability needs of students from middle-income and wealthier families, rather than promoting college access for poorer students" (p. 6). Between 1982 and 1999, the spending on need-based scholarships increased by 7.2% whereas merit based scholarship spending increased by 12.7%. A merit based student aid system is defined as a program that awards aid based on some measurement of merit (Heller, 2003).

Georgia's Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally (HOPE) scholarship program, the nation's first broad based state merit aid program, has taken root in a number of other states. Heller explained that states look across their borders when making policy decisions and borrow legislation; referring to this action as the "diffusion of innovation in policy innovation" (Quinto, 2011, p. 78). Nationally from 1993 to 2000, the share of merit based program spending has grown, 10% to 25%, respectively (Heller, 2003). The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University examined the impact of four of the largest state merit scholarship programs in the nation: Florida, Georgia, Michigan, and New Mexico. The results revealed that students generally awarded, predominantly White and upper-income students, were likely to attend college without financial support from public resources (Heller & Marin, 2002). Only two states have maintained a commitment to using aid to promote equal access to higher education, Indiana and California (Heller, 2003).

Research has shown a national trend of states adopting merit aid focused on meeting college affordability needs of students from middle-income and wealthier families, rather than promoting college access for poorer students. Financial aid and student persistence research indicates that students from lower socio-economic levels have financial access barriers to

higher education, and the type of higher education aid available to overcome those barriers impacts student persistence. Loans were found to be ineffective among lower-income students while the converse is true for grants (Mortenson, 1989; Campaigne & Hossler, 1998; Perna, 2000; Bettinger, 2004; Burdman, 2005; Usher 2006).

The *California Plan for Higher Education of 1960* (Donahoe Act) established a postsecondary education system which defined specific roles for the existing University of California (UC), California State Colleges (CSC) now known as California State University (CSU), and California Community College (CCC) systems. In 1999, *Senate Concurrent Resolution 29*, called for the creation of a new Master Plan for Education, and a new California road map was developed focused on two primary goals: "provide every family with the information, resources, services, involvement, and support it needs to give every child the best possible start in life and in school; and to provide every public school, college, and university with the resources and authority necessary to ensure that all students receive a rigorous, quality education that prepares them to become self-initiating, self-sustaining learners for the rest of their lives" (California Postsecondary Education Commission [CPEC], 2002, p. 1).

A cornerstone of California's *Master Plan for Higher Education* was a promise that the State would ensure all qualified students access to quality higher education (California Student Aid Commission [CSAC], 2004b), therefore, the State adopted the California Grant System to help meet those ends. In 2000 the California legislature made a policy change, enactment of SB 1644, revamping the Cal Grant Program by shifting the focus of these funds to entitlement, which was counter to the national trend of merit-based grant programs. Since the adoption of SB 1644, program-related annual reports have been published, but no evaluation has been conducted to determine the effectiveness of this policy change. Program evaluation called *monitoring* should be conducted for all public policies to assure quality (Wholey, 1999; Schwartz & Mayne, 2005). Both public and private sector stakeholders have a right to know if the programs they are funding are actually producing the intended effect. Impacts of investments must be known.

Theoretical Framework

Foundational to this study is evaluation research, specifically program evaluation, drawing upon social science theories and methods to identify the extent to which programs reach their intended beneficiaries; how well the programs function; and the degree to which, and at what cost, a program achieves its intended goals. Posavac and Carey (2007) stated, "Program evaluation can contribute to the well-being of society only if evaluators successfully meet their obligation to help government agencies and private organizations focus on important needs, plan effectively, monitor carefully, assess quality accurately and justly, nurture improved practices, and detect unwanted side effects" (p. 7). Program evaluations are used: (a) for human service programs as feedback loops to assess needs, (b) to measure program implementation, (c) to evaluate achievement of goals and objectives, (d) to compare levels of outcome with similar programs, (e) to provide information for program improvements (Zammuto, 1982; Wholey, 1991; Weiss, 1998), (f) to make educated choices amongst other programs (Levin & McEwan, 2001), and (g) to identify and measure the level of unmet needs within an organization or community (Gaber, 2000).

Program evaluation serves the Legislature by providing useful, objective, and timely

information about the extent to which intended program outcomes are being achieved. Evaluation information facilitates legislative and executive actions to improve state government and should be used in the consideration of maintenance, expansion or policy alternatives to current programs (Hill, 2003).

Objective-based evaluations are the most prevalent model used for program evaluation (Stufflebeam, 2001). The examination of goals and objectives is an essential aspect (Posavac & Carey, 2007). Campbell and Stanley (1963) argued that the validity of outcome evaluations seeking to test causal hypotheses are increased by observing participants before and after the program, observing natural groups of people that have not experienced the programs. One such quasi-experimental approach is a time series design.

A common general research design used to assess change in public policy is interrupted time series design (ITSD) (Posavac & Carey, 2007). In a typical application of this design, multiple observations are made of a dependent variable over time. Observations are analyzed after a new law or policy goes into effect and then compared to a previous time period. ITSD is a viable strategy for assessing the impact of policy interventions where true experimentation is impractical (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Knapp (1979) explained that when using ITSD, "a single unit is defined, measurements are made over a number of time intervals that precede and follow some controlled or natural intervention" (p. 196). Regarding quasi-experimental design, the unit observed serves as its own control (Posavac & Carey, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of California's Higher Education Entitlement Grant Program enacted by the passing of Senate Bill 1644 (SB 1644) on September 11, 2000. This study compared pre-SB 1644 (1990-2000) and SB 1644 (2001-2009) to investigate whether SB 1644 legislative objectives were being met: (1) increase higher education opportunities and (2) lower student loan debt. Additionally, demographic characteristic differences of student populations seeking higher education opportunities between pre-SB 1644 and SB 1644 (20-year period) were identified, and factors influencing California policy to embrace entitlement grants (counter to the national trend of merit based grants) were explored.

Overarching Research Questions

Four research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent has SB 1644 increased higher education opportunities for student populations seeking higher education?
2. What are the demographic characteristic differences of student populations seeking higher education opportunities between pre-SB 1644 and SB 1644?
3. To what extent has SB 1644 lowered student loan debt?
4. What factors influenced California policy to embrace entitlement grants?

Methodology

A mixed methods approach was used combining both quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative and primary methods approach was Interrupted Time-Series Design (ITSD), used to assess a policy change - enactment of SB 1644 (intervention) - and determine whether intended legislative objectives were being met. The explanatory qualitative research involved in-depth individual interviews to explore and identify the factors that influenced California policy to embrace entitlement grants. Huck (2008) would describe this study as big QUAN, little Qual, in which the quantitative component played a larger role, and the qualitative component was auxiliary.

Archival data from California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC, 2011), CPEC research reports, and in-depth individual semi-structured interviews were the instruments used. Two single units were measured over time, before and after the enactment of SB 1644, to answer the three research questions relative to: increasing higher education opportunities, the demographic characteristic differences of student populations seeking higher education opportunities between pre-SB 1644 and SB 1644, and lowering student loan debt.

Measured over 20 years (1990-2009), the first unit of measure was college-going rates of public high school graduates entering public college institutions, first time freshman. Measured over 10 years (1995-2004), average debt level of California graduates entering repayment was the second unit measured. California does not maintain an adequate debt-tracking system; therefore, debt level could not be measured over 20 years.

SPSS was used to run a series of ITSD tests (full and restricted regression models) on higher education opportunities and student debt. Additionally, three individual interviews were conducted with national experts to address the research question relative to the factors that influenced California policy to embrace entitlement grants.

Aggregated student data were used to investigate higher education opportunities. The years 1990 through 2009 were selected due to consistent information with the grant system prior to SB 1644 (1990-2000), specifically, public high school graduates available from CPEC. Freshman enrollment data obtained from CPEC included all students from public high schools: full-time, part-time, credit, and non-credit. College-going rate data consisted of percentages by ethnicity (Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Filipino, Latino, Native American, and White) and gender. All categories of public high schools were represented: comprehensive, continuation, and other.

Graduate average debt level entering repayment (1995 to 2004) was used to investigate student loan debt. CPEC June 2006 report made available by CSAC was the source of information.

Three experts were selected for individual interviews. Dr. Donald Heller was selected due to national expertise and work in higher education access and student aid. Most recent literature in the field of higher education student access has one common thread, Dr. Heller's name in the bibliography. Ms. Deborah Cochrane was selected for expertise both in national and California state educational policy on higher education student access and debt. Ms. Diana Fuentes-Michel was selected for two reasons: (a) served as a team member who helped write SB 1644 and (b) served as Director of California's Student Aid Commission since 2003.

Summary of Findings/Results

Interrupted Time-Series Design Results for Models

A series of full and restricted regression models were conducted to determine the impact of SB 1644 relative to increasing higher education opportunities and the demographic characteristic differences of student populations seeking higher education opportunities between pre-SB 1644 and SB 1644. Full model includes slopes before and after intervention, and the restrictive model forced slopes to equal each other before and after intervention. A model testing for the change between the two models (full and restricted) for each demographic category is presented in Table 1. The *F*-test for the change model is the test of equality of slope before and after intervention and is the *test of interest*. Significance is determined at 0.001 (*p*). A change model that is significant indicates slopes before and after interventions that are not equal. This analysis procedure was conducted for a 20-year period, the years 1990-2009, for the demographic categories of:

- All Cal Grant New Award Recipients A & B
- All first-time freshmen
- All first-time freshmen by gender
- All first-time freshmen by ethnicity
- All first-time freshmen by ethnicity and gender

Table 1 depicts for each category the *F*-test, degrees of freedom (*df*), probability (*p*), and R^2 values for the change model

Table 1.
Change Model Results (change between full and restricted models) for Demographic Categories

Demographic Categories	F	Df	p	R^2
All Cal Grant New Award Recipients* A & B, 1990-2009	58.811	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.125
All First-Time Freshmen, 1990-2009*	26.799	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.133
All First-Time Freshmen Male*	16.362	1, 17	**0.001**	0.113
All First-Time Freshmen Females*	36.314	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.149
All First-Time Freshman Asian*	35.936	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.179
All First-Time Freshmen Black	2.887	1, 17	0.108	0.060
All First-Time Freshman Filipino	11.114	1, 17	0.004	0.123
All First-Time Freshmen Latino*	126.463	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.234
All First-Time Freshmen Native American	1.342	1, 17	0.263	0.054
All First-Time Freshmen White	5.288	1, 17	0.034	0.222

All First-Time Freshmen Asian Males*	28.013	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.160
All First-Time Freshmen Asian Females*	39.634	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.195
All First-Time Freshmen Black Males	2.105	1, 17	0.165	0.048
All First-Time Freshmen Black Females	3.543	1, 17	0.077	0.070
All First-Time Freshmen Filipino Males	9.604	1, 17	0.007	0.118
All First-Time Freshmen Filipino Females	10.799	1, 17	0.004	0.122
All First-Time Freshmen Latino Males*	70.638	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.223
All First-Time Freshmen Latino Females*	203.073	1, 17	**<0.001**	0.241
All First-Time Freshmen Native American Males	3.168	1, 17	0.093	0.105
All First-Time Freshmen Native American Females	0.188	1, 17	0.677	0.009
All First-Time Freshmen White Males	5.548	1, 17	0.032	0.221
All First-Time Freshmen White Females	4.664	1, 17	0.045	0.207

Note. Significant Change Model = Category with * and *p value* underlined and bolded.

Table 2 presents the average indebtedness of California graduates entering repayment (1995-2004).

Table 2.
Average Indebtedness of CA Graduates Entering Repayment, 1995-2004

Years	UC's	CSU's	Private	Voc/Prop	All
1995-96	$19,803	$13,073	$25,917	$25,581	$22,090
1996-97	$19,317	$15,568	$28,287	$32,946	$23,173
1997-98	$22,699	$14,934	$30,282	$38,221	$25,667
1998-99	$24,815	$17,231	$31,967	$46,311	$28,369
1999-00	$28,514	$18,424	$34,535	$46,321	$31,145
2000-01	$30,740	$19,532	$36,700	$45,575	$33,393
2001-02	$32,859	$21,200	$38,109	$44,217	$34,732

| 2002-03 | $32,520 | $20,963 | $37,139 | $37,790 | $33,971 |
| 2003-04 | $34,284 | $21,634 | $36,670 | $38,227 | $33,886 |

Note. CPEC (2006) Average debt values represent subsidized and unsubsidized federally guaranteed loans only.

Table 3 presents the *F*-test, degrees of freedom (*df*), probability (*p*), and R^2 values for the restricted, full, and change models for average student debt level of California graduates entering repayment. The *change model* is *significant*.

Table 3.
Average Debt Level of CA Graduates Entering Repayment, 1995-2004

Model	F	Df	p	R^2
Restricted	6.624	1, 7	0.037	0.486
Full	35.335	2, 6	<0.001	0.922
Change	33.394	1, 6	**0.001**	0.436

Table 4 reports slopes before (1990-2000) and after (2001-2009) SB 1644 intervention, except for All Avg Debt Level (1995-2004). The results include slope values (pre-SB 1644 and SB 1644), all years, slope relationship (positive or negative), and slope steepness (pre-SB 1644 or SB 1644). Of the 24 demographic categories reported, 10 categories reported positive relationships and steeper slopes after SB 1644, while three categories were negative and steeper. In the Relation column, a positive relationship indicates line slope is increasing, whereas a negative relationship indicates decreasing line slope. The Steeper column indicates whether the positive or negative line slope relationship was steeper before or after SB 1644. For SB 1644 to be considered effective, the following results should be attained:

1. All Cal Grant Award; positive relationship and steeper SB 1644
2. All Avg Debt Level; negative relationship and steeper pre-SB 1644
3. Gender; positive relationship and steeper SB 1644
4. Ethnicity; positive relationship and steeper SB 1644
5. Gender and Ethnicity; positive relationship and steeper SB 1644

Table 4.
Slope Values pre-SB 1644, SB 1644, and All Years, 1990-2009

Category	Slopes			Relation	Steeper
	Pre-SB 1644	SB 1644	All Years		
All High School Grads	7073.45	6709.17	7886.20	Pos.	Pre
All Cal Grant Award* Awards	3336.84	4226.18	5036.86	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
All Avg Debt Level*	2375.23	-423.00	1712.20	**Neg.**	**Pre**
All Freshmen*	2153.03	2475.52	2974.07	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Gender					
Male*	724.30	1356.23	1319.39	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Female	1428.73	1119.28	1654.67	Pos.	Pre
Ethnicity					
Asian	638.83	365.22	617.24	Pos.	Pre
Black*	66.53	219.48	193.78	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Filipino	127.07	93.28	145.86	Pos.	Pre
Latino*	1649.25	2624.48	2045.30	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Native American	-22.11	-1.95	-18.23	Neg.	Pre
White	-303.55	-825.00	-9.83	Neg.	SB 1644
Ethnicity Male					
Asian	265.00	214.17	294.53	Pos.	Pre
Black*	20.80	99.72	84.43	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Filipino*	50.84	65.30	72.25	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Latino*	614.91	1259.02	874.63	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Native American	-18.40	-0.70	-12.49	Neg.	Pre
White	-208.85	-281.27	6.04	Neg.	SB 1644
Ethnicity Female					
Asian	373.83	151.05	322.71	Pos.	Pre
Black*	45.73	119.77	109.30	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Filipino	73.24	27.98	73.61	Pos.	Pre
Latino*	1034.35	1365.47	1170.67	**Pos.**	**SB 1644**
Native American	-3.71	-1.25	-5.75	Neg.	Pre
White	-74.70	-543.73	-15.86	Neg.	SB 1644

Note: Results considered Effective = * Category with **Relation** & **Steeper** bolded & underlined.

Factors Influencing Entitlement Grants

Two factors, values and resources, emerged from expert interviews regarding what influenced California legislators to embrace entitlement higher education grants. Of importance is a working definition of politics. Easton (1953) defined politics as the authoritative allocation of values and resources. Heller contends that change is driven by politics, and the Georgia Hope merit program set the standard influencing other states to embrace merit grant programs that funnel resources to upper middle and high socioeconomic populations. Politics come into play when legislators decide which values to authoritatively administrate through the policies they enact. The value influencing the enactment of either entitlement or merit grants is the question: Is higher education a right (entitlement) or privilege (merit)? Fuentes-Michel explained that Cal Grant B (entitlement) of SB 1644 was an outgrowth of the civil rights movement and an example of California legislators authoritatively administering the value that higher education is a right, not a privilege. Cochrane asserted that at the time SB 1644 was enacted, California's economy was flush with resources. With the Dot.com boom and growing state coffers, higher education was a great place to put those resources (Quinto, 2011).

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

SB 1644 has met its legislative objective to increase higher education opportunities, but has not kept pace with Tidal Wave II. Tidal Wave II is defined as a bulge moving through the public school system reflecting the baby boom, high birthrates, and immigration levels in California, specifically, growing number of high school graduates (Kissler & Switkes, 2006).

Figure 1 compares positive linear slope relationships of total public high school graduates. Slope equations depict that Cal Grant Awards A & B are increasing at a rate (4,226.2) lower than total public graduates during Tidal Wave II (6,709.2), and the *R2* value depicts the strength of the linear relationship (1.0 = perfect linear relationship).
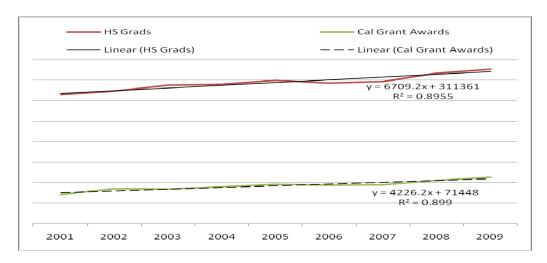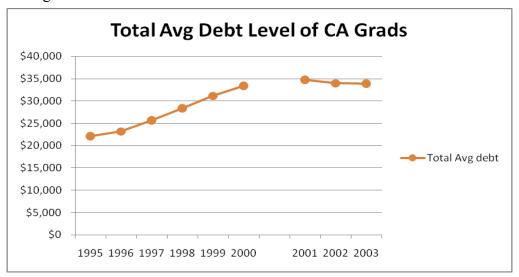

Figure 1. High School Graduates and All Cal Grant Awards A & B, Trend Line Comparisons, SB 1644 (2001-2009)

With the enactment of SB 1644, a notable distribution change of Cal Grants A & B occurred. SB 1644 resulted in more awards (3:1) going to students with grade point averages between 2.0 and 2.99 than 3.0 and 4.0 (628,672 awards, 204,537 awards, respectively), effectively increasing higher education opportunities and benefiting lower socioeconomic higher education seeking student populations. Hundreds of thousands of students seeking higher education opportunities would not have been afforded these opportunities if legislators had not enacted SB 1644.

Initial results show promise in meeting the second intended objective of lowering student loan debt and revealed that SB 1644 has had a dramatic impact on lowering federal student loan debt. Depicted in Figure 2, the slope for average student debt level of California graduates entering repayment decreased significantly after SB 1644, moving from a positive 2,153.03 to a negative 423.00.

Figure 2. Total Average Student Debt Level of California Graduates Entering Repayment, 1995-2000 vs. 2001-2003/04

Discussion and Significance

During this challenging economic time, life-altering decisions are being made about the investment in future generations. The California legislature made a policy change with the enactment of SB 1644. Critical issue decisions such as this policy change can have profound impact not only on California, but nationally as well, with equity at its core. Lawmakers and educators have a responsibility to fully understand the benefits, liabilities and implications of policy decisions. This research equips leaders with vital information to drive responsible decisions. As states look across state lines to their neighbors regarding policy information, publishing results of California's enactment of SB 1644 legislation provides useful research for diffusion of innovation in public innovation.

The research is clear, entitlement grant programs are the most successful to promote higher education opportunities for student populations who have been historically under represented. From the perspective of state policy decision making, if a state's objective is to increase overall higher education attainment for lower socioeconomic populations, then higher

education grant programs and/or needs based grants provide the best vehicle to meet those ends.

Since change is driven through politics, and politics is the authoritative administration of values and resources, it is vital for legislators, constituents, and society to understand the value perpetuated by the national embracement of merit higher education grants; the value of higher education as a privilege. It is clear that the California legislative decision to enact SB 1644 was to promote the value of higher education as a right, not a privilege. As revealed through research, low education attainment correlates with poverty, higher education promotes democracy, and current merit based national and state policies perpetuate a polarizing society. Our legislators at both the state and national level must understand the impact of their decisions and take action to ensure that lower economic populations have higher education opportunities to overcome potential negative societal and economic consequences; arguably a national general welfare issue. Leslie and Brinkman (1988) and Leslie and Slaughter (1992) purported that for every $1 million dollars budgeted for public higher education, on average $1.5 to $1.8 million dollars in local business volume and 53 to 59 additional jobs were created. Higher education must not be viewed as an expense, but an invaluable investment. Orfield (2002) argued that genuine access to higher education for poor and minority students is as basic to civil rights today as access to high school was a half century ago. A prosperous future for this nation is dependent on an educated citizenry. National and state policy decisions that do not provide higher education opportunities for its citizenry would be injudicious; perpetuating the current national trend of a declining middle class with the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

California is atypical for promoting the value of higher education as a right. As such, it is essential to evidence through program evaluation that California's Master Plan and other higher education policies are meeting their intended outcomes or fall prey to public scrutiny and face possible elimination. Periodic program monitoring is critical to ensure programs are fulfilling societal need. Lawmakers should require that program evaluation be written into legislative policies as well as use current research and evaluation results to fully comprehend the implications of policy decisions. Higher education has become a rights issue due to post 1980 national and state polices enacted by the diffusion of innovation in policy innovation. The basis of the constitutional issue before us, general welfare of its citizenry, and the political (value) question becomes, *Is higher education a privilege or a right*?

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School Board Governance and Student Achievement: School Board Members' Perceptions of Their Behaviors and Beliefs

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The intent of this study is to determine whether there was a difference between school board members' perceptions of their own behaviors and beliefs related to student achievement in California's high-performing poverty districts as opposed to such perceptions in low-performing poverty districts. Due to the findings of this study, the author calls on policymakers to place more attention and provide greater support to school boards for the good of public education.

School education in the 21st century requires strong and good decision-making in the country. Streshly and Frase (1993) asserted a while ago that "the dramatic changes needed to face today's challenges lie in the way we run our schools: basic governance" (p.141). Shifting demographics, increased accountability under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and inadequate resources pose unprecedented challenges to current school board members as they attempt to generate the conditions that create and sustain high levels of student achievement (Peterson & Fusarelli, 2001).

Until recently, education reform movements paid little attention to school district governance. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, (2004) noted that much of the effective schools research ignored the role of district level leadership, including school board governance. Moreover, research regarding the link between school board governance and student achievement has been described as uncharted territory (Iowa Association of School Boards [IASB], 2000).

Emerging evidence demonstrates that school boards may have an influence on student achievement. Leithwood, et al. (2004) found evidence that effective district-wide leadership has the greatest impact on those school systems in which it is most needed. As former U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige stated, school boards are close enough to communities and schools to see what needs to be done and powerful enough to do it (McAdams, 2006).

Yet, research substantiating the link between school board governance and students' academic achievement is extremely limited (Land, 2002). Additionally, few studies regarding school board governance that include quantifiable and reliable measures of student achievement exist (Delagardelle, 2008).

Review of the Literature

Understanding the context of school board governance in today's society requires knowledge of the historical role of school boards in the United States. In the 19th century, board members in the country were the most numerous class of public officials in the Western hemisphere (Blodgett, 1897). In fact, school board members actually functioned in a manner similar to current superintendent and central office administration (Kirst, 2008). They had extensive powers and responsibilities, including making curricular decisions, employing staff, selecting textbooks, and establishing administrative structures to operate the schools (Mountford, 2008).

The 20th century brought a call to take "the schools out of politics" (Hightower, Knapp, Marsh, & McLaughlin, 2002, p.10), as well as the adoption of the then popular "scientific approach" to management (Taylor, 1911). As a result, professional school administration increased and the number of decisions made by school boards decreased (Mountford, 2008). For most of the 20th century, school boards took a low-key, hands-off approach to student learning, reasoning that instructional decisions should be made by a professional (Lashway, 2002). With regard to student achievement, former Nevada Association of School Boards President, Anne Loring, believes that control was taken away from school boards because they were reluctant to compare districts results as they failed to accept responsibility for poor performance and focus on the clear mission: student achievement (as cited in Dexter & Ruff, 2007).

Amidst continuing societal changes in the latter half of the 20th century, school boards juggled diverse and changing conditions surrounding public school districts. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 commonly referred to as NCLB - enacted in 2001 - forced school boards to examine just how a school district can create and sustain high levels of achievement for all students. Indeed, under NCLB's accountability provisions, school boards found themselves in the position of approving outside agencies to provide supplemental services, replacing principals, reassigning an entire school faculty, and initiating other dramatic changes to address students' needs to achieve adequate yearly progress.

But, as previously suggested, demographics have dramatically changed throughout the second half of the 20th century. The Institute for Educational Leadership in 1992 recognized the increased non-instructional needs of a growing percentage of the school-age population (Danzberger, 1994). As asserted by Petersen and Fusarelli (2001), one in four children now live in poverty, and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Additionally, the U.S. Latino population has increased at a rate five times that of non-Latino whites (Petersen & Fusarelli, 2001). Adopting appropriate curriculum, instituting bilingual instruction, and increasing non-instructional resources exemplify the decisions school boards face as they seek to address linguistic and cultural differences (Land 2002). School accountability has also increased. The public wants more voice (Resnick, 1999), as parents, community members, special interest groups, and advocacy organizations demand equal access to high quality instruction and rigorous curriculum for all students. These various constituent groups may cause fragmentation in school district decision-making and board agendas (Kirst, 2008). Special interest groups such as the Gates Foundation and the Council for Exceptional Children inform and engage the public, thus adding external influences exerted on school board deliberations (Kirst, 2008). Moreover, school boards find themselves squeezed between growing federal

mandates, congressional legislation, special interest groups, community and local collective bargaining contracts (Kirst, 2008). Currently, school board members may have less authority to make decisions yet held increasingly accountable for student performance (Mountford, 2008).

In recent years, school boards grappled with balancing budgets in the midst of the worst economic recession since the Great Depression (Brookings Institution, 2009). Superintendents presented dire financial information accompanied by unprecedented reductions in an effort to balance district budgets. On top of these challenges, ongoing threats to funding also come in the form of charter schools, vouchers, tuition tax credits, contracting out to educational management organizations, and a reinvigorated home school movement (Petersen & Fusarelli, 2001).

Moody's Investors Service (2013) reported that the rise in charter school enrollments over the past decade is likely to create negative credit pressure on school districts in economically weak urban areas. School board members may continue to find themselves slashing budgets, which often results in demoralized employees, skeletal instructional programs, and community dissatisfaction.

Clearly, school boards and superintendents lead in intensely changing contexts (Bjork, 2008; Kirst, 2008). To remain a viable governing authority, school boards may need to both, reexamine their role within the current educational context, and refashion themselves accordingly (Kirst, 1994). But how should all of this happen?

With school board literature dominated by personal narratives, opinion-based articles, and guidebooks (Land, 2002; Conley, 2003), and few studies empirically examining the subject (Delagardelle, 2008) research regarding district-level leadership may serve as a guidepost to school boards.

In the past, research on district-level leadership has been sparse (Murphy & Hallinger, 1988), and few school effectiveness researchers devoted themselves to uncovering district practices and characteristics associated with student achievement (Cuban, 1984; Rowan, 1983, Cawelti & Protheroe, 2001). However, more current research acknowledged the role of the school district in providing leadership and directing large-scale change and reform (Leitherwood, et al., 2004). With a clear division of roles and responsibilities school boards can provide accountability and monitor performance (Hess, 2008), thus creating the conditions for improving student achievement. A large-scale quantitative study found that higher outcomes in middle grades schools were associated with support from district-level leadership (Kirst, Haertel, Levin, Padia, & Balfanz, 2010). Kirst et al. (2010) found that superintendents associated an effective school board with higher outcomes of student learning. Togneri's and Anderson's (2003) examination of five California school districts, found that "it was the courage of the school board that jump-started the reform efforts" (p.7). These studies offer knowledge worthy of school board members' attention as they work toward the goal of effective governance. Two seminal studies on governance and student achievement, one conducted by Goodman, Fulbright and Zimmerman (1997) and another commonly referred to as *The Lighthouse Inquiry,* conducted by the Iowa Association of School Boards (Delagardelle, 2008; IASB, 2000)*,* emerged with comprehensive documentation.

Goodman, et al. (1997) conducted one of the first in-depth examinations of school board governance and student achievement. The researchers uncovered that districts with high quality governance tended to have greater student achievement as measured by dropout,

college going, and aptitude test rates. While this study provided a foundation for understanding effective governance and student achievement, additional research remains to be done.

In a mixed-methods study conducted in three phases over ten years, the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB, 2000; Rice, Delagardelle, Buckton, Johns, Lueders, &Vens, 2001) implemented perhaps the most comprehensive examination of district governance roles and responsibilities necessary to positively impact student learning. Based on school renewal research (Rosenholtz, 1989), and reflecting the work of Goodman, et al. (1997) and the National School Board Association's (NSBA) *Key Works* (Gemberling, Smith &Villani, 2000), the Lighthouse Inquiry identified seven *Key Areas of Board Performance.* The seven Key Areas provide a framework for examining the effectiveness of school boards and contribute to the discussion of school board governance and student achievement. These areas were used in the study here reported and discussed later.

Conceptual Framework

The Lighthouse Inquiry offered emerging evidence that school board members' behaviors and beliefs have a positive impact on a school district's efforts to improve student achievement (Delagardelle, 2008). Thus, the seven Key Areas of Board Performance, a product of the Lighthouse Inquiry, provide a conceptual framework for examining if differences exist in school board members' perceptions of their behaviors and beliefs related to student achievement in California's high-performing poverty districts compared to low-performing poverty districts.

Two of the Key Areas of Board Performance assess the school board's interaction with the public, specifically in creating awareness and connecting with the community to build the public will toward improved student achievement. In addition to the board's effectiveness in increasing public awareness and will to improve, another one scrutinizes board member commitment to improved student achievement. Several Key Areas encompass the school board's relationship with staff as the school board supports and connects with district-wide leadership, provides ongoing staff development, and applies pressure for accountability. A final Key Area examines school deliberative policy development related to the improvement of teaching and learning. Each of these seven Key Areas of Board Performance were used in the quantitative phase of the study here reported and formed the foundation for the qualitative phase.

For the purpose of this study, *poverty districts* were defined as those districts with twenty five percent or more students who qualify for a free or reduced meal as defined by the National School Lunch Program criteria. The term *high-performing poverty school district* was defined as a school district meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) overall and for the significant subgroups of African-American, Latino, English Learners, socio-economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. The term *low-performing poverty school district* was defined as a school district designated as Program Improvement by the federal government and assigned a District Assistance Intervention Team by the California Department of Education.

Research Methodology

Design

This study utilized a mixed-methods procedure to collect, analyze, and link both quantitative and qualitative data in two phases (Creswell, 2009). Exporting a data file from the California Department of Education (2011) to statistical software generated a report identifying school districts meeting this study's criteria for high-performing and low-performing poverty districts. Twenty-two school districts met the study's definition of a low-performing school district with a total of one hundred five school board members contacted to participate in the study. Seventeen school districts met the study's definition of a high-performing school district with a total of eighty-two school board members contacted to participate in the study.

Quantitative Phase

This phase compared school board members' perceptions of their behaviors and beliefs related to the Key Areas of Board Performance through a closed, four-point scale survey designed to collect descriptive, self-reporting data. School board members from the identified districts were asked to respond electronically. The survey also contained three open questions. The survey research method resulted in a numeric description of school board members' behaviors and beliefs. Descriptive statistics were used to quantitatively analyze survey results. Some qualitative data were collected through the open questions as well.

The researcher sent the survey through three separate e-mails via the California School Boards Association (CSBA). Moreover, due to the researcher's position as a superintendent, the researcher personally contacted each of the superintendents and requested that they encourage their respective school board members to respond to the survey.

Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase of this study added an in-depth look into the beliefs of school board members. Interview questions were developed based on research findings addressed in the literature review, the quantitative phase of the study, and a panel of scholars, including board members and superintendents. Using a convenient sampling technique, one board member from a high-performing school district and one board member from a low-performing school district were selected for one-on-one telephone interviews.

Research Question

What differences in school board members' perceptions exist of their behaviors and beliefs related to student achievement in California's high-performing poverty districts compared to student achievement in low-performing poverty districts?

Study Limitations

Obtaining an adequate survey response from school board members in identified districts presented a limitation for this study, particularly among the identified low-achieving poverty

districts. Moreover, the fact that the research was also a school superintendent, may have played a role in both obtaining a larger response and bias control in the content of such responses.

Data Analysis

Survey participants self-reported their responses on a four point scale with 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, and 1 = Strongly Disagree. Responses to each question from participants were calculated to yield a total score for the seven Key Areas of Board Performance. The mean and the standard deviation were used to measure central tendencies of the seven Key Areas of Board Performance. The researcher used descriptive statistics to depict numerical and graphical summaries designed to provide a picture of the data collected for specific survey questions and each Key Area of Board Performance.   No statistical tests of significance were used for this study.

The qualitative phase of the research examined the thoughts and beliefs of one school board member selected from the high-performing school districts identified for this study and one school board member selected from the low-performing school districts identified for this study. The researcher categorized the tape-recorded interview responses according to each of the Key Areas of Performance, analyzing the data for evidence that corroborated or refuted findings from the quantitative phase of the study. Additionally, the researcher looked for emerging topics or themes beyond the parameters of the survey.

Figure 1 displays the aggregated mean average responses of school board members regarding their behaviors and beliefs related to each Key Area.
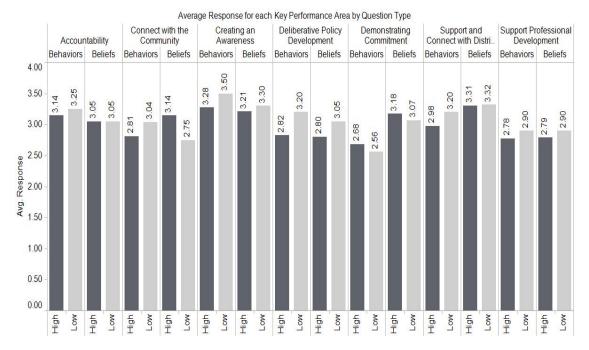

Figure 1. Seven Key Areas of Board Performance

As depicted in Figure 1, aggregated results for each Key Area demonstrated more similarities than differences. The greatest differences occurred in the Deliberative Policy Development and Connecting with the Community areas.

The researcher also calculated the numeric results and created a graphic representation for each question, similar to the aggregated results for each Key Area depicted in Figure 1. Examining the results for *each* survey question within the seven Key Areas of Board Performance yielded additional data that demonstrated differences between the two groups of board members. Findings from the examination of each survey question within the seven Key Areas of Board Performance are summarized below.

Creating Awareness

Similar responses among school board members for this Key Area were found. Board members from low- performing school districts indicated a slightly higher level of response to the belief that school board members must possess a fundamental commitment to close the achievement gap. Board members in low-performing districts ranked possession of a vision of what they want to accomplish based on their values and beliefs higher than board members in high-achieving districts. The qualitative phase of this study corroborated this finding. Confirming this finding, a board member from the latter group, noted that when the district was designated a low-performing district, prior to exiting Program Improvement status, the board had to "set things in motion" and "figure out where we needed to go, set the tone, and develop the vision."

Applying Pressure for Accountability

Both high-and low-performing districts had the most agreement that board members are responsible for ensuring that all students learn to high levels. On spending time related to accountability, both high- and low-performing districts reported spending the least amount observing instruction in the classroom. However, those from low achieving districts appear to spend more time monitoring student learning progress, and adopting long-range and annual goals, but slightly less time creating plans for student learning. The board member from the low-performing district corroborated this finding, saying that keeping teachers on target with pacing guidelines and ensuring the coverage of essential curriculum was a focus for the school board.

Demonstrating Commitment

Members from high-performing school districts agreed most strongly with the statement that effective board members are a resource to the organization and agreed the least with the statement that a board member's commitment is more important than board training. However, board members from low-performing districts agreed that commitment is more important than training, while they agreed least with the statement that school boards function efficiently if members are dedicated to practices of equality and democracy.

Both high-and low-performing districts report spending the least amount of time attending conferences and implementing special board study sessions, though it appears that

members from high performing school districts spend more time in these activities than those from low performing districts.

Supporting Professional Development

Members from the high-performing districts appear to have much less agreement with the statement about reducing or eliminating professional development than those from low-performing school districts. For the questions about how they spend their time, board members from low- performing school districts appear to spend much more time establishing criteria to guide the staff in choosing initiatives for professional development that improves student achievement, than the board members from high- performing districts.

Supporting and Connecting with District-wide Leadership

Board members in both types of districts stated that they spend time developing a relationship with the superintendent, and statements on the survey's open-ended section supported the closed section responses about this point. In fact, this topic generated the most comments in the survey's open-ended section and extensive commentary through the interviews. Study participants repeatedly stressed the importance of the board-superintendent relationship.

Deliberative Policy Development

Both groups agreed most with the statement "a clear division should exist between the board and the superintendent", and least with the statement "board policy regarding the employment and termination of personnel has the highest impact on student achievement." However, there seems to be a large discrepancy in whether they see educational reform as a district's main mission. Members from high-performing districts demonstrated much lower agreement with this statement than those from low-performing school districts. In terms of how they spend their time on activities related to policy development, board members from low-performing districts appear to spend more time reviewing and updating policy related to student achievement and fiscal policy related to resources for student achievement.

Connecting with the Community

High-performing school districts' board members reported higher levels of agreement with all of the belief statements related to connecting with the community. They had the highest level of agreement for the statements that the board should connect with and represent underserved populations and the board's linkage with other agencies enhanced their ability to raise student achievement. However, those from the low-performing school districts appear to spend much more time directly informing the community regarding student achievement.

Discussion

The overall response to the seven Key Areas demonstrated more similarities than differences in the two groups of board members. However, school board members demonstrated notable

differences in their responses to three key areas: Demonstrating Commitment, Deliberative Policy Development and Connecting with the Community.

In the Key Area of Demonstrating Commitment, board members in low-performing school districts indicated that commitment is more important than training, while more board members in high-performing districts registered greater disagreement with this statement. However, board members from both types of districts stated that they spent minimal time at state or national conferences. Lack of training and conference attendance, as Danzberger & Usdan, 1992 and Maeroff, 2010 have shown, may hamper a school board's ability to work as an effective governance team focused on student achievement, particularly in a low-performing school district where school board governance must contribute to effective leadership efforts toward raising student academic performance.

Furthermore, board members in high-performing districts indicated their belief that school boards function efficiently if dedicated to equality and democracy in their practices, while low-performing districts disagreed with this statement. These data contribute to the discussion surrounding the type of training that is most valuable to school board members. Critics of formal training or development programs state that they are too concerned with dispensing information rather than building skills, and too focused on individuals rather than the board and superintendent as a team. Such issues resonate with findings from researchers such as Carol, Cunningham, Danzberger, Kirst, McCloud & Usdan (1986); Goodman & Zimmerman (2000) and Schmidt (1992). In other words, practices of equality and democracy --- which include the ability to work together --- contribute to effective governance.

While the key area "Demonstrating Commitment" revealed that working as a team may be attributed to effective school board governance, the area "Deliberative Policy Development" yielded another difference between the two groups of school board members participating in the study. Responses to the belief that educational reform is a school district's main mission produced the second greatest difference on the entire survey. School board members in low-performing districts agreed, in the 1 to 4 scale, with an average score of 3.20, while school board members in high-performing districts disagreed with an average score of 2.32. The low-performing districts identified for this study exist under the pervasive rule of state and federal accountability and may be more keenly aware and focused on the impetus for reform under NCLB of 2001.

Similarly, low-performing districts indicated that they spent some time reviewing and updating policies related to student achievement, while high-performing districts spent only minimal time in that effort. Again, the self-reported behaviors of school board members in low-performing school districts may demonstrate the mandates of being a Program Improvement district.

Mandated accountability for "Program Improvement" may have influenced board member responses from low performing districts in an additional Key Area, Connecting with the Community, particularly when providing information about student achievement to the community. The behavior of *directly informing the community regarding student achievement* indicated that school board members in high-performing districts spend "minimal time" on this behavior, while board members in low-performing districts spend appreciably more time informing the public. As previously stated, low-performing districts designated as program improvement function under the mandates of NCLB, including distinct requirements for disseminating student achievement results.

Data from the key Area "Connecting with the Community" demonstrated several other differences between school board members in high- and low-performing school districts. School board members in high-performing districts posted an average response of 3.47 with the belief that the board should connect with and represent underserved populations, while board members in low-performing districts responded at 2.80. The population in our public schools has changed, and effective school boards, school boards that foster increased student achievement, understand that they need an awareness of the changing demographics in today's schools.

Another difference emerged in the key Area "Connecting with the Community" as school board members in high-performing districts agreed at an average rate of 3.37 with the belief that the board's linkage with other government agencies or community groups enhances the school district's ability to raise student achievement, while board members in low-performing districts responded at an average of 2.80. The behaviors reported by school board members in high-performing districts mirrored their beliefs in the Key Area of Connecting with the Community. They ranked allocating resources for the purpose of connecting with parents and the community as spending "some time," while low-performing groups spent "minimal time" on this. Collaboration yields resources to assist students and support staff in the quest for higher student achievement. Resnick (1999) noted that school boards and superintendents are ideally situated to coordinate policies and activities with other public agencies and private institutions responsible for services related to children.

Recommendations and Implications for Practice

A strong need for more research about school board preparation and training emerged from this study, particularly on the type most beneficial for school boards and their work to raise student achievement. This study indicates that governance training, as opposed to sessions dedicated to specific information or topics might have the greatest impact.

Additionally, participants indicated that their school board discusses a variety of topics related to student achievement. But to gain thicker data regarding what school boards discuss and how much time they spend discussing student achievement, a quantitative analysis of school board documents may help illuminate the issue. Additionally, detailed observation of school board behaviors, rather than reliance on self-reporting, may also offer robust data regarding effective governance as it relates to student achievement.

Finally, school board members from high-performing districts in this study indicated a greater amount of time spent with government and community agencies for the purpose of enhancing the district's ability to raise student achievement. Qualitative research regarding how school boards accomplish this task could prove useful to schools and district staff as they identify and analyze potential support for initiatives that raise student achievement. Additionally, further study may discern which type of agencies, groups, or businesses provide the most monetary and other types of support for public schools.

Summary

This study found that, indeed, there is a difference between school board members' perceptions of their behaviors and beliefs related to student achievement. Such fact affirms an old truism: school district governance is not easy. In fact, it's often controversial, confusing,

and confounding, as school board members attempt to represent the community in a quest for high student achievement that will prepare our nation's children in the 21ˢᵗ century. At their best, school board members embody the thoughtful, purposeful focus of elected officials who esteem the value of public education in a democracy, and honor the trust of placing our children's education in their hands.

While some would eschew the work of school boards, calling them an archaic system that no longer serves a purpose in our educational institutions, others call upon the potential for school boards to lead the nation toward improved schools, higher achievement, and a better citizenry. As education reform movements seek the elements that produce great schools and high-achieving students, let us hope that school boards begin to attract the attention and support necessary to propel their work for the good of public education. Training school boards to function as a team focused on student achievement with an ability to leverage community resources for the benefit of all students will support and sustain effective school board governance.

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Connecting Secondary and Postsecondary Student Social Media Skills: Recommendations for Administrators

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Social media has become common ground for many high school and college students, and its use has the potential to impact learning. With fast response times and immediate availability of ideas and data, students change their perceptions about how education should be experienced. This study explored how high school and college students view the value of social media as a learning tool, and findings showed significantly different perceptions about how social media aids learning. These differences provide a foundation for discussion among educational leaders about the transition of students from high school to college and about how social media can be used effectively for instruction.

Social media have become common place both within the worlds of business and private life. These digital locations have evolved from niche communication tools, to common elements that promote public and private agendas, commerce, education, and transcend multiple social classes. Social media are used for multiple reasons, including romance, entertainment, education, professional networking, product sales, and an online etiquette has even emerged regarding how to appropriately interact online (Kryder, 2013). The core of social media "is the ability to share content with others" (Osterrieder, 2013, p. 26), and the skills to effectively moderate social media have begun to be well documented. These skills include a technical ability to navigate the internet, self-teach skills about uploading media, discern and learn about the nuances of particular software programs, and the abilities to write, read, and edit language at a level and in a manner consistent with the media, such as what is frequently used on Twitter (Guenard, Katz, Bruno, & Lipa, 2013; Kryder, 2013; Osterrieder, 2013).

Social media has the ability to engulf an individual's interests. Much has been made about the role of social media in peer relationships, and whether or not extreme use of social media is good for a young person's education. In particular, there have been concerns expressed that social media or technology skills do not translate well to other academic areas or interests, or even among grade levels (Smith, 2008). This has been a common refrain in much of the public education sector, where the connection between secondary and postsecondary education has been described as inconsistent, broken, and in need of better and stronger articulation (Capps & Miller, 2006).

As Capps and Miller noted, there are multiple challenges for a student's progression from secondary school to higher education. As Common Core standards emerge and are set in place, the hope is that students are better prepared for college, and although the standards do offer levels of particular content knowledge, they do not reflect study skills, maturity, or developmental aspects of academic performance that are key indicators of collegiate success. Additionally, higher education has generally not performed well, and the majority of multi-ethnic students who arrive on campus do not graduate (Bowers, 1992), and nationally, only about 60% of those who begin higher education graduate within six years (Schneider, 2008).

The poor performance of secondary students moving into postsecondary education has prompted a growth in state-level policy mandates that incentivize higher education institutions to pay more attention to student graduation rates (Thaddieus & Thomas, 2011). One activity many institutions have embraced is the inclusion of a web- or technology-strategy that includes social media as a primary component (Dean, 2013). By embracing social media as a teaching tool, institutions strategize that they can improve student learning, integration, involvement, and commitment to the college experience. To do so, however, institutions must accurately identify how students are using social media, the expectations of technology, and how these might differ from student use and expectation at the secondary (high) school level. The current study was designed to identify how social media are being used by secondary students and postsecondary students, and to identify possible consistencies or gaps that might require the attention of both public school and collegiate administrators.

Background of the Study

The generation now widely referred to as "millennials" has been characterized as having relatively short attention spans, the result of which some have traced to the fast-paced world of technology (Howe & Strauss, 2007). And with 83% of the 18-29 population using social networking media (Walaski, 2013), the skills, experiences, and exposure of these individuals on campus must be addressed.

The influence of social media on higher education has manifested itself in several ways. Many institutions already take advantage of the power of social media to disseminate information in areas such as alumni relations, athletics, library information retrieval, special events, conferences, marketing, recruiting students, and news releases. Students use social media outside the classroom to socialize and network. Inside the classrooms, social media has been integrated to support both formal and informal learning, as faculty members tweet about research findings or class service-learning projects, reading updates are posted, changes to class assignments or meeting times and locations are changes that are shared, etc. Some faculty members even do quick surveys to test student learning and to try and identify if students are having problems with homework using Facebook. Other faculty members have

had students build wikis or blog pages to showcase their writing or engage in creative projects such as a potential professional portfolio outside of the learning management system (LMS). Examples of LMS include Canvas, Blackboard, Desire2Learn, and Moodle. This is mostly due to the fact that the traditional LMS systems that are connected with a particular course expire after a semester. In addition, on some campuses, faculty development services have begun building online learning communities for faculty with similar interest to share and contribute recommendations (Lu, Todd, & Miller, 2011).

Beyond the purely social purposes of social media, many students have re-purposed these social sites for academic activities (Lampe, Wohn, Vitak, Ellison, & Wash, 2011; Tess, 2013). This brings positive benefits to connect with other students with course-related work (Dahlstrom, de Boor, Grunwald, & Vockley, 2011). In a national study by EDUCAUSE, more than half of U.S. college students indicated using social media for purposes such as communicating with fellow students about course work (Salaway, Caruso, & Nelson, 2008). The study-related knowledge exchange on social networking sites is also an international phenomenon. Wodzicki, Schwämmlein and Moskaliuk (2012) examined study-related knowledge exchange via StudiVZ, the German equivalent of Facebook, among undergraduate students. They reported about one fifth of participants exchanged study-related knowledge through StudiVZ. Most students were first year students seeking social interaction and integration as they acclimated to their new environment.

Despite the increasing re-purpose of social media for academic use, the majority of higher education institutions still rely on traditional LMS. These LMS do not capitalize on the communication or pedagogical opportunities of social media. For example, students can create, manage and update a cloud based learning space that facilitates their own individual learning activities, reflections, and building connections to peers, experts in the fields and social networks across time and space nationally and internationally (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2011; McGloughlin & Lee, 2010; Valjataga, Pata, & Tammets, 2011). Traditional LMS, although increasingly sophisticated, tend to be confined to a few users who are registered in a formal class, asking students to log into a restricted space with restricted information.

According to Hrastinski (2012), students regard social media as one of three key means of the educational experience, along with face-to-face meetings and the use of learning management systems, and are mainly used for brief questions and answers and to coordinate group work. He argued that teaching strategy plays a key role in supporting students in moving from using social media to support coordination and information sharing to also using such media for collaborative learning.

Technology has been increasingly integrated throughout both the K-12 and higher education experience and curriculum. Although research has emphasized the importance of integrating technology into student learning, the use of technology can only be effective if teachers themselves possess the expertise to use technology in a meaningful way in the classroom. This teacher competence related to technology has been a key element in teacher-education standards as well as a primary focus of faculty development on college campuses. This teacher and faculty competence has been a historical challenge for education leaders, dating to the introduction of audiovisual supplements to instruction and includes movements as varied as the use of instructional television, computers in the classroom, the Internet (Reiser, 2001). Part of the challenge for administrators is the evolving understanding of how technology accentuates student learning. Rapid changes and advancement in technology can hamper research and a comprehension of what technologies can do for student learning.

Baylor and Richie (2002) conducted a comprehensive study of 94 secondary school classrooms from four states in different geographic regions of the country. The study provided an investigation into the impact of seven factors related to school technology (planning, leadership, curriculum alignment, professional development, technology use, teacher openness to change, and teacher non-school computer use) on five dependent measures in the areas of teacher skill (technology competency and technology integration), teacher morale, and perceived student learning (impact on student content acquisition and higher order thinking skills acquisition). The author found technology impact on content acquisition was predicted by the strength of leadership, and teacher openness to change. The key conclusion to the study was that school administrators have a significant role in student learning.

A significant problem associated with technology's integration in education is the uneven application of both technology as a learning aid and technology as a resource. Although many institutions and individuals have ready access to multiple technologies, there are an equal number of individuals with limited to poor or no access to technology. In 1995, the U.S. National Telecommunications Infrastructure Administration (NTIA) issued the first of four reports under the title "Falling Through the Net." These manuscripts reported on the disparity of what they termed the 'digital divide' in America, a concept that refers to the gap between people who have the resources to access technology and those for whom technology is either non-existent or a rare to seldom used resource. Variables highlighted in the report include: socioeconomic status (rich/poor), racial identifiers (white/minority), geographic lifestyle (urban/rural), and education (highly/none). Recent studies have revealed the digital divide as a symptom of a larger and more complex problem, poverty and inequality across the American citizenry. The divide persists due to market forces, unequal investment in infrastructure, discrimination, insufficient policy efforts, and culture and content (Warschauer, 2003; Agarwal, Animesh, & Prasad, 2009). These elements are particularly important to consider as both K-12 schools and college and universities push to expand technology (such as online learning), despite recognition that in many ways technologically enhanced learning can exclude a large portion of the population (Bok, 2009).

So although technology is widely available to many in America, and social media has become increasingly embedded in individual practices and preferences, there is still little understanding of how technology improves student learning. This is as true in the secondary school as it is on the college campus, and there is a growing need to create baseline data about how at least students see technology applications, like social media, as impacting their learning. This study is a direct response to that need for baseline or a foundational understanding of how students believe social media impacts their learning, and from this understanding, key recommendations can be developed for administrators at both levels of institutions to better connect technology with student learning.

Research Methods

A literature-based survey instrument was constructed by the research-team to describe how social media are used, particularly in an academic environment. Conceptually, the instrument was driven by Smith's (2008) survey of collegiate student aptitude and attitude toward social technology. The instrument included two sections, the first of which asked respondents four

questions about their social media use, and the second section included 25 questions about how social media is used and how it assists them.

The instrument was field tested with senior college students and modified accordingly, and then pilot tested with 30 secondary school students in a mid-western suburban 7-12 school. A Cronbach alpha for the pilot test indicated the instrument was reliable, with an alpha level of .7009.

Data were collected in a mid-western city of approximately 100,000, with surveys distributed to a convenience sample of junior and senior level students in a 9-12 high school. Students were those enrolled in upper level English classes, with a possible 124 students. Surveys were also distributed to seven first-year seminar classes at a land grant university, resulting in a possible convenience sample size of 133. All surveys were administered by classroom teachers, and in each setting, a set of pre-worded directions were read to the classes prior to their completing the surveys.

Findings

A total of 84 (68%) high school students and 113 (85%) college students completed the survey, with the actual survey respondents differing from the possible sample due to a number of variables, including students absent from class for illness, school activities, etc. As shown in Table 1, nearly all of the high school students (n=80; 95%) and college students (n=112; 99%) reported using *Facebook*, and approximately three-fourths of them also used *Flickr* as the second most popular social media (n=61; 73% and n=89; 79%, respectively). College students were more likely to use *Linkedin* (n=86; 76%) than high school students (n=15; 18%) and *Virb* (n=68; 60% as compared to n=26; 31% of high school students). Of the ten social media web sites presented to respondents, only *MySpace* was used by a substantially larger percentage of high school students (n=44; 52%) as compared to college students (n=24; 21%).

A very high percentage of both sets of respondents reported using social media at least once per day including 81% of secondary school students (n=68) and 93% of college students (n=104). As might be expected, college students used social media to keep in touch with their family (37%) more than secondary students (7%), and both groups most commonly reported use of social media was to communicate with their friends (n=75; 89% of secondary students and n=57; 50% of college students).

Survey participants were also asked to indicate their perceived value of using social media, and as shown in Table 1, secondary students most popular perceived value was cultural or idea diversity (n=52; 63%) and for college students the most popular was exposure to new ideas (n=64; 57%). Aside from cultural/idea diversity, the largest differences of perceived value were for technical skill refinement (such as how to upload media) and language use or articulation, and for both uses, college students (29% and 31% as compared to 13% and 14%) were more likely to identify these as uses.

Table 1.
Self-Report of Social Media Use

Characteristic	Secondary Students n=84	Postsecondary Students n=113
Social Media Site Use		
Biznik	4 (5%)	17 (15%)
Blogger	23 (27)	36 (32)
Dig	1 (1)	1 (1)
Facebook	80 (95)	112 (99)
Flickr	61 (73)	89 (79)
Linkedin	15 (18)	86 (76)
MySpace	44 (52)	24 (21)
Pintrest	52 (62)	71 (63)
Twitter	58 (69)	69 (61)
Virb	26 (31)	68 (60)
Frequency of Use		
More than once per day	62 (74)	92 (81)
Once per day	6 (7)	12 (11)
4-5 times per week	11 (13)	6 (5)
Once per week	3 (3)	3 (2)
Every other week	1 (1)	0
Monthly	1 (1)	0
Less than once/month	0	0
Primary Category/Intention of Use		
Friendship	75 (89)	57 (50)
Family	6 (7)	42 (37)
Religion	2 (2)	0
School/education	1 (1)	8 (7)
Career development	0	6 (5)
Perceived academic value of use		
Exposure to new ideas	47 (56)	64 (57)
Team building	22 (26)	37 (33)
New information	39 (46)	44 (39)
Information verification	30 (36)	46 (41)
Cultural/idea diversity	53 (63)	39 (34)
Debate/defend ideas	19 (23)	58 (51)
Technical skill refinement	11 (13)	33 (29)
Language use (articulation)	12 (14)	35 (31)

Table 2.
Mean Score of Social Technology Use

Technology Use	Secondary Students n=84	Postsecondary Students n=113
I use social media for school work to…		
Study	2.89	3.14
help with coursework	2.94	3.02
stay connected with teachers	3.67	3.57
ask for help	3.45	3.61
do research for school	3.84	3.57
teach me what I didn't learn in class	3.90	3.75
learn more about an assignment	3.81	3.74
present class information in a different way	3.63	3.52
help with memorization	3.92	3.44
relieve stress	3.99	3.87
I believe social media use helps me …		
Academically	4.29	3.99
prepare for college	4.16	--
be successful in college	--	3.94
prepare for life after graduation	4.30	3.88
keep friends	4.51	4.00
in my future career	4.62	4.01
study better	4.37	3.86
be more creative	4.00	3.72
understand myself better	3.98	3.40
be informed of the world around me	4.10	3.98
appreciate diversity	4.11	3.76
understand differences	4.00	3.62
manage my time	3.88	3.76
be accountable to others	4.24	3.90
engage in the community	4.50	3.77

The survey contained two additional sections, including the prompt "I use social media for school work to…" and "I believe social media use helps me…" Of the ten items listed on the survey about how social media is used for academic or school work, as shown in Table 2,

secondary school students rated seven items higher than the college students, although a one-way ANOVA revealed that none of these mean ratings were significant at the .05 level (f=1.68). The high school students had the highest mean rating, on a 1-to-5 progressive Likert-type scale (1=rarely use progressing to 5=always use), with using social media to relieve stress (mean 3.99), followed by helping with memorization (mean 3.92), and teaching what was not learned in class (mean 3.90). College students had a similar pattern of mean ratings, with the highest mean reported for relieving stress (mean 3.87), teaching what was not learned in class (mean 3.75), and learning more about assignments (3.74).

For how social media helps students with their academic work, every item that was rated on a 1-to-5 scale (1=*Very Little* progressing to 5=*Very Much*) by both high school and college students was rated higher by high school students. Of the 15 items, one related just to high school students, "I believe social media use helps prepare me for college" (students had a mean of 4.16 on this item), and one related just to college students "I believe social media use help me be successful in college" (mean 3.94). An ANOVA between the items (at the .05 level, f=1.72) indicated that 9 of the 12 were significantly different (higher) for the high school students.

High school students saw the greatest academic value of social media as generally with their future careers (mean 4.62), keeping friends (mean 4.51), and engaging in the community (mean 4.50). Two of these academic values of social media were the same for college students (future career 4.01 and keeping friends 4.00), and the third highest mean value was for the general statement that "I believe social media helps me academically" (mean 3.99).

Discussion and Conclusions

Study findings revealed a trend of secondary students appreciating and believing that social media is important to helping them learn, but that by early in the college experience, this belief or perception becomes much more tempered and that social media is less helpful to them. Perhaps the belief that social media is less helpful academically stems from the limited use of social media for classroom interaction. Also, the types of social media being used on college campus may not coincide with the types or preference of social media favored by new, incoming students. And, new college studentS might simply just need to develop a greater sense of appreciation of how and why social media can enhance the learning environment versus primarily broadening a social foundation.

Based on the study findings, there are several recommendations that can be made for educational leaders. First and foremost, leaders need to get into social media, try it, experiment with it, and develop a personal understanding of what social media does, can do, and is doing to students. By creating accounts and working through what it means to create an online presence, administrators can at the very least begin to understand how social media can be addictive and can frame a basic vocabulary around social media sites. Second, administrators need to get their teachers and faculty members to experiment with social media. This conversation must include recognition of personal and professional boundaries, but can also include alternative and creative ways to keep students informed of class projects, assignments, and due dates. Administrators must, however, educate and coach their teachers and faculty about how boundaries are important and how to separate personal space and information from the professional roles of teaching and communicating with students. A

specific expansion of this concept would be mandated policy and procedure on the ethical use of social media. Obviously, social media has the ability to be a powerful tool, but that persuasion can be positive and/or negative in its effect. Thus, an entry level social media course or seminar could help to address this recommendation of using social media in a responsible, ethical, and positive manner.

Administrators may also need to offer social media workshops for faculty and students alike. Faculty may be reluctant to use social media as a viable learning tool because they fell non-proficient in technology use. Students may also suffer the same feelings of inadequacy because they are not familiar with a specific type of social media. Both parties would benefit from fundamental instruction in how and why to use various types of social media.

Third, in addition to looking for ways to integrate social media into the classroom, both college advisors and high school teachers need to explore ways to teach about how social media impacts an individual and how it can and should be used. Business education classes and career centers can focus the application of social media as resume building and looking for jobs, and some social media sites can be used to help understand individual differences and students finding their personal interests. Teachers can also find a way to help students with time management, focusing on the frequency of use, for example, as a priority setting. And fourth, while social media has been highlighted as a venue for cyber bullying, there is the possibility that an aggressive, highly visible integration of school into social media could help to build a stronger sense of community. Social media are not going to disappear, as the frequency and breadth of use suggest that these media are highly integrated into students' lives, and institutions, driven by their leaders, must find a way to make them relevant and encouraging of learning and student development.

Social media is here to stay. As such, it needs to be embraced by educational administrators. This acceptance should then parlay itself into marketing the inherent educational values of social media to teachers, instructors, staff, and students. The technology has the potential to be a valuable learning asset and powerful learning tool, but users must understand the proper ways (the hows and whys) via which to use social media in a positive ethical fashion.

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Erin Gruwell: A Biographical Account of a
Teacher Leader for Change

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This biographical account of Erin Gruwell's work with marginalized youth explores the relevancy of her work for today's educators, especially those responsible for the education of future school leaders. Through both a review of the literature and in-depth interview with Gruwell, this paper shows how Gruwell emerged as a teacher leader and change agent. In summary, it is important that both current and future school administrators support teacher leaders like Erin Gruwell, by working together in challenging the status quo in today's schools. Being open-minded and listening to ideas teacher leaders can help school administrators be more effective in their often difficult role. Ideas such as "smaller learning communities" and the philosophy of "saving one student at a time" have echoed in teacher leaders like Erin Gruwell and others. School administrators' collaboration with their teacher leaders on campus, only increases the odds of more effective solutions coming forth that can help to improve academic achievement.

The story of Erin Gruwell's work with marginalized students has inspired those in the field of education, as well as those outside it, by the reforms and actions she initiated in her classroom. Gruwell demonstrated that through personalization and building on one's background experiences helped her and the students discover a sense of purpose in their lives. From that sense of purpose, came an increased desire for students to learn and, more importantly, stimulated their thought process (Gruwell, 2007). As a teacher leader Gruwell helped students, through counter narratives and other techniques, make a strong commitment to equity and social justice. According to Ackerman and MacKenzie (2006, p.68)), "teacher leaders are the pack mules of effective school improvement because they carry the weight of responsibility for ensuring that reforms take root in the classroom." This account of Erin Gruwell's life reveals how as a teacher leader she became and remains a leading change agent for transformative learning in today's schools.

Change Agents for School Reform

Feiman-Nemser (1990) argued that while optimistic faith in the power of education to help shape a new social order has continued to exist, the reality also has continued to be the sobering realization that schools have been instrumental in preserving the same social inequities.

Teachers find themselves walking on the intersection of such duality, and their agency most definitely influences the balance in one of the two directions; Gruwell's story is one of a change agent who embodied optimistic faith manifested through the best of leadership traits. As Lane, Lacefield-Parachini, and Isken (2003) stated, teachers have needed to develop feelings of ownership "so they feel empowered to transform the urban educational setting" (p. 56). Trybus (2011) also stated that leaders who want organizations to change need to create and implement a shared vision. This vision, stated by Kotter (1996, p. 68), "refers to a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future." Effective change agents have communicated with stakeholders in ways that made the change more understandable, coherent, and valuable to the organization, while setting the direction of change. Trybus (2011) also emphasized that a critical priority for a change agent involved creating a vision for the future.

Those considered to be "change agents" in promoting change in today's schools have tended to not only believe in the need for change, but some also have possessed the ability and skills to bring it about by working with others. These individuals, according to Evans (2010), saw the necessity for change, created an opportunity for vision development, and engaged in both personal and organizational growth. A change agent also needs to understand that seeking sustainable change must be an on-going effort. Fullan (2001) believes that an effective change agent possesses skills in three main capacities: developing relationships of trust, communicating the change vision effectively, and empowering others to take action toward change.

Effective change agents, in addition to being visionary, can also empower and mobilize people by modeling risk taking. This includes providing intellectual and emotional support and inspiration when followers have faced resistance, given the entrenchment of the existing system (Trybus, 2011). These change-agent leaders have not succeeded by working alone but rather building a culture of shared leadership with distributed ownership and common communities of practice (Trybus, 2011; Wenger, McDermott, Snyder, 2002). Lampert (2002) described this collaboration as being where "everyone has the right, responsibility, and the ability to be a leader." (p. 38). This culture is critical to bringing about change, Trybus (2011) argued, and works to minimize resistance to change.

Evans (2010) and Fullan (2007) both argued that if change was perceived as imposed on the people involved, resistance to change occurred because people were not involved and may have been prevented from making sense of the change. Evans (2010) further emphasized that effective change agents constantly monitor themselves such that they remain cognizant of the human dimension of change, as well as about how people have invested themselves in the existing system.

Effective change agents have based their vision on being able to answer why change was needed. Furthermore, they have established relationships of mutuality such that others implementing the change have envisioned personal gains along with the organizational ones. Effective change agents have succeeded because they knew how to deal with resistance and

remained focused on change, even when facing the most resistant colleagues (Trybus, 2011). These change agents embodied patience, humility, and the belief in the value and worth of each person in order to develop a collaborative approach to change.

Leadership and change agency must be aligned in order for effective change to occur (Hensley & Burmeister, 2009). Hence, it becomes apparent that one cannot be a change agent without being a leader (Trybus, 2011). Likewise, a leader without a vision for change will be ineffective and short-lived. It is therefore important for site administrators and district officials to be supportive of classroom teachers who have a vision of change. Trybus (2011) iterated that leadership and change are needed for the future of schools, classrooms, and systems that work towards improvement.

Cohen (2008) stated that "[e]ducators have largely ceded the public debate about education to others" (p.1). He further says that "having attended school, or having children that attend school, does not, as many may think, make one an expert" (p. 1). Yet many parents and politicians with no background in educational leadership are more involved than ever in creating and implementing school policy. Palmer (2008) states "that much of what goes on in schools is shaped by politicians who are more interested in winning elections than in winning good futures for children." Because of this, he asks "school leaders and all who care about public education to go beyond helping educators become better at doing their jobs and support them in becoming agents of institutional change," (p.4).

Recent educational leaders, who have challenged the status quo and became change agents, include Geoffrey Canada, Joe Carter, Marva Collins, the late Jaime Escalante, and Dennis Littky, who all realized the need for students to believe they had the potential for success. Consequently, they along with many others have worked tirelessly to shift the status quo away from politicians making decisions, and instead requesting schools to, "supporting educators in becoming internal agents of change," (Palmer, 2008, p. 4). By focusing on the inherent need for change, advocating for smaller learning communities and not being bound by limitations, these change agents were instrumental in helping teachers like Erin Gruwell realize the importance of changing the status quo. According to Ackerman and Mackenzie (2006), it is essential for teacher leaders such as Gruwell to "think about the gap in schools between the real and the ideal, and the discrepancies that they witness compel them to push against the status quo" (p.1).

Gruwell's work, as a teacher leader, became a foremost change agent with impoverished students in Long Beach, California, in the late 1990's and who continues this endeavor to this day.

Erin Gruwell: A Voice for Change

While in college at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), Gruwell observed the now-famous incident of an unknown Chinese student standing in front of a tank in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989. The image of an individual her same age, standing up for what he believed proved to be a powerful one for Gruwell. Seeing this young man's bravery and willingness to take a personal stand in the face of great adversity for what he believed, initially helped Gruwell decide to become a lawyer. "Although I wasn't brave enough to stand in front of a moving vehicle […] maybe I could stand before a judge and fight injustice in the courtroom" (Gruwell, 2007, p. 10). She decided at that point in her life to pursue a degree in law.

Less than three years later, on April 29, 1992, the verdict in the Rodney King trial was announced. Gruwell had been working as a concierge at the Marriott Hotel in Newport Beach when the verdict was announced; she and her coworkers watched the unfolding events on the television in the employees' lounge. When the rioting escalated, the dinner they were about to cater was cancelled, and she was sent home. There she found her fiancé and roommates also watching the news coverage of the L.A. Riots.

As the evening wore on, the comments of her roommates became racialized and stereotypical in nature, which made Gruwell uncomfortable. "I looked at my fiancé, hoping he'd interject. I wanted him to say something, anything" (Gruwell, 2007, p. 12). She attempted to block out her roommates' increasingly inflammatory comments by focusing on the coverage that was unfolding before her on television. One scene in particular caught her attention:

> I fixated on an image of a disgruntled man throwing a Molotov cocktail at a
> Circuit City building. The television crews immediately panned down and
> showed a little boy looking up at him. The boy had stars in his eyes. I
> recognized that look – it was the same reverence I had for my father when I
> was a child.
>
> If I had wanted to follow in the footsteps of my father when I was a child –
> how would this child respond to his father's actions […]? I wondered: If a kid
> could be taught to pick up a Molotov cocktail, could he be taught to pick up a
> pen instead?
>
> Maybe the best way to equalize the playing field wasn't in a courtroom but in a
> classroom. When I made the announcement to my father that I had decided I
> wanted to be a teacher, he did not take the news so well
> [….]
> "Where do you want to teach?" he asked rather gruffly.
> "I want to teach in an urban school district [...] I want to make a difference"
> (Gruwell, 2007, p 12-13).

Gruwell returned to school, and attended California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), where she simultaneously earned her teaching credential and her Master's degree.

When Gruwell began her student teaching experience at Woodrow Wilson High School, she was surprised at the segregation on campus. On paper, Wilson High School was a culturally diverse school, which was one of the reasons Gruwell had chosen to complete her student teaching at that site. To complicate matters, she had received minimal guidance or support from her supervising teacher once she was in the classroom; she was essentially left on her own.

> As a student teacher, I should have been able to rely on my supervising
> teacher, but he had stepped out of the classroom […] and never returned […]
> After nearly forty years of teaching, my supervising teacher planned to retire at
> the end of the school year. He had emotionally checked out and was now
> coasting on autopilot (Gruwell, 2007, p. 2).

When Gruwell had met with her supervising teacher over the summer, he had suggested she begin teaching on the first day of school so that her authority in the classroom was established immediately. Like most student teachers, Gruwell quickly realized that classroom management did not come easily. "It was obvious my students were the ones managing me" (Gruwell, 2007, p. 2). She learned that her ideas of life in a classroom were rather utopian: "As a student teacher, I was pretty naïve. I wanted to see past color and culture, but I was immediately confronted by it when the first bell rang […]" (Freedom Writers & Gruwell, 2009, p. 2).

Gruwell realized early on in her student teaching that she had been assigned low-performing students; many were involved in drugs, violence and gang activity. However, Gruwell was able to help transform her students' lives by instilling a philosophy that not only valued diversity but helped them promote it, finding a way to connect learning opportunities to the students. She challenged her students to steer away from the drugs and violence and to, instead, make choices for them to become citizens for change and eventual college students. Gruwell and the students began referring to themselves as the "Freedom Writers", in reference and homage to the civil rights activists of the 1960's who were called "The Freedom Riders."

The students' journey of change was collected by Gruwell in the form of anonymous journal entries and later published as the "Freedom Writers Diary." Gruwell later published "Touch with Your Heart" (Gruwell, 2007), which essentially was her memoir, and more importantly, a challenge to the educational community about desperately needed change to transform learning in the country.

An Interview

In a recent interview with Erin Gruwell, she discussed the reasons that led her to be a change agent, first at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, where she was originally hired to teach, to the creation of a training program; then at the Freedom Writers Institute, that promotes transformative learning. As Gruwell reflected back to her childhood, she stated that her passion for change began with the education she had at home, where her father, a self-proclaimed civil rights activist, taught his beliefs to Gruwell from an early age. Throughout her childhood, Gruwell's father had encouraged her to question and evaluate authority in terms of whether authority promoted or hindered the development of the human person, which she claimed has helped her believe in individuals, especially her students, whom others deemed as hopeless. She was raised to think critically and encouraged to ask questions and then debate someone's answer if she disagreed with it. Having a father who modeled the importance of asking questions and not settling for the status quo, helped Gruwell have higher expectations for the world of education.

However, when Gruwell first started her student teaching career, she was shocked to find a school system where students weren't encouraged to ask questions but instead told to be quiet and to listen. Gruwell even found in her teacher-training program she was talked "at" rather than being talked "with." Her expectations for becoming a teacher did not come from the classes she took, but rather from her on-the-job training when she became a student teacher. On the first day of her student teaching, primarily through trial and error, Gruwell quickly had to learn, on her own, how best to work with students, And while she remembered vividly the various teaching theories she had learned in college, Gruwell realized early on

what she really needed when she got into the classroom was the practice, more than just a list of theories.

Gruwell discovered quickly in her student teaching that although she knew lesson planning, the use of instructional strategies, the official curriculum, and classroom management approaches, these did not prepare her for the realities she encountered in the classroom. Students manifested their anger over their treatment in school and their troubled lives by showing a dislike for Gruwell. They viewed her as being advantaged, not connected to their lived realities, and no different from the other teachers who did not value them. They demonstrated this in different ways that made Gruwell ask such questions as: "What do I do when the students call me bad names or give me different finger gestures?" She also wondered why, as a first year teacher, the students hated her so much, and why they didn't come with a love for reading. She became convinced early on, that there was a real disconnect between education theory and practice; she believed that if she was going to survive her student teaching, she needed to know more about the important practical aspects of teaching.

So, Gruwell turned to her favorite college professor, Dr. Mary Ellen Vogt, a woman who was the founder of the research-based Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) method of reading, which has continued being a successful model developed to facilitate high quality instruction for English Language Learners in content area teaching. Gruwell loved how Mary Ellen used modeling and visual graphics; she found there was a lot of validity of the modeling and the scaffolding of techniques. Gruwell walked away with a sense of the importance of one-on-one connections, and the fact that not every child learns at the same time, or in the same place. Gruwell stated, "[F]or me, she [Dr. Vogt] was a very liberating professor because she was very practical. She was the last instructor I had at the end of my [teaching] program. I wish that I had started my program with her, because I think it would have been a very different experience."

Renée Firestone, a Holocaust survivor, has continued to have a profound influence on Gruwell's teaching. She has been in Gruwell's life for almost 20 years and has been tireless in her pursuit of justice and advocating for people's voice. Gruwell was adamant in our interview that Renée does this with incredible humility; and discussed how it has been "awe inspiring" to have such a great mentor and role model as Renée has been to her. "She [Renée Firestone] is one of the best educators I have known, because she forces people to engage in what she refers to as a 'call to action'."

Intentional versus Experimental Leadership

But how much of what Erin Gruwell did with her Freedom Writer students was intentional, as opposed to experimental? When asked in the interview, she stated: "I think that what I anticipated is that I wanted my students to love reading and love writing as a way of finding a voice and sharing their own story," Gruwell continued. "What I didn't anticipate is that being an English teacher would become a life one-on-one teacher. So much of what happened with the Freedom Writer was exposing them to a world they have never been exposed to, by taking them on field trips and exposing them to people and then mentoring them." Gruwell went on to say, "we have covered everything from how many forks are at a fancy restaurant to balancing their check books to learning the validity of going to a counselor." Helping her students get into twelve-step programs, or helping them grieve were not things that Gruwell

anticipated when she started her teaching career, but were experiences that became necessary for her students' success. She wanted those 55 minutes that she had daily with her students to matter; so she helped them find appropriate ways to cope with their life issues in order to be able to learn in the classroom. But having that same core group of students, with whom she had started her teaching career still be in her life to this day, is not something that she ever envisioned occurring.

Her initial, true "ah-ha" moment as to how she could connect with her students occurred on her first day in the classroom when her master teacher walked away. She has reflected back on that moment of realization. In the interview she said: "Oh God, I [was] paying the university to get my credential but they left me." She went on to explain, "I don't know what I am doing and that was the first moment I had to be resilient and resourceful and flexible." Gruwell realized the current model of education was failing her students. She had to find a way for them to be successful, not only academically, but also in their lives. With members of three of East Long Beach's major gangs crowded in her classroom, things had the potential to be explosive. She had to de-rail everything that she was trying to do. This became the most important moment for her as a classroom teacher, because of the ramifications that came with her decisions as to what she was going to do with her students.

In the interview Gruwell also said that she quickly realized that it was "us against the world" - the collective "us" being her students. As she worked to get money for field trips and hustled to get speakers into her classroom, Gruwell knew at that point she was doing things differently than most of her colleagues. As her students began staying after school or coming early to class to do their homework, she realized that she now had the power to get them to commit to their studies.

While being a learner-centered teacher always was at the core of Gruwell's teaching philosophy, she had to expand this philosophy to finding ways of relating to students on the basis of their lived experience. She became a learner and encouraged her students to help her understand their lives and sought their input in her teaching. This necessitated that she had to transcend the official curriculum since it was not working for her students. She faced implementing ways of reaching her students, and this did not make her popular with some people who had authority over her. Undeterred she placed her students and their needs first and acted on this belief. This resulted in her asking authority for forgiveness rather than begging for permission – and she had to frequently ask for forgiveness. In her efforts to put her students first, Gruwell would often plead ignorance as to what was allowed by the school and district - and what was not - while at the same time vehemently believing that it is not wrong to fight the good fight, which she knew was the driving force behind her efforts.

Through the teaching of literature with which her students could identify, as well as having her students journal as a way of dealing with their emotions and thoughts, Gruwell was able to transform the lives of both her students and herself. For one of their first excursions, Gruwell's students traveled to Newport Beach one Sunday to view *Schindler's List*. Soon after, her students were checking out books that were not in the curriculum to help satisfy their emerging love for reading. She was both amazed and encouraged how she was able to get the students to bring their parents to an after-school event because they were excited, and they wanted their parents to understand their newfound excitement.

Through her experiences, Gruwell became convinced that every teacher may have the epiphany that students will do things differently if the material being taught is made exciting, relevant, and student-centered. When those "ah-ha moments" were shared about one's

students, then parents and friends have to share in those "ah-ha moments" as well. Often what occurs, according to Gruwell - based upon her experience - is that students then go home and become teachers to whoever listens to them.

Gruwell always had her students write because she saw that as a necessary technique of being a classroom teacher. Also, because she used student journaling; the writing students did promote their thinking and this eventually connected them to their classroom readings. Whether the examples of stories from the books Gruwell chose - such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* or the many other books Gruwell had them read - her students learned that there was power of not just one voice, but also a collective voice. The power of writing, especially when it was a collective experience that involved her students sharing their personal stories, quickly became a focus in Gruwell's classroom. During the interview she stated that she felt this collective experience was "like this message in a bottle - and having all of the students sitting around and reading that collection of letters made it like reading a book."

Unbeknownst to them, many of Gruwell's students were writing to an audience who had faced similar experiences. As they began writing, the students didn't entertain the thought of having their writings published; they wrote their collective diary because they had something to say and share with each other. However, through their writing, Gruwell's students (who eventually became known as the Freedom Writers) realized that they shared similar stories, and the writing and sharing of their stories allowed them to identify with others, while having their own personal truths verified and supported.

Maintaining their anonymity – for many, even to this day – Gruwell's students wrote their stories, and then put them together into a book that was originally designed to be only for them. However, as they shared their personal tragedies, triumphs and hopes anonymously through their journals, the students realized that despite their social and ethnic differences, they were very much alike, and they came together as a "family" with the desire to change the world. "I think that what I anticipated" she stated "is that I wanted my students to love reading and love writing as a way of finding a voice and sharing their own story."

But as Gruwell and her Freedom Writers gained notoriety and recognition, so did their experiences and writings, which were eventually pitched to Doubleday Publishing, who decided to publish what had become affectionately known between Gruwell and her students as "the little book that could" (Gruwell, 2007, p. 182). However, Gruwell wanted to make sure that her students benefited from their work. One of the agreements she made with Doubleday was that she would help promote the book in any way possible, but the proceeds also had to help further the Freedom Writers' education: "If the book does well, they can use the money to pay for their college tuition" (Gruwell, 2007, p. 210). Her efforts proved successful; The Freedom Writers' continued pledge to share their personal testimonies of how they survived the streets of Long Beach - in what they have referred to as an "undeclared war" - have served as stories of hope for other teenagers who face similar struggles.

Teacher Leadership and Advocacy

When Erin Gruwell started teaching, she knew almost nothing of the world of poverty and traumas her students in East Long Beach faced on a daily basis. She quickly realized there were many areas that had not been addressed in her teacher preparation program; she found these omissions to be surprising, especially in today's society. These included not knowing when or how to fill out or complete a child protective service form. She had not been trained

in such critical issues as suicide watch, or how to gain access to a student who was in the hospital after having attempted suicide. She lacked knowledge of how to bail one of her students out of jail, accompany the student to court, or visit one in juvenile hall.   All of those things became a very real part of her job. Based upon her experiences, Gruwell expressed her belief that teacher preparation has needed for a long time to address these issues, a commonplace in today's society.

The potential to become a change agent was actually one of the reasons Erin Gruwell became a teacher, believing that in the truest sense of education, every teacher should strive to be a change agent. She quickly realized other teachers had given up on her students before they were given a chance to succeed. The educational system had long before served as a tool that isolated and discouraged her students, and Gruwell discovered she, too, was a victim of the system: "I had been brainwashed to teach to a test" (McGhee, 2008, p.1).   This realization was a powerful one, for even today, she has continued to challenge standardized tests that have forced teachers to teach to a test that often has nothing related to the lives of poor and disadvantaged youth. She shared during our interview that "teachers need to develop into professionals but we are in a system that doesn't trust teachers and forces teachers to be robots reading from scripted lessons." She further stated: "Standardized testing, as the sole measure of student achievement, has taken away passion in teaching, and the child has become a number or a statistic rather than a unique and complex story seeking to develop fully as a human being." Given this belief, Gruwell has continued to view education as the noblest profession.   She shared, "Because teachers are planting seeds every day, with every lesson plan, with every part of our curriculum, they are change agents. Part of being a change agent is the ongoing battle with bureaucracy, especially when it comes to test scores."

Gruwell shared through the interview, the belief that networks of support among teachers have needed development, especially in teacher preparation programs. She noted that every teacher needed access to a colleague: "have someone on speed dial who can be your cheerleader." In this era of teaching being so standardized and test-driven, she emphasized the importance of teachers allowing themselves to be vulnerable and "humanize" themselves, whenever possible in front of the students. Having been told by one of her professors not to smile until Christmas, Gruwell remembers that with every smile and every tear she feared she wasn't a good teacher because she was showing her vulnerability. Like many young teachers, she felt she couldn't ask for help, since she would then have to admit that she didn't know what she was doing.   However, she learned early on that since teaching is such a humanistic endeavor, the more human one is to one's self, friends, family, and students, the better off one will be.   With this in mind, Gruwell highly has advised new teachers to maintain their idealism by "stay[ing] the hell out of a teachers' lounge" (E. Gruwell, personal communication, September 10, 2010) because it is often toxic and can be a very negative place.

The Freedom Writers Foundation and Institute

Gruwell left Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California, when the students she had worked for the previous four years graduated and she began teaching at California State University, Long Beach, in the teacher-credentialing program.   She spent several years working with undergraduate students, trying to help them realize the importance of connecting

with their future students once they became teachers. During this time the impetus for the Freedom Writers Institute (FWI) was formed:

> A successful businessman [Ric Kayne] had challenged me to see if I could bottle the "secret sauce" of what made our experiences in Room 203 so unique. Mr. Kayne was a venture capitalist and had apparently backed several start-up companies. He bailed businesses out of bankruptcy and helped people manage billion-dollar portfolios. It seemed odd to me that a man of his accomplishments would want to create a nonprofit organization that would help disseminate my teaching methods. He told me he'd had learning disabilities as a child and always sympathized with children who didn't receive the help that he did, and that's why he wanted to help me bottle my secret sauce.

> Never one to shy away when dared, I rounded up a couple dozen Freedom Writers who would join me in identifying the key ingredients of our success – and then I challenged the businessman to pay for their tuition. When both he and the president agreed to my plan, we were off and running and fighting the good fight together (Freedom Writers & Gruwell, 2009, p. 237-238).

Yet the problems facing public education, especially those issues that appeared more readily in traditionally lower socioeconomic urban schools, have not been eliminated with the success that Gruwell experienced with her students. Rather, those issues have been illuminated, and her efforts with the Freedom Writers, have served as proof that students from all walks of life can be successful – if they are given the chance.

This realization eventually led Gruwell to the creation of the Freedom Writers Institute (FWI), a five-day intensive training program designed to work with teachers from across the United States and Canada in an attempt to help them experience a small taste of what went on in Room 203 at Woodrow Wilson High School. During the Institute, Gruwell has former Freedom Writers come in to speak, share, and work with the teachers as they learn the techniques that Gruwell found to be so successful in her career. In this way, Gruwell has worked with one teacher, one administrator and often one school at a time to effect change.

The Institute has required that teachers apply with only a limited number being accepted, as Gruwell described on the Freedom Writers (2006) website:

> […] Educators must provide information regarding their students, school, and teaching experience. Each applicant is reviewed by the Foundation's Educational Advisory Board and carefully selected so that each session is diversified by region, teaching level and experience. Much like Room 203, each session represents an eclectic microcosm that reflects classrooms nationwide.

Just as she did with her students, Gruwell has supported teachers in the FWI institute in ways that resulted in increased teacher self-efficacy and knowledge of working with diverse students. In our interview she explained why she designed the structure of the FWI in the following manner:

A lot of my university training was being talked at rather than being talked with and being included. So I think a lot of my expectations for becoming a teacher were not fulfilled in classes and really came with on the job training when I became a student teacher…. what I really needed when I got to the classroom was the practice.

Gruwell went on to report the following intended outcomes of the Freedom Writers Institute, as it was designed to capture and allow her to share her so called "secret sauce" with other educators:

I think what's been so exciting about the Freedom Writers Institute is that everyone walks away having gained some kind of knowledge. Even though I might be guiding the experience and the Freedom Writers may be assisting me, and the teachers are participating, at the end of the day we all walk away having learned something and improved. I love that it's so organic, and it's so visceral, and it's so emotional, and I think that we all gain from the fact that it's very experiential. It's not just taking notes, or using a laptop, or studying pedagogy – it comes to life. This is our gift to the world. We are trying to train as many teachers as we can.

Conclusion

Being a leader who has the knowledge and skills to bring about change is essential to the process, according to Trybus (2011). These attributes were apparent throughout the discussion of the background and the interview with Erin Gruwell, along with her passion for helping students from all walks of life, especially those who have been marginalized. Her drive for transformative change hasn't dimmed since her first days as a student teacher. The ongoing work of Erin Gruwell and the Freedom Writers via the Freedom Writers Institute (FWI) has been proven to be an effective professional development tool. Teachers have been taught various approaches that work with all students, whether gifted, average, at-risk, or in the juvenile detention setting.

A focus on recognizing students as individuals – rather than as potential test scores - with different abilities, capabilities and strengths is renewed, and methods to connect with those students are learned and developed. The FWI can be a powerful and transformative professional development program for educators, which provides teachers, counselors and administrators with techniques that have proven to be effective in not only changing the status quo, but also in helping all students be successful.

In summary, is important that both current and future school administrators support teacher leaders like Erin Gruwell, by working together in challenging the status quo in today's schools. Being open-minded and listening to ideas, teacher leaders can help school administrators be more effective in their often difficult role. Ideas such as "smaller learning communities" and the philosophy of "saving one student at a time" have echoed in teacher leaders like Erin Gruwell and others. School administrators' collaboration with their teacher leaders on campus, only increases the odds of more effective solutions coming forth that can help to improve academic achievement.

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A Study of Students on the Autism Spectrum Transformation in a High School Transition Program

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This study brings together the theoretical and empirical practices of traditional informative education, radical transformative education, and sustainable education reform. An analysis of learning disability and constructivist learning are used to elucidate the socio-complexity of historic academic constructs concerning educational leadership for social justice. This study is the beginning of a larger future exploration of alternative academic practices as transformative learning in radical school reform. The study considers how transformative education practices produce radical increase in performance outcomes for participants with Autism Spectrum Disorder; this effective impact with severely diagnosed atypical learning population challenge conventional disabled learning theory practices. The ontological student perspective deliberates where in the realm of education does the atypical learner particularly with ASD (specifically with Asperger Syndrome) exist? The students are diagnosed with High Functioning Autism and participate in an urban high school transition program called the Asperger Inclusion Program (AsIP) and an extra-curricular program called Ethos. The study provides access to student experiences that drive discussion to ponder equity and power in pedagogy and society by removing historically tendentious curricular constraints.

Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) face significant challenges in socialization, communication, and flexible behavior and thinking that impact their school experience. For purposes of this study, ASD refers to a broad definition of autism that manifest in severe, moderate, and mild forms as proposed for the edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM*-5) published in May 2013 (American Psychiatric Association 2012). As is relevant to this study, High Functioning Autism (HFA) and Asperger Syndrome (AS) are commonly used to refer to individuals with mild forms of ASD. A neurological-based developmental disability, the autism spectrum is characterized by qualitative impairments in reciprocal interaction, and verbal and/or non-verbal communication and the presence of restricted, repetitive, or stereotyped patterns of activities and interests. These core challenges manifest differently for each individual while changing across the lifespan (Attwood, 2008).

Once rare, ASD has reached epidemic proportions with estimates as high as 1 in 50 school aged children identified in the United States (Blumberg et al., 2013). Already a heavy burden on educational facilities, autism has had a large impact on public schooling, and the number of students coming of age who have autism has had an enormous effect on the economy as the affected children reach adulthood (Matson & Kozlowski, 2012). Data from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network support the inference that there has been an increase in ASD recognition by community providers. While all children defined as ASD cases in ADDM have previously come to the attention of a special education or health care provider in their communities, not all of these children had a previous diagnosis or school classification specific to ASD. Each surveillance year, a percentage of children who had clear documentation of autism traits in their records, but not a specific ASD diagnosis or educational placement, are nonetheless classified as ASD cases by ADDM clinical reviewers (National Health Statistics Reports *Number 65* March 20, 2013).

Originating as the Education of All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990; 2004) ensures equal educational opportunities for children identified with disabilities, including those affected by autism. IDEA entitles all children the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE); educated alongside typically developing peers to the maximum extent possible. Students that have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that designates special education and related services to prepare for further education, employment, and independent living to the maximum extent possible. In addition, parents are afforded the right to exercise due process to ensure that their child is receiving an appropriate education. The U.S. Department of Education is mandated to report yearly to Congress in accordance with IDEA. When this policy was first enacted, cases of autism in U.S. schools were few with identified cases relegated to other disability categories (e.g., Other Health Impaired, Speech and Language Delay, Emotional Behavioral Disorders). As the rate of autism steadily increased, a decision was made to list autism as a separate category of disability starting in 1991 (Apling & Jones, 2002). Once considered a low incidence disability, statistically students receiving services for autism have increased (marginally with emotional disturbance and intellectual disability) among the thirteen disability enrollment categories according to the California Department of Education (CDE) (2011) Special Education Division.

Statement of the Problem

State law emphasizes that a student is to be referred for special education instruction and services *only* after the resources of the general education program have been considered and appropriately utilized. In the unified school districts this "pre-referral" requirement is usually met by utilizing the Student Study Team (SST) process. The SST is typically composed of the student and parents, a school administrator, counselor, the student's general class teachers, the school psychologist, and a special education teacher. During the SST meeting, members review the student's educational strengths, areas of concern, and previous attempts at interventions. Members discuss possible programs and interventions to meet the student's needs and an action plan is developed (Thompson 1999).

Upon receiving a referral from the SST to the school psychologist for a special education assessment, parents are notified of the referral and development of an evaluation plan by a school psychologist. The school psychologist notifies the parents that their student

has been referred for special education assessment and the reasons why the referral was made. The school psychologist enters the referral information on the WISER (Web Integrated Special Education Resources) Referral Screen. The school psychologist then has fifteen calendar days in which to send the parent a written evaluation plan and related documents.
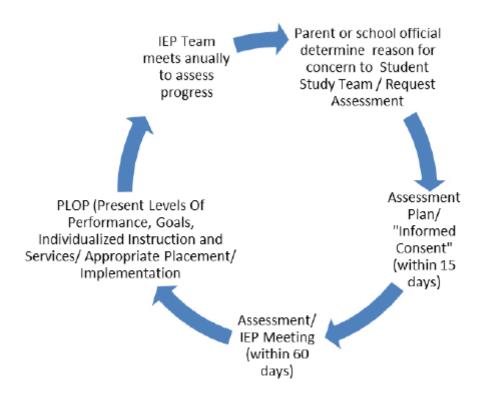

Figure 1. IEP process as initiated by a school official or parent.

With the increasing number of students identified with ASD, the need for public schools to address appropriate and ethical diagnoses, services, and effective delivery of curriculum is not only an educational concern but also a social justice concern. During an informal interview with the researcher and a practicing district psychologist the following statement was made in response to the question: *What specific tests do you give students that are referred for Autism supports either very impacted or less so, and are there one or two specific tests you use?* The following is a partial response from the psychologist.

Diagnosing Asperger is a lot more subjective than diagnosing a learning disability, which is just based on test scores. One person's take on "restricted interests" might be different than another person's. You probably know about the new ASC classes, right? They have a mix of "quirky" kids with similar behaviors, some with Autism/Asperger diagnosis, some with SLI (Speech Language Impaired) and some with SLD (Specific Learning Disability). They just started two of those classes at the high school level last year and we have two at middle school. I think they probably want to keep the ASIP (Asperger Inclusion Program) classes for the more straightforward Asperger kids and

your kids are higher functioning academically than the kids in the ASC program. Another group of kids who might be a good fit for your program are kids with Nonverbal Learning Disabilities, a much under diagnosed group who don't quite fit into any of the eligibility categories but who have many similar characteristics to kids with Asperger" (Weaver, 2010).

The perspective of the school psychologist demonstrates the connection between student diagnostic criteria eligibility and the complex process of accurate academic placement. This process is significantly influenced by the students PLOP (Present Level of Performance), which may pose complications in light of the discrepant learning profiles of students on the autism spectrum, as well as all struggling students. As the coordinator of the Asperger Inclusion Program, I have students with diagnostic tests results indicating and interpreted as not able to access grade level general education curriculum, however often perform at peer expectation and excel academically with appropriate supports despite significant lower scores in very effective and reliable diagnostics such as Beery VMI Fifth Edition, Test of Visual Perceptual Skills (TVPS), Test of Auditory Processing Skills (TAPS), The Behavior Assessment System for Children-Second Edition (BASC-2), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Fourth Edition (WISC-IV), Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-Second Edition (ABAS-II), and Gilliam Autism Rating Scale-2nd Edition (GARS-2). Evaluations explicitly include *DSM* diagnostic and district level educational code eligibility tools, with individualized approaches to the student. However the subjectivity in the determination of diagnosis, eligibility and individualized education plan for the student as the school psychologist implies, is as implicit as the social cues that evade these students. The evaluations at times are challenging to determine. Considering the variability in the range of expression of core characteristics in ASD, there is a need to elucidate these complex issues by exploring experiences of students with ASD within a contextually relevant educational setting.

This study considers the practices servicing diverse student populations, specifically from the perspective of the relatively recent sociological phenomena Curt Dudley-Marling conveys in his article, "The Social Construction of Learning Disabilities" (2004). The author argued the underpinning technical gaze that dominated learning disabilities theory and practice was the assumption *that learning disabilities were a pathology that resided in the heads of individual students, rather than in the realm of academic institutional constructs* (Gergen 1990). To be clear how this connects to this study of transitioning students with ASD, consider that Dudley-Marling is suggesting as a social construct that schools label students learning disabled when the educational pedagogy is not able to reach the student; assuming the pathology lies in the heads of categorical 'disabled learners,' not the pedagogy. The study concludes that the students begin to identify themselves as disabled and engaged with the learning community accordingly which impacted student performance. This study considers removing these socialized learning disabled constructs from the learning experience, through transformative education practice, to *re-construct the student learning identity*. The current public school student population is so diverse this study concludes the need for inclusive pedagogical development and design, as well as shifting assumptions and beliefs away from students *not* able to access learning. The study aims to shift thinking toward innovative techniques in new learning paradigms and programs.

Sociological History

The following is a brief theoretical framework on how the impact of social constructs of race has shaped inequities within the educational system. Relevant to this study is the theoretical foundation of public education's impact on students within an underrepresented population. Ladson-Billings and Tate, (1995) theorize race and use it as an analytic tool for understanding school inequity. This critical-race theory offers a political perspective of economic and political structures that influence school policy-making. While this research study is not intended to look at school performance of students with autism through the lens of critical race theory, the study proposes a parallel consistent with other underserved populations, as a growing population that is dramatically underrepresented within educational research, practice, advocacy and policy. Gross, Booker and Goldhaber (2009) noted that 'all student' level research revealed specific populations are not benefiting from the implementation of reform efforts. The data demonstrated African American, English Language Learners (ELL) and special education students exhibited no significant benefit from the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) project and its successor the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) project that the federal government devoted enormous resources between the late 1980s and early 2000s. It can be argued that reform policy, design and implementation are ineffective due to a lack of specific focus or understanding of the significant issues for these populations. Critical race theory asserts historic economic inequities that construct financial incentives for schools are ineffective by design to specific site community and culture. The funding penalizes lower performing schools, impose tighter restraint and pressure for performance in conditions that are economically and academically tendentious; this study asserts transformative education addresses this deficit.

Student Level Research

This study considers the efficacy of reform using student level research, specifically considering populations of students requiring Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). It also considers the impact on typically developing / general education student data that also showed very minimal productivity from financial incentive reform efforts. To understand why data continues to indicate unsuccessful school performances, despite continued reform implementation, Gross, Booker, and Goldhaber (2009) studied student level research using disaggregated data from specific populations within a school site or district which provided the opportunity to examine the differential effects of CSR awards across students of varying populations. This typically cannot be done with school or district level performance indicators, thus making it difficult for policy makers and school leaders to understand the specific reasons why the reforms were not successful. The study yielded student level significance:

- Cooper and Jordan (2003) suggest the recruitment of African American male teachers along with CSR design implementation will be necessary to meet the unique needs of African American male students.
- Hamann, Zuliani, and Hudak (2001) find that the CSR designs failed to provide specific accommodations for English Language Learner (ELL) students, providing little additional benefit to this population.

- Koh and Robertson (2003) investigate teacher perspectives of three CSR models and determined the fast-paced curriculum and lack of modifications presented more challenges for the special education students.

The question if school success should be measured solely by standardized testing may be argued; however, the failure for schools to produce students performing at standardized state test levels is revealed by a continually below basic test score data. Using analytic techniques for non-experimental studies to investigate the effects of federal CSR awards on student achievement, the authors (Gross et al., 2009) find that CSRD funding:

- Did not significantly affect student reading performance of general education students data gathered for the study.
- The effect on math performance varied across different student types. CSR funding did affect some students, but it has not always served to improve the performance of all student subgroups.
- The largest effects being only 4% of a standard deviation [one standard deviation difference in raw score equates to approximately 8 to 10 points in the Texas Learning

Index (TLI)] scaled score—the scale used to report TAAS (Texas Accessibility of Academic Skills) and TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) results to schools and students.

Constructs of the Individual Learner

Research shows Constructivist Learning epistemology's central tenet is that the individual learner constructs knowledge of the world by interacting with it. The development of this field of re-strategizing reform efforts to cognitive based pedagogical practices requires effective scientific research to ensure legitimacy. The intellectual health of any field of study depends on persistent and penetrating critique. Therefore, the ability of a field such as learning disabilities to shield itself from criticism in the short term may seal its fate in the long term (Dudley-Marling & Dippo, 1995). In the area of learning disabilities, Reid and Valle (2004) challenge conventional and naturalized ways of thinking about difference by which they seek to bring greater balance to the intellectual grounding for understanding school failure. Ryan (2007) addresses that essential critical thinking skills, in-depth social insight and meaningful familiarity are necessary to affect and implement educational reform that develops pedagogy to embrace change productivity and social justice in educational practices and schools. Knuth and Cunningham (1993) propose several critical principles in designing Constructivist Learning:

- Authentic learner tasks are embedded in contexts that are relevant in the real world.
- Learners are provided with the social context where dialogue and negotiation of meaning develop a means for developing and refining ideas.
- Learners are encouraged to have voice and ownership in the learning process.
- Learners experience the knowledge construction process.

- Learners reflect on their own thinking and decision-making process (Knuth & Cunningham 1993).

Heterogeneity describes the student diversity in classroom/school domains; including the wide spectrum of diverse student ability. This study concerns *homo*geneity in pedagogical practice and curriculum delivery, despite diverse student populations and learning variances. Relevant to academic and life-long learning performance outcomes, students with ASD are consistent with other marginalized populations not connecting with curriculum. The study aims to explore the experience of students with ASD in an inclusive urban high school. Understanding the pathology that resides in the experience of individual students is essential when considering the delivery of curriculum designed for all students to access. The responsibility to explore and reach that pathway remains in the realm of the academic institution.

Since *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) mandated that public schools cannot be segregated based on race, the community members began to realize that special education students were also being segregated, and being sent to state hospitals. *Daniel R.R. v. State Board of Education* (1989) began a basic inclusion movement and the court ruled that if a student can receive a satisfactory education in the mainstream classroom, he or she must be educated there as the Least Restricted Environment (LRE). To understand this inclusive legislation is to understand the implications as limitations of the *homo*geneity-based pedagogical practices despite our *hetero*genetic public student population. The study discovered Transformative Education practices were paramount, and unexpectedly aligned with the design of the program researched for transitioning students with ASD, which informed student performance process. The study explores as ethnography the transformative process of ten participants in the Asperger Inclusion Program (AsIP) for students transitioning from an urban high school setting to college, which includes the extracurricular extension referred to as Ethos. The study considers the experience in the context of specialized education, and the broader contexts of curricular development and instruction concerning school reform and design. Fundamentally, the study intends to examine and explain the extent to which these students experience transformation during their transition to higher education as participants in this progressive program; and to capture the ontological perspective of the students participating in a Transformative Education program design.

Methodology

This study employs a multiple case-study research design using qualitative methods grounded in the ethnographic tradition of anthropology (Patton, 2002). Consistent with the research characteristics described in the table at the end of this article, the design and methods were selected as appropriate for exploring questions pertaining to the people and phenomena situated within the AsIP/ Ethos program. The participants include: 8 male students — 2 African American, 1 Asian, 1 Asian / Caucasian mixed race, 1 Caucasian, 2 Mexican, 1 Mexican / Caucasian mixed race; within the age range of 18-22 years and 2 female African American students within the age range of 19-21 years old. Consistent with the former *DSM-IV* diagnostic criteria (American Psychological Association, 2000) all of the participants have been diagnosed with a mild form of ASD corresponding to either HFA or AS to qualify for participation in AsIP. Students demonstrate individualized manifestation of the impact of categorical characteristics and academic ability. Diagnostic eligibility confirmed participants

presented varying degrees of difficulty establishing social relations with peers, accessing academic curriculum due to core challenges in social communication and flexible behavior associated with ASD.

Data Collection/Analysis/Verification

The interviews were approximately 30 minutes long and participants agreed to be available at a later time for possible future data collection. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Participant observations include observation field notes, reflection logs, teacher comments and parent perspectives. Artifacts collected from participants include student records, academic work, and artwork. An inductive analytic approach was used to examine the accumulated qualitative data (transcribed interviews, field note observations, artifacts and related documents) gathered in the field. The data were examined for meaningful and symbolic content through an inquiry driven and exploratory process using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The constant comparison method involves an iterative process of reviewing, sorting, assembling and coding multiple sources of data to generate detailed narratives, emergent themes, hypotheses and theory "grounded" in the data. Transcriptions required writing detailed descriptions of the student affect and individual behaviors and overall attitude/demeanor during the interview and observations, including the transactions between researcher and student. The researcher next read through the data to gain a general sense of the material. The next phase involved coding and compiling the data for each of the 10 participants to construct *staff and student narratives*. The final phase of analysis involved coding the data within- and across-cases to identify *emergent themes*. For this final phase, the researcher utilized visual display tables (Miles & Huberman, 1992) and the Hyper Researcher Program (Copyright © 1997-2013 ResearchWare, Inc.) as tools to support the coding process. Ultimately, the goal was to assemble a coherent understanding of the data by building a logical chain of evidence to support this study's findings.

Sophisticated rigor was applied using detailed description and triangulation of data sources, participants, methodologies and theoretical perspectives for quality assurance in the verification and application of methods (Denzin, 1978). For this study, a major source of triangulation consisted of corroborating evidence with a team of four independent reviewers using educators with ether either an MA in Educational Psychology or Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Social Justice. This involved successive stages for identifying common themes based on a systematic review of student interview data and instructional assistant interview data. Initially, two independent reviewers were asked to read interview data without knowledge of one another's findings. Specific and intentional measures were taken to prevent cross contamination of research findings by electronically sending each independent reviewer a personal table consisting of only student questions and one column to record key themes. Next, the first two reviewers were shown the findings of the second two reviewers and were asked to identify common themes. The second two reviewers where then asked to confirm the common themes that were identified by the first two reviewers. At the conclusion of each successive stage, the researcher constructed a matrix as a visual display table showing evidence for the occurrence of common themes by the researcher and each reviewer.

Findings

In this ethnographic study of students with Asperger Syndrome participating in a transition program to post-secondary education and life-goals as life-long learning, three major themes emerged that are embedded within two overarching conceptual domains. The first conceptual domain is the *Social Construction of Learning and Language*, within which is the first emergent theme, *Self-Perception* (how students constructed identities), and the second theme *Connectedness* (with members of AsIP and others). The second conceptual domain is *Radical Individualism as Community Kaleidoscope* within which the third emergent theme is *Transformative Shifts in Awareness* regarding how students' view of themselves and learning experiences altered engagement in school and life. The emergent themes of *Self-Perception, Connectedness and Transformative Shifts in Awareness* serve to elucidate the socio-complexity in the learning community from an ontological perspective that considers student pathology in relation to constructivist learning pedagogy. Embedded in the program design are in-depth inquiry driven discussions and experiences to enhance interpersonal relationships, effective communication, and higher level cognition. The exploration examines whether the in-depth inquiry driven design does contribute to academic and lifelong learning, fundamentally improving students' over-all self-perception, empowerment, and actualization of life goals, which is the underpinning purpose of an exceptional education.

Conceptual Domain 1: Social Constructs of Learning and Language

Guided by initial questions, the first overarching conceptual domain to emerge derives from what Dudley-Marling (2004) conveyed in his article, "The Social Construction of Learning Disabilities." His critique of the ideology of individualism situates individual success and failure in the heads of individuals as a means of introducing an alternative perspective—***social constructivism***—that locates learning and learning problems in the context of human relations and activity. The primary argument developed here is that one cannot be learning disabled on one's own. It takes a complex system of interactions performed in just the right way, at the right time; on the stage we call school to make a learning disability (Dudley-Marling 2004). This is reflected in how the participating students have come to identify and see themselves from the context of the socially constructed disabled learning environment and the impact of this perception on performance outcomes.

Emergent Theme 1: Self-Perception

Intervention Specialists interviewed to capture their experience and philosophy as a team member in the Asperger Inclusion Program revealed an experience working with a student was making a documentary film for a class filming other students on the spectrum; asking basic questions about their lives. After watching the final edited version of documentary two facts became evident. The majority of students affected by Asperger were unable to describe the symptoms or hallmarks of the syndrome and significantly every student in the documentary reported an overwhelming feeling of sadness and depression. The study focused on an in-depth exploration to the common origin of depressions among students, revealing as originated in their early stages of school. A correlation between expressed student anger, depression and the constructed student identity within the context of common early *disabled*

learning practices became apparent. While these experiences may not be able to completely account for diagnosed clinical depression, the common experience emerged as significant in the findings; and helped to analyze a relationship correlate to student performance. The findings reveal a relationship between how students perceive themselves and others who share their experience, and levels of student outcome as evidence that a series of scenarios, (within the complex system of the learning disabled school setting) and interactions, construct self-perception that impacts access to learning. Moreover, conscious events that constructed self-perception as learning disabled in the school setting *hindered* early performance outcomes and constituted a response to early school experience as anger and depression; resulting in a socially constructed learning disability.

This study explored how students participating in the AsIP experienced a paradigm shift in self-perception through understanding the social constructs of learning through language constructs as in-depth transformative curriculum predominately developed through discussion that dramatically altered learning identity and improved performance outcomes. The findings suggest that over the course of their school experience the participants' self-perception evolved as they re-constructed identities as learners and individuals within the social construct of Constructivist Learning practices. In particular, interview data revealed students' self-perception as influenced by isolation and atypical experiences and social variances underlined how language constructs social learning reality through perception in the context of human relations and activities. Through participation in the AsIP program, their self-perception transformed as a reflection of inner growth and development and intrapersonal empowerment.

Emergent Theme 2: Connectedness

Connecting with members of AsIP and others in student social learning community was paramount as a paradigm for transformation. Interpretations draw on the notion of linguistics as a causal variable of world view (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*), students become cognizant that they are experiencing learning, community, and the world through constructs developed in language. Franz Boaz (1940) considered to be the founder of Modern Anthropology and Descriptive Linguistic Thought, explained when studying linguistics that we consider the finite concepts conveyed through spoken language. Boaz asserted if we did not have the language, we were incapable of expressing a concept or thought. Sapir's Linguistic Determination (1966) stated that language determined how we viewed and thought about the world; Sapir's Strong Determinism (1966), the extreme version of the theory, suggested language actually determined thought. Lisa Delpit (1993) considered the *connectedness* between language, cultural awareness, and cognitive process when teaching other people's children and considered language as a cultural construct that impacted the ability to teach and learn concepts. The study data support introspective communication, social/personal identity development and transformative introspection were critical for students to access *connectedness* in community, academics and life-long learning.

Conceptual Domain 2: Radical Individualism as Community Kaleidoscope

One of the most frequent grievances expressed by AsIP students is that in education you are not allowed to be an individual, and having autism is an individual autonomous experience in the world. The participants are students with radical individualism, yet they report a strong intention as connected to learning community. One of our most powerful cultural myths is the self-sufficient, "rugged individual," who overcomes life's adversities on her or his own through sheer determination, neither needing nor accepting the help of others. Through the lens of rugged individualism, those who need help (those who are unable to confront life's problems on their own) are often seen as inept (lacking determination or skill) and those who accept help as weak (Dudley-Marling 2004). An in-depth understanding of oneself and relatedness to community and social constructs discussed as *self-perception and connectedness* allowed students to look outside of their formative isolated context producing low performance, to re-construct their identity within the learning community inclusively and increased student performance.

Emergent Theme 3: Transformative Shifts in Awareness

The findings suggest a common pattern whereby the evolution of their shifts in awareness was influenced by a number of factors through participation in the AsIP program including: transformation through communication, transformative thinking, discourse with others, re-constructing a healthy identity, internal triumphs, and personal development for social community/school success. Student interview data suggests that the participants experienced a transformation through communication, which contributed to *Transformative Shifts in Awareness*. Interpretations draw on research pertaining to "Transformative Research Design" that gives close consideration to individuals who experience discrimination and oppression, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, disability, immigrant status, political conflicts, sexual orientation, poverty, gender and age (Mertens, 2010). Providing additional supporting evidence for this emergent theme, students also experienced transformative thinking. The data are closely aligned with a set of assumptions and procedures used in Transformative Research Design (Mertens, 2009), as follows:

- Underlying assumptions that rely on ethical stances of inclusion and challenge oppressive social structures.
- An entry process into the community that is designed to build trust and make goals and strategies transparent.
- Dissemination of findings in ways that encourage use of the results to enhance social justice and human rights.

While the diagnoses of Asperger Syndrome may explain *why* these students have specific challenges, articulates *how* (within the learning community) student identities are constructed as they continued to struggle. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define paradigms as systemic sets of beliefs that help us make sense of the world. This can be demonstrated with respect to the beliefs of students with ASD learning impacted by the context of diagnosed disability. The diagnostic evaluation of the students determined psychological and academic challenges. In fact early in their academic experiences, none of the participants IEP team recommended and

education plan for advanced degrees. However radically unexpected, each participant transition into higher education and life-long learning demonstrate transformative results. An alternative conception of learning constructed within the discourse of individualism, considers that learning and learning problems dwell in activities and practices situated in relations rather than in the heads of individual students (Gergen, 1990).

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iPrincipals: How a California University Educational Leadership Program is Preparing the Next Generation of School Administrators Online

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This program report provides insights on the growing national and state trends in PreK-12 and higher education to deliver fully online programs for learners of all types and from many walks of life. It documents the strategies and program constructs Azusa Pacific University's fully online Educational Leadership faculty engages within their innovative, fully virtual program. As Baby Boomer professors, they are vested in building and nurturing what they term, iPrincipals, for both traditional and virtual schools. They are focused on the iY generation in this endeavor, as they strive to meet the learning needs of future school leaders in the state.

Traditional forms of schooling in California, and the nation, are currently facing a radical change in educational delivery models (Rand, 2005; Wagner, 2012; Pink, 2006; Elmore, 2013; CAVA, 2013). As the option of charter schools became law for K-12 public education in California during the era of AB740 in 1992 (US Dept. of Ed., 2013), virtual teaching and learning became a viable next step with the advent of online delivery portals originally intended for high school independent study programs across the state (Center on Education Policy, 2002; LAO, 2013). Universities were already well ahead of this implementation as, during the same era, fully online university programs for everything from degree completion programs to teacher licensure were designed and developed to eventually become functional, if not preferred, options to traditional "brick and mortar" delivery by new markets of degree seeking students (Schools of Education Learning Collaborative, 2008). Out of twenty years of growth in online course delivery, particularly manifested early through hybrid models, (within which approximately one half of a course is delivered face-to-face, and the other half online), the rise in fully online university degree programs for both graduate and undergraduate students is the new reality in institutions of higher education, and growing worldwide within the K-12 environment (Nagel, 2009).

Kolar (2011) notes: "Virtual courses are no longer just for college students. In 2011, over 700,000 high school students were taking at least on online class from either a public or private virtual school" (p. 1). And, in California, from the birth of the charter school movement in 1992, the state's free public charters have grown to currently comprise over 800 organizations. One of the largest, The California Virtual Academies, delivers the state's curriculum in a fully virtual learning environment while serving California's K-12 population.

In addition to enrolling 15,000 students within virtual classroom environments, CAVA offers more than 100 online clubs ranging from photography, Quiz Bowl, 4-H, and Book Buddies, to debate, cooking, volunteering, model UN, and babysitters club. Student organizations including National Junior Honor Society and Student Ambassadors are available (CAVA, 2013). Indeed, the nature of schooling is changing.

Moving Toward a Virtual Leadership Preparation Program in California

The growth of virtual schools and virtual learning is growing at a remarkable rate. A recent Wall Street Journal article focused on the rapid growth of technology companies trying to reinvent higher education through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). One such firm reports having 80 schools producing online courses with 375 classes offered and having 500+ professors teaching the courses (Fasimpaur, 2013). Recent developments include a May 14, 2013 announcement that Georgia Tech will offer an online master's degree in computer science. This announcement will make it possible for a student to get the degree for a quarter of the cost of a typical on-campus degree and receive full credit in a graduate program.

As the K-12 delivery of curriculum and instruction in the state has realized such a steep rise in virtual preference, the faculty of a California university administrator preparation program began to consider those changes necessary to effectively comprise the constructs to grow the next generation of leaders for a virtual environment. Particularly, EDL faculty asked, how do program changes occur without sacrificing the components of leadership training necessary for the traditional brick and mortars? With that question as their driving mindset, educational leadership faculty at Azusa Pacific University, in Azusa, California, began to consider a gradual move to both a new program model for traditional settings, as well a fully online delivery.

APU's Master of Education in School Administration was replaced in 2005-06 with the Master of Arts in Educational Leadership (EDL). The new program, offered as a hybrid model of thirty-six units, delivered across seven courses, with field experience embedded, provided for a comprehensive change offering candidates the most current pedagogical knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices to ensure their preparation for school leadership. The former program, in existence for thirty years, and espousing exit interviews and comprehensive exams, was replaced with a linear cohort design model, supporting a case study capstone project which all candidates begin within their first course. As coursework progresses, candidates for the degree and licensure add components to their study aligned to content within each subsequent course. Their culminating study is representative of their school or district's current reality. The revised, research-based, program model offers candidates the opportunity to experience the development of their case study with full faculty support over the program.

As the new program became rooted, it went fully online in the fall of 2010, as an option to the hybrid model, which is still currently offered on main campus and at seven regional centers. Having completed its second year of fully online delivery, the EDL faculty are currently embracing additional important matters involved in the broader spectrum of online education that are affecting not only Azusa Pacific University, but the entire educational continuum in the development of the next generation of school administrators. These include:

- o Virtual Learning and Virtual Schools
- o The Nature of Teaching and Learning in a digital age
- o Innovation and Creativity as educational reform components

Program Major Goals and Student Outcomes

Within this era of rapid global change that is bringing massive change to education that includes new Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Assessments, as well as a proposed entirely new California public school funding model, preparing the next generation of school leaders is imperative (Kolar, 2013). Coupled with these radical changes, the candidates in university credential programs aspiring to become administrators are described in the literature as "millenials" and the "Y and iY" generation (Elmore, 2010). This generation has been studied and the attributes of this group are reportedly vastly different from the "Baby Boomer" generation. Many current professors in universities are "Baby Boomers," and it is critical that the programs being designed for the Millenials by Baby Boomer professors are developed with the attributes of iPrincipals and the iY generation in order for them to successfully become administrators in programs that both interest them, but also meet their needs to ensure that they complete the certification process.

A recent doctoral study by Suzette Lovely, through California State University Fullerton, entitled "Will Millenials Stay? Examining Teacher Retention from a Generational Perspective," examines some of these issues (ACSA, EdCAL, 2013). Lovely's dissertation affirmed the findings of recent current literature in identifying four unifying desires and career ideals of Millenials/iY candidates:

1. The desire to perform meaningful work
2. The desire to be respected
3. The desire to collaborate
4. The desire to exercise greater control over the work

Lovely also makes four recommendations in her dissertation. Although this study focused on teacher retention, these findings would be applicable in working with Millenials/iY teachers seeking to become administrators. Her implications for practice are:

1. Refine induction programs so that visitations and observations should be scheduled in a realistic context so induction is seen as a benefit rather than a burden.
2. Let them lead. Although Millenials haven't been in education for a long period of time, they grew up juggling many activities and possess tremendous confidence. New design models are required to keep this generation from feeling bored or stifled.
3. Give them autonomy. To increase efficacy and motivation, employ a democratic style of leadership that includes purposeful outcomes along with freedom to achieve these outcomes.
4. Help them reach out to parents. Social supports are necessary to improve parent-teacher relationships.

Accepting these precepts as the background and approaches of Millenials/iY candidates, what are the implications for iLearning, iTeaching and iLeading? A book by Tim Elmore, (2010) "Generation iY: Our Last Chance to Save Their Future," offers some suggestions on effectively connecting with Generation iY that could be beneficial in refining educational administration programs for aspiring iPrincipals.   Elmore offers seven observations for consideration about this generation:

1. They want to belong before they believe. Elmore advises that if you want iY to embrace an idea, embrace them first.
2. They want an experience before an explanation. Elmore advises that the iY generation wants to do or see something, and they want action and interaction.
3. They want a cause before they want a course. Elmore states that if you want to seize their attention, you need to give them a reason for why they need to listen to your words.
4. They want a guide on the side before they want a sage on the stage. iY wants authentic mentors.
5. They want to play before they pay. iY wants results to come quickly, or they may lose interest.
6. They want to use but not be used by others. iY uses many means to get what they want –the Internet, cellphones, instant messaging, buy they are very wary of anyone they suspect of trying to use them. Elmore states that creating environments where iY can come up with their own ideas and implement them while moving towards a common goal for the group is an effective method in working with this generation.
7.   They want a transformation, not merely a touch. Today, there is a higher demand for 'edutainment' by iY. iY want experiences that literally transform them in the process.

As programs are developed and re-designed for iPrincipals, these concepts should be kept in mind in order that the curricula are constructed that effectively reach and address the new generation of school administrators. Standards are an essential element of 21st century educator preparation and must be central to an effective principal training program. As recent research studies have found, school leadership is second only to quality of teachers and teaching toward student achievement in schools (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson, 2010).   University school leadership preparation programs have received criticism as inadequate, particularly from the federal level, where funding efforts (Race to the Top, and School Improvement Grants) have provided incentives to move states to take action.

With this in mind, EDL faculty at Azusa Pacific University developed a set of goals to which all coursework and field experiences were mapped. Candidates in the program, whether face-to-face or fully online, develop visionary leadership, scholarly practice, and exemplary character as EDL faculty require candidates to engage in the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching (Dweck, 1986; Hartley, K & Bendixen, L 2001). Candidates are encouraged by faculty to be competent, innovative, visionary leaders who are able to create educational environments within their organizations wholly conducive to educational programs that help connect them to the world of schooling and the world of life

work (Glickman, C., Gordon, S., Ross-Gordon, J., 2010). Candidates become scholarly practitioners who integrate theoretical knowledge with practical decision-making, who are grounded in relevant technologies and substantive professional content, trained in skills of inquiry, capable of independent and critical thought, and are dedicated to improving their own professional practice, as well as that of other educators (Hiatt-Michael, 2006; Hord, S. M. and Sommers, W.A. 2008). Candidates in the program become individuals of high moral and ethical character who probe the deeper questions regarding the meaning of human existence, and who dedicate themselves to a perpetual quest for truth as they face the contradictions inherent in the world (Noddings, N., 2005; Oser, F.K., Althof, W., and Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. 2008).

This is a tall order for any administrator preparation candidate. How these outcomes are measured within a face-to-face model has been reported within the long chronology of program accreditation reports at the university. How moving to a fully online environment poses new challenges for faculty as they determine the congruence of candidate mastery of these outcomes, is a question to which APU's EDL faculty are currently responding.

Development of APU's Educational Leadership Program

Tony Wagner is a first innovation education fellow at the Technology and Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard and former co-director of the Change Leadership Group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Wagner has written influential books about education and has offered important ideas for the education community to reflect on and use in the educational reform movement. His works include *Change Leadership* (2006) (a text regarding change utilized in the APU Master's program), *The Global Achievement Gap* (2010), and his latest work, *Creating Innovators: The Making of Young People Who Will Change the World* (2012),

Wagner identifies Seven Survival Skills in *The Global Achievement Gap* that he proposed are the new skills students need for careers and continuous learning:

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
2. Collaboration across networks and leading by influence
3. Agility and adaptability
4. Initiative and Entrepreneurship
5. Accessing and analyzing information
6. Effective oral and written communication
7. Curiosity and imagination (p 12).

Wagner reports that since the *Global Achievement Gap's* publication, he has consistently heard from leaders in the for-profit, nonprofit, and military spheres that these skills are, indeed, the ones that matter most. Wagner now feels however that the list of skills is necessary, but not sufficient. What he advises is missing is that of innovation. In *Creating Innovators*, Wagner states:

> What we urgently need is a new engine of economic growth for the twenty-first century…And there is general agreement as to what that new economy must be based on. One word: Innovation. We have to become the country that produces more ideas

to solve more different kinds of problems…We must outinnovate our economic competitors. (pp. 2-3).

Wagner is not alone in calling for educational reform that fosters innovation and creativity. Sir Ken Robinson in his book, *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative* (2006), advocates for the development of imagination, creativity and innovation for both education and business. Daniel Pink in *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* (2011) stresses the importance of right brain thinkers whose abilities mark the fault line between who gets ahead and who doesn't. He notes, "Left-brain-style thinking used to be the driver and the right-brain-style thinking the passenger. Now, R-Directed-Thinking is suddenly grabbing the wheel, stepping on the gas, and determining where we're going and how we'll get there. L-Directed aptitudes-the sorts of things measured by the SAT and deployed by CPAs - are still necessary. But they're no longer sufficient. Instead, the R-Directed aptitudes so often disdained and dismissed - artistry, empathy, taking the long view, pursuing the transcendent - will increasingly determine who soars and who stumbles" (p. 27). Therefore, the re-design of an educational administration program and its offering needs to keep these elements in mind. That is, redesigned educational administration on-line programs need to be in alignment with the virtual learning and virtual schools that are developing and expanding in order to be current and offer a competitive program. Secondly, the nature of teaching and learning in a digital age will require Baby Boomer professors to understand iPrincipals, Millenials, and the iY generation to create programs that attract, interest, and meet the professional needs of the aspiring administrators. Thirdly, that innovation and creativity are important program components that are being advocated by these, and other educational theorists and futurists, for inclusion in the educational system.

Who gets ahead and who doesn't is the foremost concern of every school leader, particularly as data comparisons demonstrating continuous improvement in closing the achievement gap between all students continue to drive curriculum, instruction, and assessment. To meet the needs of Millenials and the iY generation, Azusa Pacific University EDL faculty desired to facilitate candidates' development of a personal and professional leadership perspective within their first two assignments in the program. Completed within *EDL580-Educational Leadership Induction,* candidates engage the Gallup Organization's Clifton StrengthsFinder Assessment, from which, their top five strengths are determined (Buckingham, M., Clifton, D., 2001). A conversation around their strengths, and the important leadership disposition of recognizing the strengths of others, is coupled with an exercise in sampling the perceptions of others within the candidates' sphere of influence around their leadership competencies. Twenty-five constructs are measured through the use of the Leadership Competency Analysis Survey (LCAS) distributed within their first and last courses (pre/post field experience) to determine both an initial analysis of perceived competencies, and a summative assessment of their growth in leadership competencies which include relational capacity and communication skills. Subsequent conversations and strengths-based activities accompany a personal and professional growth plan, designed by each candidate within their first course and completed over their program.

Within their change course*,* candidates engage in a number of activities around organizational theory and development, including, but not limited to communication, decision making, team building, conflict management, instructional and organizational planning, budgeting, and change. Embedded activities within Sakai forums, or in-class discussions,

engage candidates to respond to needed areas of change from a personal leadership perspective. Candidates learn to analyze organizational needs through various structures such as cause and effect diagrams, flowcharts, Pareto Charts, Affinity Diagrams, Impact Analysis Charts, Gantt Charts, as well as engage models of change that combine assessment and planning, such as Force Field Analysis, PDSA Cycle, and Strategic Planning.

Educational Leadership faculty determined at the outset of the initial redesign of the administrator preparation program there were three core values to which the program would be aligned. Faculty adopted Strengths-Based theories (Clifton & Anderson, 2001); personal and professional leadership (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986); within professional learning communities (Dufour, Dufour, & Eaker, 2005); and, best leadership practices that build exemplary schools (Fullan, 2008; Collins, 2001; Wagner & Kegan, 2006; Wagner 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; and Waters & Grubb, 2004). Each of these three core values lie at the heart of the EDL program at Azusa Pacific University.

Reflective of the three core values, candidates use their strengths to develop a shared vision of learning that focuses on maintaining high expectations for student achievement. Candidates learn to develop and sustain a culture of teaching and learning through analysis of content standards, the study of instructional delivery, data analysis, application of research, and by providing staff development for all employees. Management of the school in the service of teaching and learning assists candidates as they learn the complexities of recruiting, training and evaluating employees by providing a safe, productive environment, and by understanding legal mandates and constraints. Candidates learn to work with diverse families and communities for improved student success by incorporating diverse family and community expectations in school decision making. Political, social, economic, legal and cultural understanding is enhanced through analysis of political forces, legal principles, economic dynamics, and cultural distinctions present in the school setting.

While the development of the professional knowledge and skills expected in their field begins in the induction course it is strengthened as they progress in the subsequent courses and through field experiences in which they acquire professional knowledge and skills for the field of educational leadership. Theoretical bases of developing organizations in a culture of accountability are thematically central to the program, from induction, to leadership performance assessment. Primary to informing the knowledge base of candidates, authors such as, Glickman (2010), Wagner and Kegan (2005), Wagner (2010), Wagner (2012), Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005), Andelson, (2001), Kemerer and Sansom (2009), Creswell (2012), Deal (2003), and others, contribute to the essential themes, concepts, and skills needed, relative to the performance of administrative services within todays schools. The constructs of change theory, particularly applied within data driven environments, as well as executive decision-making, planning, budgeting/resource management, and understanding political environments while operating in a legal culture, are addressed, particularly within a mindset of learning to effectively identify and eliminate bias. Online course forums, within both hybrid and fully online courses, create broadly interactive conversations between candidates and instructors, helping to develop candidate dispositions and knowledge for school leadership.

Technology, Course Sequence, Field Experience, and School-Based Case Studies

Preparing iPrincipals requires instruction in the use of technology. Keeping abreast of trends is important to keep their schools updated while serving students who may not have access to expensive technology. Keeping their schools updated with technologies, including assistive technologies, is important as they keep their schools accessible to students with special needs. Additionally, preparing principals to understand the differences between effective teaching, and effective online teaching and learning, is important. Kolar (p.1, 2011) notes: "According to the North American Center for Online Learning, virtual teachers must be even better communicators than traditional educators due to the difficulties of conveying emotion online."

The importance of understanding and effectively using technology is evidenced throughout the curriculum**.** Faculty members use technology in their teaching and candidates use a variety of technologies in their classes, as it is embedded, and assessed, in all EDL courses. Within the redesign, EDL faculty desired to offer candidates the opportunity to earn an emphasis in collaboration with the Educational Technology Program in APU's School of Education. This program provides candidates the option to take three additional courses upon completion of the 36 unit MA in Educational Leadership/Tier I Program or the 24 unit PASC Tier I Program. The Educational Technology program gives students who choose the emphasis to be immersed in technology and its applications at school sites and in classrooms.

Enrolling both pre-service and intern administrators of traditional brick and mortar, charter schools, and virtual academies in the Tier I Preliminary Administrative Services Credential program, APU's faculty designed a program model that provides candidates the opportunity to take courses sequentially with professionals who share similar goals. The cohort design affords the convenience and collegiality of studying with peers whether face-to-face, or online. This sequence of courses, and accompanying requirements, are designed to be completed during seven, nine-week terms, in approximately 15 months. The design of the APU program incorporates the online delivery model as part of a continual update to follow the educational trends, developments, and needs of the candidates. Clearly, this is a trend that is now in motion and in constant flux. As virtual learning continues to expand and define its role, online administrative credential programs will be continually updated and reformatted to stay current.

Field experience is embedded into EDL courses, including those offered online. Coursework is immediately applicable as a resource for curriculum planning, achievement assessment, decision making, and program improvement. Candidates assume leadership responsibilities at a local school or district setting under the guidance of both a site and university supervisor. Field experiences include intensive activities both in the day-to-day functions of administrators and in longer-term policy design and implementation, and, are closely related to the job performance requirements of administrators as specified by state standards. Course work and field experience work together to expand the candidate's leadership capacity.

A case study is developed by each candidate based on local school or district scenarios, needs, issues, and/or situations. It is initiated in the Induction course and developed in each of the subsequent six courses. Candidates present and defend their case studies before an evaluative panel during the final course, *EDL586-Performance Assessment for Educational Leaders.* The Case Study is used as a basis for assessing the level at which candidates have met the standards in the PASC program and master's degree. Throughout the course sequence

candidates build their personal plans for professional growth and development. These plans continue to be developed throughout the course sequence. Candidates articulate their plans to a panel of professional community members during their final course.

Implications for Preparing iPrincipals for the Next Generation

The Center on Education Policy (CEP) held a meeting in Washington DC, on April 19, 2002. Within the transcript of proceedings, it was noted that while CEP supports public education, it also welcomes change (p. 1). Within this meeting the committee attempted to place virtual schools in the context of several essential principles it had identified for the broader American public education setting, including effective preparation for life, work, and citizenship; and social cohesion and shared culture. The committee asked the central question, will the proposed reform (virtual schools) provide for and ensure these principles?

As EDL faculty at Azusa Pacific University moved the MA-EDL program online, like principles were noted. A question was asked around those differences that might occur for candidates in leadership preparation between APU's hybrid versus fully online program. Too, will the wonderful sense of community, prevalent within the hybrid model, flourish online? Will data realize within the hybrid model, be congruent with data found for each of the program constructs within the online offering? From their performance indicators, collected for every candidate in the program, whether hybrid or fully online, there is currently no difference in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions gained in either delivery model. Additionally, the sense of community formed within the online courses is as powerful, if not more so, than that of the face-to-face model.

As the nation moves more and more toward teaching and learning online, effectively training iPrincipals for school leadership, for both traditional and virtual schools, elicits a task toward which APU's EDL faculty continue to centralize their focus: meeting those outcomes of leadership expertise that lead to increased student achievement in our PreK-12 public and private schools, which, include the many charters currently operating in California, some, fully virtual. With the advent of technology, and the rapid changes inherently ongoing to all systems, *particularly* those systems of education, it is logical to build, nurture, and sustain a sequentially organized set of courses that carefully incorporate comprehensive approaches to school leadership. If Baby Boomer faculties are training up iPrincipals for the iY generation, it is essential we deliver a program model that meets their generational needs. It is vital we remain innovative, creative thinkers around the virtual environments this generation expects and demands. APU's fully virtual school leadership preparation program faculty is concerned with doing just that.

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Required Preliminary Administrative Service Credential Program Culminating Activities in California NCATE Accredited Universities

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The purpose of this effort is to share information about the variety of culminating activities used in the acquisition of the California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. Knowledge of these varying culminating activities and related practices has not previously been readily available. The culminating activities among California's NCATE accredited university educational administration programs are intended to verify that candidates are well-prepared at a level expected of a beginning school administrator. Given the devastating criticism of educational administration preparation programs, such as contained in Arthur Levine's report, Educating School Leaders (2005), universities need to make sure their culminating activities verify the professional competence of candidates recommended for administrative certification.

Editor' Note: We, the editors, realize that programmatic practices are under constant review and revision. If any of the following information is incorrect or incomplete, please contact the author so he may update his information. We do believe that it is imperative for the professors of educational administration to share programmatic best practices and we see this journal as an opportunity to do that.

This report examines the culminating activities required by twenty-one NCATE approved public and private university educational administration programs in the State of California. The purpose of this effort was to share information about the variety of culminating activities used in the acquisition of the California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. Program coordinators were asked to describe the culminating activities they conduct; program documents on file at the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing were read; and finally, coordinators were asked to verify specific program information used in this report. No effort was made to comparatively evaluate these culminating activities, or to completely describe the fieldwork, portfolios, written and oral examinations each of these universities require. Instead, this is an effort to describe sufficiently the range of culminating activities to stimulate reflective discussion.

Fieldwork

Students in these university educational administration credential programs are mainly teachers, counselors, or quasi-administrators already working in schools on a daily basis. Effective July 1, 2013, a California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential requires five years of full-time experience.

All educational administration program fieldwork occurs at two levels of instruction (such as elementary and secondary), and is supervised by both a university faculty member and an on-the-job practicing administrator. Likewise, all university fieldwork requires students to engage in administrative work pertaining to each California Professional Standard for Educational Leaders (CPSEL).

Required fieldwork within university educational administration programs vary in length. 25% of the CSU, Dominguez Hills program involves fieldwork in an action-based leadership project. California State University, Long Beach requires three weeks of full-time administrative fieldwork. The University of San Diego requires 40 days of full-time administrative fieldwork, plus a day shadowing an administrator at a school with a grade level that is different from the one in which the candidate works. San Francisco State University schedules fieldwork at the beginning and end of their program.

San Diego State University fieldwork occurs over one academic year. Candidates shadow principals in two different settings for three consecutive full days in each of two semesters (total of six full-time days). The shadowing occurs at two different instructional levels and in at least one setting that has a different cultural plurality than that of the candidate. A primary focus of the fieldwork is to identify a population of students that will be the focus of efforts throughout the fieldwork experience. Candidates acquire data about the achievement of the targeted population, and examine detailed achievement test data and at least one other data source such as discipline, student engagement, attendance, or course grade data. They contrast the performance of the targeted population with other populations at the school; describe the important questions that these data do not answer; suggest possible strategies for collecting additional information that could help answer these questions; and complete a review of the literature regarding the targeted population, plus investigate two similar schools that are demonstrating high results with the targeted population. Then the candidates, working with the site supervisor and an advisory committee including teachers and parents, lead the development of a plan for improvement that includes strategies such as instructional interventions, student engagement strategies, professional development, and clinical supervision or peer coaching. In designing the improvement plan, consideration is given to fiscal resources and compliance with the collective bargaining agreements. The plan is implemented and monitored throughout the academic year and is evaluated based on designated metrics, such as student test scores, student attendance, or other factors pertinent to the plan. Other fieldwork is associated with specific courses and includes such things as clinical supervision and developing a community relations plan.

The University of LaVerne requires one unit of fieldwork each semester throughout their program. At Fresno State, fieldwork is assigned as coursework. At Loyola Marymount University, candidates complete three one unit projects which serve as both formative and summative assessments for fieldwork and coursework. Students add to their portfolio a critical analysis of their fieldwork and coursework each semester. During their first semester (Unit 1), students present to their peers and course instructors. During their second semester

(Unit 2), students present to their peers, course instructors, and a panel of fieldwork supervisors. And during their third semester (Unit 3), students present to a panel of volunteer community experts in education, recruited and organized by the assistant program director.

California State University, Stanislaus requires four guided fieldwork projects of 45 clock hours each which are matched with four of their five courses. California Polytechnic State University requires fieldwork which lasts three terms and involves at least 90 clock hours of administrative work. California State University, East Bay requires fieldwork that lasts for three quarters. San Jose State University requires four semesters of fieldwork, while California State University, Fullerton candidates participate in field-based experiences that span a period of five terms, beginning at the start of candidate programs. Additionally, most universities give course assignments which often require fieldwork. For example, in the Human Resource Administration course at California State University, Fullerton, candidates learn how to supervise teachers and practice the skills of instructional supervision by pre-conferencing, observing, and post-conferencing with a teacher.

Programs differ in the extent to which candidates enrolled in fieldwork meet to examine, explore and address school related issues that they see, in relation to the research they have learned in their coursework. The California State University, East Bay fieldwork features such "critical friends" groups; whereas, the Azusa Pacific University faculty administers "The Strengths-Finder Inventory" produced by The Gallup Organization (2013) to determine the top five strengths of an individual, and a "Leadership Competency Analysis Survey" that measures twenty-five dispositions for leadership. Candidates aggregate their scores from peers, supervisors, and self to determine their ranking compared to overall program scores.

The amount and structure of fieldwork required reflect fundamental assumptions about the purpose of a university educational administration program. Should a university train candidates to administer schools as they presently exist? Or, should an educational administration program lead change, as university medical schools prepare new physicians with the latest strategies to improve patient care? California State University, Bakersfield does both, requiring two 110-clock hour fieldwork courses. Students spend the first 110 clock hours in a wide range of mentored administrative roles; the second fieldwork course requires students to identify a real problem a school administration is having, and help them research and then work on that problem, giving candidates a minimum of 110 clock hours of experience leading curriculum change as instructional leaders. For example, last summer, a fieldwork student researched and designed a Common Core State Standards implementation plan for a local district, and is now leading them in that process.

Portfolios

All twenty NCATE approved California university educational administration programs require a portfolio wherein students collect artifacts throughout their coursework and fieldwork, demonstrating their competence on the CPSELs. For example, CSU-Fullerton requires a portfolio that provides "evidence that can be used in determination of candidate competence." California Lutheran University asks students, among other queries, what it is about each portfolio item that describes them as a professional. San Francisco State University requires three artifacts for each of the six CPSEL standards, each preceded by a reflection which describes the student's administrative role and function, the role and function

of other participants involved, the duration of the project/activity, the outcome or impact on stakeholders and/or the school, and lessons learned. Each artifact must come from graded coursework or fieldwork. The programs at California State University, Long Beach and California State University, Bakersfield also ask candidates to reflect on each artifact, explaining how it demonstrates their administrative competence in relation to the CPSELs. Additionally, beginning summer 2013, University of San Diego students will include an analysis and reflection from their international experience through the World Educational Leadership Link (the WELL project).

The required portfolio at California State University, Northridge must include seven course exemplars and reflections on each; two shadow experiences (elementary and secondary) with reflections that connect to the six (CPSEL) standards; three activities per standard and an artifact that supports each standard; and a narrative of a research project developed in the "Research in Education" course and implemented in fieldwork.

While all of the required portfolios suggest that the candidate include their resume, some recommend including the candidate's teacher evaluations, letters of commendation and awards, course summaries, short answers to typical interview questions, and a personal educational vision. The University of San Diego asks students to describe their personal educational "platform," which includes the student's philosophy of education and leadership; vision for learners, teachers, the organization, and professional growth; and method for vision attainment.

While common rubrics (Still Developing, Competent, and Superlative; or Low Level of Competency, Average, Above Average, and Exceptional) are used, following are three more informative rubrics used by the University of LaVerne:

1. *Use of Writing Conventions*:
    (1) Many grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; the formatting is confusing; not presented in typed format.
    (2) Some grammar, punctuation and spelling errors; formatting present but not strong; material presented in a typed format.
    (3) Few grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors; formatting clear and understandable; material presented in a typed format.
    (4) Very few difficulties with grammar, punctuation, and spelling; formatting adds to clarity and meaning; material presented in typed format.

2. *Overall Portfolio Impact*:
    (1) The portfolio does not demonstrate the student's skills, abilities and knowledge to potential employers.
    (2) The portfolio does little to demonstrate the student's skills, knowledge and abilities to potential employers.
    (3) The portfolio helps to demonstrate the student's skills, abilities and knowledge to potential employers.
    (4) The portfolio demonstrates well the student's skills, abilities and knowledge to potential employers.

3. *What student learned about self as a person and as a professional*:

        (1) Unclear awareness of personal growth and no intent on continuous improvement.

        (2) Demonstrates awareness of personal growth as a student or educator with an understanding of a need for continuous improvement.

        (3) Demonstrates awareness of personal growth as a student and an educator with a commitment to continuous improvement.

        (4) Demonstrates a clear awareness or personal growth as a student and an educator with a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

The following is a sample of three rubrics used by California State University-Long Beach:

1. *Selection of Artifacts*: Artifacts selected are ((1) not clearly related, (2) related, (3) clearly related) to the relevant standard and demonstrate ((1) limited to no degree of competence, (2) some competence, (3) a high level of competence) in the standard.

2. *Oral Presentation of Artifacts*:

        (1) The candidate is hesitant in some/all responses and/or appears unable to locate key artifacts to support his/her statements.

        (2) The candidate is able to completely answer the questions while locating artifacts to accentuate responses that communicate the credential competencies have been met; the response is complete, however not entirely fluid in delivery.

        (3) The candidate is able to fluidly and completely answer the questions posed during the Exit Assessment while using artifacts skillfully to accentuate responses that clearly communicate the credential competencies have been met.

3. *Standards Based Activities*: Project/activities show (extensive depth and breadth, some depth and breadth, little depth and breadth) to provide broad experiences to master standards. When advising candidates beginning their educational administration programs, California State University-Bakersfield introduces the CPSEL framework and suggests the following rubric for evaluating a portfolio holistically:

        (1) The portfolio merely includes factual material.

        (2) The portfolio includes some evidence that the student is a "reflective" professional.

        (3) The portfolio includes evidence that the student has integrated the knowledge base in educational administration within their professional work.

        (4) The portfolio provides evidence that the educator has social purposes larger than his/her own.

        (5) The portfolio includes evidence that the student understands that education is a moral calling.

Written Examinations

Sonoma State University requires candidates to write a "What Could Be" paper and a "Personal Theory of Leadership" paper. In the Personal Theory of Leadership paper, the candidate is asked to pull together all of their learning in the program and discuss how this learning will shape their eventual practice as a school leader. The "What Could Be" paper analyzes their district site, reviews an earlier "What Is" assessment, collects information from the site supervisor, and then summarizes this information into a major paper commenting on

what their school should be working toward and the path they would take to get there. Similarly, at Fresno State, candidates write a paper on the current and desired state of their school site, and write a timed response to a practical administrative situation.

California State University, Stanislaus provides students with "30 Essential Questions" at the beginning of the program during orientation sessions. At the end of the program, students are given several weeks to respond to two of three questions in writing, selected from the 30 Essential Questions. Here are three of the 30 Essential Questions, along with a rubric for the third question:

1. First, identify the membership of a legally constituted Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team. Second, briefly describe the responsibilities of the IEP Team in providing a free and appropriate public education for students with exceptional needs.

2. School officials have the legal authority to regulate the expression of students' speech on campus. Provide relevant examples that illustrate when and how this authority can be exercised.

3. Identify and describe a mechanism or structure to raise student achievement at a school.

> *Far Below Standard*: No key mechanisms or structures to raise student achievement are identified or described. Grammatical and syntactic errors are noted throughout the narrative.
>
> *Below Standard*: One or more key mechanisms or structures to raise student achievement are identified, but are not accurately described. Occasional grammatical and syntactic errors are noted.
>
> *Meets Standard*: One key mechanism or structure is identified and accurately described in relation to student achievement. Appropriate grammar and syntax are used.
>
> *Above Standard*: Two key mechanisms or structures are identified and a clear, concise, and accurate description of each key mechanism or structure in relation to student achievement is provided. Specific examples are provided to illustrate each mechanism or structure. Appropriate grammar and syntax are used.
>
> *Exemplary*: Three or more key mechanisms or structures are identified and a clear, concise, and accurate description of each key mechanism or structure in relation to student achievement is provided. Specific examples are provided to illustrate each mechanism or structure. Appropriate grammar and syntax are used.
>
> *(Key Mechanisms*: Schmoker; Marzano; Data-driven instruction; Targeted intervention and remediation; Professional development (targeted & ongoing); Appropriate allocation of funding; Single Plan for Student Achievement; School Academic Intervention Team)

California State University, Northridge administers a comprehensive examination on general administration (including human resources), supervision of curriculum, elementary and secondary education (including special education), school finance, and school law. The first three listed subject areas are assessed by an essay question which includes a scenario situation which candidates must address by applying the knowledge and skills expected of school

administrators. Students must respond by being specific about action steps and an action plan that will facilitate student learning in situations that require leadership and knowledge of instruction.

Both credential and master's degree students at California State University, Bakersfield complete a take-home examination which requires an in-depth theoretical and practical understanding of the knowledge base in educational administration. The students address six broad questions, each sampling one of the six CPSELs. Here are six typical questions:

Based on (Promoting Learning) CPSEL #1: What leadership strategies can school leaders utilize to increase student achievement?

Based on (Instructional Program) CPSEL #2: As an elementary principal, how would you work to improve student achievement in mathematics?

Based on (Management) CPSEL #3: Salman Khan, who leads the Khan Academies, has said he doesn't understand where the money in public education goes, implying that much is wasted. In California, about $8,300 is spent per student per year. That means that a class of 25 students generates $207,500. Since, he says, teachers don't make even half of that, what is happening to the rest of that money? What should we tell Salman Khan? What evidence can be cited to support increased funding for public education?

Based on (School/Community) CPSEL #4: Utilize Comer's approach to school/community development, describing the knowledge and skills school leaders can use to engage the school and its many communities in meaningful dialogue and action to address political/social/economic challenges which affect student achievement?

Based on (Ethics) CPSEL #5: Describe the diverse student population that exists in Kern County: What cultural features, economic conditions, and political views affect student achievement? How can school leaders bring about more educational equity and opportunity for the students in this diverse region?

Based on (Political) CPSEL #6: What is the role of schooling in a democratic society?

Oral Examinations

At California State University, Stanislaus, an oral interview is conducted by teams of local practitioners (district and site-level) at the end of the students' first semester of enrollment. Questions are selected from the list of 30 Essential Questions, available on the program's web site. Comparing student performance at the first semester interview and on the final semester written examination facilitates program evaluation.

After completing all credential requirements, students at California State University, Long Beach participate in an "Exit Portfolio Assessment Summary Exhibition Night." Their portfolios must include a vision/mission statement, resume, disposition assessment forms completed by the field experience site supervisor and the university supervisor, and/or the student's current principal, and three artifacts per CPSEL, with a rationale for each artifact describing how it illustrates the student's competence in the CPSEL Standard. Then, on the Exit Portfolio Assessment Summary Exhibition Night, each candidate shares one experience for each standard. This oral presentation is evaluated by the program coordinator.

Throughout the program, Azusa Pacific University candidates develop a case study based on local school scenarios, needs, issues, and/or situations, which is presented before an evaluative panel during the final program course. At Sonoma State University, candidates summarize "the significant problem" they have addressed during the year, the outcomes of this action research project, and what they have learned in conjunction with each of the CPSELs.

The oral examinations at the University of San Diego, the University of the Pacific, and San Diego State University are presentations by the candidate of their portfolio, what they did during their fieldwork, and showcase their accomplishments related to the CPSEL standards. The oral examination at San Francisco State University is drawn from coursework and fieldwork, providing students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to integrate knowledge and practice while articulating mastery of the CPSEL competencies. At CSU-Dominguez Hills candidates make a multi-media presentation of their fieldwork to a panel of faculty and school district administrators. Fresno State University requires students to engage in a mock employment interview.

At California State University, Bakersfield, candidates complete their culminating activities with an oral examination, given by their culminating examination committee, composed of two educational administration university faculty and a practicing school administrator (often, their principal). The culminating examination committee asks the candidate to elaborate and/or clarify what they wrote in their written exam and assesses the candidate's dispositions. The oral exam also provides verification that the candidate actually wrote the take-home written examination.

Conclusion

The culminating activities among California's NCATE accredited university educational administration programs are intended to verify that candidates are well-prepared at a level expected of a beginning school administrator. Given the devastating criticism of educational administration preparation programs, such as contained in Arthur Levine's report, *Educating School Leaders* (2005), universities need to make sure their culminating activities verify the professional competence of candidates recommended for administrative certification.

Appendix: Preliminary Administrative Services Credential Culminating Requirements

University	Fieldwork	Portfolio	Written Exam	Oral Exam/Presentation
Azusa Pacific U.	X	X		
Cal. Lutheran U.	X	X		X
Cal Poly, San Luis O.	X	X	X	
CSU, Bakersfield	X	X	X	X
CSU, Dominguez H.	X	X		X
CSU, East Bay	X	X		
CSU, Fresno	X	X	X	X
CSU, Fullerton	X	X		
CSU, Long Beach	X	X		X
CSU, Northridge	X	X	X	
CSU, San Bernardino	X	X		
CSU, Stanislaus	X	X	X	X
Loyola Mary. U.	X	X		X
Point Loma Nazarene	X	X		X
San Diego State U.	X	X		X
San Francisco S. U.	X	X		X
San Jose State U.	X	X		X
Sonoma State U.	X	X		X
U. of La Verne	X	X		X
U. of San Diego	X	X		X
U. of the Pacific	X	X		X